

Artículo de investigación

Female entrepreneurship development in the Russian Federation

Desarrollo del emprendimiento femenino en la Federación Rusa
Desenvolvimento do empreendedorismo feminino na Federação Russa
Развитие женского предпринимательства в Российской Федерации

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Abstract

The purpose of the work is to assess levels of entrepreneurial activity of women in Russia, their motivational preferences. The study is based on the economic and statistical analysis of the data on Russia in 2015-2017, presented in the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor report and Female Business Activity Index in Russia. The research reveals features of female entrepreneurship and the barriers to its development. The paper defines basic indicators of woman business and ways of its development in Russia. The obtained new knowledge can be used in scientific research, in the educational process in the preparation of bachelors and masters, as well as training specialists in small business problems.

Keywords: woman entrepreneurship, small and medium enterprises, entrepreneurial activity, motivation, gender gap.

Resumen

El propósito del trabajo es evaluar los niveles de actividad empresarial de las mujeres en Rusia, sus preferencias motivacionales. El estudio se basa en el análisis económico y estadístico de los datos sobre Rusia en 2015-2017, presentado en el informe Global Entrepreneurship Monitor y en el Índice de actividad empresarial femenina en Rusia. La investigación revela características del emprendimiento femenino y las barreras para su desarrollo. El documento define indicadores básicos de negocios de mujeres y formas de su desarrollo en Rusia. El nuevo conocimiento obtenido se puede utilizar en la investigación científica, en el proceso educativo en la preparación de licenciaturas y maestrías, así como en la capacitación de especialistas en problemas de pequeñas empresas.

Palabras clave: emprendimiento femenino, pequeñas y medianas empresas, actividad emprendedora, motivación, brecha de género.

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Resumo

O objetivo do trabalho é avaliar os níveis de atividade empreendedora das mulheres na Rússia, suas preferências motivacionais. O estudo baseia-se na análise econômica e estatística dos dados sobre a Rússia em 2015-2017, apresentados no relatório Global Entrepreneurship Monitor e Female Business Activity Index na Rússia. A pesquisa revela características do empreendedorismo feminino e as barreiras ao seu desenvolvimento. O papel define indicadores básicos de negócio de mulher e caminhos do seu desenvolvimento na Rússia. Os novos conhecimentos obtidos podem ser utilizados em pesquisas científicas, no processo educacional na preparação de bacharéis e mestrados, bem como na formação de especialistas em problemas de pequenas empresas.

Palavras-chave: empreendedorismo feminino, pequenas e médias empresas, atividade empreendedora, motivação, brecha de gênero.

Аннотация

Целью работы является оценка уровня предпринимательской активности женщин в России, их мотивационных предпочтений. Исследование основано на экономическом и статистическом анализе данных по России за 2015-2017 гг., представленных в отчете Глобального мониторинга предпринимательства и Индексе деловой активности женщин в России. Исследование описывает особенности женского предпринимательства и барьеры на пути его развития. Определены основные показатели женского бизнеса и направления его развития в России. Полученные новые знания могут быть использованы в научных исследованиях, в учебном процессе при подготовке бакалавров и магистров, а также при подготовке специалистов по проблемам малого бизнеса.

Ключевые слова: женское предпринимательство, малые и средние предприятия, предпринимательская деятельность, мотивация, гендерный разрыв

Introduction

Small and medium enterprises have been developed in the Russian Federation in the process of transformation of the state economy into a market economy since 1992. Thus, to date this sector of the national economy has existed in our country for a little more than 25 years. Accordingly, female entrepreneurship in Russia is the same age.

Studies conducted by scientists in different countries demonstrate the positive impact of female entrepreneurs on economic growth, employment growth and reduction of social tension in many countries (Morozov, 2003; Fetsch et al., 2015; Lewis et al., 2014). According to the work (Woetzel et al., 2015), a more complete use of the potential of female entrepreneurs, including their participation in the economy at a level comparable to men, can increase the global gross domestic product by 26%.

The problem of a significant increase in the production of goods and services by female entrepreneurship requires an understanding of

its features and differences from male entrepreneurship. To develop measures to increase the contribution of women to entrepreneurship and to reduce the gender gap in the number of enterprises owned by women and men, it is necessary to study a wide range of issues related to female entrepreneurship. Therefore, the analysis of the regularities characterizing the existing level of female entrepreneurial activity, as well as the identification of reserves for the growth of female entrepreneurship is relevant now.

