

The Impact of Entrepreneurship Policies on the Entrepreneurial Motivation of Female Entrepreneurs

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Abstract: Purpose: The study aims to examine the influence of both advantageous and inadequate entrepreneurial policies on the motivation of female entrepreneurs across three regions in China. It will provide insights into how specific policies like tax relief impact entrepreneurial motivation. The research seeks to inform more effective policy recommendations to support female entrepreneurs better. Design/ Methodology/ Approach: 180 female entrepreneurs from the Eastern Coastal, Central, and Western Regions of China were interviewed. The research explores female entrepreneurs' perceptions of existing policies and identifies the benefits and challenges these policies pose to their motivation and success. Conclusion: This study sheds light on the specific policy needs of female entrepreneurs and highlights the critical areas for improvement in policy formulation, service support, and execution. By understanding these motivations and policy impacts, the findings can guide the development of more effective, targeted policies to support female entrepreneurship in China.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship Policy; Female Entrepreneurs; Entrepreneurial Motivation; Policy Recommendations

1. INTRODUCTION

With the progress of society and economic development, female entrepreneurship in China is thriving. During the last few years, the number and influence of female entrepreneurs have gradually increased, showcasing unique characteristics and strengths in various fields. Firstly, compared to male entrepreneurs, female entrepreneurs are typically more patient and meticulous, emphasizing interaction and communication with customers and dedicated to providing high-quality services and meeting customer needs(Laily & Wahyuni, 2023). Secondly, women excel in team collaboration and management. They usually possess strong social skills and interpersonal communication abilities, can build good team relationships, and inspire team members' potential(Valeri & Katsoni, 2021). Also, female entrepreneurs prioritize teamwork and sharing and advocate for a fair and inclusive work environment. However, despite demonstrating unique characteristics and strengths in many aspects, female entrepreneurs still face significant challenges and dilemmas. Female entrepreneurs endure

pressures and biases from society and family, with traditional social norms and stereotypes in family roles still representing obstacles that many women must overcome before embarking on entrepreneurship (Avnimelech & Rechter, 2023; Corrêa et al., 2024; Huang et al., 2022; Kawai & Kazumi, 2021). Additionally, female entrepreneurs encounter a lack of funding and resources. Due to inadequate funding channels and limited resource support, female entrepreneurs often struggle with insufficient startup capital (Aparicio et al., 2022; Dawa et al., 2021) and unfair treatment when accessing business opportunities and market resources (Aman et al., 2022; Poulaki et al., 2021). They also face the challenge of balancing career development and family life, often managing work hours alongside family responsibilities, adding to the pressures they endure. These challenges underline the need for a greater understanding of women's unique entrepreneurial motivations of women. While motivation is vital, insufficient research addresses how specific entrepreneurial policies impact female entrepreneurs in China, especially across distinct regions. Furthermore, there is a lack of consensus in existing studies, which present mixed findings on which policies—such as tax relief, support services, or networking programs—are most effective in motivating female entrepreneurs, resulting in fragmented insights that complicate policy development. Existing studies also exhibit limitations by addressing policy formulation or implementation separately without evaluating the entire policy lifecycle from development to execution. This limited scope hinders understanding of how policies either support or impede female entrepreneurs over time. Despite well-intentioned government initiatives, female entrepreneurs face ongoing difficulties accessing resources tailored to their needs, with barriers to financing, mentorship, and networking posing significant challenges. These obstacles, along with traditional gender roles, societal expectations, and financial disparities relative to male counterparts, continue to hinder female entrepreneurs' potential within the startup ecosystem. Among the numerous factors influencing entrepreneurial success, motivation plays a crucial role. Gupta(Gupta, 2021) divided entrepreneurial motivation into five categories— independence, satisfaction, financial gain, security, and recognition. These motivations are essential in building confidence and fostering the entrepreneurial spirit in women. Numerous studies in the literature have emphasized that motivation, alongside effective leadership, enhances female entrepreneurs' confidence and enthusiasm throughout the business process (Acevedo-Duque et al., 2021; Barrachina Fernández et al., 2021; Cooke & Xiao, 2021; Meng et al., 2021; Meyer & Krüger, 2021; Shabsough

