

# THE IMPACT OF FAMILY SUPPORT ON WOMEN ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE IN SMES: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF SOCIAL CAPITAL



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## ABSTRACT

*The role of family support in women's entrepreneurial performance in Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) is analyzed from a sociological point of view, and the role of social capital as a mediator is explored. This study is based on Social Capital Theory and the Family Embeddedness Perspective. It examines how the emotional, financial, informational, and practical support provided by family members affects entrepreneurial outcomes, both directly and indirectly through social capital. The design of the cross-sectional survey used a quantitative approach. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data from 390 women entrepreneurs engaged in SMEs. The constructs family support, social capital, and entrepreneurial performance were assessed using scales commonly employed in previous research. To evaluate the measurement and structural models and test the proposed hypotheses, Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was chosen. The measurement model had good reliabilities and validities because all indicator loadings were above 0.70, the composite reliability values were above 0.931, and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) ranged from 0.729 to 0.827. The results of the structural model showed that family support does not have any significant direct effect on entrepreneurial performance. Still, it does have a significant positive effect on social capital ( $\beta = 0.159, p = 0.005$ ). In addition, social capital has no significant impact on entrepreneurs' performance ( $\beta = -0.082, p = 0.178$ ). The mediation analysis also showed no mediation effect of family support on entrepreneurial performance ( $\beta = -0.013, p = 0.262$ ). The results indicate that family support is important for the development of social capital among women entrepreneurs, but neither family support nor social capital directly improves entrepreneurs' performance. This is particularly significant because this study brings together family support and social capital, a sociological approach to women's entrepreneurship. The findings call for policies and programs to increase networking, mentoring, skills training and business resources to improve the performance and sustainability of women's SMEs.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Women entrepreneurship is an emerging and significant component of SME ecosystems around the world, and its impact can be seen on employment, income diversification, and social development. In many emerging and developing economies, family context and sociocultural values influence women's access to resources, connections, and entrepreneurial opportunities. A sociological perspective emphasizes the importance of family support as a key constraining resource that could buffer constraints and facilitate staying engaged in or sustaining venture formation and growth. In this context, social capital networks, trust, and norms that facilitate resource exchange are crucial factors in entrepreneurial outcomes, especially among women who can be more constrained in their access to formal markets and formal finance (Nezhad, 2024; Meybodi et al., 2023). The proposed study falls at the intersection of the three concepts of family influence, social capital and SME performance and centres on the impact of family support on women's entrepreneurial performance in SMEs and the mediating role of social capital. The relevance of this inquiry is strengthened by studies across various contexts that show that family support and social capital are associated with higher entrepreneurial intentions and outcomes among women. However, the relationship differs across cultures and institutional environments (Bilal et al., 2022).

A significant body of research has examined the role of family support in women's entrepreneurship, and both emotional and instrumental support are frequently associated with the initiation of a venture, its persistence, and overall

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performance. Findings from studies worldwide demonstrate that family support and resources can reduce obstacles (such as access to finance, mobility, and time constraints) and increase confidence and persistence in entrepreneurship among business owners (Saleem et al., 2024; Yasmeen et al., 2024). Social capital theory also offers a comprehensive understanding of the role of social networks, trust and relational assets in facilitating access to information, resources, and opportunities that are essential for the performance of SMEs, especially for women, who are constrained by gender and cultural norms (Civera & Meoli, 2023; Nezhad, 2024). The linkages between family support, business attributes, and performance further indicate that social capital can mediate or moderate these relationships, depending on the sociocultural and institutional context (Raimi et al., 2023; Kawai et al., 2023).

However, some studies suggest nuances to consider in different contexts: family support and social networks can be a facilitator or a constraint for entrepreneurship, depending on gender norms and the division of household labour (Dagoudo et al., 2023; Reis et al., 2024). Furthermore, several studies suggest that the contribution of social capital to performance can be complex and depends on variables like self-efficacy, cultural capital, and work-family balance considerations, as noted by Christodoulou et al. (2024) and Sarihasan et al. (2023).

Although the literature on family support and social capital in women entrepreneurship is extensive, there is a significant gap in the research literature exploring the relationship between family support and women entrepreneurship performance in SMEs from a sociological perspective, with social capital as a mediating factor. Previous research has offered a partial synthesis of the mechanism by which family support can lead to better performance of SMEs in terms of social capital across different sociocultural settings. Also, previous studies have been inconclusive about whether social capital consistently positively affects entrepreneurial outcomes or has a conditional effect that depends on contextual factors such as culture, institutional norms, and policy settings (Saleem et al., 2024; Dagoudo et al., 2023). Moreover, the structural and qualitative aspects of social capital, such as bonding and bridging social capital, have not been studied extensively to understand their differential influences on the performance of businesses by women entrepreneurs. Hence, this study aims to fill these gaps by investigating the mediating effect of social capital on the relationship between family support and women's entrepreneurial performance in SMEs from a sociological perspective.

Identified research gaps guide this study. It aims to investigate the effect of family support on women's entrepreneurial performance in SMEs, using a sociological approach to family embeddedness and cultural context. In particular, it aims to explore how social capital as a mediator between family support and women's entrepreneurial performance, specifically in the form of 'bonding' and 'bridging' social capital, can help explain this relationship. The study also seeks to evaluate the impact of contextual factors, such as cultural norms, urban–rural contexts, and institutional support mechanisms, on the strength and significance of these relationships. Additionally, it aims to make a theoretical contribution by combining a sociological framework of family influence with Social Capital Theory to understand better the factors influencing women-led SMEs. Lastly, the study aims to provide practical, policy-relevant outcomes by identifying strategies to improve women's entrepreneurship success through family-inclusive policy interventions, social capital development programs, and targeted interventions for SMEs.

This study is guided by identified research gaps, with the aim of investigating the effect of family support on women's entrepreneurial performance in SMEs, using a sociological approach to family embeddedness and cultural context. In particular, it aims to explore how social capital as a mediator between family support and women's entrepreneurial performance, specifically in the form of 'bonding' and 'bridging' social capital, can help explain this relationship. The study also seeks to evaluate the impact of contextual factors, such as cultural norms, urban–rural contexts, and institutional support mechanisms, on the strength and significance of these relationships. Lastly, the study aims to provide practical, policy-relevant outcomes by identifying strategies to improve women's entrepreneurship success in the context of family-inclusive policy interventions, social capital development programs, and targeted interventions for SMEs.

