Abstract

This study will focus on two main concepts: entrepreneurship and feminism and more clearly about the relation which brings them together.

Feminist values have gained more attention over the years and became a field of studies (Grunig, 2000; Van Bogaert, 2009; Ahmed et al., 2013; Gardner, 2009). It becomes a natural topic in our society as it fills a role in businesses; and even more in entrepreneurship (Ahl and Marlow, 2012; Morris et al., 2006; Mutch, 2018; Orser, 2012).

Even if feminism gain ground in the business world, its definition is still not unanimous.

The first section will then give an insight about all the main way feminism can be understood in the current environment, then entrepreneurship. Linking both term lead to another point of view of business management. Therefore, the effect of feminism in the managerial and business culture is researched through the paper.

Three main feminist values have been chosen in this study, by their predominance in the existing feminist and entrepreneurial literature. To that aim, this paper will state the three main feminist values and then, how to identify them in the workplace.
Acknowledgment

This bachelor thesis has been written by Marie Rapp, from Strasbourg University and Zoé Varnier, from ICN Metz. The thesis has been written between March and June 2018, during their one-year exchange at Linnaeus University, Växjö (SE). It is also submitted towards the completion of a double degree Bachelor.

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We would like to thank Åsa Devine for providing valuable feedback on the paper; Michaela Sandell for her patience, advice and availability as a tutor and lastly all the students who gave us feedback through our writing process. Moreover, we dedicate this thesis to all the staff of the Linnaeus University for sharing their knowledge with us through this year; and make possible for us to achieve this thesis.

Last but not least, each author has to be thanked for the time and implication throughout the study.
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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Feminism is roughly defined as “the advocacy of women's rights on the ground of the equality of the sexes” (Oxford Dictionary, 2017). However, this definition tends to be simplistic because of the diversity of feminisms that can exist. Studies about feminism showed that it should be described as its plural form: feminisms, since “women speak with many voices: lesbian feminist; postmodern, post-structuralist, first wave, third world, or eco-feminist [...] -or male feminist; and so on” (Grunig, 2000: 56). In fact, this diversity of feminism symbolises the diversity of women: Feminism is a collective movement defined by every woman's own choices and definition (Foss et al., 1999). Feminism in entrepreneurship should therefore stand for equality in the business place.

Feminist values have gained more attention over the years and became a field of studies (Grunig, 2000; Van Bogaert, 2009; Ahmed et al., 2013; Gardner, 2009; Der Gaag, 2014). It became a natural topic in our society, filling a role in businesses and even more in entrepreneurship (Ahl and Marlow, 2012; Morris et al., 2006; Mutch, 2018; Orser, 2012).

A distinction must, however, be made between women entrepreneurship and feminist entrepreneurship. Every woman determined to start a business will be seen as a female entrepreneur whilst feminist entrepreneurship is about how feminist values are implemented in a society. Moreover, a feminist entrepreneur can both be man or woman, as feminism is related to both genders. According to Mutch (2018), “feminist entrepreneurship is not just about whether or not you have created a product or service that aims to advance social justice or gender equity. It is about how you express these values in the company's governance, operations, communications and relationship management processes which combined, act as the heart and soul of any venture. It is also about animating a deeply held worldview”. Moreover, feminist entrepreneurs should
deeply be interested in creating systems change; by marches, speeches, messages and so on (Mutch, 2018).

The concept of feminist values can be defined by the principles or standards of behaviour embraced and shared by feminists. However, precisely determine what is or not a feminist value can be complex due to the lack of official records of this subject and differences in interpretation. Therefore, identifying feminist values in the workplace can be a hard task, which will be explained further in the problem discussion chapter, due to the wide variety of feminist values and their difficulties to define them, since the definition of feminism in the business environment is not unanimous (Grunig, 2000).

However, it is stated that personal values are supposed to be the core as an entrepreneur’s business (Terrel, 2010; Urbanová et al., 2013). In that sense, since the main purpose of feminism is standing for equality (Calas et al., 2009; Chadha et al., 2016), equality should be the core of feminist values in the workplace. It should, furthermore, not only benefit to women but men as well.

1.2 Problem discussion

Entrepreneurship is a really broad field of study and while multiple studies about entrepreneurship (Hisrich, 2013), women entrepreneurship (Ahl, 2006; Bianco, 2017), gender and entrepreneurship (Marlow et al., 2013) have been done; and even if articles and studies about feminism already exists (Gardner, 2009; van Bogaert, 2009…). Studies do not focus on the feminist reflection in the field of entrepreneurship (Mirchandani, 1999); and they particularly do not emphasise feminist values or the impact they can have on feminist entrepreneurs.

“Entrepreneurship is perceived to be a masculine field such that entrepreneurs will be perceived to have predominantly masculine characteristics” (Orser, 2012: 566), in this context, what is the importance of feminism and its values?
Research already pointed to the importance of values in business development and entrepreneurship (Urbanová et al., 2013; Terrel, 2010), in the sense that values are supposed to lead the process of business creation then is the core of it. As stated previously, talking about feminism is about relating the term with its values. Finding a written record demonstrating and defining all feminist values is, however, hard as the values are scattered in many scientific studies. A lot of values are depicted through literature but select which ones deserve to be studied more than others is a hard task. A fuller listing of feminist values has been done by Grunig et al. (2000:58) and included 24 values. However, all of these values cannot be all analysed in this study because of the time limit. Further research showed that the main values appearing in the feminist and entrepreneurial literature where equality, caring and empowerment:

- **Equality** seems to be the most important value as it is the essential core of feminism, which stands for equality between men and women. It also appeared in most of the articles found for this study (Ahl and Marlow, 2012; Cakardic, 2017; Loke et al., 2017; Machold et al., 2008).

- **Caring** is about attention and how it is provided (Van Bogaert, 2009; Tronto, 1993) and it had been defined as one of the most important feminist value (Schor et al., 1994).

- **Finally, empowerment** is a common concept both linked to feminism (Grunig et al., 2000; Orser et al., 2012; Chadha et al., 2016) and entrepreneurship (Carr, 2003), it then makes sense to use it in this study. These values will then lead the research of data.

Given the importance of feminist values in the concept of feminist entrepreneurship (since feminist entrepreneurs are supposed to implement these values in their businesses), it is argued that there is a research gap existing that need to be filled. This paper intends to fill this gap by using the presentation of three main feminist values and to use them in the empirical foundation after interviews lead with feminist entrepreneurs.
1.3 Purpose and research question

The purpose of this study is then to understand if and how three main values of feminism (equality, caring, empowerment) are used by feminist entrepreneurs into and through their business.

The following research question will lead the study: how equality, caring and empowerment, three main feminist values are lived by claimed feminists through their business?

2. Theoretical framework

This chapter will present three core values of feminists: equality, caring and empowerment so as to understand if and how they are lived by entrepreneurs.

2.1 Equality

The core value used to define feminism is “equality” as it is why feminist stand for (Loke et al., 2017; Pandya and Samta, 2014). Equality is also the core of a fairer and more diplomatic both society and company. It means that distribution of power and resources must be the same for women and men to enjoy the same power and opportunities to influence their own lives. Moreover, equality lies in increasing women’s leadership and ensures than women receive equal treatment at work (Bourne, 2010).

Workplace equality must, furthermore, be the core value of all business. It is defined as following: “workplace gender equality is achieved when people are able to access and
enjoy the same rewards, resources and opportunities regardless of gender”, which will obviously be the main goal of any feminist entrepreneur (WGEA, 2018). The main idea is to reduce the hierarchy and enhance worker participation (Hult, 1995).

According to the Feminist Majority Foundation (FMF) (2018), feminism advocates “equality for all genders and supports constitutional and statutory measures to gain full equality for women and girls”, “equal rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer and gender-nonconforming people”. According to its basic definition, feminism is about equality for all genders regarding social, political, and economic rights as well as opportunities for education or job.

2.2 Caring

Caring is about “taking care of, caring for, or to be interested in someone or something” (Van Bogaert, 2009). According to Tronto (1993) and his studies about the nature of the care ethics, there are different stages in caring:

- “caring about” refers to attentiveness to the needs of others (most contextual dimensions of care ethics)
- ‘taking care of’ refers to taking some responsibility in relation to those needs
- ‘caregiving’ is about working to fulfil the needs
- “care receiving,” is about listening to how the care was received in order to know whether the need has actually been fulfilled (Tronto, 1993).

There are two types of caring: the natural one used with the family and the ethical one developed in other relations (Machold, 2008; Noddings, 1984) but “everyone is included and responded to and treated as having equal worth” (Schor et al., 1994:36).

