

Craftswomen Entrepreneurs in Flow: No Boundaries Between Business and Leisure

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Abstract

Although the high levels in Latin America, women's necessity-driven entrepreneurship is a field that has been little explored. Contemporary research suggests that entrepreneurs may experience less work-life conflict than other workers, but that gender differences mean that women are at a disadvantage in terms of uses of time and the sexual division of labor. We explore how 20 Chilean craftswomen experience their (productive) work time. The content analysis of group interviews shows that these socially at-risk women entrepreneurs achieve wellbeing at work by entering a state of flow. They describe their experience as personal time, which resembles leisure more than it does actual work. This source of emotional wellbeing seems to be a personal strategy that helps them cope with their precarious situation. Their boundaries between work and personal time are blurred. Our findings illustrate how uses of time can be perceived differently in different contexts. We put particular emphasis on the restorative nature of personal time and the need for further research in this area from a gender approach.

Craftswomen Entrepreneurs in Flow: No Boundaries Between Business and Leisure

Introduction

Necessity-driven entrepreneurship in subsistence contexts is so widespread in developing countries that further insight is needed into the phenomenon. Although entrepreneurial activity has been described as an occupation that seems to be suited to work-life balance¹ (Agarwal & Lenka, 2015), research reveals considerable disadvantages for women due to the unequal distribution of time between the sexes (Bianchi & Milkie, 2010; Callejo & Prieto, 2015). Women have a greater domestic and care workload, which makes them less available for paid work (Carrasco et al., 2011, p. 74).

The use of time by entrepreneurs is complex as the boundaries between work and non-work domains are blurred. Being self-employed, entrepreneurs, manage these limits through their self-awareness and comfort level (Myrie & Daly, 2009). Strategies to manage them are affected by gender (Callejo & Prieto, 2015). These facts strongly suggest that qualitative research should focus on the use of time in entrepreneurship, and the different impact it has on men and women.

Moreover, qualitative aspects of time, and personal and contextual circumstances can affect how individuals perceive – subjectively – the balance or conflict between time dedicated to work and non-work (Thompson & Bunderson, 2001).

In this regard, subjective experiences about the use of time have been found in the state of flow. Mihaly Csikszentmihályi made a wide-ranging study of state of flow as a source of

¹ Understanding work-life balance as having sufficient time to fulfil the commitments of both spheres (work, as paid work, and life, as all other activities). This is the definition that Guest (2002) refers to as elementary and limited, although it contains both objective and subjective dimensions.

autonomy, enjoyment, and wellbeing.² His research reports that people can experience optimal wellbeing or *flow* even during their working hours (Csikszentmihályi, 1990, 1997; Csikszentmihályi & LeFevre, 1989; Nakamura & Csikszentmihályi, 2012), when time is perceived subjectively.

This study explores how a group of women perceives their entrepreneurial work. We were interested in studying a group of Chilean women who despite being in a precarious situation with hardly any income seemed to maintain high levels of emotional wellbeing. For the purpose of this study, we will classify uses of time at work (productive or reproductive) and leisure (social or personal). This study reports the analysis of seven group interviews with 20 women entrepreneurs who participated in the PRODEMU Foundation training programs and sales events in 2017 and 2018. This foundation is a public agency that offers training and support to socially at-risk women throughout Chile.

We argue that when these women experience flow during the time dedicated to productive work, this time is perceived as (or has the characteristics of) "personal time" that is satisfying and a source of wellbeing.

The study provides relevant qualitative information about research on the uses of time by these female entrepreneurs, with a gender approach that helps to understand systemic disadvantages faced by women. After a description of the context, the theoretical section explores the state of flow and the uses of time. The next section describes the methodology and includes an explanatory table of how the thematic content was analyzed. Findings evidence women's' state of flow during entrepreneurial time. The discussion integrates how personal and

² Wellbeing is a multidimensional concept (Dodge et al., 2012; Ryff, 1995). Due to the relation between flow and emotional wellbeing, we will refer mainly to this latter dimension, which is related to satisfaction (Felce & Perry, 1995).

entrepreneurial time are intertwined. Finally, the implications are considered and conclusions drawn.

Context of the study

The object of study needs to be contextualised in the field of economies where entrepreneurship is the most favorable way to obtain income, particularly in groups that do not meet the necessary requirements to be employed by organizations, and in which the patriarchal culture presses women to take on housework and care tasks. Chile is a country with marked gender inequality,³ social stratification, and inequality in the distribution of income (Heller, 2010; UN Women, 2017; UNDP, 2019). A high percentage of women in Chile are heads of household (37.9%),⁴ a figure that has doubled in the last 25 years and is mainly concentrated in the poorest homes (Comunidad Mujer, 2016). Likewise, a high percentage of its active population are involved in entrepreneurship (26.2%) of which 39.2% are women (INE, 2017a).

A total of 66.2% of female entrepreneurs start necessity-driven businesses⁵ and 68.2% engage in subsistence entrepreneurship with a monthly income of less than 320 USD (INE, 2017a), while 52% and 74.5% belong to the informal economy in the sense that they do not make tax payments or social contributions, respectively (Comunidad Mujer, 2016; INE, 2017a). Additionally, 58.4% are home-based businesses (Comunidad Mujer, 2016, p. 268) with little added value and little innovation (Guerra & Pizarro, 2011) within the trade and services sector (Amorós et al., 2015).

