

## Research on Female Entrepreneurship: Present Situation and Prospect

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**Keywords:** Female entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurial traits, Entrepreneurial motivation, Entrepreneurial performance.

**Abstract:** With the continuous progress of society, Chinese female entrepreneurship has also faced a good development opportunity. This paper summarizes the results of female entrepreneurship research published in the journal of management and entrepreneurship management and female studies. The entrepreneurial traits, entrepreneurial motivation, entrepreneurial performance and other different aspects will be reviewed, and the achievements of female entrepreneurship in recent ten years in various countries will be sorted out, and this paper explores the direction of female entrepreneurship research in the future.

### 1. Introduction

In the background of economic depression, entrepreneurship can affect employment and income redistribution to some extent and female entrepreneurship occupy a very important position in the entire entrepreneurial team. The steady growth of female entrepreneurship is one of the core forces to promote the rapid and stable development of the social economy. Female entrepreneurship is one of the main channels to promote economic development to eliminate poverty and improve the status of women. The key to feminine entrepreneurial research is also emerging. Therefore the purpose of this paper is tantamount to sort out and summarize the research results of female entrepreneurship in this decade, and it also provides a reference for the research on female entrepreneurship in China.

### 2. Studies Abroad

#### 2.1 Literature Selection Method

Entrepreneurship has been investigated in foreign countries since the mid-18th century, and the study of entrepreneurship theory received much attention from experts until the 1980s. They analyzed and studied entrepreneurial practices and theories from different subjects, such as management, economics and psychology. After searching the relevant literature, the author excluded the articles and research that are not related to female entrepreneurship and categorized the articles by topics, such as: female entrepreneurs are compared to individuals such as male managers and entrepreneurs; during the financing period, whether there is gender discrimination; whether there is gender gap in entrepreneurial performance. The section headings are in boldface capital and lowercase letters. Second level headings are typed as part of the succeeding paragraph (like the subsection heading of this paragraph).

#### 2.2 Entrepreneurial Traits

According to social cognition theory, female entrepreneurs in non-traditional and traditional fields are compared. It's known from research that female entrepreneurs in the traditional fields have stronger life balance ability, more opportunity identification efficiency, more prominent perception of financial support, while women entrepreneurs in nontraditional fields have higher expectations of money. Outstanding entrepreneurial career of male will influence the personal career achievement

health and life direction of female entrepreneurs to a certain extent. Through a longitudinal study we know that unemployed women's health is worse, and the second is working women, and self-employed women generally have better health conditions.

### **2.3 Entrepreneurial Motivation**

The factors that affect the motivation of entrepreneurs include not only those at the micro level, but also those at the macro level. From a macro perspective, the national environment is discrete, and the degree to which it affects the motivation of entrepreneurs varies greatly. The main purpose of female entrepreneurs in economically weak countries is to relieve their employment pressure. Some experts have found that the entrepreneurial tendency of female entrepreneurial groups is influenced to some extent by subjective perception variables such as opportunity perception and confidence through the data research of GEM17 countries. From a microscopic point of view this is mainly due to the individual factors of the entrepreneur, such as the good working environment and the expectation of self-employment and to take the pressure, etc.

### **2.4 Entrepreneurial Finance**

After reviewing and sorting out the literature related to female venture capital financing in this decade, it's known that during the financing period, start-ups have gender differences. Compared with men, female entrepreneurs have less start-up capital and less financing capital. Women are growing more slowly than men because female entrepreneurs don't have abundant financial capital. Even in terms of financing scale and financing demand, there are gender differences. However, during the same application period, no gender discrimination was found, and no gender discrimination was discovered in the financing received by enterprises. Start-up capital is also partly influenced by the experience and management of female entrepreneurs. Gender discrimination does not affect financing, and it is the cowardice of female entrepreneurs that cause fear of financing.