The claim for an ethic of care was originally rooted in feminism (Undbekken, 2014; Graham; 1991; Machold, 2008) and in the care ethic framework, caring about someone’s needs involves a willingness to take care of those needs (Undbekken, 2014).
Through a feminist perspective, caring can be therefore understood as measures taken by entrepreneurs to help people to get a better life, as taking care of workers, immigrants, ethnic minorities… (Ahl et al., 2016).

Caring can be seen through many subjects as social and economic. Feminist fights through the “plan F” for having policies that contribute to reducing inequalities for everyone and at the same time take care of people and the planet (Elson, 2016). Moreover, the emotional connection is essential in the definition of the concept. According to Machold (2008), emotional connection to others is a central point and caring includes recognising and paying attention to others' needs; it is involved more often in close relationship. The idea is to help each other so as to have a meaningful experience and being there for one another as support for everyday challenges.

The feminist ethic of care is seen as relevant for business management as it focus on relationship with the self and others, and it moral principles as recognising other feelings and emotions (Machold, 2008). However, there was a gender bias in this term, who firstly was not embodied by the male point of view: women are said to make their moral decision-making based on “caring”, when men are more concerned about “rights and justice” (Van Bogaert, 2009). Care theorists (Gilligan 1995; Noddings 1984) have since abandoned the idea that women would be more likely to be care-oriented and men more likely to be justice-oriented. In fact, research led to contradictory findings (Skoe, 2010). However, the ethics of caring may lead to paternalism, deception, favouritism, futility, and burnout (Van Bogaert, 2009).

Standing from this point, both genders can be linked, and their behaviour analysed through the concept of caring. Finally, the care ethics can empower both parts of the relation if it is reciprocal (Machold, 2008).

In addition to recruiting caring members, fostering care in all organisational members requires social entrepreneurs to cultivate a caring culture over the long term, where everybody within their organisation feels entitled to care - all organisational members should be asked to care (Undbekken, 2014).
2.3 Empowerment

Feminists started to use the concept of empowerment during the mid-1980’s (Sardenberg, 2008) and empowering others is a value commonly expressed in feminist articles (Čakardić, 2017; Carr, 2003; Machold, 2008; Pandya et Samta, 2014; Sardenberg, 2008; Schor et al. 1994; Orser et al., 2011).

Empowerment can primarily be understood as a process initiated by those who seek power (Carr, 2003), rather than a goal (Akhter and Ward, 2009). Empowerment is, however, not simply about achieving control, but is about utilising it to continually “improve the welfare of themselves and others, whilst facilitating access to resources and so addressing marginalisation” (Sardenberg, 2008). It can roughly be defined as a personal development, with different stages of developing skills and understanding. These stages have been defined by Marlow (2013) as following: welfare, access, conscientisation, participation and control.

- Welfare stage: it represents the actual unequal resources available to men and women
- Access stage: women realise the gender inequality embedded within welfare provision and take action to improve their access to socio-economic resources
- Conscientisation stage: women become aware that their gendered unequal access to resources and general subordinate status are socially constructed principles
- Participation: empowerment begins as women take action and participate in the decision-making processes within their households and communities to address and/or overcome the gender inequalities. Women’s increased participation is used to achieve increased control over access to resources and distribution of benefits, and to positively influence the gender inequalities that exist
- Control stage: the woman acquires a new role within her socio-political environment as she becomes a role model to others, reduces her poverty, contributes to the community organising and gains some economic and social independence.
Through a feminist lens, these processes are mutually reinforcing and interconnecting (Carr, 2003). According to Sardenberg (2009), empowerment, by all of these processes will help women to attain autonomy and self-determination.

“It is widely assumed that the point of departure in the empowerment process is a position of human misery, whether it is termed powerlessness, oppression, or deprivation” (Carr, 2003:13). Powerlessness is seen as a manifestation of institutional and structural sexism and the resulting alienation from oneself by feminist thought. However, barriers to empowerment are said to primarily be political and not psychological. The main objective of women’s empowerment in a feminist perspective is “to question, destabilise and, eventually, transform the gender order of patriarchal domination” (Sardenberg, 2008:2). As feminism is all about equality, empowerment must be thought and acted upon not only in terms of gender inequalities, but also in terms of inequalities of class, race, ethnicity and other social determinants among women (Sardenberg, 2008).

Critical consciousness would be the key ingredient in realising empowerment. Both theorists of empowerment and feminists emphasise the importance of interpreting the world through the consciousness-raising process, which is defined by feminists as “a process of discovery in which one begins to see one’s position and move toward other possible positions” (Carr, 2003: 15).

As Schor (1994) presented “voice” as a feminist value, it is important to mention it here as a way to “empowering people when speaking with your own way of thinking” (Schor et al., 1994). Speaking from one’s own voice empowers people in organisations and gather people around it which bring their more strength. Democracy and participation are, however, well promoted and everyone -in addition to being encouraged to speak up-have the right to express their voices. Therefore, voices can be linked to empowerment too.
Fig 1. *The conceptual model:*

This conceptual model summarises all the literature review of the three main values of this research.
3. Method

This part will present how the research was done and the ethical principles behind this process.

3.1 Research strategy

Bryman and Bell (2015) state that there are two orientations in research strategy: quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative research is a research strategy which employs measurement and quantification in the collection and analysis of data while qualitative study usually emphasises words. It also emphasises the meaning and descriptions in the analysis (Bryman and Bell, 2015).

According to Bryman, “Qualitative research is associated with a feminist sensitivity” (Bryman and Bell, 2015). It should be the best way to understand women - even if views on this issue are changing, it will then lead the research process of this study. Moreover, quantitative research would be incompatible with feminist research as it does not take into account women’s voices while qualitative research provides greater opportunity for a feminist sensitivity to come to the fore. It should allow the emancipatory goals of feminism to be realised as women would be treated as a full-fledged participant in the study (Bryman and Bell, 2015).

Qualitative research allows:
• women’s voices to be heard;
• exploitation to be reduced by giving as well as by receiving in the course of fieldwork;
• women not to be treated as objects to be controlled by the researcher’s technical procedures;

in Bryman and Bell, 2013: 418

The study does not focus on quantitative data and would rather get a better understanding of words by interpretation of the analysis of data. Leading a qualitative research study allows deeper discussion with the interviewees and the study of a social phenomenon. It will lead to a most pertinent analysis and understanding of the respondents’ testimonies. Qualitative study is then the research strategy that has been adopted in this study.
Deductive Theory

According to Bryman and Bell (2015: 714), a deductive theory is “an approach to the relationship between theory and research in which the latter is conducted with reference to hypotheses and ideas inferred from the former, “It means mostly that theory guides research. Interview questions have been based on what was known in the theoretical framework and most of the study is based on already known theories about entrepreneurship and values. Deductive theory is then used in this study.

Epistemology

There are three epistemological assumptions in feminist theory: knowledge and gender are socially constructed, and that change is sought in gender relations based on male dominance (Hurley, 1999). According to Bryman and Bell (2015: 15), « an epistemological issue concerns the question of what is (or should be) regarded as acceptable knowledge in a discipline ». The central epistemological concern is “the question whether or not the social world can and should be studied according to the same principles, procedures and ethos as the natural sciences” (Bryman and Bell, 2015). Epistemology in brief is about the nature of knowledge.

Positivism and interpretivism are two epistemological considerations related to epistemology, but positivism is most of the time linked to quantitative study. If the researcher agrees, it would be positivism. Here, interpretivism will lead the study. Interpretivism should “respects the differences between people and the objects of the natural sciences” and “grasp the subjective meaning of social action” (Bryman and Bell, 2015). The differences of behaviour between gender will be studied so as to understand why and how they are created. Norms and values will also be pored over to analyse how they are generated and how they can influence women.

Ontology

Ontology is the philosophical study of social entities. It focuses on “whether social entities can and should be considered objective entities that have a reality external to social actors, or whether they can and should be considered social constructions built up from the perceptions and actions of social actors” (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Two schools of thought emerge from this theory: objectivism and constructionism. For this study, we
understood starts-up as organisations created by people who make them through a process of constant evolution. This embodied the definition of the constructionist approach which sees social entities as “social constructions built up from the perceptions and actions of social actors” (Bryman and Bell, 2015).

3.2 Data Collection Method

The data collection method in this study will be interviews, primarily based on semi-structured interviews. Indeed, “semi-structured interviewing has become extremely prominent methods of data gathering within a feminist research framework” (Bryman & Bell, 2015: 493). It means that a few open predetermined questions will be developed with no change among the respondents, while other inquiries come out naturally depending on the interviewees’ answers and information provided; with the flexibility to elaborate further what is unclear or could be interesting. This type of interview is more flexible and adjustable regarding the interviewees and their answers. It leads to a quite informal climate which could bring confidence to the respondents. Along discussion, different opinions, contributions and answers will emerge, depending on each personality but the main questions will still be considered. The only risk in semi-structured interviews is to ask for something to certain respondents and not to other, which can be seen as unfair (Bryman and Bell, 2015).

