



Women entrepreneurs in tech startups: challenges, triumphs, and the call for change in Brazil's landscape

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ABSTRACT

Entrepreneurship unfolds as a transformative narrative for women challenging societal norms and establishing innovative startups. Systemic marginalization and gender biases persist, driving the need for nuanced exploration. This study aims to conduct an exploratory examination of women entrepreneurs in the southern region of Brazil, focusing on challenges encountered during startup initiation and sustenance, along with strategies employed for viability. We address the gender gap in entrepreneurship theories, emphasizing the impact of societal structures, cultural norms, and historical biases on women's entrepreneurial experiences. Employing qualitative methods, semi-structured interviews with 15 women entrepreneurs were conducted, focusing on motivations, obstacles, and startup experiences. Snowball sampling facilitated participant selection, with SEBRAE and participant networks aiding recruitment. Findings reveal diverse motivations for entrepreneurship, including financial independence, autonomy, and the pursuit of work-life balance. Financial barriers, gender biases, and credibility deficits emerge as significant challenges. The startup ecosystem, while offering opportunities, amplifies gender disparities. Women entrepreneurs in startups navigate a triad of challenges—balancing personal and professional life, overcoming biases, and establishing credibility. Their resilience underscores the need for cultural and structural changes to cultivate an inclusive and equitable entrepreneurial ecosystem. The research suggests future studies focusing on support networks and financial constraints faced by women entrepreneurs.

Keywords: Women Entrepreneurship; Startup Challengers; Gender Gap.

INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship assumes a pivotal role in shaping the conception and expansion of businesses, contributing significantly to the advancement and prosperity of countries and regions (Duarte, 2008). The profound impact of entrepreneurship, rooted in ostensibly modest principles, is exemplified by the commencement of the entrepreneurial journey when a lucrative opportunity converges with an entrepreneurial mindset (Hisrich et al.,

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2014). The integration of new enterprises emerges as a driving force behind economic progress in developing nations (Hermann, 2022).

Within the realm of entrepreneurship, a transformative narrative unfolds, envisioning a promising future wherein women dismantle barriers and establish innovative businesses with unwavering determination and passion (Hilsdorf, 2015). Throughout history, women have endured systemic marginalization within capitalist society, often confined to undervalued occupations characterized by both inadequate compensation and complexity (Stroparo, 2023). Amid precarious working conditions, women encounter additional barriers imposed by male counterparts who perceive them as direct competitors for employment opportunities (Stroparo, 2023).

Recent years have witnessed a burgeoning global movement of women assuming prominent roles in entrepreneurship (Vargas, 2003). These courageous and visionary women challenge prevailing gender stereotypes, surmount significant obstacles, and lead the establishment of their own startups. Female entrepreneurship, characterized as an evolving phenomenon, warrants comprehensive exploration and understanding (Moura, 2018).

The late 1990s in the United States marked the emergence of startups, representing nascent companies often grounded in technology and epitomizing a novel approach to entrepreneurship. Notably, in the context of female entrepreneurship, startups distinguish themselves for various reasons, primarily as founts of innovation that offer unprecedented solutions to contemporary societal challenges. This, in turn, generates novel opportunities for women to establish themselves and cultivate their enterprises (Lopes, 2019).

Recognizing their innovative potential, capacity for wealth creation, job generation, and contribution to the social and economic development of the regions they inhabit, necessitates the establishment of mechanisms facilitating the initiation and continuity of these enterprises (Rodrigues, 2016). In light of this context, the central inquiry guiding this research is: What factors motivate women to engage in entrepreneurship within technological startups? How is the scenario in which these women are embedded characterized?

Therefore, the principal aim of this research is to undertake an exploratory

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examination of the experiences of women entrepreneurs situated in the southern region of Brazil, with a specific focus on the challenges encountered during the initiation and sustenance of startups, as well as the strategies employed to ensure their viability.