et al., 2021). However, understanding the impact of policy on these motivations requires more in-depth examination, as motivations can lead to varied responses regarding capability development and business support. Therefore, this study investigates the impact of entrepreneurial policies on female entrepreneurial motivation across China's Eastern Coastal, Central, and Western Regions, aiming to address the gaps identified in existing research. Through interviews with 180 female entrepreneurs, it offers a comprehensive view of policy effectiveness, highlighting areas where improvements in policy formulation, support, and execution are needed. Based on these findings, this study provides targeted recommendations for governments and stakeholders to support female entrepreneurship, ultimately contributing to a more inclusive and encouraging environment. This research thus plays a crucial role in advancing social gender equality, promoting the development of female entrepreneurship, and fostering an entrepreneur-friendly cultural climate that reduces entry barriers and enhances support for female entrepreneurial activities (Figueroa-Domecq et al., 2023; Naguib, 2024; Sarmah et al., 2022; Suseno & Abbott, 2021).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The steady increase in the number of female entrepreneurs has attracted the attention of scholars, leading to extensive research on their innovative entrepreneurial motivations. Franzke et al. (Franzke et al., 2022) studied the entrepreneurial motivations of Asian female entrepreneurs; they found that several female entrepreneurs are primarily driven by the need to obtain a higher family income and address gender inequality by elevating their status through entrepreneurial activities. Cakranegara et al. (Cakranegara et al., 2022) researched the entrepreneurial motivations of female entrepreneurs in the Indonesian food and beverage industry, revealing that they enter the business world driven by livelihood needs, the need to provide family support, the desire to showcase personal capabilities, and the willingness to contribute to social change, with family support being identified as a key factor for their success. Pinem (Pinem, 2019) uncovered that the primary motivations for young female entrepreneurs in Indonesia include economic independence, self-value realization, improvement of family well-being, and enhancement of living standards. Mulyani, Tutik, and Aryanto (Mulyani & Aryanto, 2019) performed a study of high school students in West Java, Indonesia, and categorized their entrepreneurial motivations as

related to intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Intrinsic motivations include self-enhancement, social rewards, lifestyle freedom, and financial returns, while family, social trends, and friends mainly influence extrinsic motivations. Li and Sanusi (Li et al., 2023) examined the relationship between entrepreneurial motivations and the business performance of Chinese female entrepreneurs. They found that those female entrepreneurs driven by necessity-based motivations (e.g., for survival needs) achieved higher financial performance. In contrast, female entrepreneurs driven by opportunity-based motivations (e.g., seeking work-life balance) did not necessarily achieve a significant financial performance. Nguyen et al. (Nguyen et al., 2020) explored Vietnamese female entrepreneurs' motivations, challenges, and success factors, suggesting that entrepreneurial motivations are primarily driven by push and pull factors. Push factors include job dissatisfaction and a sense of responsibility towards the family, while pull factors comprise the pursuit of independence, high income, and autonomy. Hani's (Hani, 2015) study on female entrepreneurs in the city of Sylhet, in Bangladesh, revealed that their entrepreneurial motivations stem from the pursuit of autonomy and economic independence, the desire to realize their personal dreams and career development, as well as to overcome societal gender discrimination and traditional conservative attitudes, in the hope of achieving economic self-reliance through their efforts to impact society and families positively. Other scholars have investigated female entrepreneurs in the Middle East. Al-Dajani et al. (Al-Dajani et al., 2019) delved into the complex motivations behind Jordanian female entrepreneurs: economic opportunities and challenges and resistance to social, cultural, and family traditions. Bui, Kuan, and Chu (Bui et al., 2018) studied the entrepreneurial motivations of Kazakhstani female entrepreneurs, highlighting motivations such as career development, economic independence and autonomy, and enhancing women's status in society. Through an in-depth analysis, Tahir and Raza (Tahir & Raza, 2020) identified the motivations of female entrepreneurs for online business in the United Arab Emirates, including the pursuit of personal independence, professional development, and utilization of low-cost information technology. Isaga (Isaga, 2019) revealed that "push factors" are the main entrepreneurial motivation among Tanzanian female entrepreneurs, driven by personal employment needs; these factors include family environment, economic pressures, the pursuit of economic independence, life path changes, and the desire to improve economic status. Cavada, Bobek, and Maček (Cavada et al., 2017) explored the entrepreneurial motivation factors of Mexican female entrepreneurs,

showing that they are jointly motivated by both push and pull factors. Push factors encompass internal aspects, such as personal traits, the desire for success, the pursuit of self-realization, and external factors, including socioeconomic factors, government support policies, and business networks. Pull factors mainly include social and economic factors. Martínez-Rodríguez et al. (Martínez-Rodríguez et al., 2022) categorized the entrepreneurial motivations of women entrepreneurs in 20 European countries into two types: necessity-driven and opportunity-driven motivations. Necessity-driven motivations refer to situations where women feel their income is below expectations or where working conditions are poor, which prompts them to start a business. Opportunity-driven motivations include women seeking economic independence and believing that entrepreneurship can bring in more income than traditional wages/salaries. Rey-Martí, Porcar, and Mas-Tur (Rey-Martí et al., 2015) studied five key motivations of female entrepreneurs in Valencia: the tendency for adventure, the pursuit of work-life balance, the desire to develop business skills, the need for self-employment, and the wish for higher income than employment. Their findings showed that motivation related to business concepts, such as the tendency for adventure, is more conducive to the survival of businesses and that the motivations of female entrepreneurs significantly impact the survival of entrepreneurial ventures. Solesvik, Iakovleva, and Trifilova (Solesvik et al., 2019) researched the motivations of 45 female entrepreneurs in Norway, Russia, and Ukraine, revealing that they typically seek business opportunities to meet social needs, focusing on building and expanding interpersonal relationships within their enterprises. Kiani et al. (Kiani et al., 2023) analyzed a sample of 215 small businesses in China. They uncovered that entrepreneurial passion influences the persistence behavior of female entrepreneurs through the mediating role of entrepreneurial self-efficacy and the moderating role of positive personality; moreover, they emphasized the importance of entrepreneurial motivation as a driving force that enables entrepreneurs to persevere in the face of challenges. Entrepreneurial passion stems from strong positive emotions towards entrepreneurial activities and a strong pursuit of personal interests, propelling entrepreneurs to maintain momentum in the face of challenges, ultimately leading to entrepreneurial success. This literature review allowed us to conclude that the entrepreneurial motivations of female entrepreneurs encompass survival pressure, family and social responsibilities, self-value realization, social status enhancement, freedom of working time and location, personal interests, government promotion, showcasing personal abilities,

