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# Women's entrepreneurial narrative: making sense of the partner's role

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BELGHIITI-MAHUT Sophia, LAFONT Anne-Laurence, RODHAIN Angélique et RODHAIN Florence (2020),

## **Abstract**

The present research explores the role the partner plays in women's motivation for entrepreneurship and how spousal support influences the female entrepreneurship process. A qualitative study, using life-story methodology, was conducted with 29 French women entrepreneurs. It was found that women perceived the partner's support as explicit, implicit, or absent. Women who perceive significant and visible support from their partners are clearly grateful to their partners, without whom their entrepreneurial journey might not have commenced. A majority of respondents perceived the tacit approval of the partner and sometimes his income as implicit support. Finally, a certain proportion of female entrepreneurs experienced no support, which they considered mostly as a hindrance or a challenge.

**Key words:** Female entrepreneurs, Partners, Support, Entrepreneurship, Life story, Typology.

## **Introduction**

Although the number, size and types of businesses owned and led by women has been expanding steadily worldwide (Brush et al., 2009; GEM, 2011, 2014, 2018), entrepreneurship is not yet an openly accessible field with equal economic opportunities for women (Ahl and Marlow, 2012). Several explanations have been proposed to shed light on this reality. These explanations intersect with those proposed to explain gender inequality at work, such as for instance the glass ceiling, the underrepresentation of female leaders in upper management positions, and their perceived lack of power and authority (Davidson and Copper, 1992; Powell, 2012). The effects and consequences of decades of a patriarchal social system, social norms and stereotypes are some of the factors identified as barriers to women's progress in the workplace (Belghiti-Mahut, 2004; Schein, 2001; Kanter 1977). Some research suggests that women's businesses fail more often than men's, which could explain the low number of female entrepreneurs. Others note that fewer women than men start their business to begin with (Patterson et al., 2012; Robichaud, Cachon and McGraw, 2015).

Research into women's entrepreneurship has experienced a resurgence over the last few years (Aaltio and Wang, 2016; Nikine et al., 2012, Kikwood, 2009; Kyrö, 2009). Researchers throughout the world have demonstrated an interest in exploring this field which is undergoing expansion (Kyrö, 2009; McDonald et al., 2015). As female entrepreneurial activities have become emphasized as a means of economic growth, an increasing number of researchers have called for more critical perspectives in entrepreneurship research (Tedmanson et al., 2012; Ahl and Marlow, 2012; Verdujin et al., 2014). It has been argued that "the taken for granted" norms of and approaches to entrepreneurship scholarship (Tedmanson et al., 2012, p. 532) and the assumption of a homogenous "white male" entrepreneur archetype (Verduijn et al., 2014) should be questioned.

Yet, the common assumption that entrepreneurship is a male-dominated activity is largely shared in the entrepreneurship scholarly community. There are a variety of reasons that contribute to the observed differences in entrepreneurial behavior across gender and why and how these differences have significant implications at the macroeconomic level (Minniti et al., 2006; Patterson et al., 2012). The propensity of women to start a business may differ from that

of men for cultural reasons and due to the existence of stereotypes and bias, as mentioned previously (Neumark and McLennan, 1995).

According to Carrier et al. (2008), most of the characteristics and obstacles observed in women's literature on entrepreneurship are related to motivation, management style, performance, training needs, work-family balance, networking and financing. A body of literature also focuses on the role the family and the partner play in supporting entrepreneurs' aspirations (Duncan et al., 2000; Kirkwood and Tootell, 2008; Kirkwood, 2009; Boggesi et al., 2016; De Vita et al., 2014). However, the level of partner support may not only influence women's entrepreneurial motivation, but also the way they succeed in both their private and professional lives, which remains underexplored. This research fills that gap. It considers the role partner plays in both female entrepreneurship motivation and in the process, focusing mainly on the start-up phase and using a life-story approach.

In the entrepreneurship research field, the use of narrative research is at its starting point (Larty and Hamilton, 2011). Kevill et al. (2014) notes that this approach requires researchers to focus on personal and emergent facets of entrepreneurial practice instead of aspects that are predominantly known. The originality of our approach lies in the use of the life-story method, specifically of the stories of 29 entrepreneurs. We use the epistemological debate around the methodology as the foundation and hone in on the influence of certain aspects of the entrepreneur's life in the construction of their stories (Pailot, 2003). This methodology is often misused and indeed quasi-absent in entrepreneurship research (Kevill et al., 2014), despite the fact that it allows the researcher to capture "the tiny true facts" that would be missed in purely quantitative/statistical studies (Rioux, 1983).