The economic impact of entrepreneurship is a subject of extensive discourse, necessitating a critical focus on the realm of female entrepreneurship. Presently, women entrepreneurs not only constitute a significant workforce but also contribute substantially to the creation of numerous employment opportunities (Nascimento, 2020). The managerial approach adopted by these entrepreneurs encompasses a recognition of individuals as bearers of distinctive identities, cultures, and unique needs, thereby engendering a pervasive positive impact (Costa, 2015).

Against this backdrop, startups, as delineated by Nascimento (2020), emerge as pivotal and remarkably innovative business models. The confluence of female entrepreneurship and startups, a recent trend of considerable prominence, underscores the need for research addressing contemporaneous and underexplored thematic dimensions. Undertaking such research presents an intellectually stimulating challenge, affording a nuanced comprehension of the gender dynamics inherent in the administration of these enterprises and elucidating prospects for female leadership within the startup landscape (Nascimento, 2020).

2. 2. THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

2.1. FEMALE ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN BRAZILIAN CONTEXTS

The exploration of Female Entrepreneurship remains a relatively recent focus, marked by a notable imbalance in available data compared to their male counterparts, a consequence of traditional data aggregation practices that do not disaggregate by gender (Santos, 2016). A cross-regional analysis of entrepreneurship reveals variable gender ratios, consistently demonstrating a lower representation of women entrepreneurs compared to men on a global scale (Bedê et al., 2019). This gender gap can be ascribed to the intricate interplay of social structure, cultural norms, customs, and technological infrastructure within each national context (Alperstedt et al., 2014).

Wruck's data analysis (2019) indicates that over the past decade, 44% of women have contributed proportionally to Brazil's economy, and 36% of them have ventured into entrepreneurship. This underscores the escalating involvement of women in the Brazilian REGMPE, Brasil-BR, V.9, Nº1, p. 24-41, Jan./Abr.2024 www.revistas.editoraenterprising.net Página 26

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workforce, culminating in enhanced economic outcomes (Wruck, 2019). The proposition put forth by Dornelas (2016) suggests that female entrepreneurship not only provides avenues for job creation and income generation but also facilitates women's pursuit of personal and professional fulfillment in fields aligned with their passions. Despite educational advancements, a gendered wage gap persists, often correlated with occupational roles (Wruck, 2019). Substantiating this, data from the study "*Diferença do rendimento do trabalho de mulheres e homens nos grupos ocupacionais - Pnad Contínua 2018*" released by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) on March 8, 2019, corroborates the observed wage inequities (Oliveira, 2019).

Beyond the economic considerations, the discourse surrounding female entrepreneurship extends beyond mere supplementary family income, encapsulating a profound societal transformation. This transformation not only redefines personal life expectations but also reshapes family dynamics and amplifies demands for public services, underscoring its multifaceted impact on societal structures (Gomes, 2009). While entrepreneurship inherently involves challenges, women, due to deeply ingrained historical gender constructs, encounter additional hurdles in their entrepreneurial pursuits (Alperstedt et al., 2014).

The examination of challenges encountered by women in entrepreneurship, as elucidated by Machado (2000), encompasses a spectrum of impediments. Primary among these are the pervasive lack of support from friends, family, and financial institutions reluctant to extend loans to female entrepreneurs (Machado, 2000). Furthermore, the credibility deficit faced by women entrepreneurs with clients and suppliers stands as a formidable challenge (Machado, 2000).

Addressing the intricate interplay between work and family, Ferraz (2021) underscores the historical evolution of women's roles, transitioning from traditional roles as mothers and wives to embracing multifaceted responsibilities upon entering the workforce. The ensuing juggling of responsibilities often leads to emotional imbalance and exhaustion, resulting in significant distress for women. Ferraz (2021) further emphasizes that woman seeking to reconcile the ideal worker role with that of the perfect mother encounter exhaustion and marital difficulties.