establishing and expanding interpersonal relationships for business, willingness to contribute to social change, and challenging societal, cultural, and family traditions. For the present study, based on the current situation in China, the entrepreneurial motivations of women were divided into seven categories: survival pressure, family and social responsibilities, self-value realization, social status enhancement, freedom of working time and location, personal interests, and government promotion. Educators, policymakers, and entrepreneurial support institutions must understand these motivations. They should focus on nurturing the entrepreneurial capabilities of female entrepreneurs, stimulating their entrepreneurial motivations by providing support and resources and encouraging them to become future innovative entrepreneurs. Additionally, there is a need for further research on how to effectively enhance entrepreneurship training outcomes and methods to promote female entrepreneurial intentions. These efforts will assist women in achieving their innovative entrepreneurial goals and contributing to socio-economic development. Notably, research must be done on the impact of entrepreneurial policies on female motivations. This study aimed precisely to address this research gap. While many female entrepreneurs have made substantial contributions, it has been observed that their achievements have several downsides. Female entrepreneurs confront numerous challenges, including government laws and regulations, a need for more finance, resources, information technology, infrastructure, and other essentials for profitably operating and growing their businesses. According to Le and Lisovich (Le & Lisovich, 2022), women usually face harsher obstacles in their economic endeavors than men. According to Kalemci Tuzun and Araz Takay (Kalemci Tuzun & Araz Takay, 2017), these factors include low demand from the local economy, low real estate value and system, low capital, a lack of professional experience and qualifications, a lack of role models, poor financial management, liquidity issues, management inexperience and incompetence, union issues, the inability to seek professional help, social boundaries, and a business network. Furthermore, cultural impediments, low motivation, high crime rates, and difficulty in transitioning from public assistance to the workforce all impede women's professional growth. Liberal feminist beliefs contend that women endure discrimination and frequently lack access to critical resources. Women entrepreneurs, on the other hand, can perform similarly to men when given equal access to resources. Feminist sociologists accept that women and men are fundamentally different and that women may use less effective approaches than men. Entrepreneurship research should address resource disparities

between female entrepreneurs in wealthy and poor countries. Many female entrepreneurs in emerging markets need equal access to resources and must rely on what is available. More research is needed to understand female entrepreneurs' motivations in industrialized and developing countries better. According to Sarmah et al. (Sarmah et al., 2022), it should be investigated whether entrepreneurs' willingness to participate in entrepreneurial activities is determined by their previous entrepreneurial experiences and available resources. Entrepreneurship is all about spotting opportunities. The type of opportunity identified informs the entrepreneur's business decision. However, they argue that more than having the opportunity is needed to establish a business. Entrepreneurial motivation is an essential component in building a successful business. According to the researchers, other factors associated with commercial success are the desire for achievement (nAch), locus of control, tolerance for ambiguity, need for independence, enthusiasm, vitality, and risk-taking. With a few notable exceptions, most empirical studies on entrepreneurial motivation focus on male entrepreneurs. At the same time, statistics show that women frequently differ from men in business development, expansion strategies, and financial performance. This discrepancy may be due to a need for more personal capital, skills, knowledge, or competencies (Sarmah et al., 2022).

3. MATERIALS AND METHODS

3.1 Methods, Samples, and Research Techniques

This study adopted qualitative research methods to explore the research subjects from a micro perspective by collecting detailed and complex data. The selected sample consists of female entrepreneurs willing to participate in interviews from the Eastern Coastal areas (Dalian, Shanghai), the Central Regions (Nanchang, Taiyuan), and the Western Regions (Guiyang et al.) of China. The techniques employed include semi-structured and open-ended individual interviews and participant observation.

3.2 Information Gathering Strategy

This study interviewed 180 female entrepreneurs in China's Eastern Coastal, Central, and Western Regions. These entrepreneurs primarily engage in various sectors, including catering, education, retail, clothing, internet and artificial intelligence, and services. The contact strategy included a first meeting with entrepreneurs to explain the research content

and express our interest in conducting interviews. The interviews focused on the support provided to the interviewees by entrepreneurial policies, the type of enterprise of the interviewees, and their entrepreneurial motivations.

3.3 Data Analysis Techniques

After completing the interviews, we collected and organized the information and entered it into an Excel spreadsheet. Python programming was used to cross-analyze the categories in the text to explore the impact of insufficient entrepreneurial policies and policy advantages on female entrepreneurial motivations. The categories of analysis were primarily derived from the summary of the analysis of the interview text. The main thematic blocks to determine the categories of analysis include personal circumstances, entrepreneurial motivations, benefits from national policies, entrepreneurial financing situations, the impact of policies on entrepreneurship, the most helpful policies for operating a store or business, and the shortcomings of the entrepreneurial policies implemented by local governments.

