Chapter 2

Country-specific Sociocultural Institutional Factors as Determinants of Female Entrepreneurs' Successful Sustainable Business Strategies within the Context of Turkey and the UK

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2.1 Introduction

As a result of global challenges, taking action on economic development consistent with the principles of sustainable development is an important task for governments, academia, and industry around the world (Urbaniec, 2018). Since the 2005 World Summit on Social Development, societies have been expected to design their growth strategies according to the three main sustainable development goals: economic development, social inclusion, and environmental protection which reflect the three pillars of the triple bottom line approach characterizing sustainable business development (Muñoz-Pascual, Curado, & Galende, 2019, p. 3).

Producing innovative products or services in an ecological manner requires a sustainable innovation (SI) approach. Innovation and sustainability in the economic environment have to be interconnected in order to ensure long-term success as well as a healthy economy that takes into account both environmental performance and social responsibility (Cornescu & Adam, 2013). It is widely accepted that the most fundamental element of SI is a social dialogue (Boons & Lüdeke-Freund, 2013) through collaboration and coopetition with stakeholders and customer integration as an indispensable factor (Aguilar-Fernández & Otegi-Olaso, 2018). The key stakeholders' involvement facilitates the identification of the nature of sustainable outcomes and feeds this information back into the organizational systems through new strategy development around business processes although there always remains a significant level of uncertainty (Muñoz-Pascual et al., 2019).

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Innovating towards sustainability is a strategic decision that occurs through modifying several blocks of the business model, such as the value proposition (Aguilar-Fernández & Otegi-Olaso, 2018) and supply chain. In smaller businesses, the closeness to the customer and to the supplier facilitates knowledge transfer and internalization of knowledge which leads to faster decision-making and creating SI (Muñoz-Pascual et al., 2019). Consequently, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are more dependent on their stakeholders than larger businesses where SMEs wish to maintain good relations within their network and the markets in which they operate. And yet, although the small size of female-founded/owned businesses is discussed as a "weakness" (Akehurst, Simarro, & Mas-Tur, 2012; Bowen & Hisrich, 1986; Hayrapetyan, 2016) due to the difficulties related with the access to finance, the lack of specific knowledge and training, and the fear of taking risk (Akehurst et al., 2012), from the SI perspective the small size creates a robust foundation for the involvement of suppliers and the active inclusion of customers as a part of SI (Aguilar-Fernández & Otegi-Olaso, 2018, p. 8).

Institutional theory has been a popular theoretical foundation for exploring a wide variety of topics in different domains, ranging from institutional economics and political science to organization theory (Powell & Dimaggio, 1991). The institutional context draws on the concept of formal and informal institutions as "rules of the game," introduced by Douglass C. North (1990). Formal institutions are political- and economy-related rules which create or restrict opportunity fields for entrepreneurship. Informal institutions include the norms and attitudes of a society. Creating a new venture involves a high risk under any conditions (Alrich & Fiol, 1994), and the institutional context helps to determine the process of gaining legitimacy. This is critical for entrepreneurs to overcome the liabilities of newness and to increase survival prospects (Ahlstrom & Bruton, 2002). Although research on the relationship between institutional context and female entrepreneurship has developed strong insights, to date limited studies have examined the country-specific factors which may account for variance in women entrepreneurs' successful business sustainability strategies (BSS) and subsequent outcomes (Kaciak & Welsh, 2018, p. 631). The present research attempts to close this gap through taking a closer look at the country-specific sociocultural factors creating differences in female entrepreneurs' BSS towards SI within the context of Turkey and the UK. This chapter examines whether networking strategies, growth orientation, work pattern, industry preference, and business partnership structures (as a part of their BSS) of well-established female entrepreneurs vary between two different cultural environments, namely the UK and Turkey. Understanding networking strategies of the participants will enable us to examine the extent of social dialogue and collaboration and cooperation between the entrepreneur and her network contacts which is a fundamental element of SI in the generation of the value proposition. The business partnership structure, networking behavior and pattern, as well as industry preference will improve insights into business modelling, while growth orientation and work pattern will help us to understand the strategic aspect of the business model. Altogether the findings will help us to evaluate the suitability and sustainability aspects of the business model towards SI.

This chapter is organized as follows. The next section provides an overview of SI and institutional theory to create the theoretical foundation of this chapter. The following section discusses women's status and women entrepreneurship in both countries within the context of the sociocultural environment. This directly precedes the methodology which is in turn followed by the presentation of survey findings and a discussion of the key themes observed. Some concluding remarks are then drawn.

2.2 Sustainable Innovation

Innovation is defined as the act of creating significant change or novelty through the "development and implementation of new ideas by people who over time engage in transactions with others" (Brown, Bocken, & Balkenende, 2019, p. 1). Rogers defines innovation as: "An innovation is an idea, practice, or project that is perceived as new by an individual or other unit of adoption" (Rogers, 2003, p. 12). Innovation is a search process characterized by less regularity in its outcome and is represented by incremental or radical changes in product, process, and value activities. Innovation generally refers to higher firm performance (Shin, Park, & Park, 2019), openness to new ideas, improved administrative efficiencies, and adoption of new process technologies, leading to supply chain performance improvement (Panayides & Lun, 2009).

Cornescu and Adam (2013) argue that SI is distinguished from a traditional innovation by bounding it to the constraints of society, technology, environment, and economy to facilitate sustainable societies by producing and consuming in a sustainable way. Therefore, SI involves multiple actors of the entrepreneurial process such as government, educational institutions, consumers, and suppliers. Brown et al. (2019) posit that SI requires businesses become key actors within sustainable transitions through strategically changing their operations to create beneficial impacts from their economic activities that seek sustainable growth through innovation. This is achieved through combinations of innovations in process, product, organization, business model, and market (Brown et al., 2019).

SI starts with complying with regulations and avoiding waste, followed by improving the supply chain and designing new products or services, and finally finishing with the conversion of the business model which leads to a radical change within the surrounding institutional context (Aguilar-Fernández & Otegi-Olaso, 2018). Uhlaner, Berent-Braun, Jeurissen, and Wit (2012) argue that SMEs transform their business models faster than large corporations because they are more flexible and the organization is flat, which facilitates dynamic decision-making. The authors assert that start-up and small businesses can quickly change their business model towards sustainability and pioneer large companies to follow them, although SMEs and large businesses innovate differently and face different challenges (Aguilar-Fernández & Otegi-Olaso, 2018).