³ The GII (Gender Inequality Index) in Chile is 0.288. This is better than Latin America as a whole (0.383) but still 62nd in the world ranking (UNDP, 2019).

⁴ The head of the household is the main breadwinner, and the woman is in charge of reproductive and productive tasks.

⁵ According to the GEM classification (Acs et al., 2005), necessity-driven entrepreneurship is the only alternative for obtaining income, because devising a business tailored to market needs (opportunity-driven entrepreneurship) is not an option. The lack of a business opportunity means that the focus is on the product they offer, so profitability is compromised.

The lowest socioeconomic levels concentrate about 70% of necessity-driven entrepreneurship (Amorós et al., 2015). There is a correlation between the type of entrepreneur – female business owners (or employers) and self-employed women – and income level: the former start a business by identifying market opportunities and are economically sustainable, and the latter belong to the most vulnerable sectors, as they engage in necessity-driven entrepreneurship in contexts of subsistence and precariousness (Comunidad Mujer, 2016).

Moreover, the United Nations (2017) has classified the barriers to economic autonomy that women in Latin America have to face into three main groups: *sticky floors*, *broken ladders* and *glass ceilings*. For the purpose of this study, we shall focus on the first two.

The sticky floors scenario is made up of women with very low levels of education and income, high and early fertility rates, and high reproductive workloads at home (housework and care). They can barely achieve work-life balance and only have access to the most precarious working conditions. Broken ladders are a problem for women with medium levels of education and low incomes, and with no support networks, who manage to achieve work-life balance with some difficulty and risk falling to the even lower level of sticky floors (UN Women, 2017).

Furthermore, the paradox of the woman entrepreneur (Brush et al., 2014) is also present in the Chilean context (Comunidad Mujer, 2016, p. 54), where women who face barriers to accessing the labor market start a home-based business to achieve better work-life balance. But they have to assume, at the same time, care and domestic tasks, and the high cost of precariousness and informality.

Since the first Time Use Surveys (TUS) conducted all over Chile, the issue has grown in importance in the country as a whole because the conflicts it describes in work-life balance

generate higher levels of stress and discomfort, and less free time in women than in men (INE, 2018).

Theoretical Foundation

This section uses a gender approach to present a literature review on the state of flow and the conflicts that arise regarding social uses of time.

1. State of Flow

The psychological construct of flow was first coined in the 1960s (Weber & Fisher, 2020). Csikszentmihályi then studied the optimal experience and developed what is now known as the theory of flow. However, there is still no consensus on how flow can be operationalized. Measurements and meanings change drastically from one study to another (Abuhamdeh, 2020). Research on flow contributes knowledge to positive psychology in topics such as skills development, quality of life, happiness, and wellbeing (Csikszentmihályi & Nakamura, 2018; Nakamura & Csikszentmihályi, 2012). The most extensive research has been conducted by Csikszentmihályi, who defines state of flow or optimal experience as “*a state in which people are so involved in the activity that nothing else seems to matter to them; the experience, in itself, is so pleasant that people will do it even if it involves great effort, for the pure reason of doing it*” (Csikszentmihályi, 1990, p. 126). As the author argues, this theory is applied with the aim of improving quality of life in a wide variety of practical domains, such as work or leisure experiences, and throughout the lifespan (Tse et al., 2020).

A state of flow can be said to exist when one or several of the following components can be identified (Nakamura & Csikszentmihályi, 2012): absorption, in which action and consciousness merge, and individuals act effortlessly, fully involved, until the worries and frustrations of daily life are removed from their consciousness; concentration on the present as

the intense focus of attention, with no awareness of any other thoughts; distortion of the concept of time, with hours seeming to pass in minutes; the autotelic experience as an activity that has a purpose in itself, which is intrinsically rewarding. Other characteristics of the state of flow reported by the authors are: the development of skills, clear goals and immediate feedback, loss of reflective self-consciousness, and the sense of control. People describe their positive experience by mentioning at least one of these eight components (Nakamura & Csikszentmihályi, 2012). Rodríguez-Sánchez et al. (2011) have studied the conditions required for the presence of a state of flow, and the common key aspects are absorption and enjoyment.

Research on flow during (productive) work time indicates that there are flow patterns in this type of work not only in healthy people but also in burned-out individuals (Rodríguez-Sánchez et al., 2011). Additionally, there seems to be a cultural mandate against enjoying work because it is perceived as an obligation, a phenomenon that is described by Csikszentmihályi and LeFevre as the *paradox of work* (1989).

More research is needed on flow and the boundaries entrepreneurs establish with their work-life balance. King et al. (2010) suggested that holistically oriented entrepreneurs use business as part of their spiritual path and create an environment in which work and leisure are not perceived as separate work-related elements.

Recent research on a similar sample reports that women perceive their entrepreneurship as therapy when they are creating products and developing support networks. The study details how they experience flow in carrying out their productive activity, and how they characterize their temporal experiences as satisfying, relaxing and restorative (Ruiz-Martínez et al., 2020).