4. RESULTS

4.1 The Impact of Entrepreneurship Policy Advantages on Women's Entrepreneurial Motivation

The interviews allowed us to identify those entrepreneurship policies that each entrepreneur believes can assist their store or business operations most helpfully. These policies were categorized into nine types: financial credit support policies, tax relief policies, entrepreneurship guidance policies, entrepreneurship support policies, administrative fee preferential policies, relaxed policies on entrepreneurship entity registration conditions, employment incentive policies, social insurance preferential policies, and free entrepreneurship training policies. Python programming was employed to conduct a cross-analysis of entrepreneurship policies and entrepreneurial motivations, aiming to assess which favorable policies are most beneficial for female entrepreneurs. The results showed that female entrepreneurs consider tax relief policies the most helpful measure for their entrepreneurial endeavors. Within the group that expressed this consideration, 78 individuals are motivated by "personal interest," 47 by "a sense of responsibility to family and society," 129 by "freedom in work time and location," 107 by "social status enhancement," 34 by "government

promotion," 118 by "survival pressure," and 115 by "self-value realization." Employment incentive policies and administrative fee preferential policies were the most helpful policies. Among those individuals who agree that incentive policies are significantly beneficial for entrepreneurship, 69 individuals are motivated by "personal interest," 37 by "a sense of responsibility to family and society," 113 by "freedom in work time and location," 94 by "social status enhancement," 30 by "government promotion," 102 by survival pressure, and 105 by "self-value realization." Within the group that finds administrative fee preferential policies as significantly helpful for entrepreneurship, 64 individuals are motivated by "personal interest," 38 by "a sense of responsibility to family and society," 110 by "freedom in work time and location," 100 by "social status enhancement," 29 by "government promotion," 99 by survival pressure, and 100 by "self-value realization." However, female entrepreneurs generally consider free entrepreneurship training policies less helpful (Table 1).

Table 1: Cross-Analysis of Advantageous Entrepreneurship Policies and Female Entrepreneurial Motivations.

Entrepreneurship Policy That Provides the Most Support to Businesses	Entrepreneurial Motivation						
	Personal Interests (Number of People)	A Sense of Responsibility to Family and Society (Number of People)	Freedom of Working Time and Location (Number of People)	Social Status Enhancement (Number of People)	Government Promotion (Number of People)	Survival Pressure (Number of People)	Self-value Realization (Number of People)
Free Entrepreneurship Training Policies	23	17	38	34	8	33	35
Entrepreneurship Guidance Policy	42	28	73	57	13	66	58
Relaxed Policies on Entrepreneurship Entity Registration Conditions	59	35	100	91	27	92	94
Entrepreneurship Support Policies	61	35	101	83	25	87	90
Employment Incentive Policies	69	37	113	94	30	102	105
Social Insurance Preferential Policies	40	26	59	44	15	50	52
Tax Relief Policies	78	47	129	107	34	118	115
Administrative Fee Preferential Policies	64	38	110	100	29	99	100
Financial Credit Support Policies	55	34	79	65	20	78	79

In conclusion, entrepreneurial policy advantages significantly impacted female entrepreneurial motivations. Tax relief policies are considered the most helpful policy, positively influencing the motivations of female entrepreneurs who engage in entrepreneurship based on the factors of "freedom in work time and location," "social status enhancement," "survival pressure," and "self-value realization." Employment incentive policies and administrative fee preferential policies were found to also promote, to some extent, the enhancement of female entrepreneurial motivations based on factors such as "freedom in work time and location," "survival pressure," "self-value realization," and "social status enhancement." However, free entrepreneurship training policies have yet to be widely acknowledged among female entrepreneurs, indicating the need for further improvement and enhancement.

4.2 Differences in Regions with Insufficient Entrepreneurship Policies

The results of the interviews with female entrepreneurs in the three different regions of China investigated (namely, the Eastern Coastal Region, the Central Region, and the Western Region) allowed us to understand the shortcomings of entrepreneurship policies in each region and categorize them into seven dimensions or influencing factors. These dimensions include entrepreneurship policy formulation, entrepreneurship support services, entrepreneurship policy implementation, tax incentives for entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial guidance, entrepreneurial financing, and entrepreneurial training and education. When cross-analyzing the deficiencies within each region and dimension, we found that female entrepreneurs in the Eastern Coastal, Central, and Western Regions generally believe that policy formulation, entrepreneurship support services, and policy implementation are affected by several shortcomings. This indicates that these regions need further improvement in formulating policies favorable to female entrepreneurship and providing better services and enforcement. Additionally, regarding tax incentives, the Eastern Coastal region has fewer shortcomings, followed by the Central Region, while the Western Region faces more issues. This may be because the Eastern Coastal region has accumulated more resources and experience to offer better tax incentive policies. In contrast, the Western Region must enhance its support through tax incentives. Furthermore, regarding guidance and financing for entrepreneurship, the Western Region has fewer shortcomings, followed by the Eastern Coastal Region, while the Central Region has relatively more issues. This could be because the Western Region has accumulated

