

female entrepreneurs. However, which images and stereotypes of female entrepreneurs are (re-)produced in German media has not been systematically studied previously. Next, we will present the method and data set of our study, which aims at filling this gap.

4. Data and method

4.1. Data collection

This article draws on data resulting from a systematic analysis of the use of key women's entrepreneurship terms in the major daily national newspapers in Germany. For investigating the development of the representation of women's entrepreneurship, we employ a longitudinal perspective to capture possible changes. Therefore, we study a period of 10 years (1995–2004), focusing the analysis on general *patterns* of representation (i.e. conducting an aggregate level analysis) as well as on *contents* of the discussion of female entrepreneurship (i.e. conducting a meso-level analysis).

Two notions are analysed in this article. The first notion is the one that most closely corresponding to female entrepreneur in English language (*Unternehmerin*). In German language this term refers to both nascent entrepreneurs, and women owning and running an existing business. Therefore, we also analyse a second notion, namely that of female business founder (*Gründerin*). Whilst this is the term commonly used in German for female business founders, the notion as such could also include female founders of non-business activities (such as founders of choirs or political parties). Yet, it is the only term in German language that exclusively focuses on the start-up stage. As our aim was to capture the social construction of female entrepreneurs we included both terms in our analysis – and initial results confirmed the usefulness of analysing both terms separately from each other.

Data were gathered in the following steps. First, we decided which newspapers to include into the study. This decision was mainly based on the numbers of copies sold, but also to ensure that the entire spectrum of political orientations was represented. This is important as the major newspapers in Germany historically have a clear political affiliation, and many readers continue to choose which newspaper to read based on their political attitudes. In addition, we made sure to cover all regions in Germany. Thus, two newspapers from East Germany were included. Whilst these two papers are nationally available, their readership continues to consist mainly of people from East Germany. Second, we searched the newspapers' online archives for all articles mentioning the key notions analysed in this article. For those newspapers without online archives, we submitted a search request to the newspaper in question and purchased the resulting articles (*Bild* and *Neues Deutschland*).

The newspapers covered are *Bild*, *Welt*, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (FAZ)*, *Süddeutsche Zeitung (SZ)*, *tageszeitung (TAZ)*, *Berliner Zeitung (BZ)* and *Neues Deutschland (ND)*. Thus, with one exception,⁴ all major daily national papers are included in the analysis, rendering this study representative in terms of coverage and also readership, as the newspapers approach different readerships and age groups. A short profile of the included newspapers as well as their regional and political orientation is presented below (Box 1).

Third, all articles identified (4955 articles across all searched newspapers) were downloaded (or purchased) without any pre-selection along article topics, as we

Box 1. Short profiles of the newspapers included in the analysis.