The researchers did not pay enough attention to the issues of female entrepreneurship in Russia. The relevant publications appeared in the press only after 2002. Let us consider the most interesting of them. Morozov (2003) concluded that the formation of a community of women, business owners, at the initial stage, was based on the initiative of the engineering and technical intelligentsia in the process of transformation of state enterprises and organizations. Dolgorukova and Kolesnikov (2004) focus on the differences characteristic of female entrepreneurship. The

article of Gritsayuk (2006) shows that in the presence of discrimination against women in the labor market, the majority of female entrepreneurs do not see significant manifestations of distrust towards them from the authorities and male businessmen. Gilmanova (2007) the main attention is paid to the development of female entrepreneurship in Bashkortostan. It is concluded that the majority of women start their own business, since they cannot earn otherwise. Kipervar and Sevelova (2009) consider features of entrepreneurship in another region (Omsk region). The article states that among Russian entrepreneurs in the 2000-s, women accounted for 25% to 30%. Moreover, among female businesses dominated enterprises with a small number of employees. The analysis of barriers to female entrepreneurship is given by Moskovtseva (2011). It also states that the share of women in business in 1997 was only 18 per cent of the total number of entrepreneurs. Semenova (2013) draws attention to the fact that female entrepreneurs are dominated by women with higher specialized education, middle and mature age (belonging to the group of potential risk of unemployment). At the same time, these are mainly women who have considerable experience in managerial work, or who have not only high qualifications, but also the necessary material resources and connections for starting and developing their business that decide to show initiative and independent creative activity. Polutova (2015) demonstrates the opportunities for the development of female entrepreneurship in the post-industrial period, when not products, but services become the dominant product type. The results of the interviews conducted by Kolobova (2016) showed the great importance of entrepreneurial activity for older and middle-aged women, who were engaged in entrepreneurship, having only unemployment as an alternative. Gallyamov (2016) proves that the main reasons for women to organize their business are the need for self-realization and the desire to have high incomes. In his opinion, they strive first and foremost to achieve success, independence and high social status. Utkina (2017) formulated gender problems and socio-cultural stereotypes of modern entrepreneurship, including those that hinder the business activity of women.

Female entrepreneurship in Russia

In the process of the study, the analysis of the development of female entrepreneurship in Russia in 2016 was carried out. At the same time,

along with the results of our work, the data provided in the report (Verkhovskaya et al., 2017) were used. The analysis carried out according to the GEM data allowed us to draw the following conclusions:

- female entrepreneurship in Russia, as well as entrepreneurship in general, has been developing for a quarter of the century. However, only for the last ten years female participation in entrepreneurship has developed significantly;
- the total number of women involved in entrepreneurship reached 5.2 million in 2016 in Russia;
- the gender gap in entrepreneurial activity has significantly reduced in recent years;
- there were almost two times more opportunity-driven early-stage female entrepreneurs than necessity-driven early-stage entrepreneurs;
- the level of entrepreneurial activity of women in the early stages in Russia exceeded similar indicators in such economically developed European countries as Germany, Italy, France;
- the share of women in the total number of people starting their own business in our country reached 47%;
- the ratio of female to male entrepreneurial activity in the early stages in Russia was significantly higher than in the US and the largest economies of the European Union.

In 2015-2017, the All-Russian Public Organization of Small and Medium Enterprises ("OPORA of Russia") conducted an assessment of the female entrepreneurial activity index (Female Business Activity Index, 2017). In total four reports corresponding to four waves of the research were released. The entrepreneurial activity index describes the preference level of the business and social environment for the development of female entrepreneurship in Russia. The index included three indicators that reflect society's attitudes towards female entrepreneurship, namely the culture of entrepreneurship, its economic conditions and infrastructure, as well as the personal qualities and talents of entrepreneurs. The survey on these three indicators took into account the views of women who already own their business, as well as employed and temporarily unemployed women. Each of the indicators in the surveys corresponded to a set of questions. At the same time, a positive assessment of the business and social environment was described by values above 50 points, while a negative

assessment was described below 50 points. The value of business activity indices for each of the indicators was calculated on the basis of the survey results on the issues included in the corresponding indicator. The composite index of female entrepreneurial activity was based on conditional proportions, which according to researchers, reflect the importance of indicators. Thus, the indicator of entrepreneurial culture corresponded to the proportion of 0.2; economic conditions and infrastructure - 0.6; personal qualities and talents of women entrepreneurs - 0.2. Taking into account these specific proportions, the composite index represented the amount of the products of the indicator values by the corresponding proportions. Thus, the values of the composite index of female entrepreneurial activity above 50 points indicate a favorable environment, and below 50 points indicates an unfavorable environment. Such approach allowed us to obtain a comprehensive assessment of the business environment. The results of the four waves of research showed that the values of the summary indicators were:

- the first wave (2015) - 56 points;
 - the second wave (2016) - 57 points;
 - the third wave (the first half of 2017) - 59 points;
 - the fourth wave (second half of 2017) - 69 points.
- At the same time, by the end of 2017, the indicators included in the composite index were:
- business culture - 71 points;
 - economic conditions and infrastructure - 58 points;
 - personal qualities and talents - 67 points.