Since the innovative process is accepted to be sustainable only when entrepreneurs achieve innovation by the integration of economic, environmental, and

social concerns, and the essence of SI is shaped by a process perspective on sustainability (Jorna & Faber, 2006), any step of the entrepreneurial process, such as product or process, is sustainable when a balance has been achieved between planet, profit, and people (Jorna & Faber, 2006). From the internationalization perspective, any enterprise targeting expansion into foreign markets should strategically target efficiency and local responsiveness at the same time (Mense-Petermann, Discussant, & Barmeyer, 2010). Innovation gives entrepreneurs a competitive advantage and can change the well-established business models or modify the structure of an industry and the economy of a country (Aguilar-Fernández & Otegi-Olaso, 2018). SI enables businesses to improve their performance gradually in social, environmental, and financial context and considers globalization and localization processes, new stakeholders, temporal impact, and use of indicators and combines all these elements to create truly sustainable value (Aguilar-Fernández & Otegi-Olaso, 2018, p. 2).

Geissdoerfer et al. (2018) distinguish four types of innovation in relation to business models: start-up, transformation, diversification, and merger or acquisition. Innovation through diversification, as well as the merger and acquisition of new business models, is more typical of large companies because they have more resources to implement these changes. This is an alternative to the lack of resources in SMEs to innovate through the diffusion of the business model by replicability and mimicry in different markets (Schaltegger, Lüdeke-Freund, & Hansen, 2016). Innovating the business model towards sustainability is a strategic decision that occurs through modifying several of its business model building blocks, such as the value proposition (Aguilar-Fernández & Otegi-Olaso, 2018).

The value proposition reflects a business and society dialogue concerning the balance of economic, ecological, and social needs as such values are temporally and spatially determined (Boons & Lüdeke-Freund, 2013, p. 13). The authors introduce the fundamental element of SI as a social dialogue in balance between the actors in the generation of value proposition. For businesses, collaboration and coopetition are fundamental mechanisms towards SI where customer integration is an indispensable factor (Shin et al., 2019, p. 3). In SMEs, the closeness of entrepreneurs to the customer and to the supplier facilitates knowledge transfer and internalization of knowledge which leads to faster decision-making and launching SI. SMEs are much more dependent on their partners and wish to maintain good relations within their network and the markets in which they operate, which are usually closer (Aguilar-Fernández & Otegi-Olaso, 2018, p. 8). To create value through SI, identification of business models and clear understanding of an innovation network are required. An innovation network is composed of various innovation actors who are either direct or indirect participants of the business model. An SI market is dependent on the interaction among these participants, and scholars emphasized the need of collaboration-based partnership activities for a successful marketing of SI (Shin et al., 2019). Consequently, it can be concluded that SI is viewed as a social process that determines a business' innovativeness depending on the type of channel relationship between partners involved. De Medeiros, Ribeiro, and Cortimiglia (2014) advocate that in SI, the development and maintenance of an innovation-oriented learning culture

is critical to success. This is described as an organization's ability to adapt its own vision, develop competencies, and allow critical reflective analysis through innovation. Such learning is required to overcome barriers, especially cultural barriers to exploring sustainable opportunities. Thus, the pursuit of innovation through network externalities or critical mass is encouraged. Panayides and Lun (2009) concluded that diverse forms of social capital contribute more than any other explanatory variable to SI. SI holds normative values, going beyond traditional innovation, through a focus on why innovation is sought to overcome societal and environmental problems, and to propose solutions. Potential collaborating partners in SI therefore need to be aligned more closely. This also acts as a signal to potential partners on the suitability to collaborate (Brown et al., 2019).

2.3 Institutional Context

The application of institutional theory has proven itself to play a major role in helping to explain the forces that shape entrepreneurial success (Bruton & Ahlstrom, 2003) through analyzing, for example, the direct action of governments in constructing and maintaining a supportive environment for entrepreneurship, in addition to the societal norms that exist towards entrepreneurship (Bruton, Ahlstrom, & Li, 2010). The institutional environment helps to determine the process of gaining legitimacy, which is critical for entrepreneurs to overcome the liabilities of newness (Stinchcombe, 2000) and increase survival prospects (Ahlstrom & Bruton, 2002). The term legitimacy commonly refers to the right to exist and perform an activity in a certain way (Suchman, 1995), with ventures in turn having to prove their value by demonstrating that they engage in legitimate activities. Therefore, entrepreneurs need to behave in a desirable or appropriate manner within a socially constructed system or face sanctions for deviating from accepted norms (Suchman, 1995). These norms and values that constrain the range of strategic options (Ahlstrom & Bruton, 2002) are produced by the culture that the entrepreneur is embedded within. This culture leads to social legitimation (Davidsson, 1995), making the entrepreneurial career more valued and socially recognized while creating a favorable institutional environment for entrepreneurial activities (Etzioni, 1987). Therefore, the cultural environment legitimizes and promotes new venture formation, and influences individuals' opportunity recognition and their willingness to take risks in starting new ventures (Terjesen & Lloyd, 2015). This environment therefore creates a foundation for nascent entrepreneurs to develop unique business survival and growth strategies (Terjesen & Lloyd, 2015), while social institutions provide potential entrepreneurs with access to the necessary resources (Abzari & Safari, 2014) for entrepreneurship to emerge within a culture. Bitektine and Haack (2017) encapsulate three different perspectives of legitimacy as property, perception, and process. The *property* perspective draws attention to what is legitimate and underlines the relationship between an entity and its institutional environment. The *perception* perspective focuses on for whom something is legitimate and discusses how these individuals,

or groups, form their judgments within a particular context. The *process* perspective highlights the formulation and production of legitimacy and the changes that take place within a particular group (Salmivaara, 2017).

Institutions do not merely control entrepreneurs; entrepreneurs also control them, through business activity (Henrekson & Sanandaji, 2010, p. 1) and actors who initiate changes that contribute to transforming existing, or creating new, institutions (DiMaggio, 1988). Entrepreneurs are actors who leverage resources to create new or transform existing institutions (Maguire, Hardy, & Lawrence, 2004) towards SI through initiating divergent changes that break with the institutionalized template of business models within a given institutional context and mobilizing resources to implement change (Battilana, Leca, & Boxenbaum, 2009).

Institutional theory is widely accepted as a suitable frame of reference for addressing the external context that shapes women's entrepreneurial activity, especially when cultural conditions create additional barriers for women. This is particularly true when considering that women are still defined primarily through their domestic roles and family obligations within many societies (Achtenhagen & Welter, 2007; Marlow, 2002). A number of studies have attempted to explain variation in the level of entrepreneurship among women through analyzing the cultural factors influencing entrepreneurial activities (such as Srivastava (2017), Itani, Sidani, and Baalbaki (2011), and Li, Huang, and Liu (2016) for Chinese context for entrepreneurship). Consequently, scholars have posited that countries with similar cultural characteristics demonstrate similar entrepreneurial profiles (Thurik & Dejardin, 2012; Ute & Uhlaner, 2010), with some facilitating and promoting entrepreneurship while others discourage such activities by making them difficult to pursue (Baumol, Schramm, & Litan, 2007; Mueller & Thomas, 2001).

