



# The Rhetoric and Reality of Entrepreneurship as Emancipation for Women

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# Rhetoric of entrepreneurship



- Neoliberalism
- Individualism
- Agency
- Reward from effort
- Empowerment through control and choice

# + Gendering rhetoric



- Women are 'missing out'
- Entrepreneurship is a good thing
- Rhetoric of choice and flexibility
- Escape from career discrimination
- Entrepreneurship as a neutral meritocracy

# + Challenging rhetoric

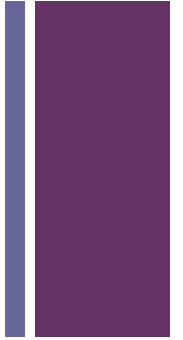


- Exploring arguments using data from the UK Household Longitudinal Survey (UKHLS), a multi-disciplinary, longitudinal study of individuals living in approximately 40,000 private households in the UK using individual and household level data from wave six and seven (2016 and 2017) giving a sample of 24,436 wage and self-employed women aged 20 and 64.



# Descriptive analysis)

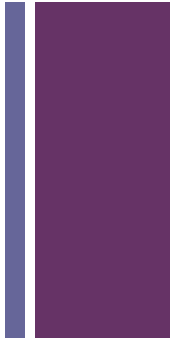
		ALL Sample		Self-employment only	
		Wage Employment	Self Employment	Male	Female
<b>Highest Educational Qualifications</b>	Higher Education (%)	46.3	45.7	39.1	<b>57.7</b>
<b>Working PT</b>	%	35.9	40.7	29.1	<b>62.6</b>
<b>Work Hours</b>	Number	32.6	35.0	39.3	<b>26.9</b>
<b>Work is Temporary</b>		7.8	15.5	14.2	<b>18.1</b>
<b>Work Location</b>	From home(%)	2.7	32.4	25.2	<b>46.0</b>
<b>Net Income (£)</b>	Mean	1422	1953	2119	<b>1642</b>
<b>Claims state benefits (Individual)</b>	%	29.3	33.5	27.2	<b>44.5</b>
<b>Childcare</b>	Childcare limits work	2.4	4.0	0.3	<b>10.9</b>



- Higher number of women educated to degree level or above but more likely (67%) to operate part-time and on fewer hours
- A significantly higher proportion of female self-employed business owners work from home, claim state benefits and take the primary childcare roles
- Net income for women is significantly lower compared to men

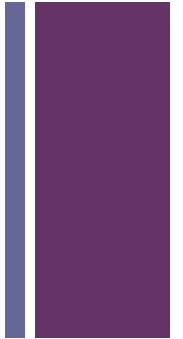


# Evidence.....



- Women more likely to select into part-time self-employment
- Financial returns to self-employment for women are significantly lower than for men in self-employment and women in employment, particularly for those working part-time from home
- Trend has noticeably increased in recent years particularly amongst Black and Minority Ethnic women – evidence of higher unemployment/precarious work post recession period
- Claims of flexibility need to be placed in context of earnings penalty
- Financial pressures related to poorer returns from part time self-employed women requires households to claim state welfare benefits to compensate for low income

# + Evidence



- Gendered sectoral segregation in self employment reflects employment (Joona, 2017)
- Performance inhibited by part-time and home operation particularly if ventures are in low value added sectors
- Employer and State funded employment benefits [Europe] that accommodate women's specific needs such as paid parental leave, extended maternity leave, crèche facilities, term time working, paid holiday etc. are not available to women entrepreneurs



# Conclusion



- Neoliberal rhetoric of choice and opportunity
- Women to be 'encouraged' towards entrepreneurship on the basis of such rhetoric and blamed for under achievement
- Evidence suggests constraints are structural not agentic
- Importance of population heterogeneity
- Entrepreneurship most rewarding for those with greatest human capital, time and high value added products/services
- Empowering or victim blaming?