State of flow has been widely studied particularly within leisure activities because of their direct connection with enjoyment (Csikszentmihályi, 1980, 1990, 1997; Csikszentmihályi

& LeFevre, 1989; Haworth & Lewis, 2005; Mannell et al., 1988; Spracklen, 2017). Studies about the presence of flow in work and leisure environments obtained similar findings; absorption was more present in work activities, and enjoyment in leisure activities (Rodríguez-Sánchez et al., 2011).

2. *Social Uses of Time*

Contemporary research on work-life discursively divides life into at least two domains (Bianchi & Milkie, 2010). However, social wellbeing involves the development of a fulfilling life, not only in the work/family binomial, but also in the work/family/personal time trinomial (Prieto et al., 2015, p. 14). Studies on the use of time reveal how these three areas are related. Personal time has gradually become more important because it is direct link with improving autonomy (Callejo & Prieto, 2015) and a dimension of wellbeing (Ryff, 2018). A gender dynamic underlies them as components of the social relationships that serve as a framework (salary relationship, domestic relationship, and relationship with oneself,) and they are subject to a tense and conflicting articulation and hierarchization (Callejo & Prieto, 2015, p. 57). All this forces the working population to adjust and seek strategies to manage these domain boundaries, in which gender plays a crucial role in the social configuration of life's main activities (Callejo & Prieto, 2015; Ramos, 2007).

A gender lens is needed to understand the work of both women and entrepreneurs because entrepreneurship is traversed by gender dynamics (Brush et al., 2014). The sexual division of labor assigns different responsibilities and tasks on the basis of biological sex, and places women in the private space (the household) in charge of domestic and care tasks, and men in the public space, in charge of all other areas (Benería, 1979). Cultural representations, norms and socially accepted behaviors based on this hierarchy (gender roles) generate an asymmetry of

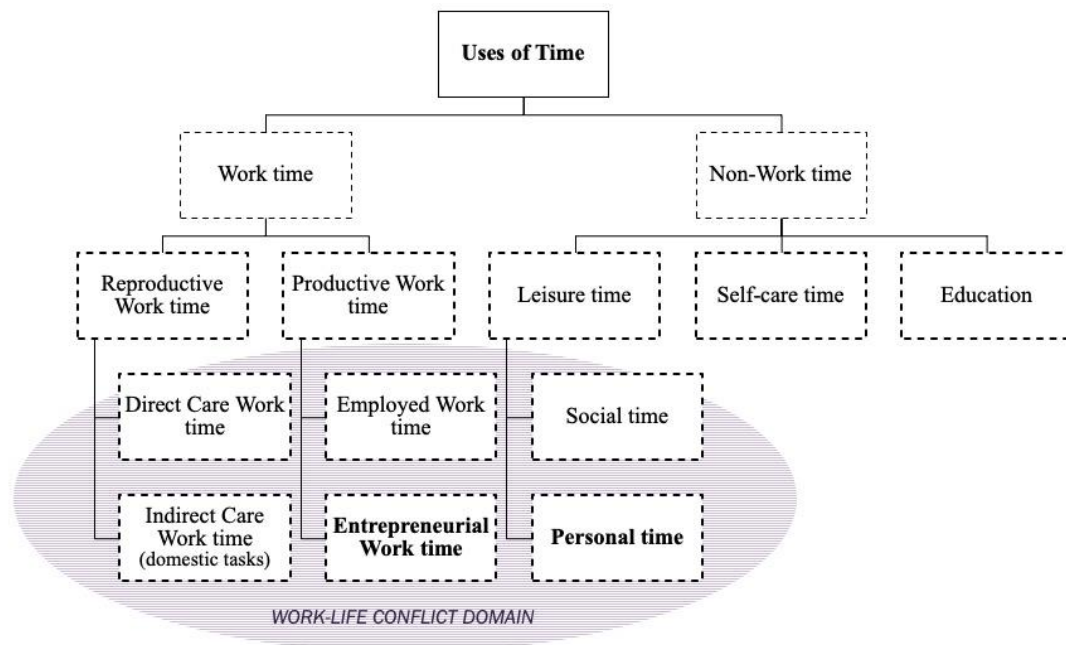
power in which women are disadvantaged compared to men (Maruani, 2000; Scott, 1999; Walby, 1990).

The massive incorporation of women into the workplace causes a *double presence* in both spheres that generates overload and reduces competitiveness. This is also known as *double shift* (Balbo, 1994; Hochschild, 1989). Thus, women have substantially less free time, as a byproduct of compulsory time, than men (Sagastizábal & Luxán, 2015). In countries where gender inequality is high (lack of childcare services, limited paternity leave, and less political power for women), women have less quality leisure than men (Yerkes et al., 2018).

The unequal use of time between men and women is determined by the sexual division of labor, which depends on social, economic, and cultural factors (CEPAL, 2015; Esquivel et al., 2012; INE, 2018; Prieto et al., 2015). The statistical information that addresses social uses of time reflect this unequal distribution of tasks. For instance, the Chilean Time Use Surveys (TUS) study the use of time according to the following classification: working time, family-care time, education, self-care, and leisure time. The latest report shows that women spend an average of three hours more than men on domestic and care activities every day (INE, 2016). With the greater participation of women in the labor market in recent years, women, globally, have a larger workload. This suggests lower levels of wellbeing, as more committed time means less freedom to choose what to do with their spare time. Moreover, Chilean TUS show that in addition to having less free time, women state that they are less satisfied with their free time than men (INE, 2017b). As argued by the Chilean non-profit institution Comunidad Mujer (2017), Chilean women's double shift means that they have less time for personal activities such as self-care, training, and leisure.