Bourne (2007) explains that in a feminist perspective, you cannot stay in a position where you just ask questions without answering the interviewees’. Feminist research has “bridge[d] the distance between the researched and the researcher” (Chadha et al., 2016: 384) so doing structured interviews is counterproductive and against what feminist are fighting for. Moreover, semi-structured interviews provided the basis to analyse complex meanings of feminism, entrepreneurialism, business creation and their link to their own personal values.
Seven interviews were conducted via Skype and recorded with a recording application before achieving saturation. The approximative time for each interview was 30 minutes (28 to 45 minutes). They have been made between April 24th and 28th 2018. All the interviews have been done at the same place for the researchers, always together and following the same scheme through all the conversations. The main questions have been asked during the natural flow of the conversation and if the researchers did not have the expected answers, they asked more precise questions directly to the respondents. Moreover, the interviewees were always at home during the call. It ensured that the interviewees were confident and comfortable with the interview and that the researchers will not bias interviews by using different methods. The language used was French, as it was the will of respondents. Respondents have been found thank to personal networks or social media as LinkedIn or Facebook groups devoted to entrepreneurship and feminism. Being a feminist and entrepreneur were the only requirements for this study. Entrepreneur was defined as people who created a business and their feminist was taken as a personal statement (as there is not a clear definition and because there is a lot of different type of feminism, each person can have its own). All the respondents agreed for the use of data. A first or personal message was sent to ensure that the entrepreneurs get an overview of the study and therefore can decide if they wanted to participate or not. After agreeing, a preliminary overview of the questions (in appendix) was sent to everyone interested in the research to prepare the interviewees.

3.3 Sampling

Respondents were chosen as a convenience sample. According to Bryman “a convenience sample is one that is simply available to the researcher by virtue of its accessibility” (Bryman & Bell, 2013; 190). Therefore, most of respondents are French entrepreneur, as they were the convenient contacts the authors had. French entrepreneur means that the sample was composed of people who started a business in France. Then, the initial and relevant contacts will be used so as to establish contact with other potential respondents. It is called a “snowball sample”.

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The findings will not be generalised as the sample cannot be representative of the population. As this study focuses on feminists and entrepreneurs and, moreover, using a convenience sample, it is not representative of the global population.

It will here be assumed that not all women are feminists. Because of the difficulty of clearly define what feminism is and because it can sometimes be seen as a stereotype, many women do not associate themselves with the current idea of feminism (Grunig et al., 2009). Moreover, feminism might not be only restricted to women as men consider themselves as feminists. According to Grunig et al. (2000) and De Wolf (2015) men can be feminist. This study will then focus on entrepreneurs’ men or women, who claim themselves as feminists, without distinction of sex, age, sector or colour.

All the data collected will come from the participants’ personal experiences and views. All respondents must be a feminist and entrepreneurs, but divergent opinions or background might influence them differently. Questions will be structured in three parts. Respondents will first be asked to describe their business, then if/how feminist values influence their business through our questions. The three feminist values chosen (equality, caring and empowerment) lead to a serie of questions designed to understand how these values are implemented into their businesses. The values were not cited directly as it would have influenced the interviewee’s answer. The interview’s questions can be found in the appendix.

### 3.4 Operationalization

The interview questions have been structured in three parts: each value presenting one series of questions. However, a natural climate of discussion was preferred, rather than an inflexible questioning. In that sense, questions have directly been asked to the respondents only if the answer or the idea related to the concept did not come naturally spontaneously.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Subconcept</th>
<th>Ref</th>
<th>Question/probe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EQUALITY</td>
<td>Distribution of power</td>
<td>Bourne, 2010</td>
<td>How is power dispensed into your business?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Opportunities to influence</td>
<td>Bourne, 2010</td>
<td>To what extent can you say that you had/have an opportunity to influence (positively or not) the people working with you through your business?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Equal treatment at work</td>
<td>Bourne 2010 + Hult, 1995</td>
<td>To what extent can you say that people working with you have a same access to resources, opportunities or awards?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CARING</td>
<td>Emotional connection</td>
<td>Machold, 2008</td>
<td>How do you define your emotional connections at work or into your business?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Caring for/about</td>
<td>Tronto 1993 + Van Bogaert 2009</td>
<td>How do you care about others’ needs and wills at work?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Taking care of</td>
<td>Tronto 1993 + Van Bogaert 2009</td>
<td>To what extent can you say that you are taking a responsibility in relation to those needs?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Care giving</td>
<td>Tronto 1993 + Van Bogaert 2009</td>
<td>How are you fulfilling these needs?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Care receiving</td>
<td>Tronto 1993 + Van Bogaert 2009</td>
<td>How do you know that care has been received and to what extent it had help to fulfill others' needs?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ethical care</td>
<td>Noddings, 1984</td>
<td>To what extent can you say that caring about the people you are working with is different than caring about your family?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMPOWERMENT</td>
<td>Improve welfare</td>
<td>Sardenberg, 2008</td>
<td>How do you use your power in your company to improve welfare?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Personal development</td>
<td>Sardenberg, 2008</td>
<td>To what extent can you say that becoming an entrepreneur has helped your personal development and people around you?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.5 Data Analysis Method

A narrative analysis is used so as to best connected respondent’s stories to the study. “Narrative analysis is a method of qualitative research in which the researcher listens to the stories of the research subjects, attempting to understand the relationships between the experiences of the individuals and their social framework” (Bryman & Bell, 2015). All interviews have been tape-recorded (with the respondents’ permission) then transcribed into English for analysis. As most of the interviews have been made in French, literal translation does not often make sense, and narrative analysis is the best tool for a better understanding of the relation between the data and their place into the study.

Coding

The main goal of coding is to organise and classify data. In qualitative research, coding is the process whereby data are broken down into component parts, which are given names (Bryman and Bell, 2015). Coding necessitates creating a coding schedule and a coding manual.

Coding is a “way of patterning, classifying, and later reorganising each datum into emergent categories for further analysis” (Saldana, 2011: 95). Therefore, coding schedule will contain all the data relating to an item being coded. Its main goal is to facilitate the discussion of the principles of coding in content analysis (Bryman and Bell, 2015). The coding manual acts as the content analysis dictionary. It will define how the text will be classified and which categories will be used to classify it.

Interviews have been recorded, retranscribed then analysed so as to find similarities (or disparities) between interviewees.

At first, tables have been coded according to the existing literature and separated between the three chosen values: equality, caring and empowerment. Each of these values have been defined through our theoretical chapter thank to scientific articles and reflect the main definition given by the current literature.
Then, the coding table was used to create the sub questions relevant for each value. After all the interviews, similarities and discrepancies were found: some concepts attain saturation and others were found as not representing the main values. Therefore, the concepts which attain saturation were kept while others were deleted (as workers’ participation).

Paths were found through interviews, and similarities in the answers gave new subconcepts. A new table was created representing the finding of the interviews. All terms are more precise, fit to the results and came from saturation.

For each concept, modifications were:

**Equality**

“Opportunities to influence” did not reach saturation as the interviewees do not feel involved in this concept, saying that the only positive influence they had on the people working with them was to give them a job.

“Distribution of power” has been studied as “relation with hierarchy into business” as the first theme did not fit the interviewee positions but the second one came in conversations until the saturation.

“Equal treatment at work” has been translated by how interviewees stand for equality as it fitted better what the respondent’s answers.

Discrimination (related to both age and gender) and inequalities towards feminist entrepreneurs (especially women, their age) which were not studied in the theoretical chapter appeared to be an important matter for the interviewees and attained saturation.

