

SAMIRA JAFARI

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EDUCATION

2022–Pres	Ph.D. (Strategy, Entrepreneurship & Management), University of Alberta, Canada
2010	M.Sc. (Control Engineering), Islamic Azad University of Tehran, Iran
2006	B.Sc. (Electronic Engineering), Islamic Azad University of Tehran, Iran

RESEARCH INTERESTS

My research examines women’s entrepreneurship in conservative versus non-conservative cultural contexts, with a particular focus on how gendered institutional constraints shape entrepreneurs’ coping strategies, psychological well-being, and business outcomes. Drawing on theories of gender, institutions, and stress and coping, I investigate how women entrepreneurs respond to persistent discrimination and legitimacy challenges, and when such responses enable business success versus impose hidden psychological costs.

This research is informed by my prior experience as an entrepreneur operating in a highly gendered institutional context, which sensitized me to the often invisible psychological and strategic costs associated with navigating persistent legitimacy challenges. These early observations motivated a systematic, theory-driven investigation into how women entrepreneurs cope with gender-related constraints across different cultural settings. Using a mixed-methods approach that combines in-depth qualitative interviews with large-scale cross-national surveys, my work reframes women’s adaptive behaviors not simply as resilience, but as responses to institutional failure, with implications for entrepreneurship policy, ecosystem design, and social justice.

AWARDS AND HONOURS

2026	Best Reviewer Award, Organizational Behaviour Division, Academy of Management (AOM)
2026	Best Reviewer Award, Canadian Entrepreneurship Research Conference (CERC)
2025	Graduate Student Support Award, University of Alberta
2022-2025	Graduate Research Assistantship Funds (GRAF)
2025	Doctoral Student Award for Professional Excellence, University of Alberta
2024	Doctoral Student Award for Professional Excellence, University of Alberta
2022-2026	Scholarship Awards, University of Alberta
2018	Woman Entrepreneur of the Year, Iran
2016	Assessment Center Software Patent
2017	Certificate of Appreciation, Farhangian University

PUBLICATIONS

Academic Journal Articles

Jafari, S. (2026). Mapping and extending research on women’s entrepreneurship in Islamic contexts: insights from a bibliometric review. *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, 1–23.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/08985626.2026.2680980>

Akramizadeh, A., Afshar, A., Menhaj, M. B., & Jafari, S. (2011). Model-based reinforcement learning in multi-agent systems with sequential action selection. *IEICE Transactions on Information and Systems*, 94(2), 255–263. <https://doi.org/10.1587/transinf.E94.D.255>

Akramizadeh, A., Afshar, A., Menhaj, M. B., & Jafari, S. (2010). Model-based reinforcement learning in multi-agent systems in extensive forms with perfect information. *IFAC Proceedings Volumes*, 43(8), 487–494. <https://doi.org/10.3182/20100712-3-FR-2020.00080>

Knowledge Translation Articles

Jennings, J.E. & Jafari, S. (2026). Women’s entrepreneurship in Islamic contexts. Open Access Government, June 2026. <https://doi.org/10.56367/OAG-051-12637>

Works in Progress

Jennings, J.E., Elkailani, O. & Jafari, S. The gender-family-entrepreneurship nexus. Invited chapter under first-round review for publication in Henry, C. (Ed.) *Oxford Handbook of Entrepreneurship and Gender*.

Jafari, S., Jennings, J., Jennings, P., Eddleston, K., Sarathy, R., Kumar, K., Andreassi, T., & Tonelli, M. Linking entrepreneurs’ internalized gender characteristics to strategic aspects of their firms: Evidence from a three-country study. In preparation for submission to *Entrepreneurship Theory & Practice*.

Jafari, S., Jennings, J., Jennings, P. Strategic adaptation under constraint: Gendered institutions and the aspiration-action divergence of women entrepreneurs. In preparation for submission to *Strategic Entrepreneurship Journal*.

CONFERENCES

Jafari, S. (2026). Women entrepreneurs in conservative versus progressive country cultures: Coping responses and their outcomes. *Canadian Entrepreneurship Research Conference, Ivey Business School*.

Jafari, S., Jennings, J., Jennings, P., & Eddleston, K. (2024). Linking entrepreneurs’ internalized gender characteristics to key strategic aspects of their firms: Insights from a three-country study. *Diana International Research Conference*.

Jafari, S., Jennings, J., Jennings, P., & Eddleston, K. (2023). Socialized to run firms differently? How the masculinity and femininity of entrepreneurs affect key strategic aspects of their ventures. *Administrative Sciences Association of Canada (ASAC) Conference*

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE ACTIVITIES

2026 Ad hoc Reviewer, *AOM Annual Meetings*
2026 Ad hoc Reviewer, *Administrative Sciences Association of Canada, ASAC*
2025 Ad hoc Reviewer, *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*
2024 Vice President, Careers, University of Alberta Business Doctoral Association
2023 Vice President, Communications & Operations, University of Alberta Business Doctoral Association

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

2025-2026 **Instructor (Co-Instructor)**, University of Alberta, Canada

Introduction to Management, Organization and Entrepreneurship

2024 **Teaching Assistant**, University of Alberta, Canada

Exploring Innovation & Entrepreneurship

2022-2013 **Lecturer**, Azad University, Iran

Courses taught included digital design, linear control design and analysis, statistics and probability, and differential equations.

2016-2022 **Lecturer and Professional Trainer**, Management Training Center, Iran

Served as lead instructor and curriculum developer for applied courses in organizational ethics, participatory management, communication skills, professional assessment, supervision principles, and project control.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2015-2022 Founder and CEO, Pouyandegan Danesh Modiran Parsa, Iran

2008- 2011 Technical Manager, Omega Electronic Company, Iran

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

2025 How to write peer reviews, University of Alberta

2025 Structuring your thesis in business, University of Alberta

2025 Posture workshop, University of Alberta

2024 Recovering the Lost Mandate: Integrating the Study of Work, Organizations and Institutions

2023 Graduate Teaching + Learning (GTL) Program, University of Alberta

2023 Innovation Bridge: How to Get Engaged in Entrepreneurship, University of Alberta

2023 Innovation Bridge: Do You Want to Serve the Community, University of Alberta

2023 Supporting Student Writing: Engaging, Accessible & Sustainable Feedback, University of Alberta

2023 Workshop on Violence and Harassment Prevention, University of Alberta

2023 Survey Design and Analysis, Institute for Statistical and Data Science