A Suitable Time-use Classification

Several criteria can be used to classify the uses of time. We aim to study how women perceive their entrepreneurial time, so it needs to be part of a classification that differentiates it from non-work time and even other uses of work time. Having just the two categories of paid and unpaid working time may be insufficient because, according to Letablier (2008), unpaid working time includes domestic and family care tasks, but also informal and voluntary work. So, categorizing the use of *work time* as either productive or reproductive explains, on the one hand, time dedicated to work as an entrepreneur or as an employee (productive work time) and, on the other, time dedicated to domestic and care tasks (reproductive work time) in the private domain. As time that is not devoted to productive or reproductive uses, non-work time can be dedicated to education, self-care, and leisure activities. Educational activities are defined as formal education time. Just like work time, education time is perceived as obligatory and occupies a great deal of the workday schedule. Self-care activities are defined as tasks that cover physiological needs (eating, sleeping), personal hygiene, and healthcare. These activities affect the individual's quality of life and, therefore, is "necessary time" (Ås, 1978). However, there is a certain degree of freedom and depending on their personal situations individuals can decide when to perform these activities. The bigger the workload, the less time devoted to self-care (INE, 2018). *Leisure time* was a category created as free time – understood as different from work – that includes social (family, friends, and community activities) and personal time (individual activities).

Figure 1: Uses of Time Classification. A conceptual map

Source: Authors elaboration, including the time dimension sources of work-family conflict by Greenhaus and Beutell (1985), and the permeability aspect of work-family border theory by Clark (2000).

a) Work time

Productive Work: Employed Work Time and Entrepreneurial Work Time

Productive work is committed time, perceived by most individuals in the workforce to be an obligation and/or necessity (Ås, 1978; Ramos, 2009). Research in recent decades suggests that productive work time operates as an identity builder (Downing, 2005; Ellemers et al., 2003). It has been the reference point for organizing Western societies, in general, and the daily life of individuals, in particular (Moreno, 2015; Pérez de Guzmán, 2015; Ramos, 2007). However, the cluster analysis by Callejo & Prieto (2015) shows that for women outside the labor market the organization of time pivots around reproductive work. Anyhow, most TUS around the world use

(productive) work time as a reference point around which all other time uses are configured because this is what clearly occupies most of an individual's day (INE, 2018).

The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) reveals that Chilean women seem to be particularly attracted to entrepreneurship because of the promise of time flexibility and autonomy (Mandakovic et al., 2016). The organizational working schedule hinders a healthy work-life balance, which mainly affects women due to the sexual division of labor (Martín Criado & Prieto, 2015).

Entrepreneurs have the autonomy and decision-making capacities to determine how, where and for how long they carry out their activities (Myrie & Daly, 2009). Bird (2014) set a framework for a taxonomy of entrepreneur's behavior; he listed their main activities, such as selling an initial product, prioritizing and rapidly solving problems, and so on, which may be related to the functional areas of the business (Alvarez & Barney, 2007). Yet the time devoted to these activities has not been sufficiently explored. The time perception is flexible and dynamic, there are not rigid boundaries; Ezzedeen and Zikic (2017) studied the apparent boundaryless and found that entrepreneurs still prefer to set some time boundaries, such as setting "mental firewalls". Entrepreneurial time is presented as more flexible, but it is also mandatory. Women entrepreneurs, whether home-based or *mumpreneurs*, use strategies to balance work with domestic and care tasks. This is initially empowering for them, but later they feel overloaded, as there is no schedule and the boundaries between time and space get blurred (Brush et al., 2014; Carter et al., 2017; Comunidad Mujer, 2016; Ezzedeen & Zikic, 2017). Empirical studies report that women founders also requires a high investment of time which conflicts with personal and family life (Pastor et al., 2016).

Reproductive Work Time

Reproductive work time includes the unpaid work done to support family and household members (Coltrane, 2000) so it consists of the time spent on domestic tasks and care of children, the elderly and other dependent people.

Domestic work cannot be avoided and expands to occupy all the time available (Friedan, 1963; Schwartz, 1976) although there is some scope for rescheduling (Moreno, 2015). However, care time cannot be postponed (Esquivel et al., 2012). Care responsibility involves, first, a lack of personal free time; and second, difficulty to disconnect and forget about the absorbing responsibility of care for a few hours. Both factors combine in a mutual dependence (Moreno, 2015). In summary, the unequal load between genders hinders women's wellbeing (Coltrane, 2000; Moreno, 2015).

b) Leisure Time

Leisure was first conceived as free time for workers when (productive) work time was regulated in organizations, but eventually it was conceived as free time outside work, in workers' private lives, as individual autonomy and freedom (Esquivel et al., 2012; Prieto et al., 2015; Zaremberg, 2007). Leisure time soon became important for nations in the development of public policies designed to increase the wellbeing of the citizenship. Leisure time in contemporary societies includes social and recreational activities. It is desired, and individuals feel they have earned it and long to use it (INE, 2018). For Setién (2006), leisure time is freely chosen but it is also a residual time, conditioned by committed time.