Table 2. *Coding for the equality value*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standing for equality</th>
<th>Sarah</th>
<th>Henry</th>
<th>Leonie</th>
<th>Chloé</th>
<th>Amélie</th>
<th>Sabrina</th>
<th>Laura</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EQUALITY Discrimination</td>
<td>&quot;taken to be the assistant&quot;, &quot;sexist or degrading comments&quot;, &quot;stay professional&quot;</td>
<td>no, but agrees that women are sometimes negatively used in the photography industry</td>
<td>&quot;inappropriate comments or gestures&quot;, &quot;taken to be the secretary&quot;, &quot;smile and stay professional&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;inappropriate advances and pictures&quot;, &quot;always businesslike&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Canada is less concerned by inequalities&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;attempt to create a seductive relationship&quot;, &quot;stay professional&quot;, &quot;personal abilities and physical capacities always questioned&quot;, &quot;need to prove her worth more than men coaches&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;no distinction of age, gender, or experience&quot;, &quot;price framework&quot;, &quot;trying to positive the image and role of women in the photography industry&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;no distinction&quot;, &quot;same attention&quot;, &quot;trying to enhance how female models are used in the photography industry&quot;, &quot;give the best and the same of himself to everyone he is working with&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;make no distinction and will choose someone regarding his or her abilities rather than gender&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;same behavior with everyone&quot;, &quot;using collaborative tools so as to allow everyone to be aware of projects progress&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;wants to work with people suffering from inequalities (mothers, people with disabilities or belonging to a minority) : considered as an entrepreneur responsibility and duty&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;make her abilities available without distinction to anyone who want to work with her&quot;, &quot;however need to adapt to each trainee capabilities&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;collaborative online tools : everyone follow the progress at the same time + same access to resources to everyone, &quot;pick up her team thank to their competencies&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Suffered from age + being a w.</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>&quot;the need to stand for yourself and your abilities is then even more critical&quot;, &quot;need to push yourself out and make yourself essential&quot;</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Relation with hierarchy into business</strong></td>
<td>&quot;not impose herself and tries to embody a natural equal footing&quot;, &quot;does not view her assistants as inferior because of their jobs&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;stand on an equal footing with the people she hires for specific job&quot;, &quot;let them manage the work to their own&quot;, &quot;only requirements: deadlines&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;no hierarchy - except that Laura is the project leader and owner&quot;, &quot;positions are not fixed and everyone are more or less the same responsibility&quot;</td>
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**Caring**

“Emotional connection” and “natural/ethical care” have both been treated and the ideas stayed the same even if different opinions along the interviewees appeared.

A “positive relationship influences positively work” feed through an emotional connection has been stated as beneficial for a working relationship and for enhancing motivation at work. All the other sub concepts stayed the same as they were used by every feminist entrepreneur and attained saturation.
Table 3. Coding for the caring value

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CARING</th>
<th>Natural/e thical care</th>
<th>Sarah</th>
<th>Henry</th>
<th>Leonie</th>
<th>Chloé</th>
<th>Amélie</th>
<th>Sabrina</th>
<th>Laura</th>
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<td></td>
<td>&quot;not make any difference in her familial or professional relationships&quot;, &quot;not stop to social requirements and tends to be really close to all the person she met&quot;, &quot;sometimes abused to share her contacts&quot;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>says that his personal and professional relationship s are really different and does not behave the same way</td>
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<td></td>
<td>&quot;try to reproduce the &quot;family-business&quot; schema&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;really professional but kind and caring relationships&quot;, &quot;made the error to work with a friend and decided to impose more boundaries in her next professional relationships&quot;, &quot;being too friendly can become a real problem&quot;, &quot;sometimes feels as a &quot;mother, enhancing the education of her child&quot;&quot;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>&quot;knows most of the person she is working with&quot;, &quot;difficult to impose boundaries with people you know&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;quite a deep connection is created with a coach and his/her trainees&quot;, created some real friendly relationships with some of her female trainees&quot;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>&quot;picked up her team mostly thanks to her feelings towards them and their competencies&quot;, &quot;tends to create friendly relationships&quot;, &quot; does not know yet if this behavior could damage her professional relationships but she is aware it could&quot;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>&quot;listening to their projects and needs, as well as being attentive to their opinions before/after&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;communication and dialogue are the most important things in a good relationship&quot;, &quot;available and attentive&quot;, &quot;shift them towards tasks related to their personal ambitions&quot;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>&quot;available&quot;, &quot;communicatio n&quot;, &quot;dialogue&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;provide a &quot;made-to-measure service&quot;, regarding needs and wants&quot;, &quot;regarding budget, availability, personal investment, abilities and motivations&quot;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>&quot;communicatio n&quot;, &quot;if someone wants to do something precise, he/she can do it as positions are not fixed yet&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;communicatio n&quot;, &quot;if someone wants to do something precise, he/she can do it as positions are not fixed yet&quot;</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sarah</td>
<td>Henry</td>
<td>Leonie</td>
<td>Chloé</td>
<td>Amélie</td>
<td>Sabrina</td>
<td>Laura</td>
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<td>&quot;assistant must also get something positive from working with her&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;wants him to get the best benefits from his experience&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;supposed to directly provide something positive for their education&quot;, &quot;certain responsibility towards school&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;not feel really responsible as it is a volunteer work&quot;, &quot;aim to propose a future job opportunity &quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;shares her own contacts, ideas or advices&quot;, &quot;available&quot;, &quot;value and respect the assistant&quot;, &quot;push up&quot;, &quot;provides guidance instead of orders&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;communication and listening to others&quot;, &quot;gratitude and rewarding good&quot;, &quot;gives instructions and tries to empower instead of only ordering&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;discussions , reunion meetings&quot;, &quot;give feedback about the concerts&quot;, &quot;gets external support if needed&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Skype meetings&quot;, &quot;everyone is given the possibility to speak&quot;, &quot;does not provide orders : say what should be done and let the others make it their ways&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;positive feedback during the shoot, when she is thanked for her advices&quot;, &quot;does not&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;positive feedback&quot;, &quot;asked again for some works&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;he is more comfortable and open to dialog, he is more communicat ing and will come talk to her more&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;communications is the best way to know if someone has been and is satisfied and&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;if they keep working with me for no money, they must be happy about it and believe in&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;enhance motivation&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;photography is mostly based on confidence and relationship&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;create a good and friendly relationship so as to reinforce his motivation to work &quot;</td>
<td>&quot;tries to maintain friendly relationship with some boundaries&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;working in a positive atmosphere and relationship motivate the trainee&quot;, &quot;confidence &quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Positive relationship influence positively work</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>26</td>
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</tbody>
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Empowerment

After interviews, a path emerged through these ideas: “becoming an entrepreneur [enhances] a positive self-development” and “makes you grow”.
The motivations for becoming an entrepreneur and how hard this job can be, even if not studied in the theoretical framework, have both been covered during the interviews, as they seem to be an important topic for the interviewees. Finally, the notion of empowerment has been defined as a need and a duty.

Table 4. Coding for the empowerment value
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EMPOWERMENT</th>
<th>Relation with hierarchy</th>
<th>Sarah</th>
<th>Henry</th>
<th>Leonie</th>
<th>Chloé</th>
<th>Amélie</th>
<th>Sabrina</th>
<th>Laura</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;happy not to be submitted to a boss anymore&quot;, &quot;happy to be her own boss&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;happy to make his own work for himself&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;was not happy as a commercial&quot;, &quot;happy to be her own boss and make choices for herself&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;really happy that not accountable to hierarchy anymore, and she is not under any supervision anymore&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Becoming an entrepreneur and positive self-development</td>
<td>&quot;developing human relationship through his business made his own personality evolved&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;her responsibility and empowerment became maximal&quot;; &quot;doing what you love for a living is a real motivation&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;full control on her life&quot;, &quot;being her own boss is beneficial as a woman and as a mother, since it allows her to spend more time at home&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;more multi-skilled and adaptable than before&quot;, &quot;enhances herself and her welfare&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Need for/developing empowerment</td>
<td>&quot;you have to learn how to handle everything by yourself&quot;, &quot;organize everything&quot;, &quot;handle the relationship with others (diplomacy)&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;learn how to think about, handle and organize everything&quot;, &quot;you are always driven into a corner, you can not rest on what you already know or can do; you have to push yourself at&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;you have to handle everything by yourself and be responsible for yourself as well as the people you are working with&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;&quot;Empowerment is of course a necessity&quot;&quot;, &quot;have to decide for her schedule, vacation, work and rest&quot;, &quot;happy to have reached this level of freedom in her job&quot;</td>
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"emotionally happy that she escaped from authority"; "really happy that she is not under any supervision anymore";"thrilled about leading a project congruent to her own values and proud to embody them in a daily basis";"still need to learn but she is already really happy about what she learned about herself and her ability to work, make contacts and create a project by herself"
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sarah</th>
<th>Henry</th>
<th>Leonie</th>
<th>Chloé</th>
<th>Amélie</th>
<th>Sabrina</th>
<th>Laura</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Becoming an entrepreneur makes you grow</strong></td>
<td>&quot;you get to know yourself better and this process is still going every day&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;more comprehensive, altruist and open to others&quot;&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;being an entrepreneur automatically makes you grow and evolved, as you learn a lot about yourself and your relationship with others&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;feels herself grow through her responsibilities&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;happy to open out to various areas, as accountabili ty, administrative side and communication or marketing...&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;helped her in her relations with others&quot;, &quot;manage different personality and character traits&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>How being an entrepreneur hard is</strong></td>
<td>&quot;you have to impose yourself limits regarding working days and hours, vacation and rules&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;time consuming&quot;, &quot;always be 100%&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;misconceiving or failing also means failing the artists&quot;, &quot;time consuming&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;working from your home means being always at work&quot;, &quot;takes a lot of space&quot;, &quot;sometimes hard to separate personal and professional life&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;being her own boss is really hard and tiring&quot;, &quot;you have to impose yourself some breaks&quot;</td>
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4.4 Research Quality

According to Bryman and Bell (2015), the usual criteria for ensuring the research quality (validity and reliability) are mainly used in quantitative research. They need to be adapted to the qualitative research as their meaning do not fit to this type of research. Therefore, alternative criteria are chosen in this paper, to ensure that the quality will be evaluating fitting the best this qualitative research.