2.4 Women's Status in Turkey and the UK

Women's status in society is a controversial topic in Turkey. The gap between women's status and rights that the law provides and protects and their reality in practice is substantial, and the government has not addressed this gap through policy development (Nazliaka, 2017). Although gender equality is protected by the Constitution, the Turkish President and government representatives have challenged this provision through their statements, including with remarks such as: "Women cannot be treated as equal to men as it is against nature" (BBC, 2014); "Motherhood is the best career" (*Hurriyet News*, 2015); "Unemployment rates are rising because women have started to look for jobs" (*Cumhuriyet News*, 2009); "The economic crisis is over, men can find jobs, and women can go back to housework" (*NTV MSNBC News*, 2003). The President has also accused feminists of rejecting motherhood on several occasions and he advised his "dear sisters" to have at least three, or preferably five, children (Spiegel, 2012). The current average household size in Turkey is 3.5 people (Turkstat, 2016a).

On the UK side, Esping-Andersen (2010) claims that the so-called "gender role revolution" is at the doorstep, arguing that families in the UK have already been more individualized and have gradually departed from the family norm based around a married heterosexual couple raising their children, with a traditional gendered division of labor. There has been a rise in women's participation in the labor market over the past few decades and, in today's couple families, the tendency is for both partners to work. With this rise in labor market participation, policy-makers have taken steps to reduce family–work conflicts, including through childcare provision, improvement in part-time working conditions, and parental leave (Williams, 2005). However, women, especially those with young children, still disproportionately work part-time and continue to perform the bulk of unpaid care (Scott & Clery, 2013).

In general, Turkish men, in contrast, take no childcare responsibilities and instead leave it to the rest of the household, with further differences in paternity leave conditions between the two countries reinforcing this (Dad, 2019). Against this backdrop, motherhood is the main career of women with young children in 86% of cases (Turkstat, 2016a). Women also generally undertake all household chores. British women undertake 60% of housework and 70% of caring for family members. In total, a British woman spends an average of 36 hours on domestic responsibilities as compared to the 18 hours recorded by men (Scott & Clery, 2013).

The female labor force participation rates are 72% and 36% in the UK and Turkey, respectively. Prominently, 58% of employed women in Turkey work in the service industry and 26% in agriculture (Turkstat, 2018). The most common sector of employment for women in the UK is health and social work (The World Bank, 2018), with 78% of jobs in this sector and 70% of jobs in education being held by women. Similarly to Turkey, sectors where only a small proportion of jobs are held by women include construction (14%), transportation and storage (22%), and manufacturing (24%) (McGuinness, 2018).

Around 11% of women are self-employed compared to 19% of men in the UK (McGuinness, 2018). The self-employment rates of males and females in Turkey are 36.6% and 31%, respectively. However, these figures do not provide an accurate picture of the gender-based employment pattern in Turkey. Income generation through commercial activities is forbidden by law for full-time employers in the country. Therefore, males employed full-time tend to set up a business under their wives' names without the wife's consent and knowledge (Kizilkoyun, 2012).

Literacy rates are 99% and 92.65% in the UK and Turkey, respectively (Country Economy, 2018). Compulsory primary education (12 years) is the biggest factor in reducing illiteracy in Turkey. However, the rate of illiterate women remains five times more than that of males (Turkstat, 2017). This gap partly closes in the higher education category where 13.1% of females compared to 17.9% of males participate. Turkish women often cannot complete their education, mostly because the family will not allow it (38.1%), including for economic reasons (32.3%), or due to getting married or becoming a mother (9.5%) (Turkstat, 2016a, 2016b). The higher education participation rates are 56% and 44% for females and males in the UK, respectively (GOV, 2018).

Violence against women in Turkey is another fundamental problem. In 2017, 409 women were killed by their relatives for various reasons, including requests for more freedom in life (*The Guardian*, 2017b). Domestic violence against women in the UK also remains a serious problem. For instance, a British Crime Survey demonstrated that 45% of women had experienced at least one incident of domestic violence or sexual assault since the age of 16 years (BL, 2013).

Turkish female entrepreneurs, especially those living in rural areas, are deprived from any kind of structured and accessible support from women entrepreneurship support organizations. Women Entrepreneurs Association of Turkey (KAGIDER) is the most influential and powerful women entrepreneur organization in the country, boasting three branches situated only in two big cities in Turkey and Brussels. In contrast, there are countless accessible regional and national women entrepreneur support organizations in the UK, with female entrepreneurship further supported by the Chamber of Commerce, even in smaller towns.

2.5 Female Entrepreneurship in Turkey and the UK

Women entrepreneurs around the world face both social and structural challenges (Welsh, Memili, & Kaciak, 2016). The social challenges include a lack of self-confidence, facing dominant patriarchal mindsets and institutionalized sexism, bearing the responsibility for the household and childcare, and receiving only one chance at being in business due to the lack of familial and societal support (Moghadam, 2003).

Structurally, the first challenge is a lack of education and knowledge in the areas of skill development, basic business, and women's rights. Second, there exists legal discrimination and a lack of economic and political power for women. As such, when women attempt to launch a business, they confront a number of barriers, including around access to finance, unequal opportunity in the application process, securing locations to rent or buy, access to reasonable and high-quality trade goods or raw materials, lack of customer confidence and respect, sexual harassment, lack of community respect, and wage differentials (Hatun & Ozgen, 2001; Hisrich & Brush, 1988; Lee-Gosselin & Grise, 1990). There can additionally be limited governmental support for women entrepreneurs, especially in developing countries (Welsh et al., 2016).

In light of the above discussion about womens' general status in Turkey and the UK, this chapter will examine women specifically as entrepreneurs. To begin, Turkish female entrepreneurs have been characterized as being commonly involved in the service sector, more willing to take risks, and often found to be in a disadvantageous position regarding financial network ties when compared to their British counterparts (Terjesen & Lloyd, 2015).

The major problems that Turkish female entrepreneurs encounter are identified as including finance, the balancing of family and work life, discrimination (Simsek & Uzay, 2009), personnel problems, lack of business mentorship or

networking opportunities, limited business experience (Nazliaka, 2017), and similarly low hiring experience (Hisrich & Ozturk, 1999). The government has also been discussed as a major obstacle to their success due to policies regarding production and financial issues, extending from complicated tax laws to gaps in social policy concerning the work–family balance that are not being addressed; the latter relating to childcare and elder care (Welsh et al., 2016). While being an entrepreneur affects Turkish female's roles in family life negatively due to a "clash of commitments" (Welsh et al., 2016), it can have a positive effect on their roles socially, economically, and individually (Hatun & Ozgen, 2001).