In this paper, we first elaborate on the role the family and the partner play in a female entrepreneur's journey (Section 1). Drawing on previous conceptualizations of work-family articulation and gender role ideology, we describe how the partner's support is perceived and how female entrepreneurs sometimes consider entrepreneurship as facilitating or complicating their lives (Section 2). Section 3 details the narrative story method and research design. Section 4 describes the main findings of the research and Section 5 discusses their implications. The paper concludes with an overview of the current study and how further research can help address its limitations.

## **1. Female entrepreneur: Role of the family and the partner**

According to Aaltion and Wang (2016), “gender dynamics within the couple”, among other contextual factors, has gained more research interest in recent years. It has also been stressed in the literature that the motivation to start a business differs between men and women (Carr, 2004; Budig, 2006). Having children and a husband has been mentioned as one of factors that increases the likelihood that a woman would favor entrepreneurial activities (Taniguchi, 2002). It has also been shown that women join their husbands in their business in order to help and support them (Budig, 2006; Nearchou-Ellinas and Kountouris, 2004). Some women also decide to become entrepreneurs to balance their family and work involvements (Nel et al., 2011, Fielden et al., 2003).

However, being an entrepreneur is a decision that has family consequences that could potentially be problematic. For instance, Van Auken and Webel (2006) have discussed the contributory role of spousal commitment in family-firm performance noting that an uncommitted spouse is likely to make the entrepreneurial process more stressful. Additionally, Aldrich and Cliff (2003) and Liang and Dunn (2010), among others, have tested how an entrepreneur’s perception of their partner’s reaction to their entrepreneurship differs in the initial phase of entrepreneurship process and after the company has been created. Entrepreneurs who are optimistic believe their partners are happier and those who are pessimistic believe their partners are less happy and would not support new ventures (ibid).

The role of the partner in entrepreneurial activity may have varying levels of involvement. Copreneurship is defined as “couples where both partners are involved in the business and share responsibilities for its operation and management” and represents the most complete level of involvement (Barnett and Barnett, 1988). The literature on copreneurship recognizes the difficulties in combining business and personal relationships (de Bruin and Lewis, 2001; Danes and Olson, 2003; Milton, 2008). The concept is also compared to unpaid labor where the non-business active partner takes on the role unofficially and for little or no compensation – a notion largely associated with women (Blenkinsopp and Owens, 2010). The term “forced integration” is used to describe situations in which one partner (usually a woman) sacrifices their own career

to support and adjust to their partner's needs in business (Blenkinsopp and Owens, 2010; Chell and Baines, 1998). The unpaid work of the female partner within businesses can also illustrate the traditional gender roles in terms of family responsibilities and childcare (Blenkinsopp and Owens, 2010).

Men and women also have different expectations when it comes to spousal support. Women entrepreneurs who are concerned about the potential consequences of their entrepreneurship on their family seek the support of their husbands for business advice and encouragement, while male entrepreneurs tend to take their partner's support for granted. Some men even start their business without their partner's explicit support (Kirkwood, 2009). Women, when deciding to be entrepreneurs, depend on the support of their family and other relatives more than men do (Kirkwood, 2009; Brush, 1992). In fact, the lack of spousal support may reduce the psychological and temporal resources dedicated to the business. The partner can support or disapprove of the use of family resources as a source of the start-up's funds (Webel and Dans, 2010).

Kirkwood (2009), in a qualitative study based on 86 interviews (45 men and 23 women), described spousal support as being a continuum from co-founders and supportive partners to unsupportive/ambivalent partners. The impact of the three dimensions of the role of the spouse – emotional support, business support, and household support – is notable not only due to their influence on the interactional marriage but also due to their impact on the wife's psychological contract with her business (Nikina et al., 2012). Some research has also shown that more educated partners and those with entrepreneurial experience tend to show greater support to their partners' aspirations (Lombard, 2001, Mattis 2004).