Then, to ensure the quality of this research, two criteria were respected: trustworthiness and authenticity.

Trustworthiness is composed of four criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Bryman and Bell, 2015). Credibility means that the research is done according to what is considered as a good practice and that the results are confirmed by the subjects who were researched; to confirm that researchers have understood the social world of the respondents. (Bryman and Bell, 2015).

In this research, credibility was done by asking the respondent’s validation: after transcribing the interviews, they were directly sent to all participants to get their validation.

The second criterion is transferability. It allows a possible transfer of the “findings to other milieux” (Bryman and Bell, 2015: 402) by having a precise description of the culture the interviewees are embedded in.

The dependability of the research ensures that the research delivers results that are considered trustworthy, which is attained by keeping the records of the research complete in the whole process (Bryman and Bell, 2015). All the elements used to this thesis were kept in the platform Dropbox for the articles and the interviews, and the thesis was done using Google Drive. It ensured that the data will not be loose and can be accessible at anytime and anywhere.

Finally, confirmability is the latest criterion that ensures that the research achieves a level of objectivity that delivers results that are not affected by personal values (Bryman and Bell, 2015). All the interviews were done in the same scheme to ensure that any bias will change the collection of data. Moreover, the thesis was judged by other persons not
directly involved in the research as the tutor and opposition group were led through the whole process by other students.

The second criterion for ensuring the quality of this research is authenticity which deals with possible political impacts. It includes several aspects as fairness, ontological authenticity, educative authenticity, catalytic authenticity and tactical authenticity (Bryman and Bell, 2015). However, as they “are thought-provoking but have not been influential, and their emphasis on the wider impact of research is controversial” (Bryman and Bell, 2015: 403) these criteria will not be developed in this thesis.

4.5 Social and ethics issues

To ensure an ethical paper, this study did not transgress the four ethical principles according to Bryman and Bell (2015): harm to (non-)participant, lack of informed consent, invasion of privacy and deception.

First of all, the harm of participants can be “physical arm, harm to participants’ development or self-esteem; stress; harm to career prospects or future employment; and ‘inducing subjects to perform reprehensible acts’” (Bryman and Bell, 2015: 135). In this study, no physical arm was involved as there was no direct contact with interviewees. Their self-esteem was preserved as researchers do not ask questions about controversial subjects. As said in the research strategy (3.1), the interviewees answer our questions at the place they wanted to e.g. their home, to avoid useless stress. Moreover, researchers were flexible and always asked the respondents to choose the interview’s hour. There was no harm to the current or future career of the interviewees as any name nor brand was cited against the will of the respondents. No harm to non-participants was done as the anonymity was respected: broad term was used instead of the name i.e. “intern”. All the interviewees or their contacts are used anonymously in the thesis and the data collected will be erased after the publication of the thesis. Moreover, all the participants agreed on the recording and the use of the data for this thesis.

Before interviewing the respondents, mail was sent to all the information about the thesis project (see Appendix A.1) to ensure that possible respondents understand the goal of the thesis, its implications, how they can participate and how the data will be used and
publish. Therefore, any lack of informed consent emerged during the whole process. In the beginning of all the interviews, a reminder was done about the use of the data and the recording.

Researchers ensured to avoid an invasion of privacy by adding the three main questions in the mail, so the possible respondents can have an overview of them and decide if they want to be a part of the study or not. All the questions were turned in a way that it does not involve anything private. However, some of the interviewees decided to share their personal ideas on their own even if it was not asked. These spontaneous statements helped researchers to have an in-depth understanding of the answers.

Any of the feedback included deception. All the interviews went smoothly and at the end, all the interviewees were satisfied with it. Furthermore, the mail sent before the interview was clear and honest about the use and the goal of the thesis, so as the interviewees will not have any surprise during the whole process.

This paper followed a strict code of ethics to allow integrity in the research and fulfil the obligation to society. According to the ethical guide of the Social Research Association (SRA) of 2003, the research has an obligation to society, funder and employers, colleagues and subjects. This paper never contravenes any legislation. The conflict between the individual rights and the contribution to society was easy to deal with as there was no harm to anyone, all the research was done thanks to the will of the participants. The paper was read by different persons to ensure the most possible objectivity and avoid misperception, bias or subjective parts. Moreover, the interviewees were the funders and they all consent with the use of the collected data to be published in an anonymous and secure way. All the procedure about it is written in part 3.2 “Data collection method”. The informed consent and all the information about the research was sent to the participants before agreeing to do the interview. Therefore, the potential interviewees can understand the goal, methods and consequences involved with their participation and decided if they want to be a part of it or not. To ensure a continuity in the communication between the two researchers, a red line was followed through the work i.e working in an independent way, sharing the work and then reviewing what the other research has done and modifying it through daily meetings.
5. Empirical data

Seven interviews were led to attain saturation. The following parts will present shortly each interview and what they brought to the study.

5.1 Sarah

Our first respondent is called Sarah, 29. She is a professional photographer from France who exclusively works for advertising agencies or press. She does not do individual or personal shoots. She launched her business 8 years ago but said that she is only making a real living from it for 4 years.

She suffered from discrimination related to her gender during her career. Photography industry is told by her to be a “really masculine environment”, meaning that a lot of photographers are men and being a woman can lead to injustice or misapprehension.

She explains that her first agent asked plenty of other people about her before agreeing to represent her. She was told that it would be better to accept after Sarah’s 30, since woman photographers are often not taken seriously before this age, mainly because of experience. She was often taken to be the assistant or asking to show her entrance badge while men photographers only “needed to have a camera”. She also suffered and still suffers from sexist or degrading comments.

She tries to “positive” the way woman is seen in photography and break the traditional image and role of seductress women are despised; trying to put women on a level playing field with men instead of a role of servitude in her personal photos and the ones she is asked to produce.

She most of the time works alone but she occasionally needs to hire assistants for particular photo shoots. In that case, she stands up for equality as she does not make any
distinction of age, gender, or experience (novice or advanced, as talent can come from all level). Moreover, a price framework is used so as to not makes any gap in salaries.

She defines herself as a “caring and attentive person” and says that she often does not make any difference in her familial or professional relationships, since she could “give the same advice to an assistant she just met or her conjoint”. She does not stop to social requirements and tends to be really close to all the people she met.

Moreover, she does not like being submitted to any hierarchy. In that sense, she does not impose herself and tries to embody a natural equal footing. She prefers providing guidance than giving direct orders. She values the assistants working for her, as she knows, her work would be harder without them. She also knows how hard it is to be an assistant; she thus thinks that solidarity should be the watchword. She does not view her assistants as inferior because of their jobs and encourages them. In that sense, she truly respects them and tries to be as available as possible and also shares her own contacts, ideas or advice. She feels responsible in a certain way for them, as she thinks assistants must also get something positive from working with her and she tries to push them up. However, most of the time, once her work is done, she does not meet her assistants beforehand, except if they call on them for another shoot; and she most of the time does not know if a connection has been made between the assistant and the contact she gave. She nevertheless says that she can have positive feedback during the shoot, when she is thanked for her advice. She emphasises that a positive atmosphere during shootings is also indicative of her beneficial influence.

Becoming an entrepreneur really helped her to achieve a positive self-development. She insists, moreover, on her creative welfare, since being an artist and living from her passion allows her to be her own reflection in her work, which is really rewarding.

“Being an entrepreneur mean learn how to handle everything by yourself: you learn how to organise everything, you embrace all the responsibilities, you learn how to handle the relationship with others (the ones you work with, your clients), most of the time you have no intermediary and you have to learn diplomacy. You get to know yourself better every day and this process is still going: I discover myself every day through my business and my everyday life experiences.”
She, however, says that it is really hard sometimes, as she had to impose limits regarding working days and hours, vacation and rules.

