

Research Article

The relationship between gender policies and the creation of businesses by women

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Abstract

Objective: to analyze the effects of gender policies on women's business creation. **Methodology/approach:** quantitative approach, with secondary data extracted from the Municipal Basic Information Survey (MUNIC); and public CNPJ data from the Federal Revenue Service. The level of analysis was restricted to the 246 municipalities in the state of Goiás. From this, tests were performed with two negative binomial regression models. **Main results:** for women entrepreneurs who created their businesses alone, gender policies showed a positive relationship; on the other hand, for those who created companies in partnership, no influence was identified. With these results, it is possible to understand that the same support measures may not have similar effects to all types of business creation by women. **Theoretical-methodological contributions:** this study showed that, when analyzing public policies as a means of promoting entrepreneurship by women, one should consider the existing differences between them, either in the contextual aspects in which they are inserted, or as the specificity of each group, bearing in mind that needs different require different support actions. **Relevance/originality:** especially for women who are self-employed, according to this research, the existence of gender policies proves to be an important factor, since difficulties, such as those generated by discrimination, can be faced, thus meeting the needs of access to education, equality, health and safety.

Keywords: Business Creation by Women. Gender Policies. EIRELI. Limited Company.

A relação entre as políticas de gênero e a criação de empresas por mulheres

Resumo

Objetivo: analisar os efeitos das políticas de gênero na criação de empresas por mulheres. **Metodologia/abordagem:** abordagem quantitativa, com dados secundários extraídos da Pesquisa de Informações Básicas Municipais (MUNIC); e dados públicos de CNPJ, da Receita Federal. O nível de análise foi restrito aos 246 municípios do estado de Goiás. A partir disso, foram realizados testes com dois modelos de regressão binomial negativos. **Principais resultados:** para as empreendedoras que criaram seus negócios sozinhas, as políticas de gênero apresentaram uma relação positiva; por outro lado, para as que criaram empresas em sociedade, nenhuma influência foi identificada. Com esses resultados, é possível compreender que as mesmas medidas de apoio podem não apresentar efeitos semelhantes a todos os tipos de criação de empresas por mulheres. **Contribuições teóricas-metodológicas:** este estudo evidenciou que, ao analisar as políticas públicas como meio de fomento ao empreendedorismo por mulheres, deve-se considerar as diferenças existentes entre elas, seja nos aspectos contextuais nos quais estão inseridas, seja como especificidade de cada grupo, tendo em vista que necessidades diferentes requererem ações de apoio distintas. **Relevância/originalidade:** especialmente para as mulheres que empreendem sozinhas, segundo esta pesquisa, a existência de políticas de gênero mostra-se fator importante, pois dificuldades, como as geradas pela discriminação, poderão ser enfrentadas, atendendo, com isso, às necessidades de acesso à educação, à igualdade, à saúde e à segurança.

Palavras-chave: Criação de Empresas por Mulheres. Políticas de Gênero. Empresa Individual de Responsabilidade Limitada (EIRELI). Sociedade Empresária Limitada.

INTRODUCTION

Policies to support women's entrepreneurship not always reach the desired results. Studies by (a) Pandey and Amezcua (2020), which were carried out in the United States, did not point out the effects expected by support programs; by Okeke-Uzodike et al. (2018), which was performed in South Africa to assess policies focused on approaching women's economic empowerment through financial assistance, consultancy training and services – no action was good enough to encourage business' launching by women –; are examples of studies in this field.

Lack of efficacy among policies aimed at feminine participation in new businesses can be partly explained by the influence of other factors, such as gender discrimination, and hard time accessing education, health and well-being promotion, daycare availability for their children or maternity leave, among others (Foss et al., 2019).

It is important highlighting that some of these aspects are already observed in gender policy agendas linked to gender equality and inclusion programs, and to support to labor and income (Bandeira, 2005; Farah, 2006; Muntean, 2013). According to Villaseca et al. (2020), using gender policies is a likely alternative to fight the gaps observed in the existing women's entrepreneurship policies.

Given the relevance of aspects associated with gender policies when it comes to women's entrepreneurship, Foss et al. (2019) suggest that future research must encompass gender social mechanisms. Giménez and Calabrò (2018) made effective analyses of gender equality policy effects on such entrepreneurship.

It is so, because the existing studies in this field still (a) approach policies that encourage business creation by women in an implicit or broad way, and it impairs the implementation of specific actions in this field; and (b) neglect gender structures by recommending policies focused on molding entrepreneur women, rather than on focusing on adjustments in the environment to this specific population (Foss et al., 2019).