## **2. Work-family articulation, gender role ideology**

Gender-role ideology (GRI) refers to the attitudes or beliefs an individual holds about the proper roles of men and women in society (Korabik, 2015). Pleck (1977), analyzing men's and women's work and family roles, noted different patterns in the workplace and the family sphere and said that GRI is usually expressed as a unidimensional construct with traditional and egalitarian attitudes at either end of the spectrum. Individuals with a traditional gender role ideology believe that women should give priority to family responsibilities, while men should prioritize work responsibilities (Guttek et al., 1991). Even though in most western societies the traditional male breadwinner model of the family has deteriorated and a transition from

traditional gender ideology to a more egalitarian one has taken place, women still have the primary responsibility for domestic and family chores (Meda, 2008) and experience a “double shift” on the time and effort expended, one at work and one at home (Marlow, 1997).

Research has shown that, in terms of balance, women entrepreneurs either consider entrepreneurship a “problem” or a “solution” (Knorr et al., 2011; Nel, et al., 2010). For some women, the main motivation for starting a business is the desire to balance professional life with private life, as in the case of so-called “mumpreneurs” (Nel et al., 2010). Entrepreneurship offers the flexibility often lacking in traditional jobs, as Bourgain and Chaudat (2013) noted in their study comparing the perceptions of 12 women executives and 12 women business owners. Many studies show that economic necessity is the primary motivation pushing women to start a business (Eversole 2004; Holmen et al., 2011). Studies in developing countries use the pull/push theory to explain female entrepreneurs’ motivations (Poggesi et al., 2015). Women are also attracted to entrepreneurship to express their desire to achieve personal goals or social recognition and to tackle gender discrimination in the labor market (Okafor and Amalu, 2010).

However, some research has highlighted the work-family conflict experienced by female entrepreneurs and their need for greater support from their partners in family and childcare duties (Kim and Ling, 2001). Family support from the partner had a particularly significant impact in reducing conflict. The partner’s support is either perceived as instrumental support (participation in childcare and household chores) or information and emotional support (information, advice and/or affection provided by the partner) (Parasuraman et al., 1996).

Undeniably, in general, gender has an effect on work-life articulation through time commitment to family and time commitment to work (Parasuraman et al., 1996). Female entrepreneurs dedicate more time to family than their male counterparts in order to reduce anticipated work-family conflict (Parasuraman et al., 1996). They are also supposed to place more importance on domestic issues than men, according to the 20 male and 20 female entrepreneurs interviewed for a study by Knorr, Garzon, and Martinez (2011). This may explain why finding a balance can be problematic for female entrepreneurs

### **3. Methodology**

#### **Design/approach**

A qualitative research technique was used to better understand the role partners play in enhancing or hindering the female entrepreneurship process. Interviews, based on life narratives, were used to discover how families and partners interact within the business women's life course. The life story method helps to explore what the individual wants to tell about him/herself (Riessman, 1993). The life story method is different from other biographical methods (Man, 1992), as it is "one part of life history, the part that is told to another" (Kotre, 1992, p. 35).

The narrative method is particularly well adapted for in-depth exploration when knowledge is still partly based on stereotypes and preconceived assumptions, which is the case in female entrepreneurship (Sanseau, 2005; Gartner, 2010). The life story method fits into entrepreneurship research, as it allows entrepreneurs to give factual information about the events that have marked their lives, while highlighting the major events that have had a strong impact on them (Pailot, 2003, p. 27). It "provides some very powerful tools for exploring what entrepreneurs (or others) say about what they do" (Gartner, 2007, p. 616) that can help to capture reality's contradiction (Pailot, 2003).

The interview in life narrative method comprises two phases (Bertaux, 1997). The entrepreneurs were first invited to tell the story of their lives, from birth to the present day. In the second phase, the themes pre-designated as important that had not been mentioned spontaneously were discussed. Different themes were introduced, including reasons for becoming an entrepreneur, attitudes toward risk taking, objectives in the near future, the role of families, partners and networking, and assistance and barriers encountered. The interviews were held at a location chosen by the interviewee (most commonly in their office or a public place) and lasted from one hour to two and a half hours. All interviews were fully recorded and transcribed.

