

Review of: "A Survey Study on Women Entrepreneurship in the BTR Area of Assam"

Allard C.R. van Riel¹

¹ Hasselt University

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

After reading the study, I am left wondering what exactly is the (theoretical, practical, societal) relevance and the added value of this study? The introduction remains silent regarding research questions. Some of the research objectives also seem very difficult to achieve based on a simple survey of the entrepreneurs. To get the most out of the study and all the data collected, some interesting research questions must be formulated. Depending on the ultimate motives of the study, by using some good research questions the data could provide insights about the localization of problems and challenges (and possibly even their solutions), their coherence, either geographically or in terms of segments in the population, their relative importance, etc. Now we are just presented with a large amount of descriptive factual information.

The literature review is descriptive, and doesn't build any theoretical framework, or hypotheses. Although literature is used and a reference list is provided, the author doesn't clearly indicate which insight or facts come from which article or which source. This needs substantial improvement, if the insights presented in the literature review are to be taken seriously. It should also be indicated clearly what the purpose of the literature review is. Is it to build a conceptual framework for the case study, to develop hypotheses that can then be tested in the case study, etc., or does it have another purpose?

The data set is enormous (maybe disproportionally large, as I do not think that so much data was needed to arrive at the current conclusions), but the methodology and the subsequent analysis are very basic. In the first place, it is a great pity that a survey that has been sent to 5000 individuals only comprises highly standardized descriptive questions. This approach doesn't allow to really understand how the facilitators or barriers encountered by the respondents are experienced, and only provides some pre-set options. Even so, the data contains much more information than is currently presented, and information could be obtained about many issues, depending on the interests of the researcher. Now the study is highly descriptive, and not very investigative.

The recommendations do not always seem to follow from this study. In fact, most recommendations I read in this study have already been formulated in many other studies, so the relevance of doing this 'localized' study is not very clear.

The study, due to a lack of good research questions, and lacking embeddedness in a theoretical framework, currently does not have a theoretical contribution to make. This is a missed chance.