Thus, the aim of the present study was to analyze the effects of gender policies on business creation by two groups of women, namely: individual entrepreneurs and entrepreneur women with partners.

These two groups were chosen because of the premise, according to which, undertaking with a team is different from doing so, alone. Those who undertake with partners gather resources from different team members, such as competence, financial input, contacts in networks (Bernhard & Olsson, 2020; Pinzón et al., 2022), among others. On the other hand, those who undertake on their own only count on their own resources, without a partner to give them support at times of difficulty (Lim & Suh, 2019). In other words, besides the demands and challenges commonly faced by entrepreneurs in teams, there are other factors affecting those who undertake on their own. This process allows gender policies to play different roles in each of the herein assessed groups.

BUSINESS CREATION BY WOMEN

Dheer et al. (2019), carried out a study based on data from 45 countries; they showed that women have 30% less probability of undertaking than men. These data can be related to the contextual aspects women are inserted in, since they lack entrepreneurship-support mechanisms, and face a hard time accessing networks and actions to develop the basic skills to run a business (Dheer et al., 2019).

Women also face social and cultural judging, and it labels them as lesser skilled to undertake. This stigma impairs financing obtainment and the creation of political structures; moreover, it broadens the lack of acknowledgement, increases bureaucracy and deepens gender discrimination (Bui et al., 2018; Halabisky, 2018).

Undertaking, for these women, means facing barriers, such as lack of expertise on the business field, insecurity to leave their job positions (Machado et al., 2016), lack of resources to start their own business (Brush et al., 2019; Machado et al., 2016), hard time getting the initial capital and lack of incentive from family members (Machado et al., 2013). Other groups of entrepreneur women, in their turn, overcome these barriers due to their labor preferences and/or to their different life styles (Vracheva & Stoyneva, 2020).

Conditions to undertake on their own, or with partners, are among these preferences. Despite the advantage of undertaking with partners, several people tend to create their business alone, but women are more prone to undertake on their own (Lim & Suh, 2019; Pinzón et al., 2022). Lack of expertise to run a business was highlighted by Pinzón et al. (2022), and cultural aspects were pointed out by Lim and Suh (2019) – all these factors influence decision-making about this particular choice. Santos and Neumeyer (2022) completed the aforementioned understanding by highlighting that undertaking with partners, mainly for women, depends on how they are seen by cultural standards.

Having a partner allows sharing responsibilities, functions and combining skills to make the team more complete, at the time to start a business (Lim & Suh, 2019). This is an alternative to get financial resources and emotional support, mainly for women (Maden, 2015). However, according to Lim and Suh (2019), women tend to create individual businesses due to lack of resources and to cultural and social aspects. The same does not happen when they are self-confident, have professional expertise, leadership skills, and capital, cultural and social features, since these features can make them look for a partner at the time to launch a new business.

It is worth highlighting that women business' initial performance can be lower than that of men when women undertake alone (Lim & Suh, 2019).

These findings shine light on the relevance of formal institutions aimed at encouraging female entrepreneurship (Bui et al., 2018), since they act through programs to promote better conditions to this population, such as inclusion and equality (Brush et al., 2017).

Gender policies under the lens of entrepreneurship

Gender policies are centered on autonomy promotion and on women's empowerment (Bandeira, 2005). Human rights, violence, schooling, support for family care and insertion in the labor market are the main issues discussed by Jang (2009).

Instruments to formulate, monitor and coordinate policies for women are on the hands of Municipal Councils for Women's Rights (Martins & Conteratto, 2018; Ribas, 2015). Their mission is to rule out any form of discrimination against women, to ensure their insertion in several areas of society and to create bureaus capable of joining public administration and civil society (Martins & Conteratto, 2018).

According to Martins and Conteratto (2018), prevention measures, mainly to fight violence against women, have improved, and it points out the relevance of such structures for gender policies. This process highlights the need of municipalities having their own governmental bureau focused on policies for women (Martins & Conteratto, 2018).

Therefore, it is essential emphasizing that gender embodiment is oftentimes approached as key aspect for a successful policy. Thus, it is expected to have programs to promote improvements and more equality in this field (Engeli & Mazur, 2018).

Based on Bandeira (2005), talking about gender equality means taking the path to equity, emancipation and sense of belonging, since women redefine themselves based on culture, on labor relationships, and on other aspects that open room for new opportunities aimed at overcoming inequality.