#### **Sample selection**

The sample was composed of 29 female entrepreneurs with a broad range of ages, educational levels, and sectors of activity (see Appendix 1 for the list of interviewees and demographic details). The common characteristic was their choice to create their own small company (0 to



30 employees). They were initially recruited from local entrepreneur networks (not necessarily women's networks) and the sample was extended by using the snowball method. For our location, while most studies focus on regions that are particularly attractive in terms of employment (Orhan and Scott, 2001), we focused on two French regions (the northeast and the south of France), that are plagued by high unemployment.

The dilemma for the female scholar, as evoked by Devault, (1990), is to find methods for listening around and beyond words. In order to write about women and their diverse experiences, Devault argues that “we need to move toward new methods for writing about women's lives and activities without leaving sociology altogether” (p. 2). We achieved this by using the life narrative method as a way to capture women's stories “without interruption” (Jones et al., 2011, p. 6). Our main purpose was not to make a comparison between male and female entrepreneurs, but instead to listen to women entrepreneurs telling their stories and to transcribe and relate these stories and our analysis thereof. The use of narratives “allow[s] for systematic study of experience and (for feminist researchers) the changing meaning of conditions that affect women disproportionately...” (Riessman, 1993, p. 185). We agree with Kyro (2009, p. 1) that using “gender lenses to study the interplay between gender theories and women entrepreneurship research might advance the understanding of women entrepreneurship and small business ownership.”

## **Analysis**

First, each interview was summarized. The summaries provide an overview of the different life pathways of the women we interviewed. Data analysis was conducted using a thematic matrix (Huberman and Miles, 1991). The interviews were analyzed both vertically, on the basis of interview summaries, and horizontally for thematic content (Bardin, 1993). The examination of the 29 summaries led to the creation of categories of women entrepreneurs according to the role the partners play in their entrepreneurship journey. Content analysis revealed the pertinent types of support that were expressed by the female entrepreneurs. We were able to create a typology of partner support based on the different stories.

We then made a lexical analysis of the corpus of the interviews with the software Sphinx iQ Lexica. To confirm the manual coding, data tables were prepared in an Excel spreadsheet and were imported into Sphinx software. The Sphinx software was also used to confirm the categories and to explore highlighted and over-represented keywords (Appendix 1). In this way,

Sphinx Lexica helped us to examine our corpus, and confirm the typology. The software was used to create word groupings inside different dictionaries; each dictionary representing one of the three categories obtained by the content analysis. Once the groupings were created, we used the main application to mark the most frequent words in the lexicon and their number of appearances, in order to highlight the major themes. After the manual content analysis and the lexical analysis, we extracted the final typology of partner support.

#### **4. Findings**

The typology that emanated from the entrepreneurs' stories distinguished three types of partner support: visible support, implicit or mixed support, and no support. The findings suggest that the gender equality between partners might be associated with the entrepreneur's perception of the partner's support for her business. An entrepreneur who dispenses with her partner's support is more likely to be an independent entrepreneur whose desire for freedom and independence from conventional structures of authority is strong (Baker and Nelson, 2005). The different types of support are discussed in more detail below.

##### **i. Visible support - “Without him no journey!”**

Some of the female entrepreneurs view their partner as very supportive, without whom the entrepreneurship journey would not have been possible. This was characterized by statements such as: “*The partner has the first place... we often say that behind a successful man is a woman, but I would say, it is a couple's story, not a question of man or woman...*”; “*I have a very present spouse and very present family.*”; “*It is him who listens to me, all the time, all the time, all the time... because I talk a lot about my work!*” Some of the partners are actively involved in the entrepreneurship process: they help with the implementation, assist in the entrepreneurship process, or care for the children. In this regard, a participant noted: “*My husband handles the kids (...). He reduced his work load to 70% so he can be here for me, for the kids...*”

Some of these entrepreneurs consider the security of having a partner with a good income as a great support, with a respondent noting: “*Really, having my husband with his comfortable salary helped a lot... the risk I took is low.... I had a backup if it fails...*” Some of these women used to be completely dedicated to the family duties at the beginning, even

ignoring their own careers. But when their family obligations were met (the partner had retired or the children had grown up), they took the opportunity to focus on their own aspirations. One of the interviewees emphasized on this by stating: *“He took over from me... because there was a tacit agreement, I followed him for his career...then it was my turn... I am lucky to have this agreement with my husband...”*