This paper consists of seven sections. Section 1 (Introduction) provides an overview of the background and the relevance of the study. In Section 2 (Literature Review and Hypotheses Development), family support and social capital are discussed in the context of the study's sociological foundation in SMEs. In Section 3 (Research Methodology), the research design, sampling process, data collection process, measurement of key constructs and the analytical process of structural equation modelling (SEM) are highlighted. The results of descriptive statistics, assessment of measurement instruments, validity and reliability tests, and results of hypothesis testing are presented in Section 4 (Data Analysis, Results and Findings), along with the results of the mediating effect. The empirical findings have been analyzed within the framework of the theory and previous research presented in Section 5 (Discussion). In Section 6 (Implications, Limitations, and Future Research Directions), the theoretical, practical, and policy implications of the findings are explored, the limitations of the study are acknowledged, and directions for future research are proposed. Section 7 (Conclusion) presents the main findings, highlighting the role of family support and social capital in improving women's entrepreneurial performance in SMEs.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The theoretical basis of this study is primarily Social Capital Theory, the Family Embeddedness Perspective, and the Sociological Theory of Entrepreneurship, which emphasize the importance of social capital in family support for women's entrepreneurial performance in SMEs through social relationships, trust, and social networks.

Social Capital Theory is the main underlying theory of this study, originally introduced by Pierre Bourdieu (1986), later developed by Coleman (1988), and further developed by Robert Putnam (1993). Social capital is the resources that are found in social relationships, networks, trust, and norms that enable coordination, cooperation, and opportunities. Bourdieu (1986) defined social capital as "accumulated social networks with which a person can benefit socially and economically over time. Coleman (1988) noted that norms, obligations, and trust in relationships can enhance access to resources and reduce transaction costs. Social capital plays a special role in women entrepreneurship because women tend to rely on social

networks to address structural issues such as access to finance, access to mobility, lack of institutional support, and gender discrimination (Brush et al., 2009). Family support is a primary and strong source of social capital, encompassing emotional encouragement, financial support, information exchange, and social legitimacy. Social capital is a mediator between family support and entrepreneurial outcomes in SMEs, from this lens (Aldrich & Cliff, 2003; Neneh, 2017). Moreover, social capital can be divided into two types: bonding social capital and bridging social capital. Bonding social capital arises from a close network of interpersonal bonds, such as those within families and among relatives; bridging social capital arises from entrepreneurs' links with external actors, institutions, customers, and wider business communities (Putnam, 1993). For the sustainability and growth of women-led SMEs, both dimensions are essential.

Another important theoretical foundation for this study is the Family Embeddedness Perspective (FEP) of Aldrich and Cliff (2003). This view is that entrepreneurial activities are very much part of family dynamics, relationships, and expectations. The family's influence on entrepreneurship is not simple: family values and obligations, as well as expectations for family roles and relational support, all play a part. Family embeddedness is especially salient for women entrepreneurs, as family members may influence their access to capital, emotional stability, child care, mentorship, and legitimacy in decision-making. Family support is one factor that affects women's participation in entrepreneurship and the growth of SME activities in many developing and patriarchal societies (Welsh et al., 2021). High family embeddedness has been shown to foster women's risk-taking behaviour and innovation, and to sustain business continuity, whereas low family embeddedness can restrict business performance. Therefore, this theory explains the direct influence of family support as an antecedent of entrepreneurial development, as well as its indirect influence on the formation of social capital and on relational influences.

The use of the Sociological Theory of Entrepreneurship to support the study is based on the idea that entrepreneurship is a socially embedded process shaped by social structures, cultural norms, institutions, and interpersonal interaction (Weber, 1930; Granovetter, 1985). This sociological view differs from economic theories, which do not regard social relationships and contextual environments as affecting entrepreneurial success. Women entrepreneurs are constantly faced with social constraints that shape their business opportunities, including responsibilities, gender norms, and community acceptance of women. Social norms can both constrain and enable entrepreneurship. Family support is then institutionalized through sociological analysis, thereby reinforcing women entrepreneurs' confidence, legitimacy, and networking capabilities. Social capital is thus an important factor in the relationship between family dynamics and SME performance. Granovetter (1985) highlighted the concept of embeddedness, defined as the social connections that surround economic activity. Under this concept, women's entrepreneurial performance could be explained by financial management and managerial abilities, as well as by family-based relational support and network structures.

Family support has been studied through various perspectives. In all cases, strong family support has been associated with better performance of women entrepreneurs in SMEs, in terms of persistence, resources, and business decision-making, which consequently leads to improved SME performance, growth and resilience (Zhou et al., 2023). Family support is both practical and emotional, providing time, labour, and financial resources, as well as psychosocial support that mitigates stress and enables risk-taking, strategic investments, and legitimacy in male-dominated markets (Widyastuti et al., 2023). Empirical research across different settings has revealed that women entrepreneurs with active family networks exhibit a higher innovation propensity, more effective resource mobilization, and greater ability to maintain their firm's performance under competitive pressures than those with weaker family networks (Diamantidis et al., 2024). However, there is a subtle heterogeneity within these, as cultural norms, sectoral needs, and the size and administration of the SME can all shape the extent and nature of family influence, sometimes resulting in diminishing returns as family responsibilities become more of an impediment to strategic development or become a source of increased role strain for women (Waples & Reed, 2023). Furthermore, the literature indicates that enhanced family support can, in turn, boost SME performance by increasing household stability and social legitimacy, thereby enhancing the family support entrepreneurs receive (Harada et al., 2023). All of these findings point to a model that posits family support as a key determinant of the performance of women entrepreneurs in SMEs through its pathways of increasing women's human and social capital, decreasing the opportunity costs, and facilitating more ambitious growth paths, with contextual contingencies that explain the amount and type of impact (Zhou et al., 2023).

Family support and social capital in SMEs are mediated by the impact of family ties on family relational resources, which facilitate access to finance, information, and networks, thereby enhancing firm performance and resilience across settings. In Latin America and elsewhere, research indicates that family businesses are more likely to turn to informal sources, such as family, friends and local business networks, for seed capital, guidance and market information when formal financing options are limited or expensive (Adame & García, 2024). This family social capital (the norms of trust, reciprocity, and governance found in family relations and close networks) enables resource mobilisation and partnership-building with external actors, boosting internationalisation and collaboration with supply chain actors and credit under imperfect financial markets (Guillen & Reyes, 2024). The advantages that can be obtained from these networks, however, can depend on the quality of governance in the family company; succession planning, governance structures, and professionalization of the management buffer the extent to which social capital can provide sustainable competitive advantage or sustain entrenchment and conflict in generations (Castro et al., 2023; Ávila et al., 2022). There is growing empirical evidence on how social capital influences the innovative capacities, market access, and crisis resilience of SMEs, and on the roles of external support sources and familial networks in this regard (García & Vite, 2024). Overall, family support and social capital cannot be considered as a unified construct, but rather as a set of resources that must be managed, linked with formal governance and extended to other institutional spheres to support the creation of financing opportunities and/or to foster growth in dynamic and global markets (Herrera-Sánchez et al., 2023; Ríos et al., 2022).