Callejo (2013) classifies free time as personal or social. Social time is spent on family, donated to other domains, such as community care and worthy causes, or set as collective time. On the other hand, personal time can also be one's own, so it is an asocial time, an individualized

time, the most highly valued of the uses of time that goes beyond the concept of "free time". It is a desired, liberating, and satisfying time. Unlike obligatory time, it needs to be earned, and acts as a repairer of the reality that all the obligatory time involves (Callejo, 2013). Setién (2006) refers to personal time as being free of commitments, destined for leisure and other activities, during which people choose to do the activities that give them the most satisfaction.

Lastly, a recent study examines the daily linkages between the adequacy of perceived time, the use of time, and the wellbeing of a group of parents, and shows that an intervention in the workplace conditioned their temporal experience and their wellbeing (Lee et al., 2017).

Methodology

The information presented in this article was collected through qualitative research by means of 7 group interviews with 20 women. Because of the socio-economic profile of the interviewees, the individual interview was discounted due to the proven difficulty these women have in constructing an explanatory discourse about their economic and labor decisions. As an alternative, the group interview was chosen to generate meaning from the voices themselves and for the rest of the women in the group to recognize that reality (Valles, 1999). Furthermore, this data collection technique provided phenomenological data in a natural context for the participants (Frey & Fontana, 1991).

The aim of the interviews was to determine in what respects women agreed and differed about the use of time at (productive) work, and the richness and nuances of different environments. We asked participants to talk about their working activities and how they perceived their entrepreneurial time. Since the script was based on open-ended questions, the researcher took care to redirect the topic or avoid lengthy interventions by some participants, which can be a potential threat to group interviews (Valles, 1999). We gathered data about

women from two different geographical locations using the access provided by the PRODEMU Foundation (Table 1).

The interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed and analyzed. All participating women were informed about the research project and asked to sign a consent form.

The participants in this study are craftswomen who were taking part in a basic training program with a gender approach at the PRODEMU Foundation. This suggests that they have a basic awareness of the sexual division of labor. They fit the average profile of female entrepreneurs in Chile described above, most of them work informally and, for some of them, their entrepreneurship is their main source of income.

Fifteen percent of the sample are women with a profile that places them at the *sticky floors* barrier. The rest of the sample started work as employees, and when confronted by the *broken ladders* barrier and their inability to balance work and family, they had to abandon their jobs and fall into a lower level of economic empowerment that kept them at the *sticky floors* barrier. In this context, our sample is exposed to poverty and social exclusion, which limits their chances of receiving equal treatment, both at work and at home (UN Women, 2017).

On the basis of the information provided by entrepreneurs and the institution, they all decided to engage in necessity-driven, home-based entrepreneurship, with no employees and not enough business training. These limitations drove them to choose an activity related to their own skills and preferences, which made their activity product-oriented rather than guided by market needs.

Table 1: Characteristics of the Women in the Sample

[Table 1]

Participant ID	Sector	Age	Max. education	Informal Economy	Household head	Marital Status	City
C.M.	Services	26	Secondary education	Yes	No	Married	Santiago
S.C.	Handicraft products	28	Secondary education	No	Yes	Single	Chiloé
A.L.	Clothing manufacturing	37	Secondary education	Yes	No	Married	Santiago
C.V.	Cosmetics	38	Higher education	Yes	Yes	Divorced	Santiago
S.C.R.	Handicraft products	39	Secondary education	No	No	Married	Chiloé
I.E.	Handicraft products	41	Secondary education	Yes	No	Married	Santiago
M.C.	Handicraft products	42	Secondary education	Yes	Yes	Married	Santiago
B.R.	Food products	44	Higher education	Yes	No	Married	Santiago
M.CH.	Food products	52	Secondary education	Yes	Yes	Married	Santiago
R.C.	Handicraft products	52	Secondary education	Yes	No	Married	Santiago
R.R.	Handicraft products	52	Secondary education	No	No	Married	Chiloé
C.D.	Handicraft products	53	Secondary education	Yes	Yes	Separated	Santiago
D.G.	Retail	53	Higher education	No	Yes	Divorced	Santiago
I.C.	Services	55	Primary education	Yes	Yes	Divorced	Santiago
S.F.	Services	59	Secondary education	Yes	Yes	Married	Santiago
A.S.	Handicraft products	60	Higher education	No	Yes	Married	Santiago
T.B.	Handicraft products	60	Primary education	No	No	Married	Chiloé
E.M.	Handicraft products	61	Secondary education	No	No	Married	Chiloé
T.S.	Clothing manufacturing	73	Primary education	Yes	Yes	Divorced	Santiago
A.R.	Clothing manufacturing	76	Secondary education	Yes	Yes	Widowed	Santiago

The design of our thematic analysis was based on the Braun and Clarke (2006) approach as a process of identifying patterns or themes in qualitative data. This method identifies themes, and then goes on to interpret them and give them meaning on both a semantic and latent level (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The transcriptions were open-coded, just like the first stage of data reduction (Huberman & Miles, 1994). The codes that merged were, in turn, sorted into categories to achieve a broader view of the data. Thereby, the categories that depended on the theoretical concepts constituted the themes or aggregate theoretical dimensions. The researchers identified those categories separately, and subsequently compared and discussed them as a team to achieve greater robustness. The categories resulting from the content analysis are shown in table 2.