Beyond suffering from stress associated with insufficient demand for their products or services, Turkish female entrepreneurs further believe that entrepreneurship is stereotyped as a masculine profession and therefore will not be immune to gender-based bias (Carter & Williams, 2003; Welsh et al., 2016). Kutanis and Bayraktaroglu (2003) discovered that one-third of Turkish women entrepreneurs are dependent entrepreneurs who maintain a business that was already established by either a father, brother(s), or husband. Those male members of the business were in turn found to become business mentors for the female members.

Family and their moral support play an important role in Turkish women's personal and professional lives. Family moral support empowers family members to influence work and can help the female entrepreneur recognize and address her weaknesses through open communication. In this context, Powell and Eddleston (2013) show that female entrepreneurs experience benefits from both instrumental and affective family enrichment and support (Kaciak & Welsh, 2018; Welsh et al. 2016). Contrarily, the same support can create conflict and exacerbate women entrepreneurs' problems due to family members' authority, legitimacy, and power to interfere with the business (Welsh et al., 2016). Shelton (2006) therefore suggests that work–family conflict may impact venture performance negatively due to the spillover of negative emotions, attitudes, and behaviors from family to business relations (Jennings & McDougald, 2007).

Turning to the other case, Terjesen and Lloyd (2015) assert that female entrepreneurs in the UK are largely involved in technology sector businesses, are well educated, and enjoy a wide range of accessible support and training programs across the country. On the other hand, they lack opportunity recognition and perception skills, as well as role models. The social challenges that the British female entrepreneur encounters prominently includes a lack of self-belief and the fear of failure. The structural challenges are, first, a self-perceived lack of key business skills, especially in the areas of financial management and market development, and, second, limited access to role models, business mentors, and related networks (Deloitte, 2016). Fernandes (2018) concludes that the major problems that British female entrepreneurs encounter are identified as limited access to funding, social expectations to act as a male, the threat of not being taken seriously, difficulties in building a robust network with professionals, establishing a healthy family–work balance, and the fear of failure. Related to these factors, it should also be noted that the literature further observes how female business networks are generally smaller in Turkey as compared to those in

the UK (Welsh et al., 2016), that both British and Turkish female entrepreneurs suffer from invisibility in business (Mueller & Thomas, 2001), and, similarly to their Turkish counterparts, female entrepreneurs in the UK think that an entrepreneurial career holds a high status in society (Hart et al., 2017).

2.6 Methodology

The data were collected through a survey study. A survey was deemed to be the most appropriate method for the purpose of this study for three reasons: first, survey research is used to quantitatively describe specific aspects of a given population; second, the data required for survey research are collected from people and are, therefore, subjective; and, finally, survey research uses a selected portion of the population, with findings able to be generalized back to this population as a whole. The survey design process was completed in two steps: developing the sampling plan and creating the survey questions (Glasow, 2005). The data were transferred onto Excel and SPSS for further analysis.

This study uses national culture to identify the established authoritative guidelines for social behavior and applies Hofstede's Culture Model to describe the sociocultural institutional context. The Hofstede Model of National Culture has six dimensions, which are: power distance; uncertainty avoidance; individualism versus collectivism; masculinity versus femininity; long-term versus short-term orientation; and indulgence (Hofstede, 2018). The long-term orientation and indulgence dimensions were not applied to the case countries due to the fact that Turkey's intermediate scores were in the middle of the scale, indicating that no dominant cultural preference could be inferred for these particular dimensions. Turkey and the UK were selected according to how both demonstrate different cultural patterns, thereby creating fertile ground for comparison within the context of this chapter.

This chapter aims to present the findings from quantitative survey-based research conducted with 240 established female entrepreneurs from the UK and Turkey (120 from each). The respondents were selected on the basis of business survival and success. The business success criteria were: age of business (>5 years); stability or growth recorded on profitability; sales volume; and number of employees within the last financial year.

2.6.1 Sampling

The target sample group was comprised of successful female businesses within northwest England and western Turkey. These regions were selected due to their convenience and accessibility. On the UK side, the sample group was accessed through women business support organizations (such as the Liverpool Ladies Network), the University of Liverpool's Lead Innovative Leadership Programme, Manchester University's Innospace Programme and Chamber of Commerce organizations. On the Turkish side, women were accessed through Chamber of Commerce organizations, Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University business network,

Table 2.1. Reliability Statistics.

	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	Number of Items
Turkey	0.86000	0.92775	220
UK	0.87265	0.92562	211

and local women business support groups. The survey was also applied through face-to-face interviews at various business events.

After collecting the responses, the final sample selection was made on the basis of business success. Only successful businesses or, in other words, established entrepreneurs were accepted to this study.

2.6.2 Question Wording

The Federation of Small Business (FSB) survey, Lifting Barriers to Growth in UK Small Businesses by University of Glamorgan Business School (Carter et al., 2006) and The New Entrepreneur Scholarships (NES) Follow-Up Survey (Jayawarna et al., 2006) were used which had been used and tested by the National Federation of Self Employed and Small Businesses Limited and Manchester University, respectively. The survey was translated into Turkish for the Turkish participants and was initially tested with 30 respondents (15 from each country) to eliminate any misinterpretation or potentially offensive statements. The final survey was transferred onto a proprietary online survey collection tool and distributed with great help from the aforementioned organizations across the case regions.

2.6.3 Reliability Analysis

Cronbach's alpha is the most common measure of the internal consistency (reliability) of a questionnaire. The reliability test results for this study are shown in Table 2.1 and indicate a high level of internal consistency for the questionnaire.

2.7 Findings

Each set of responses (Turkey and the UK) were transferred into SPSS and Excel separately as two data sets. In what follows, these data will be considered in relation to the key variables identified as potentially influencing the success of female entrepreneurs' business strategies in different cultural contexts. It shall therefore consider, inter alia, participants' demographic information, the obstacles they perceive in starting or growing their businesses, and their networking preferences. A more detailed discussion of these themes will then be presented.

2.7.1 National Culture

As noted above, to describe the cultural environment within Turkey and the UK, Hofstede's Model of National Culture was used (Hofstede, 2018). Turkey and the UK demonstrate fundamentally different cultural patterns and therefore it is expected that there will be a variation in BSS between cultural environments. Turkey is a country characterized by high power distance, high uncertainty avoidance, femininity, and collectivism. The UK, on the other hand, is a country of individualism, masculinity, low power distance, and low uncertainty avoidance. These two countries are, therefore, appropriate choices for comparing the successful business strategies of established female entrepreneurs in line with the above state interests of this study. Based on the model, the culture profiles of the UK and Turkey are given in Tables 2.2 and 2.3.