<i>Bild</i>	Bild is Europe's largest daily newspaper with an average of 3.83 million copies sold daily. Bild was first published in 1952, and reaches 11.82 million people in Germany. The mission of this tabloid is to be close to the people, and to deliver up-to-date daily news, background stories and entertainment from different areas of the political and societal lives (Bildmedia 2005).
<i>Die Welt (Welt)</i>	On April 1, 1946 the first issue of Welt appeared under the patronage of the British occupying power in Hamburg. In 1953, the newspaper was taken over by Axel Springer. After the Fall of the Wall, it was the only national newspaper to move to Berlin in order to be able to report directly from the new capital city. Its stated principles are liberality, cosmopolitanism, innovativeness and a sense for traditional values. Welt appears in about 250,000 copies (Welt 2005).
<i>Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (FAZ)</i>	The newspaper FAZ attempts to reach a broad range of readers from different professions and age groups, selling around 380,000 copies daily, and reaching about one million people. It plays an important role for opinion-making in Germany, as its readership is highly influential in public opinion making roles. This article claims to reach 247,000 decision makers from business, administration, self-employed people, entrepreneurs, and managers.
<i>Süddeutsche Zeitung (SZ)</i>	On October 6, 1945 the newspaper SZ received the first license from the US military regime in post war Germany and thus became the first newspaper in Bavaria after World War II (SZ 2005a). The newspaper is a national newspaper with a strong Bavarian coloring. It wants to provide independent journalism (Pressrelations 2005). With about 415,000 copies sold, it is market leader in terms of copies sold and readership (SZ 2005b).
<i>tageszeitung (TAZ)</i>	TAZ was created in the spirit of providing a loud, critical, left-wing voice to oppose the more conservative press. It was founded in 1979, without publishing house, capital or experience. Since 1992, a cooperative based on the deposits of more than 6000 readers finances the newspaper. Moreover, the subscribers to the newspapers voluntarily pay higher rates for their subscription to ensure the survival of the paper. The around 60,000 copies sold reach about 150,000 readers. The motto of the newspaper is 'All others are equal in comparison with us!' (TAZ 2005).
<i>Berliner Zeitung (BZ)</i>	BZ has a circulation of 180,000–196,000 copies and is mainly aimed at readers in the larger Berlin area (Berliner Zeitung 2005). The paper reaches around 446,000 people. The newspaper wants to be 'pluralistic, liberal, and independent' (Berlin Online 2005). BZ was founded by the Soviet Army in 1945, and became the official Berlin newspaper of the leading party in the German Democratic Republic, the SED. In October 1990, the PDS (as successor party of the SED after the transition) sold the BZ to the publishing house Gruner + Jahr. In October 2005, the publisher owning BZ, Berliner Verlag, was acquired by a financial consortium led by media manager David Montgomery.
<i>Neues Deutschland (ND)</i>	ND was the official newspaper of the leading party in the German Democratic Republic, the SED. Today, around 50,000 copies are sold mainly in the New Länder. The now independent newspaper focuses on discussing general topics of interests, and continues to have a socialist orientation. It is still an important opinion maker in East Germany (ND 2005) and is therefore included in this analysis despite its relatively low number of copies sold.

wished to gain a picture of all instances in which female entrepreneurs were considered noteworthy in these newspapers.

4.2. Data analysis

We analysed the newspaper articles based on a text analysis of the articles' content, which allowed us to describe their content in a systematic and rigorous fashion. This type of analysis is particularly appropriate for mass media studies as it permits to precisely describe a vast diversity of message content which might prove to be elusive otherwise (Sparks 2002, 19–20). In line with established methods of content analysis, we developed categories for classifying the information in the newspaper articles (Merten 1995). This includes categories with general information about the article (e.g. newspaper, key term, date of publication, section/sub-section, headline) as well as content-related categories such as 'major idea', 'key statements regarding search term', or 'images regarding search term'. All articles were read after downloading⁵ and relevant text passages were converted into a data file, assisting us in identifying the topics discussed around female entrepreneurship as well as the characteristics attributed to it. Also, this file allowed us to analyse changes in categories over time.

Entries into the data file were initially made by both authors and inter-rater consistency was checked for the entries. After reaching an inter-rater consistency of above 95%, coding was divided between the two authors in order to cope with the large number of articles. When entry differences were identified, items were reassessed until consensus was obtained (Grimm 1989). In order to ground the analysis in its wider context, we additionally analysed the business and policy context for entrepreneurship in general and women's entrepreneurship in particular in Germany (see previous section for a short overview). For this, we drew on statistical data showing the development of (female) entrepreneurship over time, a literature review and an analysis of policy documents. Additionally, one of the authors has contributed to several research reports commissioned by the German federal and state governments, which concentrated on assessing different aspects of the business and policy environment for female entrepreneurs, based on surveys and/or expert interviews. These results were also used as background material.

5. Findings and discussion

We will present and discuss our findings in two steps. First, we take on an aggregate level of analysis – the level of grand discourse. Here, we analyse patterns in terms of numbers of articles published in the different newspapers over time. We also investigate in which categories or parts of the papers the articles are published over time. Second, in the meso-level analysis, we discuss which prominence is given to female entrepreneurs in the newspaper articles, by analysing whether they are the main or a side focus in the articles, as well as whether this changes over time. Most importantly, we identify and discuss major recurrent themes in the reporting on female entrepreneurs. In order to condense the analysis of the large number of articles to fit the scope of this article, we concentrate on presenting those patterns that are typical across different newspapers as well as those that are very specific for just one newspaper.