**ii. Implicit or mixed support - “My project, my decision.”**

The second category of support includes women for whom, while it is not manifest, the support of their partners is implicit. For instance, a respondent stated: *“What was really helpful for me? Not to discuss my project with my family... my way not to worry them, but of course their affection... my partner’s support is important.”* These women appear to be more autonomous, with a complementary view of partners’ roles. They take more risks and seem to be less affected by their partner’s support, with a respondent specifying: *“Yes, there are many moments where you are alone with your decisions. But, well... there are things that you don’t share, not with your partner, not with your team or with your investors.”*

There were instances of women who started their businesses with ambivalent support from their partners, with one expressing it as: *“I wouldn’t say he supported me! That’s a big word... but anyway, as I don’t cost him a penny... he has nothing to say about my project.... my savings...”*. For these women, the support of their partners was not clear and obvious; however, letting them achieve their project was considered a form of implicit support, with one respondent noting: *“Let’s say that I had a support from him... he had a good job!”*

**iii. No support - “A partner? Not in my plans!”**

For some women, the partner is perceived as a weight on their projects, with responses such as: *“No support. I was alone, alone, alone!”*. Two classifications of female entrepreneurs can be made here: single women and divorced women. Single women noted that for them it is complicated to get involved in a relationship while being an entrepreneur. A respondent noted: *“For me, it has been 15, 16 years, I lead the ship alone!”*, and another highlighted that after the business is launched, the private life is often ignored, by stating: *“No real place for a private life!”*

For divorced women, the partner had been a barrier rather than a support, causing the relationship to end in separation or divorce. For instance, one respondent stated: *“Even when I needed him to take over for the kids... he said no!”* In these cases, partners appeared to hinder their aspiration and these women entrepreneurs considered entrepreneurship as a solitary project. Statements in support of this view included: *“Yet, I wasn’t able to give myself the legitimacy... I... my husband... doesn’t contrast my feeling... he drove me in.”*; *“It caused my divorce!”*

Overall, these findings suggest that gender equality between partners, implicitly suggested in their stories, as well as their entrepreneurial experience can somehow be associated with their perception of the partner’s support to her business and its consequences.

## 5. Discussion

Our results are aligned with previous findings that indicate that there is a continuum of spousal support from supporting (and co-founding) to not supporting (Kirkwood, 2009). However, none of the women interviewed founded their business with their partners, so the obvious support of the partner co-founder is not indicated in the sample. Our findings also confirm earlier observations that partners can be either very supportive and influence female entrepreneurs’ motivations and aspirations or unsupportive, in which case women simply do not consider having partner as a source of support (Kirkwood, 2009).

Nikina et al. (2013) highlight three key dimensions of the role of the husband: emotional support, business support, and household support. Our cases do not confirm their observation of the greatest contribution of the partners being in terms of business support.<sup>1</sup> Most of our cases recognize the effective emotional and social support of their partners. Emotional support enhances the entrepreneurs’ self-efficacy perception and can have a positive effect on work-family balance (Beutell and Greenhaus, 1982). Similar to the results of Mattiss (2004), the economic support provided by a working partner was also seen as an important support for some of our interviewees. Some of the responses also confirmed the findings of Lombard (2001) which suggest that women are more likely to choose self-employment when they are older, have children, and their husband’s education and earnings are high.

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<sup>1</sup> We had one case: a female entrepreneur in the clothing field who has the business support of her partner who was in charge of managing the website, taking photos, etc.

Our findings illustrate a majority of what we call “independent entrepreneurs”, for whom implicit or no support is the reality. As one of the motivations for being an entrepreneur is independency and autonomy, it is not surprising that these entrepreneurs create and handle their enterprises without perceived or effective partner support. This is also evidenced in the literature where pull motivation factors for female entrepreneurship are usually associated with independence, self-fulfillment and power needs (Duchenault and Orhan, 2000). Similarly, a common desire that drives entrepreneurs is the desire for freedom and independence from conventional structures of authority and income generation (Baker and Nelson, 2005). Personality traits should also be considered, especially since it affects the perception of and the need for social and family support.