5.2 Henry

Our second respondent was also a photographer from France, specialised in nudes, newborns and portraits. His name is Henry (25) and he started his business 5 years ago. He mostly deals with female clients who “try to convince their husbands to be part of the shoot”. He may think that women can be more sensitive to photography than men, because of their sensibility or natural gentleness. He also thinks that men sometimes see photography as negative and “demasculinizing”.

He agreed on the fact that most photographers he knows are men. He also says that the place of women in photography can often be seen as negative, since women are only used for their physical appearance and beauty. He acknowledges than most, if not all, models are females; “at least during [his] own formations “. He also approves that most of his personal models are women but claims that he is using them to reinforce and highlight the positive image and beauty of women.

He is aware that using women as a “good-looking visual object” can be seen as opposed to his own feminist values but he insisted on the fact that he first chooses his models thank to their personality and natural, individual and specific attributes, more than their natural beauty as they can be seen as divergent from the actual standards of beauty. For his last work, he decided to diverge from standard photos magazines and decided to emphasise on different features, with “non-smiling with hair tied up in a ponytail model”.

He thinks that “photography is mostly based on confidence and relationship” and he tries to always give the best and the same of himself to everyone he is working with, without making any distinction : he offers the same attention to everyone. He also attempts to guide others, by adopting their ideas if something should not fit as they thought in a shoot.
He tries to bring his abilities to the fore so as to convince them. He also is really listening to their projects and needs, as well as attentive to their opinions beforehand.

He truly thinks that developing human relationships through his business made his own personality evolved. Being confronted with different views and projects, which sometimes lead to conflict is beneficial for his personal development; he also had to learn how to handle everything by himself and be responsible for himself. The need for adaptation and sometime being out of his comfort zone and go beyond his limits and ideas made him counter some prejudices or foreboding he had and he now tends to be more “comprehensive, altruist and open to others”. He also thinks that he evolved in his own work and style as he also learned from others.

5.3 Léonie

Our third respondent was Leonie, 22. She decided to become an entrepreneur one year ago, when she decided to establish herself as communication and brand manager for a Swiss luxury watch brand. She is therefore in charge of the social media and brand communication as well as contact with retailers, clients and shops. One of her major responsibilities is to build and nurture relationships, as the main owner of the brand does not speak English.

She argued that being an entrepreneur is a state of mind and does not think that it can really be taught; she says that she had always been interested in creating things. For her, being an entrepreneur means being open-minded, willing to give a lot of herself and her time, being curious and determined.

She hired an intern that she is planning to hire after his Master. After the internship interviews, she wavered between a woman and a man but as she is already a woman and because she wanted to be confronted by a different mindset, she decided to hire the man.

She says that luxury watch industry is mainly masculine and above all sexist. Women are used during events to present the products and in her opinion “it is what makes sell”. She
is sometimes not taken seriously because of her gender and/or taken for the secretary. It already happened that a man greets all the men present in the room but not her or that she suffered from inappropriate comments. She also says that men tend to often try to be more tactile than required. She, however, thinks that sexism tends to decrease with time and that understanding and adaptation are essential between generations; “in the sense that guys from my generation tends to be more respectful with women from the same age”. She also experienced some noticeable behavioural differences among countries and cultures. About cultural differences, she says that for example men from Singapore would hardly talk to a woman and always after making sure of her position in the society. She emphasises as well about the difficulty to combine the female gender and young age because it can often be seen as a negative inexperience characteristic and insists on the real necessity of command respect. “The need to stand for yourself and your abilities is then even more critical, and you always need to push yourself out and make yourself essential to the organisation.”

She says that the need for communication and listening to others is essential in a good (professional) relationship. She needs to communicate and ask her intern about project progress as well as his own needs and wills, so he could ensure the best benefits from his experience. She takes into account his own career plan and tries to adapt his chores. Instead of only dictating what should be done, she gives instructions and tries to empower him for instance by giving him full responsibilities for a specific project. She truly thinks that being in charge and seeing how things are progressing from A to Z are really stimulating; she also considers that gratitude and rewarding good work is essential. Since she hired him, she thinks that he is more comfortable and open to dialog, he is more communicating and will come talk to her more easily.

As the brand is a family business, she really tries to implement this winning formula while managing her intern. Everything is done for his welfare and she wants to create a good and friendly relationship so as to reinforce his motivation to work but she also had to create some boundaries. They both have the same age, but it has not been a struggle regarding respect. On the contrary, it strengthened the relationship and he is now well integrated.
She says that becoming an entrepreneur helped in her personal development as her responsibility and empowerment became maximal. She had to learn how to think about, handle and organise everything. “You are always driven into a corner, you cannot rest on what you already know or can do; you have to push yourself at your maximum as your business is also your self-image, and you want your business to be the best.” In her opinion, being an entrepreneur automatically makes you grow and evolved, as you learn a lot about yourself and your relationships with others. She also thinks that the possibility of doing what you love for a living is a real motivation.

5.4 Amélie

Our fourth respondent was Amélie, she is a 43-year-old Canadian from Montréal. She worked for 10 years in the community sector before deciding to open her own communication and marketing business for non-profit organisations. She is therefore in charge of writing documents, advertising campaigns, social networks managing and so on. She hires professionals in specific fields depending on the situations’ requirement: graphic designers, translators, website redactors, photographers… She does not really feel responsible for them, as she gives them a certain deadline for a job and does not have feedback from the person until the date, except in case of questions or troubles. She, moreover, insists on the fact that she needs to say what she wants as she hires them for something specific, for a particular project. She, however, knows most of the person she is working with and describe these relationships as “particular since it is then difficult to impose boundaries with people you know”. She thus says that she is sometimes “too kind” and that she has difficulty to say no, even in her professional relationships.

She says that Canada is less concerned about inequality, at least in business context and that equal wages are mandatory by law. She, however, says that a lot of mothers are replaced during their maternity leaves or that their positions are abolished. She then thinks that inequalities, even if more subtle or discrete, are still existing. That is why she wants to work with a lot of young mothers. She also claims that for two equally qualified people, she would tend to hire a woman than a man and that she tends to prioritise people with disabilities or belonging to minorities. She mentioned that specific and existing resources
in search of employees in the situation of disability or ethnic minorities exist in Canada. She says that it is one of her entrepreneur’s responsibility and duty to “use her power to help others” and that she is “happy to do it”. She thinks that these working forces are under-used and are often not recognised for their worth. She, however, does not “make charity” and will not hire someone unqualified, only because of gender.

Being an entrepreneur helped her to move forward as she has full control of her life. “Empowerment is, of course, a necessity.” She decides for her schedule, vacation, work and rest. She is happy that she escaped from authority and being her own boss is beneficial for her as a woman and as a mother, since it allows her to spend more time at home. She, however, says that working from your home means being always at work; it takes a lot of space and it is sometimes hard to separate personal and professional life. She is happy about her choice and happy to have reached this level of freedom in her job but admits that you have to “push yourself 100% and sometimes be really tired”.

5.5 Chloé

Chloé, 22, is an artistic manager from France. She works with individuals or groups of artists and is in charge of “all the legal side with the registration and communication with SACEM (French Society of Authors, Composers and Music Publishers), contracts and payment as well as artists communication on social networks or events, concerts creation and preparation, music recording and so on. She mostly works with men artists now but is also in charge of a woman Jazz singer. Her interns are also two boys, but it is more a coincidence than a pure choice.

In her relationships with her artists, she does not stand as a woman but as manager. Meaning that they know what she can provide to them and that they need her. Her relationships are really professional even if kind and caring, as she made the mistake of working for a friend, which destroyed the relationship, she then decided to impose more boundaries with her artists. She says that money and speaking about money always create issues between humans and she thinks that being too friendly can become a real problem.
As a woman, she encountered a problem with one of her artist’s photographer, who tries to harass her sexually by sending inappropriate pictures and continually makes inappropriate advances, but she always remains business-like.

In her opinion, communication and dialogue are the most important things in a good relationship. She is always attentive and available for others. She is using collaborative tools to allow everyone to be aware of project progress at the same time. She organises discussions and reunion meetings once a week with the artists and interns to track the advancement and define the new objectives. During their reunions, they, however, never meet in a personal accommodation, but use professional locals or external framework.

As she follows the artists for quite a long period of time, she sometimes feels as a “mother, enhancing the education of her child” but always tries to stay professional. She also tries to be available for their personal problems if they want to confide in her even if their relationships remain mostly professional.

She also tries to attempt to her artists’ concerts so as to give feedback on what was good, what could be better, even when she is not the main coordinator. She also gets some support if needed, as she sometimes hires professionals of music sector as photographers, sound engineers, make-up artists and sound technicians to respond in the best way to the need of her artists.