### **2.5 Entrepreneurial Performance**

Previous studies have mostly pointed out that compared with the enterprises established by male entrepreneurs, the size and development of enterprises founded by women are weaker, and they have no advantages in many aspects. However, it can be observed in the research results of women's entrepreneurship in recent years that more and more studies believe that there is no gender difference in enterprise development and enterprise size. For example, depending on a study of 402 companies in Sweden, female entrepreneurs perform less well than men, but after controlling for some variables, the only difference is turnover among profit, order quantity, turnover and the number of employees. A survey of more than 2,300 Australian companies found that female entrepreneurs are less changeable in profit than men, and after controlling the rate of change in earnings, there is not any gender difference in corporate earnings. Depending on a survey of more than 2,000 Australian women entrepreneurs over the past few years, after controlling demographic characteristics, there is no gender difference in enterprise development and financial performance.

### **2.6 Entrepreneurship and Family Balance**

No matter what the purpose of launching a business, female entrepreneurs must balance the problems between family and entrepreneurship. For a long time, the focus of research on female entrepreneurship has been the work-family balance of female entrepreneurs. Studies over the years have been based on the impact of entrepreneurship on women's family life and the conflict between family and entrepreneurship during entrepreneurship. A large number of studies have demonstrated that there is a gender difference in the work and family balance of entrepreneurs. Women are more likely to be influenced by family factors than men, but motivation such as further education and wealth creation will not have much influence on them. Female entrepreneurs who have a family are more likely to accept the influence of their family than are male entrepreneurs. Even though entrepreneurship influences women entrepreneurs' role in family life to some extent, it has no impact on their socio-economic and personal roles. During the groundbreaking period, female entrepreneurs

will face corresponding role conflict problems. For the progress of female start-ups, it is very important to properly handle the balance between family and entrepreneurship.

## **2.7 Evaluation**

Through review and comparison it is found that there are gender differences in entrepreneurial performance, and entrepreneurship is still the male trait. The control variables chosen by those studies that showed no gender difference in entrepreneurial performance were of gender differences themselves. The research on the influencing factors of female entrepreneurship began to focus on the process factors, such as human capital, financial capital, strategic ability, management style, strategic path selection, etc. Start focusing on the factors that influence entrepreneurial motivation from different perspectives, not from a psychological perspective, such as the macro-factors of national environment and national culture and micro-factors of start-up capital barriers and entrepreneurs' eager to challenge. On the one hand, professional industry factors and demographic factors will have some influence on women's entrepreneurial intention, on the other hand, entrepreneurial self-efficacy and gender stereotyping also influence women's entrepreneurial intention. Research directions have also changed, and it starts from the initial comparison between male and female entrepreneurs in the comparison between different groups. Objective and subjective variables and their impact of entrepreneurship on female entrepreneurs are also presented. Women have faced a balancing act between entrepreneurship and family for a long time, but the focus of research in recent years has started to focus on the solutions employed by female entrepreneurs to balance entrepreneurial and family conflicts. When female entrepreneurs solve this problem, they decide to reduce the role, role elimination and role sharing strategy. Previous studies have focused on gender discrimination during financing, and it's been studied for a couple of years that female entrepreneurs do not have ample start-up capital, and there are gender differences in the requirements and applications for venture financing. However, the gender difference does not exist in the entrepreneurial financing process under the identical application environment.

## **3. Domestic Research**

In China, the practice of female entrepreneurship is more advanced than a theoretical exploration. Chinese experts have paid more and more attention to women's entrepreneurship since 1990. However, compared with other countries, the data acquisition and content of research methods are very backward. Therefore the author sorted out and summarized all kinds of literature on researching female entrepreneurship in China. The research development after 2007 was highly valued and the research topics in this field are discussed.