The researchers identified the categories related to state of flow, productive work time, and personal time using the theoretical framework described above.

Table 2: Category Development

Aggregate theoretical dimensions	Theoretical categories	First-order coding
FLOW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absorption • Intense and focused concentration at the present moment • Distortion of temporal experience • Autotelic experience 	<p>I am totally into the activity I feel relaxed</p> <p>I become really creative</p> <p>I don't realize it, and I'm just working Time flies when I am working things happen faster or slower I forget my problems effortlessly</p> <p>I enjoy it, I feel great</p>

USES OF TIME	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Characteristics of entrepreneurial time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Mandatory</i> ○ <i>Productive, to earn money</i> ○ <i>Core activity</i> ○ <i>Identity builder</i> • Characteristics of personal time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>satisfying, liberating</i> ○ <i>restorative</i> ○ <i>need to be earned</i> ○ <i>individualized, asocial</i> 	<p>Thinking about work as an obligation I have to work for a living</p> <p>Work comes first Being a woman entrepreneur</p> <p>Feeling great/relief/enjoyment</p> <p>To keep problems away, to heal</p> <p>To gain time for myself</p> <p>Personal time metaphors: my time, my space</p>
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Findings

The categories resulting from the thematic content analysis show how entrepreneurial activity is perceived by these craftswomen.

A) State of Flow

The analysis found evidence of three elements of flow: absorption, enjoyment (Rodríguez-Sánchez et al., 2011), and distortion of temporal experience.

As Csikszentmihályi and LeFevre (1989) showed, state of flow can take place during work activities. They identified situations that produce flow, in which subjects claim to have been in a state of intense and focused concentration, during which they forgot about their environment. They described their productive work as an activity that gave them a sense of wellbeing. Furthermore, the study by Ruiz-Martínez et al. (2020) on the benefits of

entrepreneurial activities in women of similar profiles also describes how women remain in a state of flow during their productive work.

The women in this study say that the state of flow takes place in the productive phase of their business, that is, the handcrafting of the products. This is evidenced when participants show an almost unconscious preference for productive activity over other activities:

"I have a small sewing room for work at home (...) I wake up and go to that room and notice later that even before I grab the broom or take a shower, I'm already working!".

(E.M., handicraft products, 61)

Other moments in the interviews also reflect that productive activity, as an obligation (I must produce), also includes absorption (I travel relaxed) and time distortion is clearly manifested (the trip goes faster):

"I carry the wool with me because I have to produce during the commute [to take care of her mother]. That makes the trip go faster. I'm not thinking about my problems... then I'm knitting and not thinking... so I am relaxed while I travel". (R.R., handicraft products,

52)

Then, as the following quote illustrates, this temporal distortion presents itself among the interviewees both as something that happens and, figuratively, as a positive perception that emanates from it (i.e., time flies):

"It's as if you were flying, when you start to knit (...) like... time goes by. I'm knitting and then suddenly I say: "Oh, it's gotten dark and I didn't even realize", it happens". (S.C.R.,

handicraft products, 39)

The analysis carried out also tells us about women starting in necessity-driven entrepreneurship as a consequence of the sexual division of work. It also tells us that there is enjoyment in their productive activity. The positive experience is explained to us through absorption and temporal distortion when reference is made to time passing without their being aware of it until the early hours of the morning:

"When my boy was born, I had no one to take care of him, so I felt forced to quit my job. I put my salary and my boy into the equation, and I obviously chose my boy. I started a business. I realized that I could do it, that I liked it... and I loved it! [Handcrafts] was fulfilling. Suddenly, it's 3 a.m. and I find myself looking for patterns, marking, embroidering... And I like it. Those are skills that I didn't know I had. I know that I might have many more skills than those I am discovering right now. I love this work". (R.C., handicraft products, 52)

B) Uses of Time

We examine below the main characteristics of the uses of entrepreneurial time and personal time defined in Table 2. The interviews with participants explain a daily reality riddled with problems related to lack of money, lack of health, and an overload of housework and care. However, as will be demonstrated, when referring to how they use time in their entrepreneurial activity, their statements are inclined towards rewarding experiences.

The disadvantages of the sexual division of labor, as well as the problems of daily life common to all women, are evidenced throughout the fieldwork. The survey indicates that the strategy that women use to avoid thinking about problems and to experience emotional wellbeing consists of appropriating time for their productive activity.