Gender policies and their effects on women's entrepreneurship

On the one hand, when cultural values favor human rights, entrepreneur women have more resources to get better balance between their personal and professional lives, because their effort will be socially acceptable. On the other hand, if cultural values are against gender equality, these values can influence the way women think, discourage them and make them feel like they miss freedom (Clercq & Brieger, 2022).

According to Zandberg (2021), gender differences in entrepreneurship encompass several factors, such as access to resources and education, and aversion to risk. In any case, these aspects are not always closely related to entrepreneurship. Better access to health, for example, is an important determinant for higher women's entrepreneurship rates, as observed by him.

Dilli and Westerhuis (2018) assessed the role played by gender differences in promoting opportunities perceived by women and men who aim at setting a business partnership. They observed the relevance of taking into account tools specific for gender policies.

Accordingly, based on Villaseca et al. (2020), women's entrepreneurship rates reach half, or even less than half, of rates recorded for men in almost 40% of the economies. Besides, they compose the group that mostly suffers with the impact of lack of financial access, networking and coaches. According to these authors, without the guarantee of gender policies to fight such negative effects, inequality in opportunities for men and women will just increase.

According to Bayeh (2016), a given context can generate development when one invests in women's qualification, since it leads to gender equality; so women, can act in at several scopes of society: economic, social and political. The aforementioned author advocates for the need of giving women proper access to education, since this is a crucial factor for their inclusion in the market, mainly in fields that demand different skills and qualifications.

Syed and Ali (2019) also showed that an inclusive environment must be created for women, who must be supported at the time to develop their professional path to new job positions and to other opportunities in the labor market.

Patterson and Walcutt (2017) developed a study aimed at investigating the literature about gender policies by the South-Korean government. They identified that women's larger participation in the market has proven the positive impact of gender policies either on the public or private sectors.

With respect to business creation by women, Muntean (2013), compared data about institutional and cultural factors affecting this population's decision-making. He observed how relevant measures, such as health, education, and income, are to ensure women's human development. This development, in its turn, can lead to more ventures and to the creation of more job positions.

Child care is also a governmental action capable of making feminine participation in the market easier, mainly when it comes to women's entrepreneurship (Elam & Terjesen, 2010). According to Baughn et al. (2006), locations that value gender equality are positively associated with support for entrepreneur women.

Furthermore, given the several responsibilities entrepreneur women often carry, they end up being directly influenced by other policies, rather than just by those related to business properties, for example: sexual discrimination, access to education, health promotion and well-being (availability of daycare centers and maternity leave). This is a way for women to keep their participation in the labor market (Foss et al., 2019).

Actually, societies that give women traditional gender roles, such as domestic duties, mark the action of undertaking as a less attractive alternative for them (Welter, 2020). Hechavarría and Ingram (2019) also reported that patriarchal societies reduce

women's commitment to undertake, and the reasons for it are related to the unfair treatments given to them and to gender discrimination.

It is essential for entrepreneur women to have access to resources other than the material ones, such as the case of protection and health, which can help them achieving professional and personal deeds (Clercq & Brieger, 2022). Such a behavior would turn the market into a more adequate place for women's entrepreneurship.

Accordingly, the following research hypotheses were developed:

- H1:** *There is positive association between gender policies and the creation of legal-nature companies - Limited Liability Company - by women.*
- H2:** *There is positive association between gender and the creation of legal-nature companies - Limited Liability Sole Proprietorship (in Portuguese, Empresa Individual de Responsabilidade Limitada - EIRELI).*

METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES

Descriptive, analytical study of quantitative approach (Collis & Hussey, 2005), with cross-sectional cutting (Cooper & Schindler 2011). Secondary data collected from two different sources were used in the study: (1) Survey on Basic Municipal Information (MUNIC), which was developed by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE); and (2) National Registry of Legal Entities (CNPJ) of the Federal Revenue Service.

MUNIC database provides information about gender policies, their structure and about the functioning of public institutions related to this topic (IBGE, 2019). Although this survey has been carried out since 1999, it was only from 2005 onwards that gender policy aspects started being analyzed by it. By having in mind, the potential influence of these policies on business creation by women, information about companies created by women from 2005 onwards were also collected in the database of the Federal Revenue Service.