As her interns are specialised in musicology, she tends to shift them towards tasks related to their personal ambitions, abilities and wills. For example, she authorises of her intern to follow the full process of an album recording, from the researching need to the audio recording. She insists again on the importance of communication with them, as “you need to make sure that the work they are supposed to do is understood and as you need to be attentive to what they will too”. As they are interns, she is supposed to directly provide something positive for their education and she also has a certain responsibility towards school, since she is supposed to fill a document with intern’s abilities afterwards.

She really thinks that becoming an entrepreneur helped her own personal development and empowerment. She was not happy in her previous job as a commercial and she is really proud to learn how to manage her time and her relationships and herself. She feels
herself grow through her responsibilities and is happy to confront so many challenges every day. She is, however, aware that misconceiving or failing also means failing the artists.

5.6 Sabrina

Sabrina, 29, is a sports coach and fitness trainer in France. She provides collective or individual group works, training session in gyms, as well as in home or outside (parks) for people who deliberately chose her. She sometimes hires and joins forces with other specialised coaches for specific sports’ events. In that sense, she does not make any difference between them and herself and does not impose her hierarchy as they are all as useful and involved in the training. She wants to open in the future a collective place with several business partners.

Most of her clients are women. In her opinion, it could be because women may feel more comfortable with a woman, but she is also training men “who thought that working out with a female coach was easier, when they afterwards say that it is sometimes even harder”. She says that female coaches are often desired, “maybe because women are seen as more sensitive or sweet, because we maybe judge less regarding physical conditions”. But also says that she noticed a judgement matter when she is training a man in a public place, as a gym or a park ; and that the glance of others sometimes annoys or freeze the trainee.

She thus says that the professional sporting world is chauvinist, even if more women appeared in gyms. Her personal abilities and physical capacities are always questioned, and she often needs to prove her worth more than men coaches: “I need to show that I am able to do it, and sometimes even better than men do.” She always says that some of her client's attempt to create a seductive relationship through time, and she explained it happened to her through her men trainees, she also says that it is common between female trainees towards their masculine coach.

She says that if people chose her and accepted to work with her, it is because they know what she is worth and that they want her. She then must make her maximum and give her
best to satisfy her trainee and to fulfil his/her needs. Her job is to do provide her capabilities to best reply to her trainees needs. The prodigies service will, however, be different as she needs to adapt to different people and a wide public from all ages, physical capabilities and wills. Her job is then to provide a “made-to-measure service”, regarding needs and wills. That is why she will establish several propositions after the first meeting with a new trainee, regarding budget, availability, personal investment, abilities and motivations and will let the trainee choose what he/she wants.

She thinks that working in a positive atmosphere and relationship motivate the trainee. And she says that quite a deep connection is created with a coach and his/her trainees, as she will follow them for quite a long time and since most of her clients are hung up about their body or insecure. She needs to talk about herself and her own journey without revealing too much about her personal life. “Talk about yourself aim to convince the other that they are not alone in their situation, and it may be really motivating for them”. She, however, admits that she created some real friendly relationships with some of her female trainees and that she made real friends. She, furthermore, says that most of her clients really confide in her and sometimes reveal some personal information, which can be hard to deal with. She also says that being too available for them can be a problem as she can receive text messages anytime, day or night, asking about meal plans or exercise concerns. As she wants to be available and provide the best service as possible, she always replies but it can be a problem.

Communication is for her the best way to know if someone has been and is satisfied and thankful for her job. And she can, of course, see the physical changes to her clients. She also keeps records of their performances, mensuration and “before/after pictures”, so as to motivate them. Some of her trainees also ask to work again with her after the end of the program, because it has been beneficial to them, not only on the physical level but also psychological.

Last but not least, she thinks that becoming an entrepreneur really helped her personal development as she does not accountable to the hierarchy anymore, and she is not under any supervision anymore. She is only accountable to the person she works with and decide by herself for her own schedule, working days and hours (even if she must also be available according to her trainees’ schedules) or vacation. She is also happy to open out
to various areas, as accountability, administrative side and communication or marketing. She says to be more multi-skilled and adaptable than before and that she enhances herself and her welfare. Even if she also admits that sometimes being her own boss is hard and tiring: “Willingness and involvement are indispensable”.

5.7 Laura

Laura, 21, from France decided one year ago to launch a business project, so as to counter the misleading marketing of the food-industry sector and implement herself as a student entrepreneur. Her idea is to propose, “ready-to-eat products (as cereal bars (sweet and salty))”, created in a sustainable, innovative and transparent way with 100% French, organic, vegetal and locally sourced products. Her business aims to democratise a more sustainable, gourmet and responsible way of eating “without the boring label of organic farming and the sometimes negative image vegan products have nowadays”. The communication is then mostly based on the young and dynamic side more than green or ecological.

She personally not suffered from discrimination during her launching, as she thinks that French legislation is quite helpful, especially for students entrepreneurs but states that she knows some women who had been discriminated : they were refused to all investors, then invented a man's partner, used his fake name to sign email and received more positive answers from investors.

The transparency will be her key driver as the objective is to be 100% transparent regarding origins, place of production and remuneration : …% to the farmer, …% to the distributor, …% to the business.

Five people are currently working on the project, all are students : IT, food engineers, marketing and communication. All the work is, however, conducted in a collaborative way and there is no hierarchy - except that Laura is the project leader and owner. She picked up her team mostly thanks to her feelings towards them and their competencies. She is working with both men and women. Everyone’s contribution is made regarding their own capacities and network ; if someone wants to do something precise, he/she can
do it as positions are not fixed yet. In the same way, if someone cannot work during a period because of studies, it does not really matter, and they managed it. They are working with collaborative online tools, so everyone could follow the progress of the project at the same time and it gives the same access to resources to everyone. They also organise Skype meetings quite often and everyone is given the possibility to speak. The idea is to develop something from everyone’s ideas as everyone is supposed to bring something positive into the project. As the business is not actually active and still in its beginning, none is being paid and they are only doing volunteer work.

As she is friendly and because she chose her team by affinities as well as competencies, she tends to create friendly relationships with them. She does not know yet if this behaviour could damage her professional relationships. She thinks that in case of disagreement or specific problem, being a friend could be a problem as the situation would be handled differently, because of the fear to harm a relation. She also knows that she is beholden to them, as she could not lead the entire project by herself.

She says that becoming an entrepreneur helped her in her relations with others, as she had to learn how to manage different personalities and character traits. She sometimes needs to impose herself as a conductor and manager, which she is not used to. She is thrilled about leading a project congruent to her own values and proud to embody them daily. She hopes to make her business her full-time occupation in the future. She says that she still needs to learn but she is already happy about what she learned about herself and her ability to work, make contacts and create a project. She thinks that the most important thing is to believe in her values and to follow them, to give the best of herself.
6. Analysis

In this chapter, the findings from the empirical data collection are going to be analysed and used to answer the research question.

As introduced in the theoretical chapter, equality, caring and empowerment has been described as three main values of feminism. The interview guide was designed following this pattern, each value as the main concept leading a series of questions.

6.1 Equality

Equality was introduced in the theoretical chapter following the models of Bourne (2010) and Hult (1995), regarding the “same access to resources, opportunities or awards” and “opportunity to influence”. The notion of power introduced by Bourne (2010) was not employed directly during the interviews but came naturally through the discussion with the concept of the hierarchy.

The notion of equal treatment at work (Bourne, 2010) has been conducted in two views: the one of an entrepreneur towards the people he or she works with (same access to resources) and the view of others towards itself.

Equality has been determined in the theoretical chapter as “core of a fairer and more diplomatic both society and company” (Bourne, 2010). According to the data found in the interviews, equality is the core of business for an entrepreneur. “Same behaviour,” was mentioned since no distinction is made while hiring and “personalities and capabilities” are selection criteria more than sex, age or previous experience. The same access to resources and opportunities is allowed thanks to the use of collaborative tools. Moreover, one of the respondents, Amelie considered as an entrepreneur responsibility and duty to stand even more for equality and said to mostly “prioritise people with
disabilities or belonging to minorities” so as to “reduce inequalities”, which is also the core of the feminist perspective of caring introduced by Ahl et al. (2016).

Hierarchy is avoided and standing on an equal footing is viewed as more preferable than abusing power. Direct orders are replaced by directions or advice so as to enhance self-governance. A positive relationship is seen as a motivation, “confidence” could enhance motivation positively influence work.

However a main concern which has not been studied in the theoretical framework emerged from all the discussions: inequalities and discrimination towards women. Inappropriate comments and inequalities linked to gender seem to be common in “masculine industries” such as photography, music or sport. Proving its worth and standing for itself in a business context is even more important and essential for a woman, as they are not always taken seriously. The matter of being a woman and being young has also been raised as it is often seen as indicative of experimentation.