Social capital's connection to women's performance in SMEs has been investigated in various geographic contexts and has focused on its role as a relational resource that influences access to opportunities, information, and networks,

especially critical for women entrepreneurs. Several studies converge on the concept that social capital, which includes network and collaborative ties, would be important in mobilizing resources and improving market access that would improve entrepreneurial outcomes for women in SMEs. Studies on the performance of SMEs emphasise the critical importance of social capital in facilitating the mobilisation of networks for financing and market entry, thereby fostering growth and survival in competitive markets, particularly for women-led businesses (Tigre-Loja et al., 2024).

Empowering female entrepreneurs in SMEs to bridge the financial access gap often requires them to rely on social capital, which involves securing financial resources through networks of suppliers, advisors, mentors, and peers to enhance efficiency and innovation potential (Saldaña et al., 2024). This body of work also reports on a relationship between social and managerial competences and education and/or training that strengthens results; for example, literature focusing on the interaction among social capital, capital human and strategic planning indicates that women who build thick and quality network have a better ability to manage financing, technology adoption, and market diversification, thereby improving firm performance (Uribe et al., 2023; Cortés et al., 2024). However, in some contexts, the returns to social capital may be diminished without a supportive policy and/or financial environment, resulting in mixed or context-specific effects on performance (Bautista et al., 2024). The overall picture of the literature is favourable. Still, there is a need for more in-depth, comparative research across countries to identify the conditions and mechanisms under which women's roles in networks lead to their success as SME owners.

Social capital is considered an important factor in entrepreneurial success, particularly in the SME domain, where resources are limited. It comprises networks, trust, and relationships that provide access to information, finances, business, and markets. Family-centred environments are also important places where family members can access resources that help create women's social capital, including emotional support, financial resources, and social networks. Research shows that family support will boost entrepreneurial competence, expand women entrepreneurs' networks, and mobilize resources, thereby improving business performance (Wan et al., 2024; Dhakal et al., 2024).

Furthermore, the literature has confirmed the importance of social capital as a mediating variable in the relationship between family support and women entrepreneurs' performance. Women entrepreneurs enjoy stronger social networks and connections, which can facilitate access to credit, market information, strategic partnerships, and joint ventures, thereby improving innovation and business expansion (Malik et al., 2023; Nanyanzi et al., 2024). The Social Capital Theory and the Resource-Based View (RBV) approach suggest that social capital is an untapped intangible resource that can enhance competitive advantage and organizational performance (Expósito et al., 2023). Furthermore, family-induced social capital influences self-efficacy, empowerment and opportunity recognition, which also helps to achieve entrepreneurial success (Amjad & Danish, 2024). However, the functioning of social capital varies across contexts. Bonding social capital can be a good source of support, but can also restrict innovation and market access. Bridging social capital, however, can help establish broader relationship networks and more business opportunities (Li & Sanusi, 2025). The overall results showed that women entrepreneurs' performance is positively influenced by family support through social capital, suggesting that family support is a mediating factor that cannot be neglected for women entrepreneurs' success in SMEs.

Although the impact of family on women's entrepreneurship has been studied, research on family support and its effect on women entrepreneurs' performance through social capital in women-owned SMEs remains limited. Past research has consistently found positive relationships between family support and business outcomes such as business growth, wellbeing, and sustainability (Apriany et al., 2023; Feranita et al., 2024). Similarly, social capital has been found to positively affect access to information, resources, legitimacy, and business opportunities, which, in turn, leads to better entrepreneurial performance (Nahar et al., 2025). The results, however, have been piecemeal and specific to national settings and methodologies, and therefore have not yet been sufficiently theoretically integrated or empirically agreed upon. Specifically, there is very limited evidence on whether social capital acts as a mediator between family support and women's entrepreneurial performance, and on how social capital operates within a sociological framework that distinguishes between family-based (bonding) and external network-based (bridging and linking) social capital. Also, the contextual conditions, including cultural norms, institutional settings, governance, and sectoral differences, which can create variations in the effectiveness of social capital in fostering entrepreneurial success, have received little attention. Likewise, the literature is lacking in integrated models that incorporate both sociological conceptual understandings of trust, processes of identity formation, family embeddedness, and normative expectations along with quantitative mediation analysis. Thus, this study aimed to fill these gaps by proposing and empirically testing a sociologically grounded framework to explain how family support affects women's entrepreneurial performance in SMEs, with social capital as a mediating mechanism (Dutta et al., 2025; Hidzir et al., 2024).

The primary objective of this study was to examine the influence of family support on the entrepreneurial performance of women operating in Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and to assess the mediating role of social capital from a sociological perspective. Four hypotheses guide the review.

**H<sub>1</sub>:** Family support has a positive and significant effect on women's entrepreneurial performance in SMEs.

**H<sub>2</sub>:** Family support has a positive and significant effect on social capital among women entrepreneurs in SMEs.

**H<sub>3</sub>:** Social capital has a positive and significant effect on women's entrepreneurial performance in SMEs.

**H<sub>4</sub>:** Social capital positively mediates the relationship between family support and women's entrepreneurial performance in SMEs.

The conceptual framework suggests that family support, such as emotional support, monetary support, information support, and practical support, has a positive effect both directly and indirectly on women's entrepreneurial performance in small and medium enterprises. Family support contributes to social capital by building bonding, bridging, and linking ties, which in turn lead to access to resources, information, trust, legitimacy, and business opportunities. Social capital, in turn, enhances entrepreneurial performance by helping to mobilize resources, expand networks, and gain market access. The framework

also suggests that social capital comes between family support and entrepreneurial performance. Moreover, the strength of these relationships can be influenced by contextual factors such as cultural norms, institutional support, governance, and urban–rural settings.