If one takes into consideration that the public CNPJ database by the Federal Revenue Service does not present variable sex, it was necessary using the gender BR package in R language to likely identify female entrepreneurs. This software has been used in other studies, such as in those by Fontenelle et al. (2020), and de Santana and Braga (2020). This software stores data from IBGE's Brazil Census used to predict sex through people's names. Because women entrepreneurs' information is available in the public database of the Federal Revenue Service, this information was also used to predict entrepreneurs' sex.

This database was filtered based on records about the creation of active companies in Goiás State, from 2005 onwards; in total, 218,387 records were registered. After data treatment for sex identification, only 200,506 companies remained in the sample; in other words, the algorithm was capable of identifying 91.81% of entrepreneurs' names.

If one has in mind that the MUNIC survey has evolved, but that it kept its screening questions related to gender policies, option was made for extracting the most recent data in its online base, in IBGE's platform (referring to 2018). The total of 246 municipalities in Goiás State were filtered, and this number set the present study's analysis level. Thus, it was possible making a comparative analysis of data in both databases and, consequently, assessing the influence of gender policies on business creation by women.

Variables' description

The aim was to describe the variables listed for the conduction of the present research. They were split into dependent and independent variables, as follows.

Dependent variables

The study used two dependent variables that were measured to assess whether they were influenced by the independent variable (Cooper & Schindler, 2011), namely: (1) creation of legal-nature company - limited liability company - by women (206-2); and (2) creation of legal-nature company - EIRELI - by women (230-5).

Based on provision in law n. 12.441 (2011), EIRELI must be held by only one entrepreneur, whereas limited liability companies, provided on law n. 10.406 (2002), can be formed by one or more entrepreneurs - the responsibility of each entrepreneur is limited to the value of its share in the company; however, all of them are accountable for social capital payment.

In total, 237 of the 246 municipalities in Goiás State have active companies created by women from 2005 onwards, in the EIRELI category. Limited liability companies, in their turn, were observed in all 246 municipalities.

Independent variable

Gender policy was used as independent variable, and it is a dummy variable formed by the existence, or not, of an executive bureau focused on women policies, such as the case of the Municipal Plan for Women's Policy, and the Municipal Council of Women's Rights.

In order to do so, score 1 (one) was given to municipalities with at least 2 (two) of these elements; and score 0 (zero) to those with just 1 (one) of them, or with no element at all.

The existence of a bureau, such as the Municipal Plan for Women's Policy and the Municipal Council for Women's Rights, can help implementing policies to ensure factors from gender equality and women empowerment to women's insertion in several scopes of society (Bandeira, 2005; Jang, 2009).

Table 1 describes the elements to form variable "gender policy".

Table 2 introduces the list of dependent and independent variables selected to the present study.

Table 1

Formation of variable "gender policy"

Elements	Description	Source
Existence of an Executive Bureau of Policies to Women	Management bureau accountable for elaborating, organizing and implementing public policies for women. It also ensures their rights and promotes equality to this group.	IBGE (2019)
Existence of a Municipal Plan for Women Policies	Instrument to act and plan, carried out by different secretariats to develop policies for women.	IBGE (2019)
Existence of a Municipal Council for Women's Rights	Council to deliberate, along with the public power, about policies for women. It inspects governmental actions whose goal is to rule out all discrimination forms by ensuring women's participation in several scopes of society.	IBGE (2019)

Note: Elaborated by the authors based on Survey on Basic Municipal Information by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (2019).

Table 2

Study variables

Dependent variables	Reference	Measurement level	Data source
Creation of legal-nature company by women - Limited Company (206-2).	Godwin et al. (2006); Maden (2015); Lim e Suh (2019); Pinzón et al. (2022); Santos e Neumeyer (2022).	Numerical	CNPJ at the Federal Revenue Service
Creation of legal-nature company by women - EIRELI (230-5).	Godwin et al. (2006); Maden (2015); Lim e Suh (2019); Pinzón et al. (2022); Santos e Neumeyer (2022).	Numerical	CNPJ at the Federal Revenue Service

Independent variable	Reference	Measurement level	Data sources
Gender policies	Bandeira (2005); Dilli e Westerhuis (2018); Jang (2009); Villaseca et al. (2020); Zandberg (2021).	Dummy 0 = Lack of 1 = Presence	MUNIC/IBGE

Note: Elaborated by the authors.

Analysis models

According to Fávero (2015), it is common estimating a regression model based on ordinary least squares when the dependent variable is quantitative. However, if one takes into account that the present dependent variables are counting variables, the Poisson regression models in the Generalized Linear Models (GLM) become the most appropriate ones, because the least squares approach could generate biased estimators (Fávero, 2015).