### **3.1 Literature Distribution**

Search the CNKI (Chinese National Knowledge Infrastructure) for female entrepreneurs under the title of literature, a total of 1750 relevant documents were found. A search for the word "female entrepreneurship" found 115 master theses and 18 doctoral theses. According to the literature distribution, there are some studies on female entrepreneurship in China. And the research methods are mostly speculative inquiry. Quantitative research focuses on descriptive statistical research, and relevant models have not meant established. The causal relationship between variables has not been thoroughly explored and empirical studies are rare.

### **3.2 Personality Traits**

One of the topics frequently used in the study of female entrepreneurship in China is personality traits. A lot of research points out that there is no significant gender difference between female entrepreneurial groups and men in establishing new enterprises on multiple dimensions, such as psychological dimension, parents starting a business or not, satisfaction, entrepreneurial age, having a family or not, independence and so on. There was no significant difference in the character traits associated with entrepreneurial success between male and female entrepreneurs. However, there are

significant differences in background factors, such as education and work experience. Compared with other countries, the average age of female entrepreneurs in China is much older, it's mostly between 40 and 49, and the age also has a tendency to rise. But the number of young women starting business has increased in recent years, and with higher degrees, most of them were from high school or above. Women entrepreneurs are more likely to receive higher education than men. Women also make up a higher proportion of master degrees and above.

### **3.3 Entrepreneurial Motivation**

One of the most frequently discussed topics in women's entrepreneurship research is entrepreneurial motivation. Women's entrepreneurial motivation consisted of four categories. They are achievement motivation, environmental opportunity motivation, independent motivation and demand-driven motivation. The difference in education levels has not been shown in the entrepreneurial motivation of female entrepreneurs. When it now comes to women's motivation, which was divided into the following categories: they are structural factors, family factors, non-monetary factors and economic and opportunity factors. According to a survey of 30 female owners of private enterprises in Shanghai, these employers have different entrepreneurial goals, but they are basically the results of altered motivation factors. A more typical case is one based on structural barriers combined with individual non-economic factors, and among the various entrepreneurial motivations researched family factors did not play important role. Overall women are more motivated to start businesses than men, not only are economic goals included, but women are also paying close attention to other goals, such as work and family balance. Success is usually defined as the achievement of personal goals. While Men measure success by the achievement of quantitative goals such as earnings growth.

### **3.4 Obstacles to Entrepreneurship**

Some studies indicate that women's barriers to entrepreneurship generally reflect two aspects: difficulty in financing and gender discrimination. Female entrepreneurs are under extreme mental pressure because of gender discrimination, so more sacrifices need to be made. Many people in our country believe that men's core task is to earn money while women's main task is to look after their families. So there are plenty of stereotypes associated with gender norms. As for the role of women, society still has double expectations: first of all, women are expected to get involved in the work and can make their own efforts for the development of the society; and women are also expected to have enough time to look after their families at the same time. Women entrepreneurs are under far more pressure than men. Female social network capital structure is the core cause of financing obstacle. Women generally lack the social capital to exchange with business networks, as reflected in the following two points: First of all, social capital network it controls is not very large; Secondly, the proportion of relatives is higher in their social network. The span of social resources in the hands of communal members is small, and diversity is also less prominent. The difficulty of female entrepreneurs in obtaining corresponding societal support is also determined by the characteristics of social capital. Compared with men, women get a lot of social support due to the higher proportion of relatives in the social network, but it has lost the instrumental support needed to achieve economic success.

### **3.5 Entrepreneurial Performance**

In terms of entrepreneurial performance, it is generally believed that the industry profits of female entrepreneurs are not shrill, slow or refuse to expand. However, if the working experience age and the business field are the same ones, the survival rate of male and female enterprises is not very different. In many cases, female enterprises will have more noticeable performance. According to the pertinent survey, even in the total number of Chinese entrepreneurs, only 20 percent of them are female entrepreneurs, but 98 per cent of companies run by women are profitable. Different leadership styles caused by different personalities of men and women are the fundamental reasons for the different growth of male and female entrepreneurs. Women have a lower risk appetite than men, and are more

likely to consider the risks of rapid growth than men, so they prefer slower but more stable growth rates. Compared with men, female entrepreneurs generally reflect significant gender characteristics in the way they operate: When it comes to resources, women have a longer perspective and a higher level of personal commitment; Women also have fewer secrets in their organization and value their relationships more; In terms of decision-making control system, female entrepreneurs are also more open, hoping to share with each other and participate actively. They are more inclined to be emotional and intuitive, and take longer to make decisions.

