# Professional Development Workshop (PDW) International Association for Chinese Management Research

**9th Biennial Conference June 16-20, 2021, Xi’an**

# Cultivating Entrepreneurship in China

1. **Title of the workshop:**

***Researching Chinese Women Entrepreneurship in a New Era: Opportunities and Challenges***

1. **Full name and contact information of the chair (organizer) and presenter(s):**

Dr. Jun Li, Associate Professor \*

Associate Editor, New England Journal of Entrepreneurship University of New Hampshire

Peter T Paul College of Business and Economics 10 Garrison Avenue, NH 03824, USA

Phone: +1-603-8623365

Email: jun.li@unh.edu

Dr. Grace Guo, Associate Professor \*

Editor-in-Chief, New England Journal of Entrepreneurship Sacred Heart University

Jack Welch College of Business and Technology 5151 Park Avenue

Fairfield, CT 06825, USA Phone: +1-203-426-3462

Email: chun-guog@sacredheart.edu

Dr. Crystal Jiang \*

Professor, Bryant University, USA

Associate Editor, New England Journal of Entrepreneurship 150 Douglas Pike, Smithfield, RI 02917 USA

Email: cjiang1@bryant.edu

1. **Panelists / Supporters:**

Dr. Dev Dutta

Associate Professor, University of New Hampshire, USA Associate Editor, New England Journal of Entrepreneurship Email: Dev.dutta@unh.edu

Dr. Yiyuan Mai

Professor, Huazhong University of Science and Technology, P.R. China Chair, Department of Technology Management and Intellectual Property Email: maiyiyuan@mail.hust.edu.cn

# Goal of the workshop (i.e., learning objectives):

The past few decades have witnessed an unprecedented social and economic growth of China. Along with China’s rapid economic growth is the increasing involvement of women in entrepreneurial activities (Burt, 2019; Chen, 2012). The most recent Mastercard Index of Women Entrepreneurs reports that women own

30.9 percent of all businesses in China (Newsroom MasterCard, March 2017). Contrary to the conventional Confucius’ view that women shall be submissive or supportive of their male counterparts in society, Chinese women have been more active in taking leadership positions and pursuing their entrepreneurial dreams. This is in line with the finding of the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor 2015/2016 study on 74 global markets that women in China (and Vietnam) are among the most inclined to invest in a business or an entrepreneurial activity. (Kelley, Singer, Herrington, 2016). According to the All-China Women’s Federation statistics, Chinese women entrepreneurs have risen to a quarter of total entrepreneurs as of April of 2017. In terms of personal wealth, Chinese women have successfully made it to the billionaires’ club too – Forbes reports that half of the worlds’ 14 self-made female billionaires are from China (Alberts, 2010).

The growth of Chinese women entrepreneurship has deep institutional and socio- cultural roots. The market-oriented reform started in the late 1970s stimulated the growth of the private sector in China. The government’s long-term one-child policy and the Chinese multi-generational family structure also offer a lessened family burden to women who take on an entrepreneurial career. The relatively developed gender equality in Chinese society has also encouraged females to take entrepreneurial or leadership positions in the business communities. Despite the supportive institutional environment and the rapid growth of women entrepreneurship, unfortunately, systematic research on Chinese women entrepreneurship is far behind their burgeoning entrepreneurial activities in China (Deng, Wang, & Alon, 2011).

The call for more systemic research on Chinese women entrepreneurship becomes even more urgent, given the new development of the Chinese economy and society at the turn of the new century. The rapid growth of digitalization and mobilization of the economy has dramatically empowered disadvantaged people for entrepreneurship ( Yu & Cui, 2019), and has created a more favorable environment for women entrepreneurship in China. It is reported that Chinese women have been more active in new economies such as technology sectors, especially the internet-based or e-commerce-related startups. Women now have been leading more than half of tech startups in China (Springer, 2018). On Alibaba’s C2C e-commerce platform Taobao, over 50 percent of store owners on the site are female, and 46 percent of transactions are from female vendors. Also,

almost half of the technology startups are owned by Chinese women (Zhang, 2017).Chinese women entrepreneurs are competing in businesses in every sector, with rapid growth in the technology sectors.

The profiles of Chinese women entrepreneurs of this new era are also changing. Traditional Chinese woman entrepreneurs usually started their businesses in their 40s or 50s; they often built their businesses with strong ties of resources from the state-owned enterprises and likely started new ventures for necessity reasons (Hernandez, Nunn & Warnecke, 2012). The “new generation” of women entrepreneurs are often younger, better educated, and much more technology empowered. They are more opportunity-based and poised to take business opportunities brought by disruptive technology and innovations in society. This new era of women entrepreneurship calls for updated theories, new sets of research questions, and corresponding approaches and methodologies.

The purpose of this PDW is to gather scholars with research interests in woman entrepreneurship in China to discuss the current state of the research, gaps in the literature, future research directions, especially in light of these new developments of women entrepreneurship in China. This PDW will also focus on sharing experiences and insights in publishing research on Chinese women entrepreneurship to the mainstream entrepreneurship journals.

# Content of the workshop:

The first part of this workshop will focus on a review and discussion of

research in this field, especially in light of new developments of Chinese women entrepreneurship. The participants, along with presenters/organizers, will collectively discuss the following questions (in a round table format).

* + What are the driving factors of women entrepreneurship in China in the new era, compared to the tradition?
	+ What are the characteristics of women entrepreneurs in China in this new era?
	+ What are the gender effects on the entrepreneurial process given the Chinese culture in this new era?
	+ How do globalization and women entrepreneurship interplay with each other in this new era?
	+ How does gender influence entrepreneurship and technology innovation, given the change of the technology landscape in China?
	+ How gender influences social entrepreneurship in China in this new era?
	+ What are the current (persistent) and new hurdles for Chinese women entrepreneurship, given the technology empowerment?
	+ How does women’s business shape or influence Chinese societies’ norms, expectation, beliefs, and development?

The second part of this PDW will be focused on publishing research on Chinese women entrepreneurship in mainstream entrepreneurship journals. The PDW plans to invite professors and scholars with both research and editorial experiences to share their experiences, and to discuss existing opportunities and challenges associated with publishing this line of research in the mainstream entrepreneurship journals.

# Intended participants and admission criteria for the participants:

Intended participants for the workshop are faculty members or Ph.D. students from Western and Chinese institutions of higher education, with expertise and an interest in women (or general) entrepreneurship, particularly with Chinese context. Admission to the workshop will be on a first-come-first-served basis.

However, in order to preserve the quality of the hands-on and discussion-based approach, a maximum of 25 participants will be accommodated.

# Time requirement of the workshop:

The PDW will require 2.5 hours.

# References

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