experience and resources in guidance and financing for entrepreneurship, providing better support than the other regions. Lastly, regarding training and education for entrepreneurship, we found that the Western Region has fewer shortcomings, followed by the Central Region. In contrast, the Eastern Coastal region has a higher number of issues. This may be due to the greater attention and investment in entrepreneurship training and education in the Western Region. In contrast, the Eastern Coastal region must strengthen training and educational support for female entrepreneurs. In conclusion, by conducting interviews with female entrepreneurs in different areas of China and analyzing the deficiencies of entrepreneurship policies from seven dimensions or influencing factors, we could observe that each region is affected by other issues. These results provide a basis for relevant government agencies and organizations to improve entrepreneurship policies, offer better support, and enhance training and education to promote the development of female entrepreneurship (Table 2).

Table 2: Distribution of the different types of inadequacies in entrepreneurial policies across the three Chinese regions investigated.

Region	Types of Insufficiencies in Entrepreneurship Policies						
	Entrepreneurial Training and Education	Entrepreneurial Guidance	Entrepreneurship Policy Formulation	Entrepreneurship Policy Implementation	Entrepreneurship Support Services	Tax Incentives for Entrepreneurship	Entrepreneurial Financing
Eastern Coastal Region	5.00%	3.33%	35.00%	16.67%	35.00%	1.67%	3.33%
Central Region	3.33%	6.67%	26.67%	10.00%	43.33%	3.33%	6.67%
Western Region	1.67%	1.67%	26.67%	10.00%	53.33%	5.00%	1.67%

4.3 The Impact of Inadequate Entrepreneurship Policies on Female Entrepreneurial Motivation in Different Regions

We used Python programming to cross-analyze the inadequacies in entrepreneurship policies and female

entrepreneurial motivation in China's Eastern Coastal, Central, and Western Regions. The results of this study revealed that deficiencies significantly influence female entrepreneurial motivation in these three regions in entrepreneurship policy formulation, entrepreneurship service support, and inadequate implementation of entrepreneurship policies. Among these factors, the impact of entrepreneurship service support on female entrepreneurial motivation was found to be the most significant, followed by entrepreneurship policy formulation and implementation. Comparing the results across the three regions, we observed that the lack of entrepreneurship service support has the most pronounced impact on female entrepreneurial motivation in the Western Region. At the same time, deficiencies in entrepreneurship policy formulation significantly affect female entrepreneurial motivation in the Eastern Coastal region. Similarly, inadequacies in entrepreneurship policy implementation have a more pronounced impact on female entrepreneurial motivation in the Eastern Coastal region. In the Eastern Coastal region, some female entrepreneurs argued that adequate entrepreneurial support services are lacking. More in detail, 20 individuals declared to be motivated by the pursuit of "freedom in work time and location," 18 seek "self-value realization," 16 aim to "enhance their social status," 15 are driven by "survival pressure," 13 pursue "personal interests," 6 act out of an "a sense of responsibility to family and society," and five are influenced by "government promotion." Female entrepreneurs who perceive deficiencies in entrepreneurial policy formulation include 17 individuals compelled by "survival pressure," 16 seeking "freedom in work time and location," 12 pursuing "self-value realization," 11 seeking "personal interests," 11 driven by an "a sense of responsibility to family and society," 9 aiming to enhance their social status, and three influenced by "government promotion." Among the female entrepreneurs who believe that there are shortcomings in entrepreneurship policy implementation, nine individuals pursue "freedom in work time and location," 8 seek to enhance their social status, eight are driven by "survival pressure," 8 pursue "personal interests," 7 seek "self-value realization," 3 are influenced by "government promotion," and 2 act out of an "a sense of responsibility to family and society" (Table 3). In the Central Region, among those female entrepreneurs facing insufficient entrepreneurial support, 20 individuals are motivated by the pursuit of "freedom in work time and location," 19 seek "self-value realization," 17 aim at "social status enhancement," 14 are driven by "survival pressure," 9 pursue "personal interests," 5 act out of "a sense of responsibility to family and society," and five are encouraged by government promotion.

Table 3: Cross-Analysis of Inadequate Entrepreneurship Policies in the Eastern Coastal Region of China and Motivations for Female Entrepreneurship.

Types of Insufficiencies in Entrepreneurship Policies	Entrepreneurial Motivation						
	Personal Interests (Number of People)	A Sense of Responsibility to Family and Society (Number of People)	Freedom of Working Time and Location (Number of People)	Social Status Enhanceme nt (Number of People)	Governmen t Promotion (Number of People)	Survival Pressure (Number of People)	Self-value Realizatio n (Number of People)
Entrepreneurial Training and Education	1	1	3	3	0	2	2
Entrepreneurial Guidance	1	0	1	2	0	2	0
Entrepreneurship Policy Formulation	11	11	16	9	3	17	12
Entrepreneurship Policy Implementation	8	2	9	8	3	8	7
Entrepreneurship Support Services	13	6	20	16	5	15	18
Tax Incentives for Entrepreneurship	1	1	1	1	0	0	1
Entrepreneurial Financing	0	1	2	2	0	2	2