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The challenges intensify during the initiation of entrepreneurial endeavors, characterized by limited access to credit in financial institutions and the intricate task of establishing favorable relations between women entrepreneurs and venture capital funds (Ferraz, 2021). Simultaneously, these entrepreneurs grapple with the perpetual need to balance domestic responsibilities with their business activities, a dynamic that can lead to gradual burnout over time (Santos, 2016). Collaborative engagement from family and friends emerges as a pivotal solution to these challenges, assisting in credit acquisition and mitigating the burdens of multitasking (Bonfim et al., 2015).

Gender stereotypes, as discussed by Santos (2016), introduce complexities into women's integration into the workforce, perpetuated by societal and historical constructions that reinforce their subjugation in sexual, economic, and political terms. Importantly, biological differences between genders cannot rationalize existing inequalities or determine women's presence or absence in leadership roles. Ferraz (2021) contends that gender stereotypes, rooted in binary oppositions, contribute to gender bias. For instance, women are often perceived as being primarily influenced by emotions and intuitions, while men are associated with heightened aggression and rationality. This ideological framework may induce resistance among workers and cultivate a culture reinforcing divisions between female and male leaders.

In the context of gender inequality, particularly concerning the distribution of responsibilities and promotional opportunities, Ferraz (2021) highlights the prevalence of discriminatory biases in recruitment processes. In the Brazilian context, discrimination limiting professional advancement and access to leadership positions engenders dissatisfaction, insecurity, and distress among women, perceived as biased treatment towards those outside specific demographic groups (Ferraz, 2021).

An additional challenge arises from the crucial role of networking, where women encounter disparities. While some studies suggest that women lack informal networks, leaving them distanced from top-tier positions (Marshal, 2001), others argue that, irrespective of position or hierarchy, women are excluded from social circles (Scott, 1986; Scott, 2005). Moreover, research indicates that even when participating in social interactions and networking, women still derive fewer benefits compared to men (Ibarra, 1992).

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The multifaceted challenges faced by women in entrepreneurship necessitate a comprehensive understanding to foster an environment that is not only inclusive but also supportive of women's entrepreneurial endeavors. As we delve into the discussion of these challenges, the subsequent exploration will direct our attention to the role of the startup ecosystem in mitigating these obstacles and facilitating the advancement of female entrepreneurs.

2.2. FEMALE STARTUP ECOSYSTEM

The intertwined concepts of entrepreneurship and startups have significantly reshaped the business landscape in recent decades (Dionello, 2020). Startups, characterized by their potential for rapid growth, scalability, and a focus on innovative and technological solutions, play a pivotal role in fostering economic development and driving job creation (Cunha Filho et al, 2018; Alvez, 2013). Understanding the essential skills for effective participation in this dynamic market is crucial for both the encouragement of entrepreneurship and the development of entrepreneurs (Dionello, 2020).

The dynamism of startup operations encompasses a myriad of interconnected elements, constituting a globally recognized phenomenon that contributes to socioeconomic and technological development (Torres et al., 2016). Within the Startup Ecosystem, described as a conducive environment for collaborative interaction among diverse stakeholders to promote startup development (Sena, 2017), the interplay of actors like startups, investors, incubators, accelerators, universities, governments, and communities is critical for creating a supportive environment facilitating the growth and development of these enterprises (Torres et al., 2016).

Expanding this discussion to the realm of the Female Startup Ecosystem, it pertains to the factors, actors, and resources influencing female entrepreneurship within the startup context. This ecosystem comprises elements such as acceleration programs, support networks, investments, materials, and public policies directed towards women entrepreneurs (Arbex, 2021). However, it is essential to recognize that, similar to entrepreneurship in its broader sense, which has predominantly been shaped by male-centric perspectives, female entrepreneurship - where women take the lead in startups - is also permeated by socio-historical relations within the country (Silva et al., 2022).

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Overcoming historical challenges, contemporary women navigate an environment more open, inclusive, and secure, particularly in the expansive field of communication technology. This has led to widespread opportunities for female entrepreneurship within the startup sector, with women emerging as formidable contenders alongside their male counterparts (Akhila Pai, 2018). Demartini's observations (2018) indicate that startups led by women are comparable to their male-led counterparts in terms of size, profitability, efficiency, and leadership.