The “opportunity to influence” raised by Bourne (2010) was, however, not presented the same way in this study since none of the interviewees thought to have a real positive influence on the people working with them. The only positive influence they introduced was the opportunity to work.

### 6.2 Caring

Caring has been described following the notion of emotional connection (Machold, 2008), the difference between natural and ethical care advanced by Noddings (1984) and the global notion of caring has been described according to the definitions of Tronto (1993) and Van Bogaert (2009).

Divergences have been noticed regarding the creation of emotional connection with people from work and a distinction between the behaviour embraces and the attention provided to others in a professional or personal environment has sometimes been made.
For a “natural caring person”, it is "difficult to impose boundaries with people you know". This kind of person tends to adopt the same behaviour in their personal or professional spheres and therefore do not make a difference between the natural and ethical cares: the same behaviour is embraced towards friends, family, and professional relationship. However, it has been mentioned that “being too friendly in your professional relationships” can also be a problem, either concerning money or simply abuses of trust or kindness.

As mentioned in the theoretical framework, “caring about someone’s needs involves a willingness to take care of those needs (Undbekken, 2014). So as to show others that they and their needs are being cared, communication and dialogue seem to be the most important thing and also the best way to know if people blossom and are satisfied in a relationship. “Available” and “attentive” are two words mostly used to describe the behaviour used towards others. Questions can also be asked so as to best understand then best reply to these needs and, of course, tasks can be adapted regarding needs and wills relative to the future projects of life people aim to reach.

“Taking care of” has been translated by the notion of responsibility towards others’ needs and wills (Tronto, 1993). This notion of responsibility is, however, different depending on people and professional environment. However the idea is to “help each other so as to have a meaningful experience” (Machold, 2008). As the “best benefits” are supposed to emerge for both boss and employees or surroundings working relationship, a certain responsibility tend to emerge from these relationships; especially towards the youngest but most of this notion has simply been defined as a “professional responsibility only”.

“Sharing with others”, either advice, contacts, ideas or personal experiences are seen as the best way to provide care, fulfil needs, understand the others and be understood. “Respect,” “gratitude” and “reward good” are necessary so as to encourage and motivate people at work, while be responsive is necessary to every relationship.

So as to know if the care has been received and positively influenced, which is the principle of “care receiving” (Tronto, 1993), communication is again watchword, as “being thanked” or being given a “positive feedback” are two of the main indicators.
6.3 Empowerment

Empowerment has been presented according Marlow et al. (2009) studies about personal development and welfare. Motivations for becoming an entrepreneur also emerged naturally from the discussion.

“Escaping from authority” is seen as the number 1 motivation to become an entrepreneur. “Becoming your own boss” and “enjoying more freedom” is one of entrepreneurship main goal. Entrepreneurs also seem to be thrilled by doing what they love for a living and happy not to be submitted to the hierarchy anymore.

According to the study, becoming an entrepreneur improve self-development, with different stages of developing skills and understanding (Marlow et al., 2009) since it enhances responsibilities. Entrepreneurs have to learn how to handle everything by themselves: all the sides of their businesses as well as their relationships with others. “Developing human relationships through business make grow”. Welfare is also enhanced through entrepreneurship.

By becoming an entrepreneur, there is a necessity for empowerment, as all the responsibilities are handled by one person and there is a need to “open out to various areas, as accountability, administrative side and communication or marketing”. In that sense, entrepreneurs tend to become multi-skilled and more open-minded than before and get to know each other better through their businesses. Empowerment therefore allows “autonomy and self-determination” (Sardenberg, 2008).

Being an entrepreneur is, however, really hard and time consuming. An entrepreneur make money only during his/her working days and they do not enjoy paid leave. They also need to impose themselves on vacation, rest and limitations regarding their working hours. Moreover, for the ones working from home, it makes harder the division between personal and professional life, as everything from professional life invade the home;
being too much available mean being contacted anytime, day and night, which can be really intrusive.

7. Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to understand if and how three main feminist values (equality, caring and empowerment), chosen because of their prevalence in feminist literature, are experienced by feminist entrepreneurs. This research finds out that the main definition of these terms does not fit every feminist entrepreneur and therefore a new theoretical model emerged, describing the three main values according to the research findings.

Three main values that have been divided in different sub concepts, have been chosen to lead the study and therefore the interview questions: equality, caring and empowerment. The main goal was to understand how these values are understood and used by feminist entrepreneurs into and through their business.
The first model presented three sub concepts concerning the value “equality”: distribution of power, opportunity to influence, equal treatment at work.

Four main ideas emerged from the interviews and are presented in the second model. “Distribution of power” and “equal treatment at work” have been discussed in the same vein with the interviewees. The notion of power generated the idea of “hierarchy” while “standing for equality” is what emerged from “equal treatment at work”. It has been interesting to notice that the notions of discrimination and inequality towards feminist entrepreneurs (particularly women), which have not been studied in the theoretical chapter has been recurring.
Regarding the idea of caring, “emotional connection” connected the concepts of “natural and ethical care” presented in the theoretical chapter. This notion has been treated with the interviewees and the difference of opinions conflict with the study of Noddings (1984). However, a “positive relationship” feed through an emotional connection has been stated a beneficial even in a business environment. All the other subconcepts stayed the same as they attained saturation and were used by every feminist entrepreneur: “caring for/about, taking care of, care giving, care receiving”.

The first model presented the concept of empowerment with the notions of improving welfare and personal development. These ideas have been developed along the interviews and the main ideas were effectively that “becoming an entrepreneur [enhances] a positive self-development” and “makes you grow”. The motivations for becoming an entrepreneur and how hard this job can be, even if not studied in the theoretical framework, have both been covered during the interviews, as they seem to be an important topic for the interviewees. Finally, the notion of empowerment has been defined as a need and a duty.

8. Research implications

The new model presents different sub concepts of the three main values of feminism adapted to entrepreneurship. In fact, the definition of these values did not fit the way feminist entrepreneur saw themselves completely. This model is then adapted to the entrepreneurial and feminist world thanks to the analysis of the discussion. These tested definitions are now the basis to analyse these values contextually in further research.

Managerial implications

Managers can use this paper as a basis to understand the main feminist values in a business, deal with feminist issues and how they influence the way the business is managed.
Managers and business owners will be able to recognise feminist values, manage and develop them in accordance with their will; or managers will begin by identifying a lack of one (or more) of those values and decide that implementing a feminist view can bring benefits. Therefore, it can be useful to assess the current values of a business and their pro/cons to see if changing the current norms can lead to the renew of a business through feminist values.

It will help managers and business owners to think and act differently about feminist issues in their companies and give them interest to gain knowledge about how to manage, help and develop these values.

9. Future studies

Now as a new model emerged, the interest for further research will be to test on a bigger scale. For example, using a quantitative study to confirm whether this study is valid in many other environments as different countries, type of business; or people who have different approaches to business creation (push or pull into it), taking a special strand of claimed feminist…

This research confirms the statement that “feminist entrepreneurs do not perceive themselves as described in the feminist literature” (Orser et al., 2011: 584). This study contributes to assessing that the current studies on feminism do not fit the reality. Therefore, more studies should consider the experience of feminist entrepreneurs; by using qualitative research and limiting the masculine bias.
Reference list


Oxford Dictionary (2018) [accessed on 20.03.18/15.04.18]


The workplace gender equality agency [https://www.wgea.gov.au](https://www.wgea.gov.au)


A.1 Preliminary e-mail

Dear ...,,

thank you so much for agreeing to be part of our study. As you asked us, here are some further information about what will be asked to you during our Skype interview.

The interview is done with the goal of our Bachelor thesis about “Feminism and Entrepreneurship” at Linnaeus University, Växjö. After the interview, the data collected will be analysed and used anonymously in our thesis. After the thesis being published and approved, all the data will be erased. By agreeing to have a meeting with us, you consent to the use of our personal communication for the thesis.

We first would like to have a general idea of what your business is. Then we will raise the subject of equality, caring and empowerment and how you implement these values into or through your business.

Our main questions will be:

How do you deal with inequality issues? How do you set equality up into your business? *i.e. measures leading to gender, political, economic or social equality in the workplace as well as giving the same job/educational opportunities...*

To what extent do you pay attention to your employees’ opinion, needs and wills and what do you implement into your business to fulfil their needs?

To what extent can you say that developing your own business helped your personal development as well as your and employees’ welfare?

These are only preliminary questions to give you the first idea of what will be asked in the interview. More questions can be added depending on our conversation.

Thank you for sharing your experience with us,

Best regards,

Zoe and Marie