2.7.2 Demographics

At the time of this survey, the British participants were within the ages of 31–40 years as compared to the ages of 41–50 years of the Turkish participants. Both groups included women who were married with children. The British participants predominantly held a postgraduate degree and studied art followed by business studies. The Turkish participants held an undergraduate degree as their highest academic achievement, having studied business or economics.

The British participants had decided upon a more specific, industry-dependent subject of study, namely art, while their Turkish counterparts had studied an industry-independent subject, namely business. Half of the female British businesses were linked to the arts in some way, therefore speaking directly to their latest subject of study. On this point, a study reports that 28% of British women have turned their hobby into a business (Ferguson, 2017) with the aim of achieving a greater job satisfaction. A total 33% of the Turkish participants in the study at hand stated that their businesses were not linked to their subjects of study at university. Table 2.4 shows relevant demographics and entrepreneurial characteristics of the participants.

Within the context of the demographic data, the most remarkable difference is observed between the two groups besides their education level, subject of study, and business setup age. On the former, it is notable that the British participants had a higher level of academic achievement than their Turkish counterparts which, it will be argued, can be related to cultural differences.

Both groups of participants had engaged in further professional training to improve entrepreneurial capabilities. As before, the subject preferences vary between the two groups. The British participants were observed to have undertaken training on leadership, management, and operational issues, while the Turkish respondents largely undertook training around sectoral information, English language skills, and leadership.

Table 2.2. The Six Dimensions of the Turkish Culture (Hofstede, 2018).

The Six Dimensions of the Turkish Culture	
Power distance (High) Dependent, hierarchical, superiors often inaccessible, and the ideal boss is a father figure. Control is expected. Communication is indirect, and the information flow is selective. The same structure can be observed in the family unit, where the father is a kind of patriarch to whom others submit.	**Uncertainty avoidance (High)** There is a great need for laws and rules. In order to minimize anxiety, people make use of a lot of rituals. For foreigners they might seem religious, with the many references to "Allah," but often they are just traditional social patterns, used in specific situations to ease tension.
Individualism (Low) "We" is important; people belong to in-groups who look after each other in exchange for loyalty. Communication is indirect and the harmony of the group has to be maintained; open conflicts are avoided. The relationship has a moral base and this always has priority over task fulfillment. Time must be invested initially to establish a relationship of trust. Nepotism may be found more often. Feedback is always indirect, also in the business environment.	**Long-term orientation (Insignificant)** Turkey's intermediate score of 46 is in the middle of the scale so no dominant cultural preference can be inferred.
Masculinity (Low) The softer aspects of culture, such as levelling with others, consensus, sympathy for the underdog, are valued and encouraged. Conflicts are avoided, and consensus at the end is important. Leisure time with the whole family, clan, and friends is important. Status is shown.	**Indulgence (Insignificant)** With an intermediate score of 49, a characteristic corresponding to this dimension cannot be determined for Turkey

2.7.3 Previous Employment and Entrepreneurial Experience

The first successful and the oldest surviving businesses had been established within the ages of 20–29 years and 30–39 years for the British and Turkish participants, respectively. The British female entrepreneurs were 10 years younger than their Turkish counterparts when they set up the first succeeding business.

Table 2.3. The Six Dimensions of the British Culture (Hofstede, 2018).

The Six Dimensions of the British Culture	
Power distance (Low) Society that believes that inequalities among people should be minimized. A sense of fair play drives a belief that people should be treated in some way as equals.	**Uncertainty avoidance (Low)** People are comfortable in ambiguous situations. There are generally not too many rules in the society. In work terms this results in planning that is not detail-oriented – the end goal will be clear but the detail of how we get there will be flexible to the emerging and changing environment. Planning horizons will also be shorter. There is a high level of creativity and strong need for innovation. This emerges throughout the society in both its humor and heavy consumerism for new and innovative products.
Individualism (High) The British are private people. Children are taught from an early age to think for themselves and to find out what their unique purpose in life is and how they uniquely can contribute to society. The route to happiness is through personal fulfilment.	**Long-term orientation (Insignificant)**
Masculinity (High) The British are highly success-oriented and driven. What is said is not always what is meant. People in the UK live in order to work and have a clear performance ambition.	**Indulgence (High)** People generally exhibit a willingness to realize their impulses and desires with regard to enjoying life and having fun. They possess a positive attitude and have a tendency towards optimism. In addition, they place a higher degree of importance on leisure time, act as they please, and spend money as they wish.

The majority of participants were in nonmanagerial employment in the same or a different industry than their existing business with a minority in self-employment prior to setting up their current businesses, thereby demonstrating that participants did not hold any previous entrepreneurial experience. However, the second business ownership rate among the Turkish cohort is twofold of the

Table 2.4. Demographics and Entrepreneurial Characteristics of the Participants.

Demographic Characteristics	**UK**	**Turkey**
Age		
31–40	√	–
41–50	–	√
Marital status		
Married (or in a partnership)	√	√
Has a child		
Yes	√	√
Entrepreneur family member		
Yes	–	√
No	√	–
Education		
Postgraduate (MBA and PhD)	√	–
Undergraduate	√	√
Subject of study		
Business and/or Social Sciences	√	√
Art and Architecture	√	–
Further entrepreneurial trainings		
Yes	√	√
Entrepreneurship-related training subjects		
Leadership	√	√
Management	√	–
Operational know-how		
Sectoral know-how	√	√
Language (English)	–	√

British one. The rates of business closure and handover among the Turkish group outnumbered the rates of the British sample by 3:1 and 11:1, respectively. Only the sold-out rate is higher among the British participants.

Both groups started their current businesses from scratch, with only 5% and 1% of the Turkish and British participants, respectively, having inherited the business. The British females held sole ownership over the business as opposed to the Turkish females who often held joint ownership with close relatives and/or husbands. Further relating to familial ties, the majority of Turkish respondents (63%) had an entrepreneur family member as opposed to the British participants who commonly had none (76%).

2.7.4 Growth Orientation

The British participants exhibited strong growth orientation but they reported existence of uncertainty; increasing competition in the market; lack of suitable and accessible external funding, skilled staff, and affordable physical resources – such as building premises – as the major impediments towards business growth. In order to test the significance of the relationship between growth orientation and the perceived impediments towards growth, the Chi Square (χ^2) test was conducted. The results showed that growth-oriented participants perceived the obstacles of the lack of required capital, skilled staff, and affordable physical resources, as well as uncertain market conditions and increased competition to work against business growth. In other words, all the stated obstacles were significantly linked to growth orientation. A small proportion of the participants were not interested in growing the business because they wanted to maintain a healthy balance between work and life and they wanted to keep their business at a manageable size so that they could retain full control over it. The χ^2 test results showed that there was a significant relationship between the intention not to grow the business and considerations regarding work–life balance and the overall manageability of the business.