Ammar and Widmer’s typology (2013) of couple interaction styles, which included *bastion*, *cocoon*, *association*, *companionship*, and *the parallel* style, was based on internal cohesion, either fusional or autonomous; role differentiation, highly gendered or tending toward equality between partners; and the couple’s relationships to the surrounding environment, either closed or open. In our sample, women who are independent and also involved in relationships seem to be close to the *association* type in this typology. The *association* style is defined with a high level of personal autonomy for both partners and a relatively egalitarian division of roles, tasks, and power. The main values that structure this interaction style are the quest for personal authenticity and the regular negotiation of individual rights between partners (Widmer, 2016).

According to several researchers, seeking autonomy is one of the main drivers for becoming an entrepreneur (Kolveried, 1996). Rindova et al. (2009) suggest that entrepreneuring can be seen as acts toward emancipation, emancipation being defined as “the act of setting free from the power of another” (Webster’s Revised Unabridged Dictionary, 1996, in Rindova and Barry, 2009). The question as to whether entrepreneurship is emancipatory or not was addressed by Verduijn et al. (2014) who suggested “that a productive way to address this question is to let go of an ‘either-or’ contested position, and instead endorse an ‘as-well-as’ position which essentially contends that emancipation and oppression are both immanent potentials of entrepreneurship” (p. 100).

Considering Laclau’s (1996) discussion of the emancipation perspective, Verduijn et al. (2014) conceive entrepreneurship as a two-headed phenomenon, comprising emancipation and

oppression as forces which stand in a relationship of constant tension. There are several paths to analyze this supposed emancipation and the factors leading to it. However, one prerequisite would be to re-examine the social construction of gender and the symbolic violence, invisible *even to its victims*, which Foucault (1972) called *masculine domination* (Bourdieu, 2001). Given that the concept of emancipation or masculine domination did not emerge from the current data set, this may be an indication of cultural and/or situational elements that are absent from the current context of entrepreneurial women in France.

## **Conclusion**

Whether married, in a relationship, or single, female entrepreneurs face many challenges during their entrepreneurship journey. This research has shown that partner support for many entrepreneurs is not a consistent determinant. Partner support has a great influence on some entrepreneurs, while it plays a mixed role in enhancing many women's willingness to start and run a business. Female entrepreneurs are known to be independent and self-reliable, which can suggest in part why a majority of our interviewees do not perceive their partner's support as a vital need. This perception is also determined and affected by several factors, one among them being the couple relationship. We would argue that female entrepreneurs mainly need network, institutional, and financial support.

Our research had a limited sample and there are thus some important limitations that require further research. The study sample included only French entrepreneurs. French female entrepreneurs may not be affected by the support of their partners, but this could be due to cultural factors and it may thus not be the case for all female entrepreneurs. There is also a need to consider in more depth how couples interact with each other and to investigate the dominating role within the couple. Further research should uncover possible layers of factors that might explain women's motivation to start a business and to believe in its success. All of this will shed more light on how female entrepreneurship can be increased and how female entrepreneurs can be supported in achieving their objectives.

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**Appendix 1: Profiles of the interviewees**

<b>Alias</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Marital status</b>	<b>Children</b>	<b>Sector</b>
<b>T</b>	50	Divorced	2: adolescents	Food services
<b>H1</b>	30	Single	0	Cell phones
<b>C1</b>	30	Single	0	Statistics
<b>M1</b>	41	Married	2: 3 and 10	Children's fashion
<b>A1</b>	55	Living with partner	3: 19 to 26	Chemistry
<b>N1</b>	37	Married	1: 1 yr	Cosmetics/chemistry
<b>S1</b>	40	Divorced	2: 10 and 14 yr	Home services
<b>E</b>	59	Living with partner	1: + 20	Coiffure
<b>L1</b>	57	Widow	2	Affective coaching
<b>B1</b>	32	In a relationship	0	Commerce
<b>F1</b>	46	Remarried	2: 17 and 20	Publishing
<b>C2</b>	43	Divorced	3: 8,14 and 18	Organic haircare
<b>D</b>	55	Married	2: 20 and 24	Real estate
<b>S4</b>	40	Married	0	Couture
<b>B2</b>	45	Divorced/in relationship	1	Tourism
<b>S2</b>	43	Living with partner	2	Chemistry
<b>S3</b>	46	Married	2: 7 and 13	Carpentry
<b>B3</b>	36	Married	1: 15 months	Naming
<b>A2</b>	30	In a relationship	0	Cosmetician
<b>F2</b>	53	In a relationship	1: 22	Hotel/hospitality
<b>A3</b>	41	Divorced/in relationship	1: 14	Home services
<b>M2</b>	55	Married	2: adults	
<b>L2</b>	38	Living with partner	1; 3 yr	Mass-media
<b>N2</b>	57	Living with partner	3: adults	Health
<b>K1</b>	44	Single	0	Biotechnology
<b>K2</b>	42	Married	2: 8 and 10 yr	Biotechnology
<b>H2</b>	49	Divorced/ in relationship	2 adults	Health
<b>M3</b>	45	Living with partner	2: 8 and 13	Food
<b>V</b>	41	Married	2: 13 and 10	Digital