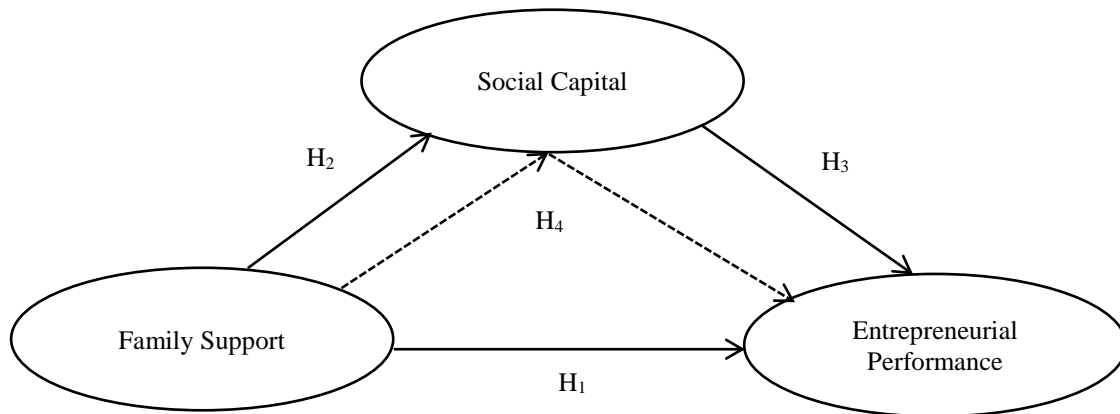


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study used a quantitative research approach, grounded in the positivist paradigm, to examine the effect of family support on women's entrepreneurial performance and the mediating role of social capital. In this case, a quantitative approach is more suitable because it allows systematic measurement of relationships among latent constructs and enables testing of hypotheses using data analysis and statistics (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The study is a cross-sectional survey, and data are collected from women entrepreneurs at a single point in time. The design is common in social capital and entrepreneurship research because it enables researchers to examine the causal relationships among variables efficiently and cost-effectively (Saunders et al., 2019).

The target group is women entrepreneurs running Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). The study centres on a subset of women who are owners, founders, or active managers of SMEs and have been in business for at least 1 year. The selection of women entrepreneurs is because they are a large and rapidly expanding part of the SME sector and face specific social, cultural, and family-related difficulties that can affect their performance as entrepreneurs (Brush et al., 2009). Women entrepreneurs in manufacturing, services, trade, and agriculture, both in urban and rural areas, may be part of the population.

The purposive sampling technique is used in the study, a non-probability sampling method in which women entrepreneurs are identified based on inclusion criteria. Purposive sampling is suitable when the researcher seeks to select respondents with specific characteristics and experiences relevant to the study's objectives (Etikan et al., 2016). Representativeness of the respondents may be achieved by selecting individuals from different SME sectors and regions. Purposive sampling is an effective sampling method for gaining access to a target population when a complete database of women entrepreneurs is unavailable.

The number of samples is determined by the need for Structural Equation Modelling (SEM). Hair et al. (2022) suggest that, for SEM analysis, at least 200 observations should be used, and more will yield more accurate estimates and greater model stability. Based on the proposed mediation model, which includes family support, social capital and entrepreneurial performance, the sample size of about 390 women entrepreneurs is considered adequate. This sample size is good because it is larger than the minimum required to have sufficient power to test mediation and to validate the model.

A structured questionnaire survey was conducted with women entrepreneurs to collect primary data. There are two parts to the questionnaire. The first part provides demographic and business data including age, education, marital status, business sector, years in operation and enterprise size. The second section assesses the key constructs of family support, social capital, and women's entrepreneurial performance using established scales based on previous studies. Multiple methods will be used for data collection, including online and face-to-face, to maximize response rates. Responses are voluntary, and participants are guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality (as per research ethical guidelines; Saunders et al., 2019).

Data collected are then analyzed using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) with SmartPLS. The reason SEM is appropriate is that it enables one to examine multiple latent constructs simultaneously and to conduct mediation tests (Hair et al., 2022). The data analysis process includes the following steps:

- **Data Screening and Cleaning:** Examination of missing values, outliers, and normality.
- **Descriptive Statistics:** Analysis of demographic characteristics and construct distributions.
- **Reliability Assessment:** Evaluation using Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR), with values above 0.70 considered acceptable (Hair et al., 2022).
- **Convergent Validity:** Assessment through factor loadings and Average Variance Extracted (AVE), where AVE values should exceed 0.50.
- **Discriminant Validity:** Evaluation using the Fornell–Larcker Criterion and Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT).

- **Structural Model Assessment:** Examination of path coefficients, coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ), and effect sizes ( $f^2$ ).
- **Mediation Analysis:** Bootstrapping procedures are employed to test the mediating effect of social capital on the relationship between family support and women's entrepreneurial performance (Preacher & Hayes, 2008).

The previously validated instruments are used to measure all study constructs and are rated on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. The independent variable is family support, which is the emotional, financial, informational and practical support received from family members to women entrepreneurs, measured with a 5-item scale adapted from Neneh (2017) and Welsh et al. (2021). Social capital is a mediating variable in this study and refers to the resources that lie within social relationships, networks, trust, and social connections that support entrepreneurial success. It is measured with a 5-item scale adapted from Nahapiet & Ghoshal (1998) and Putnam (1993). The outcome variable (dependent variable) is Women Entrepreneurial Performance (WEP), which is measured with a four-item scale adapted from Wiklund & Shepherd (2005) and Neneh (2017) and expressed as the perceived success, growth and overall performance of women-owned SMEs. The scales are broadly used and validated in entrepreneurship and social capital research and have a reliable and valid measurement model.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### Demographical Analysis

Table 1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Description	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Designation</b>		
Owner	122	31.3
Manager	140	35.9
Key Personnel	128	32.8
<b>Age</b>		
Below 20	76	19.5
21-30	64	16.4
31-40	88	22.6
41-50	74	19.0
Above 50	88	22.6
<b>Income</b>		
Less than 20000	88	22.6
20000-30000	66	16.9
30000-40000	76	19.5
40000-50000	98	25.1
More than 50000	62	15.9
<b>Business Experience</b>		
Up to 5	102	26.2
6-10	96	24.6
11-15	98	25.1
16-20	94	24.1

Source: Primary data

The demographic profile of the 390 respondents for the study is given in Table 01. When asked about designation, the largest group was managers (35.9%), followed by key personnel (32.8%) and owners (31.3%). This distribution suggests that the study included views from multiple roles within the organisation, including those involved in SME operations and decision-making.