However, despite progress, women's development and empowerment in prominent entrepreneurial ecosystems remain constrained, both in more developed and in emerging countries, with their representation in startups never surpassing 18% of the population (Demartini, 2018). The association of technology with the masculine domain, as noted by Souza (2017), potentially contributes to the detachment and exclusion of women from this scenario. The historical transition of gender roles in computing adds complexity to this phenomenon, revealing that while contemporary startups may seem male-dominated, history demonstrates a period where women played a central role in technological development.

Therefore, understanding the intricacies of the startup ecosystem, especially within the context of female entrepreneurship, is paramount for addressing the challenges faced by women in this dynamic landscape. Acknowledging historical contexts, fostering inclusivity, and creating supportive structures are essential steps in ensuring equitable participation and empowering women to navigate and thrive within the startup ecosystem.

3. METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES

In this study, a qualitative approach was adopted, aligning with the framework proposed by Prodanov and Freitas (2013). The collected data were descriptive, incorporating a cross-sectional analysis (Malhotra, 2012), with a focus on the process and analysis aiming to unearth a comprehensive set of insights into the context of female entrepreneurship within the startup ecosystem, along with the associated challenges.

The exploration delved into the perspectives of women entrepreneurs regarding external opinions about them and how these perceptions affects the growth of their ventures.

Notably, these perceptions included skepticism about the capabilities of women

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entrepreneurs, with some individuals believing that these women should confine themselves to decorative roles or adhere to traditional responsibilities of homemaking and childcare, or pursue "normal" jobs (Sobral, 2019). Other considerations involved the beliefs of these women about what their customers and suppliers think of them as female entrepreneurs.

For participant selection, a snowball sampling technique was employed. The study initially identified women entrepreneurs in leadership roles within technology startups (Lopes, 2019). The initial contacts were facilitated through Sebrae, with the participants themselves assisting in extending the network for interviews. This method allowed for a more organic expansion of the participant pool, as existing participants referred the researchers to other potentially suitable candidates within the targeted context.

The study relied on data obtained through a survey conducted with women entrepreneurs who chose to establish startups. This survey involved semi-structured interviews, through which the most pertinent themes regarding their work were analyzed and assessed. The semi-structured interview approach was chosen, consisting of direct questions that facilitate the classification of responses, aiding in social studies (Severino, 2007). The questions aimed to understand the motivations behind creating these enterprises (Lopes, 2019) and selecting startups as their field of operation (Lopes, 2019). The set of open-ended questions in this interview was categorized into three themes: (1) Motivation, (2) Obstacles, and (3) Startups.

The treatment of open-ended questions followed the guidelines proposed by Bardin (1997) and Vergara (2005), involving the construction of categories after material selection, reading, preliminary pairing, and coding (Wruck, 2019). The data collection period commenced on October 18, 2023, and concluded on November 15, 2023.

Fifteen interviews were conducted with women entrepreneurs who founded startups, aiming to comprehend their journeys, motivations for entrepreneurship, and the challenges they encountered, among other aspects. Subsequently, the collected data were organized separately, associating each piece with the corresponding research participants. The examination of the collected material involved the application of concepts and theories from the authors that informed the interview script, enabling a comparative analysis of theory and obtained data.

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The culmination of the research involved a meticulous analysis of the gathered data, incorporating the principles of content analysis as advocated by Bardin (1997). Following Bardin's content analysis framework, the process began with a careful selection of pertinent material. Subsequently, an in-depth reading and preliminary pairing of data were conducted, facilitating the identification of recurring motifs. These recurrent elements were then systematically coded, allowing for the categorization of responses into meaningful clusters aligned with the predefined themes of Motivation, Obstacles, and Startups.