Entrepreneurial identity is defined within the work domain (Downing, 2005). Even though they identify themselves as members of this group, when asked, the participants focus on reproductive work as the common reference point of their conflicts:

"All the problems of daily life, that is what we [women entrepreneurs] have in common. That all of us (...) also have problems with the same things: preparing food, doing this or that, problems with caring for children". (R.R., handicraft products, 52)

Although it is a source of income and is therefore conceptualized as (productive) work time (Ås, 1978; Ramos, 2009), productive activity also appears to have characteristics of personal time, as it is restorative; it is time that is generated (Callejo, 2013):

"But we make time to craft. And that (time) is paid, and it helps us to have some money for the household. And we also heal mentally, we sort of forget about our problems". (R.R., handicraft products, 52)

The time dedicated to productive activity in women with similar profiles has been described as a form of therapy so that they can handle everyday life (Ruiz-Martínez et al., 2020). As Callejo (2013) showed, this restorative feature of personal time becomes necessary especially when reality gets unbearable. In the same vein, the next two entrepreneurs perceive their activity as restorative time. It allows the first one to escape from her difficult daily reality and the second to relax and feel better:

"When I start working, I forget about my ailments, my pain, my problems". (T.B., handicraft products, 60)

"And when you can't take it anymore ... you think: "ugh, I'm fed up!" and pretty soon you realize you are weaving! Then, at night, you get to sleep, you relax, and the next day dawns as if you had been resting the day before". (R.R., handicraft products, 52)

They describe an average workday using characteristics of personal time – as an asocial, individualized time of great value during which pleasure can be projected (Callejo, 2013).

"When I finish tidying up the room, I organize my space to work; coffee, music, and my crafts, ... and do not bother me! I'm focused (...) I'm here, I'm tired, but I don't care because I'm happy, you know what I mean? This is something different and very powerful (...) this has been beneficial for me in many ways; being 60 years old and feeling happiness". (T.B., handicraft products, 60)

These entrepreneurs also describe a desired and satisfying use of time, which are more characteristics of social and personal leisure time (Ås, 1978; Callejo, 2013) than of entrepreneurial time. Thus, since they choose their business activity because of their personal preferences, they perceive it more as a hobby than as an obligation, within a precarious life context, as illustrated in the following quote:

"I love knitting, that's why I started this business. For me, this is my life; it allows me to make some money, not much... but it's also my pastime. And that's how I started to get ahead, and also to leave the house and not be afraid of things". (E.M., handicraft products, 61)

Entrepreneurial activity is thus described as a source of enjoyment associated with entertainment and satisfaction, which are less prominent traits of working time and fit more closely in personal time (Callejo, 2013). The following quote explains that entrepreneurship allows these women to free themselves from their gender role when they go to market to sell

their crafts at a stand. At the same time they continue to produce, and it is this, not the sale itself, that increases their wellbeing:

"These women [fellow craftswomen] realized that they can also earn money because they can work and make nice things (...) And this, here [in the market] is no longer (done) with the family; no children, no husband... they feel free, without any guilt, they jump with joy!". (S.C., handicraft products, 28)

In the same vein as Ruiz-Martínez et al. (2020), the participants declare that their entrepreneurship brings them greater psychological wellbeing, since they are socially legitimated to reduce the gender role obligations assigned by their patriarchal culture: that is to say, if they do not perform their domestic and care tasks their entrepreneurial activity excuses them from social punishment:

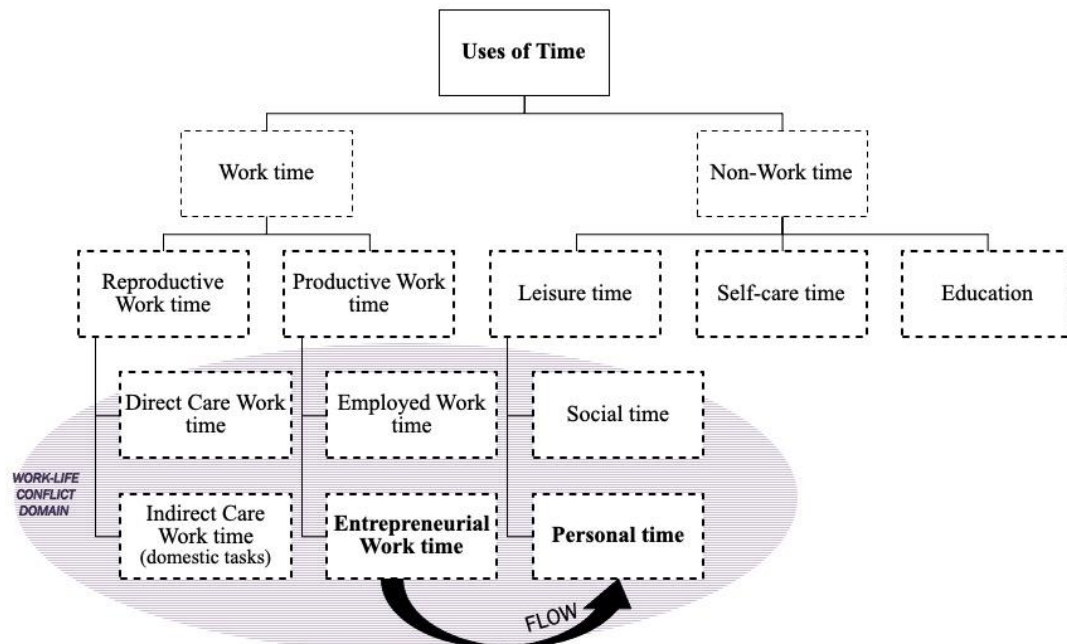
"[in the entrepreneurial activity] creativity flows and that helps with self-esteem, and then they get excited and get rid of or forget everything bad about life's burdens... being a mother, having children, raising them, all to serve men". (S.C., handicraft products, 28)

Discussion

Our analysis shows that the interviewees experience a state of flow characterized by absorption and enjoyment (Nakamura & Csikszentmihályi, 2012; Rodríguez-Sánchez et al., 2011) while they are making their handmade products and explains their temporal experience as having the characteristics of personal time (Callejo, 2013). We argue that through this process these craftswomen resignify entrepreneurial time as their own personal time. Their subjective perception is of adequate time, identified by Lee et al. (2017), which in turn matches with an experience that increases wellbeing.