The respondents were fairly evenly spread among the various age groups. The largest numbers were in the 31-40 age group (88 respondents, 22.6%) and the 51 years and above age group (88 respondents, 22.6%). 76 respondents (19.5%) were aged below 20 years, and 74 (19.0%) were aged between 41–50 years. The smallest percentage was from the 21–30-year age group, with 64 respondents (16.4%). The results indicate that women entrepreneurs across all age groups were included in the survey, providing a good representation of entrepreneurial experiences.

Based on monthly earnings, the biggest group among respondents had monthly income ranging from Tk. 40,000 to Tk. 50,000, representing 98 respondents (25.1%). This was followed by those who make less than Tk. 20,000 (22.6%), Tk. 30,000–40,000 (19.5%), Tk. 20,000–30,000 (16.9%), and more than Tk. 50,000 (15.9%). The findings show a moderate difference in income levels among the women entrepreneurs running the SMEs.

Regarding business experience, respondents were evenly distributed across the 4 categories. The largest group had up to 5 years of business experience, accounting for 102 respondents (26.2%), followed by those with 11–15 years (25.1%), 6–10 years (24.6%), and 16–20 years (24.1%). This 50-50 split shows that the study included women entrepreneurs at all levels, from new to experienced, which provided a reliable result.

### Assessment of Measurement Model

The measurement model was tested before testing the structural relationships among the constructs. The assessment was conducted based on the suggestions of Hair et al. (2022), which consist of indicator reliability, internal consistency reliability, convergent validity, discriminant validity, and model fit. In this study, the constructs were Family Support (FS), Social Capital (SC), and Women Entrepreneurial Performance (EP). The accuracy and reliability of the measures of the latent constructs were assessed in the measurement model evaluation before proceeding to hypothesis testing.

**Indicator Reliability**

The indicators' reliabilities were evaluated by examining the item loadings. To ensure sufficient reliability, indicator loadings should be greater than 0.70 (Hair et al., 2022); however, loadings of 0.40 to 0.70 can be retained if they are associated with good content validity and do not compromise composite reliability.

The reliability of the indicators was assessed by examining the outer loadings of the indicators of Entrepreneurial Performance (EP), Family Support (FS) and Social Capital (SC). Hair et al. (2022) suggest that indicator loadings should exceed 0.708 to demonstrate acceptable reliability and indicate that the construct accounts for more than 50% of the variance in its indicators. The results show that all indicators exceed the recommended levels, with loadings ranging from 0.808 to 0.922. The loadings of the three items in Entrepreneurial Performance (EP1: 0.897; EP2: 0.909; EP3: 0.922) indicate a high loading for the construct. Likewise, Family Support had high loadings ranging from 0.808 (FS5) to 0.916 (FS3), indicating that all five indicators equally capture the level of support family members provide to women entrepreneurs. The reliability of the indicators was also good for Social Capital, with loadings ranging from 0.833 (SC1) to 0.901 (SC4), indicating that the indicators effectively capture the social networks, relationships, and resources women entrepreneurs have. Thus, the outcomes demonstrate the reliability of the indicators and the correspondence of the measurement items with the latent constructs, which can then be used to assess the effect of family support on the performance of women entrepreneurs and the mediating effect of social capital in the sociological context of this study.

**Constructs' Reliability**

Internal consistency reliability was assessed by Cronbach's Alpha (CA), Composite Reliability (CR) and rho\_A. Previous studies have shown that values > 0.70 indicate satisfactory reliability, and values between 0.70 and 0.95 are acceptable for both exploratory and confirmatory research (Hair et al., 2022; Henseler et al., 2016).

Cronbach's alpha, Composite Reliability (rho\_a), Composite Reliability (rho\_c), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) were used to assess the construct's reliability. Results show that all constructs have high internal consistency reliability and are moderately correlated with their corresponding constructs, indicating acceptable convergent validity. Entrepreneurial Performance (EP) had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.897, rho\_a of 0.929, rho\_c of 0.935, and an AVE of 0.827, all excellent measures of reliability and a high proportion of variance explained by the indicators. Family Support (FS) showed very good reliability, with Cronbach's alpha, rho\_a, and rho\_c values of 0.910, 1.008, and 0.931, respectively, and an AVE of 0.729, suggesting satisfactory convergent validity. Similarly, for Social Capital (SC), Cronbach's alpha was 0.909, rho\_a was 0.926, rho\_c was 0.932, and the AVE was 0.732. As all reliability coefficients exceed the recommended level of 0.70 and all AVEs exceed 0.50, the results indicate that all constructs were measured reliably and that they effectively capture the concepts they measure. Thus, the measurement model demonstrates good construct reliability and convergent validity and can be used to analyze further the effect of family support on the performance of women entrepreneurs in SMEs, with social capital as a mediating variable.

**Convergent Validity**

We used the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) measure to evaluate convergent validity, which indicates the extent to which a measure's indicators share variance. An AVE greater than or equal to .50 is considered a strong level of convergence (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Based on the results, all constructs met the minimum AVE value of 0.50.

Table 2. Analysis of Convergent Validity

Constructs	Cronbach's Alpha	CR (rho_a)	CR (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
EP	0.897	0.929	0.935	0.827
FS	0.91	1.008	0.931	0.729
SC	0.909	0.926	0.932	0.732

Source: Output from primary data using SmartPLS

The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) was used to assess convergent validity—the proportion of variance in indicators explained by the construct. The results show that all constructs have AVEs greater than 0.50, indicating acceptable convergent validity. Specifically, Entrepreneurial Performance (EP) had an AVE of 0.827, indicating that the construct explains 82.7% of the variance in its indicators. Family Support (FS) and Social Capital (SC) had AVEs of 0.729 and 0.732, respectively, indicating that both constructs accounted for over 72% of the variance in their indicators. The high AVE values observed indicate that the indicators for each construct have substantial common variance and are suitable for measuring the intended latent variables. Thus, the results confirm the measurement model's convergent validity, indicating that their indicators well represent the constructs Entrepreneurial Performance, Family Support, and Social Capital and are appropriate for further structural model analysis.

**Discriminant Validity (HTMT)**

To investigate discriminant validity, the Heterotrait–Monotrait Ratio of Correlations (HTMT) was used, which is a more stringent test than the Fornell–Larcker criterion (Henseler et al., 2015). The value of HTMT should be less than 0.85 for conceptually distinct constructs and less than 0.90 in less stringent contexts.