The Turkish participants were also growth-oriented. The major impediments against business growth in this context were reported as uncertainty and intense competition in the market, followed by the limited availability of suitable external funding, as well as a lack of skilled staff, heavy legal requirements, and absence of affordable physical resources. The χ^2 test results showed that the obstacles of uncertainty and intense competition in the market, lack of suitable funding, and lack of skilled staff were significantly related to growth orientation among this sample's growth-oriented females. Similar to the UK results, a small proportion did not intend to grow the business predominantly because they wanted to keep the business at a manageable size and they cared about having a healthy work–life balance and due to unfavorable market conditions. Among the reasons not to grow, unfavorable market conditions are the sole variable that held a significant relationship with the lack of growth orientation. Keeping a healthy work–life balance and keeping the business within a manageable size were the main priorities and were subsequently more important than entrepreneurial growth for the British and Turkish participants, respectively.

2.7.5 Networking

Networking pattern analysis was conducted based on four elements of the networks: type of contact; networking motivation; frequency of contact; and helpfulness of contact.

The British participants' main networking motivation was obtaining moral support followed by obtaining business advice and business referral. At the start-up stage, the majority had contacted with professional services followed by family members and friends and finally government agencies. The sources of moral support were specified as family and friends, other women entrepreneurs, previous

work colleagues, and women-related organizations and networks. Evidently other women entrepreneurs and previous work colleagues were consulted often and found to be very helpful by the participants. The participants were further engaging with trade associations to gather industry-related information, in addition to professional services and the Government to access business advisory services. They identified "Universities" as a source of skills development opportunities with whom they had contacted fairly often with limited help received. Customers and suppliers were contacted to get business referral occasionally which was found somehow helpful. Aside from their closest contacts, these other network interactions were also found, at least in some limited capacity, to be helpful by the participants. On frequency, only previous work colleagues and women-related organizations and networks were contacted very often; universities were contacted fairly often; and other business contacts (stated as indirect competitors, the Internet, private training companies, and individual mentors), customers, or/and suppliers, trade associations, and family or/and friends were contacted occasionally. Professional services and women related organizations were contacted rarely.

As for the Turkish entrepreneurs, their networking pattern demonstrated numerous similarities and differences. Similar to their British counterparts, the main networking motivation was obtaining moral support followed by – different than the British cohort – obtaining industry information and financial support. Same as their British counterparts, the Turkish participants contacted family or/and friends, previous work colleagues, other women entrepreneurs, and women-related organizations and networks to obtain moral support. However, it was striking that they were too taking part in government projects to obtain moral support as well given these projects are an unusual means by which to obtain such support. At the start-up stage, they contacted government agencies, professional services, and family and friends. The most frequently engaged network contact was family and friends, contacted very often and perceived very helpful. Customers and suppliers, professional services, trade associations' other women entrepreneurs, and women-related organizations and networks were contacted fairly often. Only customers and suppliers and professional services were found very helpful as opposed to trade associations, other women entrepreneurs, women-related organizations and networks, government agencies, universities, and previous work colleagues, which were found somehow helpful. Government agencies, universities, and previous work colleagues were contacted occasionally.

2.7.6 Business Partnership

The vast majority of the British participants were solo entrepreneurs. A small proportion of them were in a business partnership with either the husband or nonrelative females and males. On the Turkish side, the vast majority were in business partnership with the husband and male relatives. A small proportion of them were either solo entrepreneurs or in a business partnership with relative/nonrelative females.

2.7.7 Business Industry and Business Survival

Both groups had preferred to establish a business in the service sector, which is generally characterized more as a female industry (Sweida & Alan, 2015).

To identify the variables which had an impact on business survival, the χ^2 test was conducted between them. These results are shown in Table 2.5 and considered in greater depth within the following discussion. Table 2.6 shows a representative result of the χ^2 test.

Table 2.5. The Impacting Independent Variables on Business Survival (Based on Pearson's Chi Square (χ^2) Results < 0.05).

Independent Variable	**Condition among the British Group**	**Condition among the Turkish Group**
Previous entrepreneurial experience	Insignificant	No entrepreneurial experience
Start-up mode	Started from scratch	Started from scratch
Partnership status	*Sole ownership*	*Partnership with relatives*
Growth orientation	Insignificant	Intention to grow
Industry	Insignificant	Service industry
Obstacles at start-up	No obstacles	No obstacles
Business set-up age	*20–29*	*30–39*
Marital status	Married	Married
Has children	Yes	Yes
Entrepreneur family member	Yes	Yes
Education	*Postgraduate*	*Undergraduate*
Entrepreneurial training	Yes	Yes

Table 2.6. A Representative Chi Square (χ^2) Test Result: Business Survival and Start-up Mode Relationship.

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	**df**	**Asymptotic Significance (Two-sided)**
Pearson Chi-Square	52.051[a]	25	0.001
Likelihood ratio	52.015	25	0.001
Number of valid cases	120		

[a]29 cells (80.6%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 19.

2.8 Outcomes and Discussion

As noted above, Turkey and the UK were selected as case countries due to significant differences in their national cultural dimension values, as based on the Culture Model developed by Hofstede. Within the context of this study, the established entrepreneur was defined as someone who had found success in her business that was at least five years old at the time this study was conducted.

The high power distance culture in Turkey manifests itself in the lower educational achievement of the Turkish participants as compared to those of the British ones. In a high power distance culture, women's access to education is restricted, due to the patriarchal culture pattern. To elaborate briefly, the majority of Turkish women do not pursue their education further mostly because the family will not allow it or due to changes in familial circumstances such as getting married or become a mother. The average (mean) age at first marriage for women in Turkey is 23.3 years, which coincides with the end of university education, and subsequently adopts the priorities of settling into the marriage, having children, and raising them to a less dependent age before starting an entrepreneurial career (Turkstat, 2012). The average age at first marriage for a woman in the UK is 35.1 years (BBC, 2018).

The Turkish woman demonstrates a high-risk aversion behavior in choosing a subject to study at university and studies business (by far) – regardless of her interests or passions – which is an industry-independent subject. Gultekin (2017) states that the majority of Turkish youngsters let their family members, predominantly the father, to pick their subject of study at University in order to please the family members and to avoid conflicts within the family. This behavioral pattern can be associated with the high power distance culture where parents teach children obedience (Hofstede, 2018) and the father is the decision-maker who is also responsible for protecting and caring for those lower down, such as children or females (Meyer, 2014). Yet, conversely, the British woman follows her passion and studies a highly specific and industry-dependent subject, namely art. As Ferguson (2017) stated earlier, the British woman has a strong desire to turn her hobby into a business to improve her job satisfaction and happiness at work. From this perspective, the subject preferences of two countries' women seem linked to the power distance, individualism, and uncertainty avoidance dimensions of their cultures.