Among those female entrepreneurs who perceive deficiencies in entrepreneurial policy formulation, 14 aspire to "social status enhancement," 13 seek "freedom in work time and location," 12 are driven by "survival pressure," 12 pursue "self-value realization," 8 aim for "personal interests," 7 act out of "a sense of responsibility to family and society," and three are influenced by "government promotion." Among those female entrepreneurs who perceive deficiencies in entrepreneurial policy implementation, six are driven by "survival pressure," 3 aim at "social status enhancement," 3 seek "freedom in work time and location," 3 pursue "personal interests," 2 act out of "a sense of responsibility to family and society," 2 pursue "self-value realization," with no individuals starting a business due to "government promotion" (Table 4).

Table 4: Cross-Analysis of Inadequate Entrepreneurship Policies in the Central Region of China and Motivations for Female Entrepreneurship.

Types of Insufficiencies in Entrepreneurship Policies	Entrepreneurial Motivation						
	Personal Interests (Number of People)	A Sense of Responsibility to Family and Society (Number of People)	Freedom of Working Time and Location (Number of People)	Social Status Enhancement (Number of People)	Government Promotion (Number of People)	Survival Pressure (Number of People)	Self-value Realization (Number of People)
Entrepreneurial Training and Education	1	2	2	1	0	2	1
Entrepreneurial Guidance	2	0	3	1	1	4	2
Entrepreneurship Policy Formulation	8	7	13	14	3	12	12
Entrepreneurship Policy Implementation	3	2	3	3	0	6	2
Entrepreneurship Support Services	9	5	20	17	5	14	19
Tax Incentives for Entrepreneurship	1	0	1	2	1	1	0
Entrepreneurial Financing	1	2	2	3	1	2	4

Among those female entrepreneurs in the Western Region who feel a lack of support in entrepreneurial services, 25 individuals are motivated by the pursuit of "freedom in work time and location," 24 seek "self-value realization," 23 are driven by "survival pressure," 18 hope to "enhance social status," 14 are drawn by "personal interests," 7 are influenced by "government promotion," and 4 start a business out of "a sense of responsibility to family and society." Among those female entrepreneurs who believe that there are deficiencies in entrepreneurial policy formulation, 12 pursue "freedom in work time and location," 12 seek "self-value realization," 10 aspire to "enhance social status," 9 are driven by "survival pressure," 7 act out of "personal interests," 6 are encouraged by "government promotion," and 3 start a business due to "a sense of responsibility to family and society." Finally, among those female entrepreneurs

who perceive deficiencies in entrepreneurial policy implementation, 6 seek "self-value realization," 5 pursue "freedom in work time and location," 5 are driven by "survival pressure," 4 hope to "enhance social status," and two are motivated by "personal interests." At the same time, no individuals are starting a business due to "government promotion" and "a sense of responsibility to family and society" (Table 5).

Table 5: Cross-Analysis of Inadequate Entrepreneurship Policies in the Western Region of China and Motivations for Female Entrepreneurship.

Types of Insufficiencies in Entrepreneurship Policies	Entrepreneurial Motivation						
	Personal Interests (Number of People)	A Sense of Responsibility to Family and Society (Number of People)	Freedom of Working Time and Location (Number of People)	Social Status Enhancement (Number of People)	Government Promotion (Number of People)	Survival Pressure (Number of People)	Self-value Realization (Number of People)
Entrepreneurial Training and Education	0	1	1	1	0	0	1
Entrepreneurial Guidance	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
Entrepreneurship Policy Formulation	7	3	12	10	6	9	12
Entrepreneurship Policy Implementation	2	0	5	4	0	5	6
Entrepreneurship Support Services	14	4	25	18	7	23	24
Tax Incentives for Entrepreneurship	1	1	3	2	0	2	2
Entrepreneurial Financing	1	0	1	1	0	1	1

5. DISCUSSION

This study explored the impact of entrepreneurial policy advantages on the entrepreneurial motivations of women, using Python programming to conduct a cross-analysis of entrepreneurial policy and entrepreneurial motivations to identify the most beneficial policies for female entrepreneurs. The results of this study clearly show that female entrepreneurs generally believe that tax relief policies provide the most excellent assistance for their entrepreneurial endeavors. Among those who consider tax policies to be the most helpful for entrepreneurship, 78 individuals are motivated by personal interests, 47 by a sense of responsibility to family and society, 129 by the freedom of working time and location, 107 by the enhancement of their social status, 34 by governmental promotion, 118 by survival pressure, and 115 by the realization of self-value. It can be observed that tax relief policies have a positive impact on the motivation of female entrepreneurs who start businesses based on "freedom of working time and location," "enhancement of social status," "survival pressure," and "realization of self-value." Firstly, 129 individuals are motivated by the freedom of working time and location. Tax relief policies can alleviate the tax burden on enterprises, provide greater economic autonomy, and enable female entrepreneurs to choose the time and location of their work freely. This is particularly important for female entrepreneurs with family responsibilities, as it allows them to balance work and family life better, enhancing the flexibility and freedom of their work. Secondly, 107 individuals are motivated by the enhancement of their social status. Implementing tax relief policies provides female entrepreneurs with more resources and financial support, enhancing their competitiveness and influence in the business field. Through entrepreneurial activities, female entrepreneurs can access more opportunities for success and elevate their social status, boosting their confidence and self-esteem (Valeri & Katsoni, 2021). Furthermore, 118 individuals are motivated by survival pressure. Female entrepreneurs often face survival pressure during the entrepreneurial process. Tax relief policies can provide them with additional financial and resource support, helping to alleviate economic pressures during entrepreneurship and increasing their confidence and motivation to start businesses. Thirdly, 115 individuals are motivated by the realization of self-value. Tax relief policies can offer female entrepreneurs more excellent entrepreneurial opportunities and economic support. Reducing the tax burden allows them to invest more in business development, improve