Nevertheless, given the evidence of super dispersion of data in the current study - i.e., the variance in the dependent variable ended up being higher than the mean-, it was better working with the negative binomial regression model from the GLM group, which is estimated based on maximum likelihood and matches data counting (Fávero, 2015). This technique allowed analyzing the association between the herein assessed independent and dependent variables.

Negative binomial regression models

The estimated regression models were treated in separate. The offset component provided by estimates on the economically active women population in municipalities of Goiás State were included in all models to mold the amount of women entrepreneurs based on municipalities' populations.

Model 1 - tests the association between gender policies and EIRELI creation by women. Based on the study variables, Model 1's equation is expressed as follows:

$$M1: EIRELI = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{ gender_policies} + \log(\text{PopulationF}) + \mu$$

Model 2 - tests the association between gender policies and the creation of Limited Liability Companies by women. Based on the study's variables, Model 2's equation is expressed as follows:

$$M2: \text{limited company} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{ gender_policies} + \log(\text{PopulationF}) + \mu$$

Both regression models were tested in statistical R software, extension RStudio, version 4.0.3.

RESULTS' PRESENTATION

The test by Cameron and Trivedi (1990) was applied to assess super dispersion. As explained by them, Table 3 shows that the estimated parameter β was statistically different from zero, and the p-value was lower than 0.05. Therefore, the dependent variables presented super dispersion and were inappropriate for Poisson's use.

Table 3

Super-dispersion test applied to Poisson regression models

Dependent variables (DV)	p-value	Super-dispersion
Creation of legal-nature company by women - Limited Company.	3.009e-05	Confirmed
Creation of legal-nature company by women - EIRELI.	2.2e-16	Confirmed

Note: Elaborated by the authors.

Models 1 and 2 (Table 4 and Table 5) tested the association between gender policies and business creation by women based on two legal natures: limited liability company and EIRELI.

Table 4

Results recorded for regression models 1 and 2

Variables	Model 1 Creation of legal-nature company by women - Limited Company		Model 2 Creation of legal-nature company by women - EIRELI	
	Coefficients	p-value	Coefficients	p-value
Intercept	-3.88219	< 2e-16 ***	-5.61565	< 2e-16 ***
Gender policies	0.05558	0.682	0.27013	0.0749
	log-likelihood: -2366.598 Deviance: 243.9018 AIC: 2372.6 BIC: 2382.938		log-likelihood: -1635.842 Deviance: 238.565 AIC: 1641.8 BIC: 1652.183	

Note: Elaborated by the author. Significance: *** = 0.001; ** = 0.05; * = 0.01.

It is possible observing that the association between gender policies and limited liability company's creation by women in Model 1, although recording positive coefficient, did not reach any significance ($\beta = 0.05558$, $p > 0.05$). On the other hand, the association between gender policies and EIRELI creation by women was positive and statistically significant ($\beta = 0.27013$, $p < 0.1$).

Table 5

Summary of Hypotheses

Hypothesis	Description	Result
H1	There is positive association between gender policies and business creation by women - Limited Company	Non-confirmed
H2	There is positive association between gender policies and EIRELI creation by women.	confirmed

Note: Elaborated by the authors.

RESULTS' DISCUSSION

There is only positive association between gender policies and the creation of individual companies by women. This finding points towards a structure capable of helping the implementation of gender policies, and it highlights a promising path for ventures held by women. On the other hand, there was no positive association between women who create businesses in partnership with others and gender policies.

Moreover, in order to face the barriers found in this field, the only effective measure is linked to entrepreneurship promotion (Zandberg, 2021), but they need complementary assistance policies, such as balance between personal and professional life, as well as the search and achievement of autonomy, equality, health and safety (Clercq & Brieger, 2022; Foss et al., 2019).

These result differences between assessed groups highlights that there are specificities between the types of business creation by women (Machado et al., 2016; Vracheva & Stoyneva, 2020). Therefore, it is not possible stating that the same support measures will be effective to all women.

These differences derive from specificities among women, who cannot be treated as a single group. With respect to individual women entrepreneurs, cultural standards and beliefs can be more influential to their ventures (Bullough et al., 2014). Furthermore, there are certain limitations to be taken into account, such as financial resources, human and financial capital, and lack of business expertise (Lim & Suh, 2019; Pinzón et al., 2022), as well as how they are seen by society (Santos & Neumeier, 2022).