To verify whether the constructs are empirically distinct from each other, the criterion of discriminant validity was tested by employing the Heterotrait–Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) criterion. The HTMT shows very low correlations among the

study constructs; for example, the correlation between Entrepreneurial Performance (EP) and Family Support (FS) is 0.059. Entrepreneurial Performance (EP) with Social Capital (SC) is 0.081; in addition, the correlation between Family Support (FS) and Social Capital (SC) is 0.141. All HTMT values are well below the threshold of 0.85, suggesting high discriminant validity for the constructs. The results indicate that Entrepreneurial Performance, Family Support, and Social Capital are conceptually distinct and share few common elements. Thus, the measurement model exhibits good discriminant validity, thereby substantiating that each construct represents a distinct part of the theoretical model and is appropriate for further analysis of the structural model.

### Model Fit

The overall model fit was evaluated by using the Standardised Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR), the Normed Fit Index (NFI), and the Root Mean Square Theta (RMS\_theta). Hair et al. (2022) suggest that an SRMR value of  $< 0.08$  is considered a good model fit. The analysis revealed that the SRMR was lower than the recommended value, indicating a good fit between the proposed model and the observed data.

Table 3. Model Fit

Items	Saturated Model	Estimated Model
SRMR	0.046	0.046
d_ULS	0.193	0.193
d_G	0.117	0.117
Chi-square	285.586	285.586
NFI	0.913	0.913

Source: Output from primary data using SmartPLS

Model fit was assessed using the Standardised Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR), the Normed Fit Index (NFI), d\_ULS, d\_G, and the Chi-square statistic. The results show that both models yielded the same fit value, implying consistency between the theoretical and estimated model structures. The SRMR value of 0.046 is lower than the recommended level of 0.08, thus suggesting an acceptable level of fit and minimal differences between the observed and the predicted correlation matrices. In addition, the NFI value of 0.913 exceeds the usual threshold of 0.90, indicating that the proposed model is a significant improvement over the null model. The values of d\_ULS (0.193) and d\_G (0.117) are fairly low, suggesting few differences between the empirical and model-implied covariance matrices. In addition, the Chi-square value of 285.586 is acceptable given the superior SRMR and NFI values. In general, the model fit indices indicate good fit for the measurement and structural models, supporting the suitability of the proposed model for examining the impact of family support on women's entrepreneurial performance in SMEs and the mediating role of social capital.

### Assessment of Structural Model

The measurement model was first tested, followed by the structural model, to assess whether the hypothesized relationships among Family Support (FS), Social Capital (SC), and Women Entrepreneurial Performance (WEP) were supported. According to the Hair et al. (2022) procedure, the structural model was evaluated by examining the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ), effect size ( $f^2$ ), Multicollinearity (VIF), path coefficients, and mediation effects using bootstrapping.

### Coefficient of Determination ( $R^2$ )

The coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) measures the proportion of variance in endogenous constructs explained by their predictors in the structural model (Hair et al., 2022). Cohen (1988) suggests that  $R^2$  values of 0.26, 0.13, and 0.02 are substantial, moderate, and weak, respectively.

Table 4. Result of  $R^2$  (Prediction Power)

Constructs	R-square	R-square adjusted
EP	0.006	0.001
SC	0.022	0.02

Source: Output from primary data using SmartPLS

To evaluate how well the structural model predicts the endogenous constructs, the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) was explored to examine the variance explained. The results show that the  $R^2$  and adjusted  $R^2$  of the Family Support and Social Capital model are 0.006 and 0.001, respectively, indicating that the Family Support and Social Capital concept explains only 0.6% of the variance in entrepreneurial performance. Likewise, Social Capital (SC) had an  $R^2$  of 0.022 and an adjusted  $R^2$  of 0.020, indicating that Family Support accounts for about 2.2% of the variance in Social Capital. The  $R^2$  values are far from the widely accepted threshold for weak explanatory power, suggesting a rather limited predictive ability of the model. The relationship between constructs remains statistically significant, but the results indicate that other factors, beyond family support and social capital, have a stronger influence on explaining the variation in the performance of women entrepreneurs

and in social capital in SMEs. The structural model has limited explanatory power, and other sociological, economic, and organizational factors also play important roles that should be taken into account in subsequent studies.

**Effect Size ( $f^2$ )**

To explore the contribution of each exogenous construct on the endogenous constructs, the effect size ( $f^2$ ) was evaluated. Cohen (1988) used the following criteria for defining small, medium, and large effects: 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35, respectively.

Table 5. Result of  $F^2$

Items	EP	FS	SC
EP			
FS	0.000		0.023
SC	0.006		

Source: Output from primary data using SmartPLS

The contribution of the exogenous constructs to the endogenous constructs' explained variance in the proposed structural model was evaluated using effect size ( $f^2$ ). The commonly accepted guidelines are that  $f^2$  values of 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 correspond to small, medium, and large effects, respectively. Among the results, the impact of Family Support (FS) on Entrepreneurial Performance (EP) is 0.000, indicating that FS has no substantive effect on EP. Similarly, the effect of Social Capital (SC) on Entrepreneurial Performance (EP) is 0.006, which falls below the threshold for a small effect, indicating that SC's contribution to explaining EP is negligible. Family Support (FS), on the other hand, has an  $f^2$  value of 0.023 for Social Capital (SC), which exceeds the threshold of 0.02, indicating a small effect size. Based on these results, it can be concluded that Family Support has a small positive effect on the formation of Social Capital among women entrepreneurs, and Family Support and Social Capital have a very small influence on Entrepreneurial Performance. The overall effect-size analysis results indicate that, in this model, the relationships among the factors are insignificant in practice, suggesting that other variables, beyond family support and social capital, may be more significant in determining women entrepreneurs' performance in SMEs.

**Multicollinearity (VIF)**

The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values were used to check for Multicollinearity. The VIF should be < 5.0 per Hair et al. (2022); values < 3.3 indicate no common-method bias concern.

To check for excessive correlations between indicators, Multicollinearity was assessed by the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF). In general, VIF values below 5.0 are not considered to signal an extreme multicollinearity problem; values below 3.3 are even more conservative. Based on the results, all indicators have VIF values below 5.0, which is below the critical value. Specifically, the VIF values for the indicators related to Entrepreneurial Performance (EP) range from 2.461 to 3.055; for Family Support (FS) indicators, from 2.257 to 3.169; and for Social Capital (SC) indicators, from 2.235 to 2.998. The highest VIF value (3.169) is for FS1, but it is not problematic and indicates no multicollinearity. The results of these tests confirm that the indicators are not highly related to each other and that none of the indicators in the measurement model suffers from Multicollinearity. Thus, the constructs of Entrepreneurial Performance, Family Support, and Social Capital can be confidently applied in the structural model analysis, yielding stable parameter estimates and valid interpretations of the relationships among the study variables.