product quality and service levels, and achieve their entrepreneurial ideals and dreams, further igniting the drive of female entrepreneurs to realize their self-value (Morazzoni & Sy, 2022). Moreover, female entrepreneurs stated that incentives for job creation and administrative fee discounts provide significant assistance to them, as these policies also positively influence their motivations based on "freedom of working time and location," "social status enhancement," "survival pressure," and "realization of self-value." Incentives for job creation help female entrepreneurs expand their business scale, create more employment opportunities, and empower others with job opportunities (Alene, 2020). By creating job opportunities, female entrepreneurs can realize their self-value, contribute to society, and enhance their social status and reputation. Implementing administrative fee discounts can alleviate the economic burden of entrepreneurs, providing them with higher financial and resource support. This helps to ease financial pressures during entrepreneurship, increasing the motivation and confidence of female entrepreneurs to persist in entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurs believe that free entrepreneurship training policies provide less assistance for their entrepreneurial endeavors. Looking at the educational background of the interviewees, the number of individuals with a bachelor's degree or above was 123, accounting for 68% of the interviewees, with over half having higher education qualifications. Therefore, this result may be due to female entrepreneurs' relatively solid educational background and skills. Subsequently, this study further explored regional discrepancies in inadequate entrepreneurial policies. The inadequacies of entrepreneurial policies in the three regions investigated were summarized and categorized into seven dimensions: entrepreneurship policy formulation, entrepreneurship support policies, entrepreneurship policy implementation, tax incentives for entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial guidance, entrepreneurial financing, and entrepreneurial training and education. This study identified the issues affecting these seven dimensions and conducted a cross-analysis of the three regions and the shortcomings in entrepreneurial policies. The findings of this study reveal that female entrepreneurs in the three regions generally believe that there are significant areas for improvement in the formulation of entrepreneurial policies, entrepreneurial service support, and execution of entrepreneurial policies. Finally, by conducting a cross-analysis of the inadequacies in entrepreneurial policies across different regions and the motivation behind female entrepreneurship, we could gain a deeper understanding of the negative impact of insufficient entrepreneurial policies on the motivation

of female entrepreneurs. The deficiencies in entrepreneurial policy formulation, entrepreneurial support services, and policy implementation significantly impact the motivation of female entrepreneurs in all the regions investigated. Specifically, the impact of entrepreneurial support services on female entrepreneurial motivation was found to be the most prominent, followed by policy formulation and policy implementation. This conclusion aligns with the results of the previous cross-analysis of regions and shortcomings in entrepreneurial policies (see Section [4.2]). It can be inferred that the lack of entrepreneurial support services will restrict the motivations of female entrepreneurs in the three regions to engage in entrepreneurship based on "government promotion" and "responsibility towards family and society." In the case of shortcomings in entrepreneurial policy formulation, their impact on female entrepreneurs in the Eastern Coastal region includes limiting their motivation to engage in entrepreneurship based on "social status enhancement" and "government promotion." Policy formulation deficiencies will also restrict female entrepreneurs' entrepreneurial motivation in the Western and Central Regions, as they will affect their willingness to engage in entrepreneurship based on "government promotion" and "responsibility towards family and society." In terms of shortcomings in policy implementation, these will place limitations on the motivation of female entrepreneurs in the Eastern Coastal region to engage in entrepreneurship based on "government promotion" and "responsibility towards family and society." Moreover, policy implementation deficiencies will affect female entrepreneurs' motivation in the Central Region, limiting their willingness to engage in entrepreneurship based on "responsibility towards family and society" and "government promotion." In the Western Region, deficiencies in policy implementation will also restrict the motivation of female entrepreneurs, including limiting their willingness to engage in entrepreneurship based on "personal interests," "government promotion," and "responsibility towards family and society." Overall, a series of issues exist in entrepreneurial policy formulation, service support, and policy execution, which have a significant negative impact on the motivation of women to start businesses based on the factors of "government promotion," "sense of responsibility towards family and society," "personal interests," and "social status enhancement." Regarding entrepreneurial policy formulation, the lack of differentiated and targeted support places female entrepreneurs in a position to balance family and societal responsibilities while facing entrepreneurial challenges. When policies fail to provide appropriate support, female entrepreneurs may abandon business opportunities due to the heavy burden of their