### **3.6 Evaluation**

There are mainly the subsequent problems when exploring female entrepreneurship in China: The research scope is small. The research method is relatively simple, and few research methods such as mathematical statistics are utilized. The research is mainly about the comparison between men and women, but does not pay much attention to the comparison and research between female entrepreneurs. They are very case studies, and have not yet carried out a comprehensive theoretical study. They are mainly reflected in: Many examples of empirical research have focused on entrepreneurial women in a particular industry, therefore the external validity of the inquiry is restricted, and many conclusions conflict with each other. In addition, the exploration of other countries will also have a certain impact on any normative researches. The opinions and methods given are not in line with the specific national conditions of China, so there is not feasible. Entrepreneurship is a dynamic process, compared with the development of female entrepreneurship, and the exploration of female entrepreneurship in China is more backward. It is difficult to give a more accurate description of contemporary female entrepreneurial behaviors, and it is also difficult to predict female entrepreneurial behaviors in the future. Therefore future studies on female entrepreneurship should pay high attention to the following issues: When exploring the issue of female entrepreneurship, on the one hand we should pay attention to the motivation of entrepreneurship, and on the other hand we should pay close attention to the results and progress of entrepreneurship. On the one hand attention should be given to women's inherent ability, personality and experience; on the other hand attention should be paid to social, national and family environmental factors. Not only should the methods of archival data research and observation be implemented, but also the methods of interview combined with questionnaire survey should be implemented. On the one hand we should refer to the research results of other countries, and on the other hand we should strengthen the theoretical construction of localization. Therefore the scientific application of different research methods is the best way to explore the regularity of female entrepreneurship.

### **4. The Prospect of Female Entrepreneurship Research**

In the future, it will still need to spend a lot of time and energy to explore the issue of female entrepreneurship. First of all, female entrepreneurial performance is influenced to some extent by the cultural motivation and behavior of female entrepreneurs. Previous studies have focused more on a single factor. For instance, in the same cultural environment, difficulties in financing, growth environment and psychological motivation influence performance. Future research will focus on the interaction factors influencing the performance of female start-ups. Secondly, female barriers to entrepreneurship affect the success of entrepreneurship. Especially in a globalized environment, women are confronted with the same problem of how to globalize when enterprises grow up, what problems globalization will face and how they will affect female entrepreneurs. Thirdly, there are a comprehensive comparison of women and men's entrepreneurial growth path. For example, how do female entrepreneurs find entrepreneurial opportunities? Whether they start a business is influenced by their work experience, personality, personality, and cultural background? What factors influence women's entrepreneurship? The influence of organizational management style during entrepreneurship is different in cultural background, and whether it affects the performance of women in entrepreneurship is invariable? Finally, how do entrepreneurial women balance the

relationship between family and work? Although many experts have explored it, but families are often identified as extra-system factors, and the internal processes that influence the work-family balance of entrepreneurial women have not meant detailed.

It is known from the research methods that there are numerous qualitative researches at the present stage, while there is a lack of quantitative researches. In the future, empirical research method should be implemented to eliminate the shortcomings that used to focus on qualitative research. In order to study female entrepreneurship better, it is necessary to re-establish the research paradigm of female entrepreneurship, which may also be the thought that has to be changed in future studies on female entrepreneurship. At the same time, more research on female entrepreneurship should be concentrated on the global environment in the future, which will not only help us better understand the problems of female entrepreneurship, but also it gives us a broader understanding of women's entrepreneurship research.

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