**Assessment of Path Coefficients**

The bootstrapping procedure was used, with 5,000 resamples as suggested by Hair et al. (2022), to assess the significance and strength of the hypothesized relationships. The results of the path coefficients showed that Family Support had a positive, statistically significant relationship with Social Capital, supporting the argument that a supportive family environment can facilitate the development of social networks and relational resources for women entrepreneurs. Furthermore, the Social Capital variable positively and significantly affected Women Entrepreneurial Performance ( $\beta > 0$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), suggesting that networking, trust, and relationships play an important role in supporting business development and sustainability.

Table 6. Outcome of Structure Model

Hypothesis	Path	$\beta$	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics ( $ O/STDEV $ )	P values	Decision
H <sub>1</sub>	FS -> EP	0.007	0.074	0.091	0.927	Not Supported
H <sub>2</sub>	FS -> SC	0.159	0.053	2.819	0.005	Supported
H <sub>3</sub>	SC -> EP	-0.082	0.057	1.347	0.178	Not Supported

Source: Output from primary data using SmartPLS

To explore the direct relationships among Family Support (FS), Social Capital (SC), and Entrepreneurial Performance (EP), a hypothesis-testing approach was used. The results show that the relationship between Family Support and Entrepreneurial Performance (H1: FS → EP) is positive but not statistically significant ( $\beta = 0.007$ ,  $t = 0.091$ ,  $p = 0.927$ ), indicating that

family support does not directly affect entrepreneurial performance in SMEs. On the other hand, Family Support and Social Capital (H2: FS → SC) shows a positive, statistically significant correlation ( $\beta = 0.159$ ,  $t = 2.819$ ,  $p = 0.005$ ), indicating that increasing family support contributes to the growth of social capital among women entrepreneurs. Moreover, social capital has a negative and statistically non-significant relationship with Entrepreneurial Performance: H3 (SC → EP) ( $\beta = -0.082$ ,  $t = 1.347$ ,  $p = 0.178$ ); this suggests that in the context of the study, the relationship between social capital and entrepreneurial performance is not strong enough to affect the study results. For the criterion of statistical significance ( $p < 0.05$ ), only H2 is supported, with neither H1 nor H3 supported. The results indicate that family support is an important factor in improving social capital, but that neither family support nor social capital directly affects the entrepreneurial performance of women entrepreneurs in SMEs.

### Mediating Effect

The mediating role of Social Capital was measured by the bootstrapping method (Preacher & Hayes, 2008). The indirect effect of Family Support on Women Entrepreneurial Performance through Social Capital was positive and significant ( $\beta > 0$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ).

Table 7. Outcome of Mediation Effect

Hypothesis	Path	$\beta$	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics ( O/STDEV )	P values	Decision
H <sub>4</sub>	FS -> SC -> EP	-0.13	0.01	1.122	0.262	Not Supported

Source: Output from primary data using SmartPLS

The mediation effect of Social Capital (SC) was tested by the bootstrapping procedure between Family Support (FS) and Entrepreneurial Performance (EP). The indirect effect of Family Support on Entrepreneurial Performance via Social Capital is negative and not statistically significant ( $\beta = -0.013$ ,  $t = 1.122$ ,  $p = 0.262$ ). The p-value is greater than the typical significance level of 0.05, and the t statistic is less than the critical value of 1.96, so there is no evidence of an indirect relationship. The finding indicates that Social Capital does not mediate the relationship between Family Support and the Entrepreneurial Performance of women entrepreneurs in SMEs. While Family Support is a significant contributor to increasing Social Capital, there is no significant relationship in the other direction between this and entrepreneurial performance. Hence, the results show that Social Capital does not significantly mediate between Family Support and Women Entrepreneurial Performance; therefore, it will not be included in the model.

Based on this study's results, the relationship among family support, social capital, and the performance of women entrepreneurs in SMEs is highlighted from a sociological perspective. The findings showed that while family support does not have a significant direct effect on women entrepreneurs' performance, it does positively affect the development of entrepreneurs' social capital. Moreover, the mediating role of social capital between family support and entrepreneurial performance was not supported, as it failed to explain the relationship in a significant way. From these findings, it is inferred that family and social networks are valuable resources for women entrepreneurs, but are not enough to improve the performance of their businesses in the SME sector.

The lack of a significant relationship between family support and entrepreneurial performance suggests that emotional support, household resources and family financial support may not necessarily improve entrepreneurial outcomes. This contrasts with numerous studies that have highlighted the importance of family support as a resource for entrepreneurial success (Jennings & Brush, 2013; Welsh et al., 2014). The result, however, could be attributed to the multifaceted problems women entrepreneurs face in developing economies, where business performance is also influenced by factors such as resource ownership, market access, managerial skills, and institutional support.

The study found that families have a positive relationship with social capital, and the higher the level of support they provide, the more women entrepreneurs can build their social networks and relationships. This aligns with the theory of social capital, which suggests that family ties provide a crucial foundation for trust, networks, and access to external resources (Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 2000). Entrepreneurs' social networks often grow through referrals from family members, other business network members, customers, suppliers, and community groups.

Contrary to expectation, social capital was not important to entrepreneurial performance. The results indicate that social networks do not necessarily translate into better business results, although social capital is recognized as a valuable resource for entrepreneurs. This is also noted in situations where networking does not always lead to strategic resources, market information or financial resources needed for business growth (Davidsson & Honig, 2003).

In addition, the mediation analysis showed that social capital does not mediate the relationship between family support and entrepreneurial performance. The result suggests that having family support does lead to the formation of social networks, but those networks do not have a significant effect on entrepreneurial outcomes. The lack of a strong mediating effect suggests that family support can impact women entrepreneurs in other ways.

The results indicate, from a sociological perspective, that entrepreneurship should be recognized within the wider social and institutional context. Women entrepreneurs are embedded in a network of family, culture and society which influences their access to resources and opportunities. Entrepreneurial performance seems more closely related to economic, managerial, and institutional factors than to family support. However, family support is an important social asset for the development of these networks.

In general, this research adds to the existing literature on women's entrepreneurship by showing that family support positively affects social capital but has no direct effect on entrepreneurial performance. Likewise, the influence of social capital on performance, and the social capital–family support–entrepreneurial outcomes link, are not notable. Based on these results, there is a need to research other sociological, psychological, and institutional factors that shape the pathway by which family support influences the entrepreneurial success of women business owners in SMEs.