responsibilities. Furthermore, inadequate policy support for female entrepreneurs may entail more significant difficulties and obstacles as they strive to improve their social status, ultimately affecting their entrepreneurial motivation. Lastly, more specialized support for female entrepreneurs helps them retain confidence and motivation in government-led initiatives. Regarding entrepreneurial service support, deficiencies in policy formulation, inadequate funding support, shortages in investment institutions and talents, and insufficient support for new technologies and industries can negatively impact the motivation of those female entrepreneurs driven by "government promotion." Additionally, the lack of social security and welfare support can increase the survival pressure faced by female entrepreneurs, thereby decreasing their entrepreneurial motivation. In the entrepreneurial process, women may have greater family responsibilities, making the need for social security and welfare support more urgent. The absence of such support may make female entrepreneurs worry about their future and family, resulting in hesitance and withdrawal from entrepreneurial motivation (Elam et al., 2019). Regarding entrepreneurial policy execution, bureaucratic issues can hinder female entrepreneurs from balancing family and business responsibilities. Cumbersome procedures and inefficient policy implementation may require female entrepreneurs to spend additional time and effort to deal with administrative tasks, making it challenging to manage the relationship between family and business affairs effectively. In these circumstances, female entrepreneurs may perceive conflicts and pressures between family and societal responsibilities, reducing their entrepreneurial drive and enthusiasm. Moreover, the lack of long-term systematic planning can affect entrepreneurs' recognition of the sustainability and reliability of government-led initiatives. In fact, without long-term systematic planning in entrepreneurial policies, instability and frequent changes in the execution process can lead entrepreneurs to doubt the effectiveness and long-term benefits of government-led initiatives, diminishing their willingness to rely on government support for entrepreneurship. Furthermore, the absence of public participation and feedback mechanisms restricts the realization of entrepreneurs' interests. If the implementation of entrepreneurial policies has public participation and feedback mechanisms, entrepreneurs can effectively express their needs and gain societal support and recognition. This can make entrepreneurs need more support and motivation in pursuing their entrepreneurial interests, reducing their willingness to sustain their commitment (Kamberidou, 2020).

6. CONCLUSIONS

This study has certain limitations related to the research methods and sample selection. In terms of research methods, we employed qualitative research methods to analyze the impact of current entrepreneurial policies on women's entrepreneurial motivations and to identify the factors influencing entrepreneurial motivations based on these policies. However, we did not analyze the relationships among these influencing factors. Therefore, in future research, it is recommended to use quantitative methods to explore the relationships between the factors influencing entrepreneurial motivation and the pathways of impact of entrepreneurial policies on women's entrepreneurial motivations. Regarding sample selection, the coverage of the sample investigated in this study is relatively limited. Therefore, expanding the sample coverage to include more regions and cities is recommended in future research. In particular, additional first-tier, second-tier, and third-tier cities and areas with different levels of economic development should be considered to obtain more comprehensive and representative sample data. Despite these limitations, this study holds theoretical value and significance in assisting policymakers in assessing whether their initiatives have achieved the intended goals and promoting improvements in development policies. Based on our research findings, we can infer that tax relief policies, employment incentive policies, and administrative fee preferential policies play a positive role in motivating female entrepreneurs to start businesses based on factors such as "freedom of working time and location," "social status enhancement," "survival pressure," and "self-value realization." However, significant areas for improvement still exist in certain aspects, such as the formulation of entrepreneurship policy, support services, and policy implementation. These shortcomings can have substantial negative impacts on the motivations of women entrepreneurs seeking to start businesses based on factors such as "government promotion," "a sense of responsibility to family and society," "personal interests," and "social status enhancement." Therefore, to enhance female entrepreneurial motivation, the government needs to fully consider the unique needs of female entrepreneurs when formulating entrepreneurship policies and provide differentiated and targeted support. Additionally, a focus on scientific evidence, unified evaluation standards, and anticipating industry development trends is also crucial. Furthermore, it is necessary to provide more significant support and opportunities for female entrepreneurs, including flexible work arrangements to balance family responsibilities, professional

entrepreneurship consulting and guidance services, improved social security, and support for personal development. Moreover, improvements in entrepreneurship policy implementation are needed to reduce the adverse effects of bureaucracy, establish long-term systematic planning, enhance public participation and feedback mechanisms, combat corruption, and improve the effectiveness and fairness of policy implementation. Moreover, it is essential to enhance the specificity and comprehensiveness of entrepreneurship guidance, focus on developing emerging industries, enhance policy promotion, evaluate and guide entrepreneurship projects, and guide and motivate young entrepreneurs. Finally, it is necessary to strengthen diversification and inclusiveness in entrepreneurial financing by exploring additional financing channels, lowering the threshold for financial support, improving innovative enterprise financing solutions, and providing sufficient financing support, thus enabling female entrepreneurs to access better financing support.

Biographical Note

Weiyang Ye is a lecturer at the School of Innovation and Entrepreneurship at Wenzhou University. Her research interests are entrepreneurial management and traditional Chinese medicine supply chain management, and she has published several articles in international and domestic journals. His contribution to this article was mainly to write the first and final drafts.

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