As highlighted by Bardin (1997), this content analysis approach serves to uncover latent meanings within textual data, providing a structured and rigorous methodology for interpreting qualitative information. By applying the theoretical concepts that initially shaped the interview script, this analysis aimed to bridge the theoretical framework with the rich insights gleaned from the participants' narratives. Through this comprehensive approach, the study sought to contribute nuanced perspectives on the motivations, challenges, and experiences of women entrepreneurs within the dynamic landscape of startup ecosystems.

4. RESEARCH RESULTS

In this section, we present the collected data and the analyses conducted, beginning with an exploration of the participants' motivations. Subsequently, we delve into the analysis of respondents' profiles, followed by the description, analysis, and comparison of the collected data.

When observing at motivations to undertake, women opt to initiate their own ventures for a variety of reasons. According to the interviewees, the pursuit of financial independence and autonomy stands out as a prevailing factor. The idea of breaking away from traditional roles, such as the outdated concept of women solely responsible for the household, propels some to venture into entrepreneurship to attain their independence. Furthermore, negative experiences in marriages, such as abusive relationships and the persistence of patriarchal structures, drive many women to seek freedom and control over their lives, finding in self-owned businesses a means to achieve recognition and professional fulfillment.

Dornelas (2016) asserts that female entrepreneurship provides an opportunity to generate employment and income, enabling women to work in fields they are passionate

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about, seeking **personal and professional fulfillment**. Most interviewees emphasize the time dedicated to daily work and autonomy as motivating factors. This aspect is particularly significant for married women or those with children, highlighting the importance of autonomy, as explicitly expressed in this statement: "*I decided that I wanted to have time to take care of my daughter, stay at home, I wanted to be able to be a very present mother, so what came to mind was starting to think about something I could do to work and take care of her at the same time. It was thinking about this that I started my own business (P06, 34 years)*" and also, "*I started my own business to have more time with my children and leave a better future for them (P03, 28 years)*".

Another highly justifiable reason mentioned by the participants is the **pursuit of autonomy**, being in charge of their own choices and not depending on others. Not only in contemporary times but also in the past, the conception of a woman being responsible for the home was deeply rooted. However, in some situations, this transformed into a nightmare for women, especially in the face of abusive and aggressive husbands who still adhere to the patriarchal idea, where the man holds absolute control.

These circumstances lead women to leave such marriages and embark on entrepreneurial endeavors to **achieve financial independence and freedom**. The majority of the interviewees highlighted that **professional routine and repetitive tasks** were significant reasons, as articulated in the statement, "*After working 15 years at Banco do Brasil, there came a moment when I looked at my job, at what I was doing (...) I decided that it was no longer my place, it no longer made sense to me, so I decided to leave the bank. (...) I knew I had a lot of knowledge and determination and yes, I could start my own business (P 7, 56 years)*".

Women in entrepreneurship face some challenges. Women encounter a myriad of challenges when embarking on the journey of establishing their own businesses. **Financial barriers** often manifest as initial obstacles, with limited access to funding and resources being a common reality.

In the research, a majority of the interviewed women, whether married or not, and many of them **responsible for managing a household**, indicated that this responsibility becomes a significant challenge for women. In numerous cases, this burden even leads to

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project abandonment, as evidenced by this testimony: *"Certainly, raising children and taking care of the home complicates the process, it limits your time, physical, mental, and emotional energy (...). Understanding is necessary from the people involved in the business, in this case, partners, and also from those who are with you (P 11, 40 years)"*.

The **financial aspect** stands out as a preeminent challenge for women seeking to establish their own businesses. Overcoming this financial gap requires continuous efforts to promote equal opportunities and ensure that women have equitable access to the means necessary to turn their visions into successful businesses. Regarding the financial challenge, we can clearly observe in this statement: *"The biggest challenge initially was to secure some type of funding (whether private or public) to go through the research and development period of the product and company (P 12, 37 years)"*.

Upon entering entrepreneurship, women often face a **persistent lack of credibility** and gender bias. As evident in the participant's statement, *"The biggest challenge I faced as a woman in the startup world was a lack of credibility. Since my partner is a man, every time the product was presented to a sponsor, they addressed him when, in reality, everything was done by me, I was the leader (P 1, 26 years)"*.