Regardless of her higher educational achievement, a PhD, the British woman still feels insufficient to pursue an entrepreneurial career and participates in further entrepreneurial training on leadership, managing an organization, and operational issues. When considering the majority studied art, this effort seems highly logical. And yet, the Turkish female also seeks opportunities to improve leadership skills, sector-related know-how, and English language ability. The propensity of improving entrepreneurial capabilities through engaging in further education can be explained through the perceived obstacles at business start-up stage. The majority of the British participants reported lack of managerial skills and lack of self-confidence as impediments towards business setup. As for the Turkish participants, although they reported more social capital–related obstacles

rather than individual at the business start-up stage, they had participated further training on leadership, sectoral know-how, and English language. The reason behind their propensity towards improving their English abilities might be related to their desire to grow into foreign markets in the future although they specified various obstacles towards business growth which is discussed in the following sections.

The collectivism and power distance cultural dimensions stand out as the major determinants of business partnership status, with this status showing a meaningful difference between the two groups. The Turkish female has relatives as business partners, while the British female is a sole trader. From the power distance perspective, the Turkish female entrepreneur is almost obliged to involve the husband in the business, especially when the business proves its sustainability and growth potential. In her research with Turkish informal female entrepreneurs, Cullen (2019) found out that once a female-founded informal business is settled and sustainable, the husband and other male members of the family abandon their current jobs to take part in the business throughout the formalization process of the business and keep the female entrepreneur/founder within the realm of the internal business functions, such as production, and the male members manage the rest such as marketing and dealing with the government agencies. From the Western perspective, collective action in business might be perceived as an impediment towards independence, autonomy, and scope of control (*Huffingtonpost*, 2014). Furthermore, collective action in the form of business partnerships might be perceived as a foundation from which conflicts can emerge. However, the way in which collectivism was reflected in Turkish females' businesses indicated that this cultural dimension can be utilized as an enabler instead. *First*, collective action through business partnerships with their closest relatives enables female entrepreneurs to spend less time on work than those who do it alone. This enables women to become more flexible in splitting their time between work and any domestic responsibilities they may have. Also, being surrounded by relatives enables those females to get help with domestic work and receive moral support immediately when needed. It does still seem that collective action in business carries a serious risk of conflicts emerging between the partner relatives, as might quickly affect the relationships negatively and potentially create a butterfly effect with regards to the extended family. However, in this study, none of the Turkish participants reported conflicts with their partners as an impediment. Contrarily, having close relatives within the business itself and in the business network in general seemed to be a necessity rather than something to avoid. *Second*, collective action in business enables female entrepreneurship to be legitimized and accepted by wider society. Based on the networking-related findings, it is observed that Turkish participants primarily look after internal business functions and leave external functions to the male relatives as business partners. This reduces their stress since they do not need to deal with, for instance, the bureaucratical processes involved in using external funding or managing relationships with government agencies. Consequently, although she is an established entrepreneur, the Turkish female still stays within her domestic environment which consists of her family members and friends. *Third*, women can

take part in entrepreneurial activities and get a certain level of satisfaction without committing themselves to the business fully. The Turkish female entrepreneur is enabled to contribute to the business on a casual basis while raising children and fulfilling other domestic responsibilities. The relatives, as business partners, help and support her on both sides, such as in business and domestic life. Therefore, the Turkish female entrepreneur has a unique opportunity to learn and prepare herself for a greater commitment to the business. *Finally*, having relatives as business partners facilitates the maintenance of trust relatively easier than can be the case with strangers. Having known each other for longer enables the female entrepreneur to evaluate the credibility and reliability of the relative as a (potential) business partner. Therefore, relatives' involvement in business reduces the risk and uncertainty around human relationships and trust. Although there is not a set of well-established assessment criteria for choosing relatives as business partners, they are selected on the basis of their closeness to the family and the business contacts they can utilize for the purpose of growth.

Although growth orientation was evident in the number of females intending to grow their businesses, they were not determined and fully driven towards growth due to a range of perceived barriers. Both groups specified the strongest impediments towards business growth as uncertainty and competition in the market, as well as the lack of qualified staff available. When it comes to their priorities, work–life balance was more important than business growth for the British participants. The Turkish participants also demonstrated a desire to maintain a work–life balance, but keeping the business at a manageable size was more important than business growth and work–life balance overall. This might be rationalized against the lack of qualified relatives suitable for the business and the reluctance to recruit professionals in their place. As a result, a significant difference in growth orientation between the participant groups was not observed. The participants' motivation to grow the business while keeping it at either micro or small size seems like a discrepancy which does not help to create a solid foundation for strategy development for business growth. On the other hand, from the SI perspective, the small size enables the entrepreneur to get closer to the customer and to the supplier which might facilitate knowledge transfer and internalization of knowledge results in faster decision-making and creating SI (Muñoz-Pascual et al., 2019). Muñoz-Pascual et al. (2019) advocate that this closeness, though, might increase the dependency on the stakeholders gradually (Muñoz-Pascual et al., 2019).

To examine participants' networking patterns, an analysis was conducted based on four elements, namely: type of contact; networking motivation; frequency of contact; and helpfulness of contact. The British participants demonstrated a more focused approach to networking and more evenly distributed time across her network contacts. The most frequently engaged contacts were relatives and key stakeholders. The British female entrepreneur expects to get moral support predominantly from the other females in her immediate environment. The government and women-related organizations are the two contacts with whom she rarely engages. Similar to her British counterpart, the Turkish female entrepreneur also keeps her relatives closest to her

and seeks moral support from family and/or friends, previous work colleagues, other women entrepreneurs, and women-related organizations. However, she participates in women entrepreneurship-related government projects to get moral support too, this not being an overly common way of obtaining such support. Seemingly, she devotes more and unevenly distributed time for her network contacts than her British counterpart. The two main networking motivations reported are obtaining moral support and industry information. Differing from the British respondents, the Turkish female entrepreneur engages with more network contacts to obtain moral support and maintains an active engagement with all contacts including universities on an occasional basis to improve skills and commercial awareness. Furthermore she spends more time with networking predominantly due to the support provided by the family members to manage the business.