Along with the assessment of the conditions of entrepreneurial activity, a survey on the

attitude of the Russian population to female entrepreneurship was conducted. The absolute majority of respondents (96%) were positive about entrepreneurship, including self-employment of women. The survey showed that three-quarters of women see themselves as entrepreneurs in future. Only 11% of respondents would not like to be engaged in business activity.

In addition, "OPORA of Russia" conducted interviews with female entrepreneurs on the problems of running their own business. The sample of respondents was based on statistical data on the size of business and types of activities. The structure of the respondents was as follows. Half of the respondents were microenterprise owners, 35% were owners of small enterprises and 15% were medium enterprises owners. The specialization of female entrepreneurs participating in the survey was as follows: trade (40%), production of goods (10%), provision of various services (50%).

Some of the respondents' opinions on the results of the surveys are given below.

According to the data for 2015, the main reasons why the interviewed women started doing business were the following:

- additional income - 37%;
- possibility of self-realization - 28%;
- independence from the employer - 23%;
- desire to leave business to children - 4%;
- other reasons - 8%.

Additional information on the drivers and motives of women in business was obtained in the third and the fourth waves of the study. These data are given in table 1.

Table 1. Drivers and motives of female entrepreneurs, %

Goals	The third wave (the first half of 2017)	The fourth wave (second half of 2017.)
	Drivers	
Desire to realize her own idea	27	22
More income than employment	33	21
Experience in the relevant industry	8	16
	Motives	
Material incentives (money, standard of living)	48	35
Professional incentives (development, interest, experience)	32	37
Social incentives (family, status, communication)	20	27

Source: developed by authors

The main drivers affecting the entrepreneurial activity of women are the desire to get higher income than employees (on average, 27% of respondents) and the need to implement existing ideas and plans (on average, 25%). A bit less impact (12% on average) is due to previous experience in a particular type of economic activity.

The main motives of entrepreneurship are material and professional incentives, namely improving the standard of living, material well-being, as well as further professional development, the availability of interesting work and additional experience. From 72% to 80% of respondents noted these motives in the complex. At the same time, social incentives also seem significant; they were indicated by more than 20% of the surveyed female entrepreneurs of our country. In the first wave of surveys (2015), a wide range of problems impeding female entrepreneurship were identified. These problems were identified as:

- lack of time (41%);
- lack of knowledge and experience in doing business (40%)
- lack of financial capacity (39%);

- self-doubt (32%)
- the impact of the economic situation in the region and competition (21%).

According to the data for 2017, respondents indicated the main barriers to the development of female entrepreneurship:

- lack of financial capacity - 33%;
- self-doubt and personal qualities - 16%;
- lack of knowledge and experience in doing business - 10%;
- the impact of the economic situation in the region, competition and infrastructure - 19%.

Comparison of data for 2017 and 2015 show that the lack of funds remained the main barrier. There is a significant decrease in 2017 compared to 2015, mentioning such problems as self-doubt, lack of knowledge and experience in doing business. The lack of time as one of the often mentioned barriers disappeared in 2017.

Given that the main obstacle to the development of entrepreneurship is the difficulty of financing, table 2 shows the proportion of various forms of attracting financial resources. The corresponding survey was conducted during the first, second and third waves of the survey.

Table 2. The structure of attracting financial resources, %

Forms of financing	Survey waves		
	1 (2015)	2 (2016)	3 (the first half of 2017)
Money from friends, relatives and acquaintances	20	16	43
Bank loans on behalf of an individual	32	26	36
Bank loans on behalf of the company	32	36	19
Private investment	7	9	15
Government subsidies	2	3	No data

Source: developed by authors

The data presented in table 2 differ significantly from one period to another. Therefore, the analysis of the financing structure can be based on averages. This analysis shows that the proportion of Bank loans issued on behalf of individuals and companies did not change significantly during the period under review and ranged from 64% to 55%. The share of financial resources borrowed from friends, relatives and acquaintances is lower. From 7% to 15% of female entrepreneurs attracted private investment. State subsidies were used by a small number of entrepreneurs.

Specialization of businesses that women own is quite diverse. Female entrepreneurship in the service sector is the most widespread. At the same time, according to the results of surveys, about a third of all entrepreneurs work in the sphere of trade. In addition to trade, female entrepreneurs are very interested in the provision of social services to the population, catering, cosmetic and hairdressing services, education, medicine, art, culture and tourism. Production of various goods (food, consumer goods and other products) is about 14%.

The second and fourth waves of research included surveys on popular areas of social entrepreneurship. The proportions of various types of such entrepreneurship, calculated on the basis of these surveys, are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. The structure of social entrepreneurship, %

Activities	The second wave (2016)	The fourth wave (the second half of 2017)
Social assistance to the population	29	20
Sport and healthy lifestyle	11	11
Culture, art, architecture	7	9
Creative development of children and adults	6	9
Education for children and adults	11	7
Medicine	11	5
Ecology	10	4
Animal protection and care	1	3

Source: developed by authors

Female social entrepreneurship, as shown in Table 3, is quite diverse.