Within the realm of startups, as highlighted by Souza (2017), the prevalent association of technology with the **male domain** can lead to a significant alienation, potentially resulting in the exclusion of women from this landscape. The increased inclusion of women in the startup ecosystem not only dismantles barriers but also enhances the adaptability and growth capacity of these organizations in an ever-evolving business world.

Many participants conveyed that the technology "world" is dominated by men and is perceived as a predominantly male environment. According to Demartini (2018), startups led by women are on par with their male counterparts in terms of size, profitability, efficiency, and leadership. They share insights into the challenges faced by women in the technological and innovative realm, as articulated in the following statement: *"My greatest difficulty was being included as someone important in the team. (...) That's where I had to assert myself, I had to demonstrate my competence and capability in that area (P 2, 28 years)"*. Another participant echoes the same sentiment by sharing her experience, stating,

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“Entering the startup scene as a woman is a high step, and even when included, you face situations and scenarios that you wouldn't if you were of another gender (P 8, 40 years)”.

Amidst the dynamic startup landscape, women entrepreneurs confront a triad of challenges permeating their journeys. The dichotomy between professional and personal life, known as the double burden, imposes additional demands, requiring delicate balance. The lack of credibility often stems from these ingrained biases, hindering access to vital resources. In this challenging context, female startup founders demonstrate remarkable resilience, underscoring the urgency for cultural and structural changes to foster a more inclusive and equitable entrepreneurial ecosystem.

5. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Discussing the challenges faced by women entrepreneurs holds paramount importance in reshaping perceptions of their efforts and, subsequently, devising strategies to facilitate their journey in this domain. This research underscores the pivotal role played by women startup founders, contributing significantly to entrepreneurial dynamics and fostering diversity and innovation in the business landscape.

Their presence not only dismantles gender barriers but also enriches the entrepreneurial ecosystem with unique perspectives and innovative approaches. As these women confront specific challenges and overcome obstacles, they serve as inspiring figures, encouraging others to follow suit, thereby instigating cultural change and promoting gender equity in entrepreneurship. Furthermore, the active participation of women in creating and leading startups propels economic and social development, cultivating a more inclusive and dynamic environment for business progress.

Precision in defining interviewee profiles proved crucial, particularly as the questions addressed during interviews were tailored to married participants with children, which may not have been relevant for single, divorced, or younger childless participants. Identifying and analyzing the obstacles women face when entering the entrepreneurial realm was essential. Investigating the adversities, constraints, and motivations behind initiating and sustaining their ventures was a pivotal point. Subsequently, immersed in the entrepreneurial context, it became imperative to delve into the motivation behind starting a startup and justify this decision to explore associated challenges.

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Regarding development constraints, the research encountered difficulties in locating participants for interviews. Initially confined to the State of Paraná, the search expanded to other states in the Southern region of Brazil due to challenges in identifying women. Additionally, the issue of time availability among entrepreneurs for interviews emerged, given their demanding schedules. The research highlighted that women engaged in projects or innovative companies find it easier to navigate the challenges along this path. Participation in groups, even if through social networks, also functions as a support network for these women.

Considering the identified results and limitations, a novel research approach could focus on establishing support networks for women entrepreneurs facing specific challenges, such as mothers or pregnant women without familial support. It would be relevant to explore the significance and assistance provided by these support networks. Furthermore, the difficulties encountered by women entrepreneurs in obtaining financial support and sponsors could be subject to analysis. Subsequent research could evaluate these aspects, using the objectives and analyses uncovered in the present study as a foundation.