Figure 2: Resignification of craftswomen's entrepreneurial time into personal time:

Blurred boundaries through the state of flow



Source: Authors elaboration, including the time dimension sources of work-family conflict by Greenhaus and Beutell (1985), and the permeability aspect of work-family border theory by Clark (2000).

Another important aspect observed is the lack of any adverse statements. Along the same lines as the study by Ruiz-Martínez et al. (2020), these women do not make any negative statements about their production process, since artisans focus on the product instead of the market and they choose their activity on the basis of their own preferences. However, interpreting subjective perceptions about satisfaction with paid work can be complex and depends on multiple factors (Warren, 2010).

It is the understanding of this finding that is our contribution to the discourse on the links between gender disadvantages and the use of time in the entrepreneurial role.

First, since productive work time is mandatory time, work-life balance can be achieved when the remaining time is assigned to other activities (i.e., community work, education, self-

care, leisure). As remaining time, leisure time can be overlapped or even suppressed. The different use of time by men and women based on gender roles implies disadvantages for women; and as Chilean TUSs show, the scope for leisure time is limited. For these women, personal time – as part of leisure – is managed through coping strategies that allow them to flow from one use of time to the other.

Furthermore, leisure and gender studies have shown that free time for women with family responsibilities is often compromised by guilt or submission as represented by gender stereotypes (Deem, 1986; Shaw, 1985; Wearing & Wearing, 1988). This coincides with similar Latino stereotypes such as the *madresposa* (mother-wife) coined by Lagarde (2005) or the *profesión de casada* (profession of married woman), by Durán (2002). However, women in this study state that they use their entrepreneurial activity to free themselves from their gender role when they go to craft fairs. As Shaw (1994) argued, they use time to exercise personal power as a form of resistance against this kind of gender restriction.

In summary, this study has explored the question of how the time dedicated to entrepreneurial activity is perceived by a group of women entrepreneurs. The findings of our analysis of the state of flow bring us one step closer to clarifying the connection between entrepreneurial work and the uses of time. This implies that traditional categories of time classification are not rigid, being possible the interconnection between entrepreneurial work time and leisure time. Our results also suggest that the blurring of boundary between work time and personal time depends on structural factors, such as the impact of gender disadvantages, and many other subjective factors, such as the perception of time. The structural factors are visible because of the lack of leisure time, now available through the strategies adopted by these

women. Regarding the subjective factors, according to Lee et al. (2017) what is modified is the perception of the use of time, thus achieving an experience closer to personal time.

Conclusions

The interviews conducted reveal that these women are aware that the use of their time is affected by the sexual division of labor. Understanding their limited ability to choose, they use personal strategies to deal with the structural problems of the patriarchal system. As a result, they manage to increase their level of emotional wellbeing by enjoying new personal time, which is hidden (because it does not appear in TUS reports) within the time they spend on their productive work. The importance of this finding in its context opens up possibilities to focus on the qualitative aspects of TUS reports that are not currently evident.

Likewise, the restorative nature of this personal time helps these women in situations of vulnerability, although it does not solve the underlying problem (that is, the work overload assigned to women because of gender roles and the existing systemic barriers of patriarchal society). In terms of uses of time, the restorative nature of personal time and its perceived adequacy are of particular importance. It can contribute to understanding how individuals manage adverse situations from a gender approach.

Limitations and Future Research Opportunities

Regarding the objective and subjective factors mentioned in this section, our research design does not provide any evidence of correlation or causality. For this reason, we recommend future research on the qualitative aspects of the links between the uses of time and the impact of gender on women entrepreneurs. It may also be interesting to extend the research to other contexts or profiles since our sample was specific.

Finally, as has been pointed out throughout the article, it is now necessary to focus on the impact of gender roles on the perception and analysis of uses of time. A large cross-national study across 25 countries reveals the relationship between gender inequality and the quality of leisure time (Yerkes et al., 2018). Along these lines, we recommend that future studies be carried out into personal time from a gender approach in different contexts.

Implications for Entrepreneurship Policy and Practice

Contextualizing our findings on the importance of the uses of time affected by gender has illustrated the personal strategies used by a group of women to deal with systemic disadvantages. These strategies do not release them from poverty, however, since they choose their productive activity for emotional rather than economic reasons; they focus on the product rather than market needs. In contexts such as that of Chile, with a high rate of entrepreneurship, support programs must guarantee processes by which individuals can migrate from necessity-driven and subsistence entrepreneurship to market-oriented models. Designing gender-focused employment and training programs in entrepreneurship will facilitate women's access to greater economic autonomy. It is also advisable to implement gender equity policies that aim for a better distribution of time between men and women.

Declaration of interest statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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