Development of female entrepreneurship in Russia

The further development of female entrepreneurship in Russia is determined by two strategic documents. These are the "Strategy for the development of small and medium businesses in the Russian Federation for the period until 2030", which applies to all entrepreneurs, and the "National strategy of actions for women for 2017-2022" of March 8, 2017 N 410-p, which includes measures to increase female entrepreneurial activity.

The first strategy involves reducing administrative barriers, increasing the availability of financing, providing information, legal, technological and other types of support, and stimulating demand for products of small and medium enterprises.

The second strategy includes the following activities:

- creation of conditions for women to receive professional education in the most advanced areas of the economy;
- empowerment of women in small and medium enterprises (SME), as well as ensuring the participation of women in the development of social entrepreneurship infrastructure;
- professional training and additional education for women on maternity leave until a child reaches the age of 3 years, women in need of advanced training and retraining in connection with the need to develop relevant competencies and qualifications, as well as unemployed women;
- creation and development of self-employment support, including on the basis of resource centers of socially oriented non-profit

organizations and innovation centers of the social sphere;

- creation of specialized forms of grant support and holding of professional competitions to encourage women's participation in high-tech industries and innovation activities;
- holding competitions of business and socially active women in the subjects of Russia.

The implementation of the measures should unite the efforts of Federal and regional authorities and public organizations to create conditions for providing opportunities for female participation in business activities and solving the problems of increasing incomes, gaining independence, developing self-realization and creative activity.

Let us consider some measures to support female entrepreneurship in Russia. As part of the implementation of credit and guarantee business support, the SME Corporation and the SME Bank have developed specialized credit products for female entrepreneurs. Currently, "Express for current purposes" and "Express for investments" are available for them. The purpose of loans can be both the replenishment of working capital and financing of the current enterprise activities, and the implementation of investment projects. The rate for the special segment, which includes female entrepreneurship, is 10.6%. This is 2% less than the standard credit rate.

The analysis of loan applications from female entrepreneurs conducted by the partners of the SME Corporation showed that in most cases the amount of the requested loan does not exceed 100 million rubles. According to experts, it is caused by the scale of female business and their inherent caution in making capital investments. With this in mind, the SME Corporation has

developed a special financial product for female entrepreneurs.

In recent years, the project "mother-entrepreneur" has been implemented in Russia, organized by the charity Fund "responsible for the future", the Higher School of Economics and "SUPPORT of Russia". The project provides free training in the basics of individual entrepreneurship for young mothers. This Federal social project has been implemented for several years. The duration of training is about one and a half months and includes disciplines that help to increase the level of entrepreneurial activity: the basics of business planning, marketing, accounting, small business taxation and other similar economic subjects. In the process of training, additional subjects are also considered: time management, stress management, business female style. Women who are on leave to take care of children, mothers of preschool children and mothers with many children are involved in training.

In addition to training, the project "mother-entrepreneur" includes a competition of business plans prepared by the participants. The winner receives a grant in the amount of 200 000 rubles, which will help to realize the business idea. The aim of the project is to use the potential of women for economic development and increase their motivation in creating their own business. The project is designed for women who need to combine professional self-realization with family care. Women with minor children and women on maternity leave are invited to participate in the project.

Speaking about training and additional education of women who are on leave to care for a child up to the age of 3 years, it should be noted that the relevant activities are related to women who before leaving on leave were not associated with business, while on paid leave, these women have the opportunity to attend free training courses and receive theoretical knowledge, as well as practical competence on a wide range of issues: legislation, accounting and reporting, financing and lending, leasing, franchising, personnel work, advertising, as well as production management. After the holidays, given the high level of children's institutions in Russia, these women have the opportunity to start their own business. One of the advantages of business activity in comparison with hired work, for women, is possibility of use of non-standard work schedules that allow reducing a

problem of care of children and elderly family members.

Conclusion

The scientific novelty lies in the study of the distribution of indicators characterizing the motivation of female entrepreneurs and the existing gender gap between them and male entrepreneurs. New methods and tools of such analysis are proposed. Their use is possible in subsequent research, in justifying the development of female entrepreneurship in Russia and its regions. The results of the study can be used in educational activities of higher and secondary specialized educational institutions, researchers, as well as employees of public and municipal administration.

The social significance of the study is associated with the reduction of prejudices and stereotypes against female entrepreneurs and obtaining data confirming the possibility of self-realization of women through the creation of their own businesses.

Further research on female entrepreneurship may be related to the justification of measures for the development of this sector of the national economy and the provision of targeted support to female entrepreneurs by the authorities, financial institutions and public organizations.

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