When women seek to undertake with partners, it is partly explained by the search for resources and support, so they can get more favorable conditions to undertake (Lim & Suh, 2019; Maden, 2015; Santos & Neumeier, 2022), mainly in sectors dominated by men (Godwin et al., 2006).

Accordingly, based on the current results, it is possible understating that the existence of gender policies is a relevant factor to promote the creation of business by women. It is so, because certain difficulties often faced by entrepreneur women can be even more latent for those who undertake on their own, such as gender discrimination (Godwin et al., 2006), lack of knowledge, bureaucracy and scarce resources (Brush et al., 2019; Bui et al., 2018; Machado et al., 2016).

The herein recorded results support the statement that policies focused on fighting sexual discrimination, and on promoting access to education, to health and well-being, actually can help women to remain participating in business ventures (Clercq & Brieger, 2022; Foss et al., 2019). This process, in its turn, must generate more equality to those who still face the weight of social judgement, resource limitations and work overload (Lim & Suh, 2019; Maden, 2015).

It is worth highlighting the need of understanding the reasons why gender policies were not significantly related to women who launch their businesses with partners. According to Dilli and Westerhuis (2018), different aspects must be taken into consideration in order to face the inequality of opportunities between men and women, as well as between women, themselves. Among them, one finds the development of actions to promote female empowerment and gender inclusion in the generation of new job positions (Bandeira, 2005; Farah, 2006; Muntean, 2013).

Research implications

By analyzing the association between gender policies and business creation by women, based on two legal natures – SLLP and limited liability company -, one finds some possibilities for further studies.

Firstly, there is enough room for more exploration about gender policies and entrepreneur women in other Brazilian states, by having in mind different contexts that can influence the results.

Secondly, still, by taking into account the different Brazilian contexts, researchers can deepen the analysis applied to the association between gender policies and business creation by women by exploring other company types, such as female individual micro-entrepreneurs.

Thirdly, assumingly, those interested in investigations related to business creation by women and to the measures to support them, seek to explore other groups of entrepreneur women and other socioeconomic profiles, given their different needs. Therefore, this is a way to get results capable of reinforcing the elaboration and implementation of more effective actions in this field.

The present study can trigger practical implications in the entrepreneurship field, mainly for governmental managers, who can use its results to create really effective gender policies; or as diagnostic to better understand their role and the structure to encourage business creation by women, by driving more assertive efforts to them.

CONCLUSION AND STUDY LIMITATIONS

The aim of the current research was to analyze the effects of gender policies on business creation by women. These policies presented positive relation to female individual entrepreneurs; on the other hand, no influence was observed for women who create business in partnership with others.

Accordingly, it is possible understanding that, by analyzing public policies as the means to encourage women entrepreneurship, one must take into account the differences among these populations, be them the contextual aspects they are inserted in, or the specificities of each group of women. Different needs demand different support actions.

With respect to women who undertake on their own, the present research highlights the relevance of having gender policies to help them overcoming a whole series of barriers faced by them, among them: discrimination. Besides, initiatives can fulfil access to education needs, as well as promote equality, health and safety. These actions, in their turn, can ensure more autonomy and women empowerment, since they will allow women to identify new opportunities in the labor market, and to feel encouraged to undertake.

Limitations of the present study are related to the used databases. MUNIC (2018) provides cross-sectional information, but it is not too deep in temporal terms. Most of the time, it is also limited to qualitative data that cover the existence, or not, of these policies in municipalities.

Another issue to be highlighted lies on the study models, which were limited to the data available. Thus, it was necessary creating the variable "gender policy" based on a set of elements in the MUNIC database.

As for the public CNPJ database, the study limitation was associated with the fact that this database does not inform entrepreneurs' sex. Therefore, it was necessary making a classification procedure, which was carried out in R software.

Conflict of interest statement

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

Authors' statement of individual contributions

Roles	Contributions		
	Teixeira D. M.	Borges Júnior C. V.	Almeida M. I. S.
Conceptualization	■	■	
Methodology	■		■
Software	■		
Validation	■	■	■
Formal analysis	■	■	■
Investigation	■	■	
Resources	■	■	
Data Curation	■	■	■
Writing - Original Draft	■		
Writing - Review & Editing	■	■	■
Visualization	■	■	■
Supervision		■	■
Project administration	■		
Funding acquisition		■	

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