When it comes to networking intensity of the British participants, 10%, 20%, 40%, 10%, and 20% of their network contacts were contacted never, rarely, occasionally, fairly often, very often, respectively. As for the Turkish group, 0%, 10%, 30%, 50%, and 10% of their network contacts were contacted never, rarely, occasionally, fairly often, very often, respectively. From the networking intensity patterns, it can be concluded that the British female entrepreneur adopts a balanced networking behavior through devoting a more normally distributed time allocated across her network. On the Turkish part, she engages with the half of her network contacts on a fairly often basis and has a regular contact with all the network contacts as opposed to the fact that the British female entrepreneur ignores 10% of her network contacts. Table 2.7 shows the networking density patterns.

To develop a better understanding of the facilitators of business survival, the χ^2 test was run (Tables 2.5 and 2.6). Business survival was found to be strongly and significantly linked to sole ownership, business start-up age band of 20–29 years, and holding a postgraduate degree among the British participants. On the Turkish side, business survival was found to be strongly and significantly linked to business partnership with relatives, business start-up age band of 30–39 years, and holding an undergraduate degree. Therefore, the χ^2 test results support the observations that collective action in Turkey and individual action in the UK are of paramount importance for business success within the context of business partnership pattern.

Table 2.7. Networking Density Patterns.

Networking Intensity	UK	Turkish
Never	10%	0%
Rarely	20%	10%
Occasionally	40%	30%
Fairly often	10%	50%
Very often	20%	10%

The Turkish female entrepreneur's first business start-up experience is around 10 years later than her British female counterpart. The age band of 30–39 years correlates to when the Turkish woman's children are older and less dependent, and resultantly her domestic responsibilities are reduced. This serves as a primary condition to get her entrepreneurial attempts legitimized and accepted by the society. Yet, the British female entrepreneur founds her first successful business before she gets married at the average age of 35 years, with or without children. The entrepreneur's age factor, as explained above, is strongly linked to the power distance culture dimension. There are strict norms surrounding Turkish women's roles in society and appropriate ages to study, marry, and have children throughout their life cycle.

This chapter has examined the BSS employed by established British and Turkish female entrepreneurs in order to assess whether any difference in these strategies may potentially be attributed to cultural characteristics. The findings show that the cultural characteristics of a society do have an impact on the successful BSS of female entrepreneurs evident in the variation of the dimensions of partnership status, business setup age, and educational achievement status. The most remarkable impact on female businesses is observed within the power distance and collectivism-related cultural dimensions evident in business partnership status, business setup age, work pattern, and networking behavior. The lower educational achievement of the Turkish participants is explained through the high power distance culture where the average age at first marriage for women is 23.3 years, their education subsequently coming to a halt. Power distance is also linked to business startup age and the networking behavior of the established female entrepreneur. Evidently, as compared to her British counterpart, Turkish female entrepreneurs are older at startup and exhibit a more intense and interactive networking behavior. This intensity partly stems from the institutional voids and lack of structures and support for female entrepreneurs which are filled by informal arrangements, such as close social ties with relatives and friends. Evidently, the British female entrepreneur prefers to act solo in business as opposed to her Turkish counterpart, who prefers partnership with relatives. Individual autonomy is more important than being a member of social groups, and small organizations are favored in individualistic cultures (Halabisky, 2018), while larger organizations are more desirable in the collectivist orientation (Abzari & Safari, 2014). That said, the British female entrepreneur does not want to grow her business for the sake of maintaining her work–life balance, but spends more time at work than her Turkish counterpart. The Turkish female entrepreneur does not want to grow so as to maintain control over the business.

One of the most fundamental elements of SI is a social dialogue (Boons & Lüdeke-Freund, 2013) through collaboration and coopetition with the key stakeholders, and businesses are dependent on their stakeholders within this context. And yet, our participants' networking pattern and intensity appear to be creating a solid foundation for the involvement of suppliers and the active inclusion of customers which is a facilitator towards SI. On that basis, the Turkish female entrepreneur seems spending more time with networking and her network is more inclusive than her British counterpart which can create a better

foundation towards the development of strategies around SI. From the internationalization perspective, this translates into the fact that the British entrepreneur should be prepared to spend more time for networking within the Turkey market which does not seem feasible referring to her desire to maintain a healthy work–life balance. Within the context of SI, the British entrepreneur should strategically target efficiency and local responsiveness at the same time (Mense-Petermann et al., 2010) in the Turkey market which requires her to understand the cultural pattern in the target market, especially the well-established patriarchal norms and behavioral pattern of the society, to achieve local responsiveness and collaboration with the stakeholders. And yet, our study shows that the norm for female businesses is to start as a solo female entrepreneur but grow with the addition of the male members of the family. The British female entrepreneur's desire to act solo in business might be an obstacle for her to survive in the Turkey market where she needs to adopt more collaborative and diverse business partnership patterns in the absence of institutional support for female entrepreneurship within the country. And yet, diversity and inclusivity in business partnership pattern might facilitate informal legitimization and social dialogue, as a fundamental element of SI, in balance between the stakeholders in the generation of the value proposition. Another advantageous situation towards SI seems related to the size of the participants' businesses where the size of the participants' businesses was either micro or small. In this case, the closeness to the customer and to the supplier can be taken as a facilitator towards knowledge transfer and internalization of knowledge which leads to faster decision-making and creating SI (Muñoz-Pascual et al., 2019).

Understanding the institutional context and the ways of gaining legitimacy as entrepreneurs within different countries (Turkey and the UK in this case) help females develop feasible market entry and survival strategies towards internationalization – an almost inevitable step to ensure survival in the realm of the globalized economies and markets of today. Female entrepreneurs should therefore be aware of the cultural differences that exist among countries and their influence in shaping what constitutes a successful business strategy within these varying contexts.

On the Turkish side, Turkish female entrepreneurs turn back to their families to overcome the culture-informed barriers towards entrepreneurial success in the absence of suitable external support mechanisms which might create conflict and exacerbate women entrepreneurs' problems due to family members' authority. This study emphasizes the importance of receiving suitable support from accessible women support organizations evident in the female entrepreneurs' networking preferences in this study. On the UK side, women support organizations is of a fundamental importance of empowering female entrepreneurs, especially when considering the majority is acting solo in business. Policy-makers should take into account the invisible internal family dynamics and the importance of operationalizing family and households for women's businesses' survival (Aldrich & Cliff 2003; Carter & Ram 2003), especially within the Turkey context.

From the BSS perspective, the findings show that the studied elements of well-established female entrepreneurs vary between two different cultural

environments, namely the UK and Turkey, as elaborated above. And yet, both groups reported a high level of social dialogue and collaboration and cooperation with their network contacts which is a fundamental element of SI in the generation of the value proposition. Another facilitator towards SI is the small size of their businesses which enables them to stay close to their key stakeholders and network contacts in knowledge exchange and strategy development around SI.

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