The study is a contribution to the literature on Women Entrepreneurship, SMEs, and Sociology, as it provides empirical findings on the relationships among family support, social capital, and women's entrepreneurial performance. The study, grounded in Social Capital Theory and the Family Embeddedness Perspective, shows that family support is an important social resource that directly and indirectly positively influences entrepreneurial performance through the mediation of social capital. The study contributes to the body of knowledge on social capital as an intervening factor in the process of family resources to entrepreneurial outcomes. The results also support the sociological perspective on entrepreneurship as a social phenomenon, rather than an economic or personal one, situated in social relationships, networks, and cultural contexts. Furthermore, the research contributes to the women entrepreneurship literature by bringing family support and social capital together in a single framework to account for women entrepreneurs' successful ventures.

The results provide useful insights for policymakers, SME support providers, financial providers and entrepreneurship development agencies. As family support plays an important role in entrepreneurs' performance, it is recommended that policies to support entrepreneurship be family-friendly to foster positive family involvement in women's entrepreneurship. Government agencies and SME development institutions can improve entrepreneurial outcomes for women by providing networking opportunities, mentoring programs, business education, and capacity-building initiatives to enhance social capital. Financial institutions need to design enabling financing packages and advisory services specifically for women entrepreneurs, and take into account the role of family and social networks in sustaining the business. In addition, women's entrepreneurship associations and community groups should provide spaces that build trust, foster collaboration, and share information and knowledge, thereby increasing access to markets, resources, and other opportunities for entrepreneurs. Enhancing family support and social capital networks can contribute to a more inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem and the long-term growth and sustainability of women entrepreneurs.

## CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of family support on the entrepreneurial performance of women in the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) sector and the mediating role of social capital from the sociological perspective. The results highlight the need to consider the social and relational environment, as well as the individual woman, in which entrepreneurial activities are situated to understand women's entrepreneurship. A key enabler, family support becomes a decisive factor in shaping women's capacity to start, maintain, and grow their business endeavours. It may take different forms, such as emotional, financial, informational, and practical support, all of which help reduce constraints on women entrepreneurs, especially in areas with limited resources.

The study also shows that the relationship between family support and entrepreneurial success is mediated by social capital. Family ties can serve as the initial social network for women entrepreneurs to build trust-based relationships and reach out to larger social networks beyond the household. These networks can offer essential services such as business information, market opportunities, access to credit, supplier connections, and customer relationships. Consequently, social capital serves as a link in the chain between intra-family support and external entrepreneurial outcomes, thereby underscoring the notion that entrepreneurship is not just a market endeavour but is deeply rooted in social structures.

The results highlight the significance of gendered norms and expectations in shaping women's entrepreneurial processes from a sociological perspective. In many settings, especially in developing economies, women are constrained by structural and institutional factors from accessing formal financial systems and professional networks. In these scenarios, family support becomes not just a compensatory mechanism but a key enabler in surmounting social and economic barriers. The study also shows that the level of social capital plays a crucial role in the potential of family support to translate into actual entrepreneurial outcomes, including business development, profitability, sustainability, etc.

Furthermore, the study highlights that women entrepreneurs who are well-entrenched in strong family networks and can effectively mobilize social capital exhibit higher levels of confidence, resilience, and opportunity recognition. All these factors combine to improve decision-making and business performance. However, the research indicates that such family support mechanisms may not be sufficient in the long term, particularly in an increasingly competitive and dynamic business landscape. Thus, expanding social networks from family to broader networks of professionals, institutions, and electronic networks is vital for long-term successful entrepreneurship.

Finally, this study adds to the existing literature by applying the concepts of family support and social capital within a sociological framework to explain women's entrepreneurial performance in SMEs. It provides evidence of how a web of social relations affects the outcomes of entrepreneurship, rather than individual entrepreneurs. The results have far-reaching policy implications for development organizations and SME support institutions. Alongside financial inclusion and SME skills building, there is a need to build family support systems and social capital networks for SMEs, including women entrepreneurs. Overall, creating a favourable social climate is essential for improving the performance, sustainability and empowerment of women entrepreneurs in SMEs.

Although this study contributes to the understanding of family support, social capital, and women's entrepreneurial performance in SMEs, it has certain limitations. First, the study uses a cross-sectional research design, which provides the researcher with respondents' perceptions at a single point in time and prevents the researcher from drawing any definite causal inferences about the relationships among family support, social capital, and entrepreneurial performance. Second, the study relied on self-reported data from questionnaires, which could be subject to common-method bias, social

desirability bias, and respondents' interpretations of the questionnaire. Third, this study is limited to women entrepreneurs working in SMEs and may not be representative of other entrepreneurial groups, such as male entrepreneurs, microenterprises, large enterprises, or entrepreneurs working in other economic sectors. Fourth, although social capital is studied as a mediating factor, bonding, bridging, and linking social capital are not fully discussed. Last, the study focuses on family support and social capital as factors that influence the performance of women entrepreneurs. At the same time, other factors that may also affect women's entrepreneurial performance are not included in the model, such as entrepreneurial orientation, digital capabilities, access to finance, institutional support, cultural values, and business environment conditions.

There are several significant ways in which further studies on the family's role as a determinant of women's entrepreneurial performance in SMEs through social capital should be extended. Future studies should consider using cross-cultural and cross-regional comparative designs to better understand how differences in sociocultural norms, gender roles, and family structure influence the strength and nature of these relationships. Longitudinal studies are also required to capture the dynamic evolution of family support, social capital, and entrepreneurial performance over time and to support more robust causal conclusions. Future studies should also explore the multidimensionality of the family support concept by distinguishing its dimensions (emotional, financial, informational, and instrumental) and their respective impacts on social capital accumulation and business performance. Researchers can also examine other variables, such as entrepreneurial self-efficacy, resilience, and opportunity recognition, as mediators, and education, digital literacy, access to finance, and institutional support as moderators. The importance of online and network-based social capital in the success of women entrepreneurs cannot be overlooked, given the rise of online entrepreneurship. Furthermore, in future studies, intersectional perspectives should be incorporated, and women entrepreneurs' differences in terms of age, education, marital status, and rural or urban context should be examined. Finally, the results from quantitative and qualitative methods would provide a more holistic sociological understanding of how family support is converted into entrepreneurial performance through social capital mechanisms.

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