## Appendix 2<sup>2</sup>



### Words' Cloud

Analyzed Variable : Partner

Contexte : Partner-support (1 Visible Support; 2 Mixte Support; 3 No support)

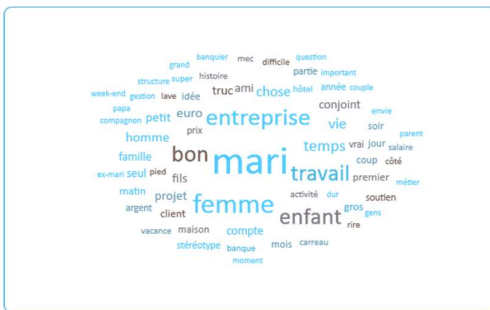


### Lexical and Semantical Overview

Corpus : 3587 words      Length median : 92 words



Principles thematical fields :



The cloud represents the main key-words (size proportional to effectifs).



### Words' Cloud

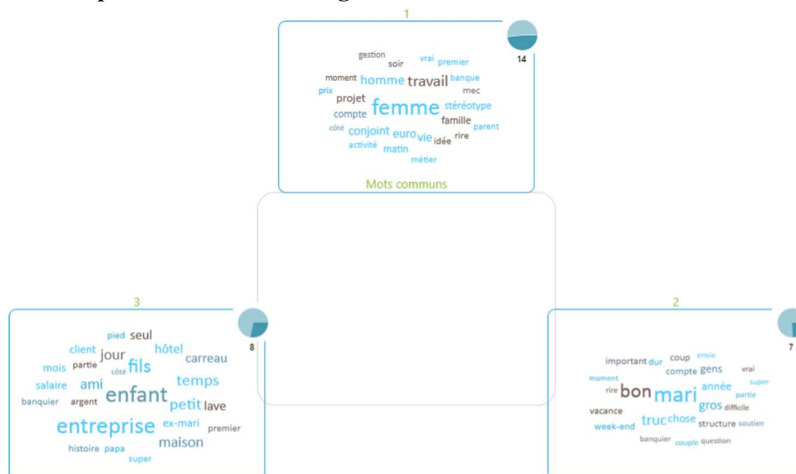
Analyzed Variable : 14. Partner  
Context : Partner-support (1; 2; 3)



### Specific words according to contexts



Responses' rate : 100%



<sup>2</sup> The interviews were conducted in French, the software outputs are in French. The authors translated the headings and text when it was possible.

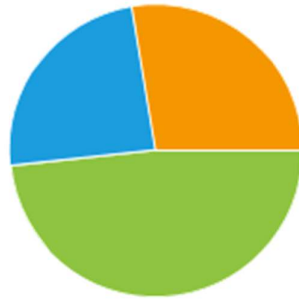


### Contextual Analysis

Analyzed Variable : 14. Partnert  
Context : Partner\_support (1 Visible Support; 2 Mixte Support; 3 No support)



### Characterization according to context



1 Visible Support  
2 Mixte Support  
3 No support

	Effectifs	Average Length	5 specific words	Specific Concept	Specific Feeling	Specific Class	Specific Orientation	Relative relevance Indicator
1	14	133	Women - work - man - life - euro - ...	Cash and bank				1,00
2	7	56	Partner - good - stuff - big - year - ...	Job and salary	Fear			0,48
3	8	219	company - child - son - small - time	Job and salary	Interest			1,52

Concepts correspond to concepts level 3.

The relevance of a corpus depends on the number of diverse words affiliated to a corpus. Of the relevance indicator is superior to 1, then the responses belonging to this category are more relevant than the average. If the indicator is inferior to 1, the responses to are less relevant than the average.