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Empreendedoras em startups de tecnologia: desafios, triunfos e o chamado por mudança no cenário brasileiro

RESUMO

O empreendedorismo, uma pedra angular do progresso econômico, se desdobra como uma narrativa transformadora para mulheres que desafiam normas sociais e estabelecem startups inovadoras. A marginalização sistêmica e os preconceitos de gênero persistem, impulsionando a necessidade de uma exploração detalhada. Este estudo tem como objetivo conduzir um exame exploratório de empreendedoras na região sul do Brasil, focando nos desafios enfrentados durante o início e a sustentação de startups, juntamente com as estratégias empregadas para a viabilidade. Baseados em teorias de Dornelas, Souza e outros, abordamos a lacuna de gênero no empreendedorismo, enfatizando o impacto das estruturas sociais, normas culturais e preconceitos históricos nas experiências empreendedoras das mulheres. Utilizando métodos qualitativos, foram realizadas entrevistas semiestruturadas com 15 empreendedoras, focando em motivações, obstáculos e experiências em startups. A amostragem em bola de neve facilitou a seleção dos participantes, com o SEBRAE e as redes de participantes auxiliando no recrutamento. Os resultados revelam diversas motivações para o empreendedorismo, incluindo independência financeira, autonomia e busca pelo equilíbrio entre trabalho e vida pessoal. Barreiras financeiras, preconceitos de gênero e déficits de credibilidade emergem como desafios significativos. O ecossistema de startups, apesar de oferecer oportunidades, amplifica disparidades de gênero. As empreendedoras em startups navegam por um triângulo de desafios - equilibrando vida pessoal e profissional, superando preconceitos e estabelecendo credibilidade. Sua resiliência destaca a necessidade de mudanças culturais e estruturais para cultivar um ecossistema empreendedor inclusivo e equitativo. A pesquisa sugere futuros estudos focados em redes de apoio e restrições financeiras enfrentadas por empreendedoras, construindo sobre as percepções fornecidas aqui.

Palavras-chave: Empreendedorismo Feminino; Desafios de Startups; Diferenças de Gênero.

Les entrepreneuses dans les startups technologiques : défis, succès et appel au changement dans le paysage brésilien

RÉSUMÉ

L'entrepreneuriat, pierre angulaire du progrès économique, se déploie comme un récit transformateur pour les femmes défiant les normes sociétales et établissant des startups innovantes. La marginalisation systémique et les préjugés de genre persistent, ce qui nécessite une exploration nuancée. Cette étude vise à mener un examen exploratoire des entrepreneuses dans la région sud du Brésil, en se concentrant sur les défis rencontrés lors de l'initiation et du maintien des startups, ainsi que sur les stratégies employées pour la viabilité. Fondée sur les théories de Dornelas, Souza et d'autres, nous abordons l'écart entre les sexes dans l'entrepreneuriat, en mettant l'accent sur l'impact des structures sociétales, des normes culturelles et des préjugés historiques sur les expériences entrepreneuriales des femmes. En utilisant des méthodes qualitatives, des entretiens semi-structurés avec 15

Women entrepreneurs in tech startups: challenges, triumphs, and the call for change in Brazil's landscape

entrepreneuses ont été menés, en mettant l'accent sur les motivations, les obstacles et les expériences des startups. L'échantillonnage par boule de neige a facilité la sélection des participants, avec le SEBRAE et les réseaux de participants aidant au recrutement. Les résultats révèlent diverses motivations pour l'entrepreneuriat, notamment l'indépendance financière, l'autonomie et la recherche d'un équilibre entre vie professionnelle et vie privée. Les obstacles financiers, les préjugés de genre et les déficits de crédibilité émergent comme des défis importants. L'écosystème des startups, tout en offrant des opportunités, amplifie les disparités entre les sexes. Les entrepreneuses dans les startups naviguent à travers un triade de défis : concilier vie personnelle et professionnelle, surmonter les préjugés et établir leur crédibilité. Leur résilience souligne la nécessité de changements culturels et structurels pour cultiver un écosystème entrepreneurial inclusif et équitable. La recherche suggère des études futures axées sur les réseaux de soutien et les contraintes financières auxquelles sont confrontées les entrepreneuses, en s'appuyant sur les idées fournies ici.

Mots-clés: Entrepreneuriat féminin ; Défis des startups ; Écart entre les sexes.