A Study of Chinese Entrepreneurs' Motivation for Innovation and Its Influencing Factors

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Abstract. Innovation strategy has become the core strategy of the country, and entrepreneurs are the natural main body of innovation and the fundamental driving force to promote innovation. However, the academic research on the innovative motivation of entrepreneurs is less and not systematic, and the research on the innovative motivation of Chinese entrepreneurs is even less. By using NVivo 12 plus software to analyze the interview contents in the interview with entrepreneurs' program, a theoretical model of Chinese entrepreneurs' innovative motivation and its influencing factors is finally constructed. It is found that the external motivation of Chinese entrepreneurs' innovation is far more than the internal motivation, and the feelings of home and country account for a high proportion of the external motivation; The influencing factors of innovative motivation include personal factors, environmental factors, and resource conditions. Among the personal factors, spiritual quality accounts for a relatively high proportion and is a very important influencing factor.

Keywords: Grounded theory · Entrepreneurs · Innovative motivation · And influencing factors

1 Introduction

Since the reform and opening-up, China's economy has been able to sustain high growth for a long time, mainly due to the factor dividend, reform dividend, and globalization dividend (Zhang 2013) [30]. Although Chinese enterprises have achieved rapid development and scale expansion with the "three dividends", the problem of insufficient innovation capacity remains prominent due to the excessive emphasis on importation and imitation (Li and Wei 2019) [17]. For the country, innovation is an essential element of economic development and a fundamental path to sustainable development (Barney et al. 1968) [2]. Therefore, China's 14th Five-Year Plan for 2020 continues to emphasize the centrality of innovation in the overall modernization of China; for enterprises, entrepreneurs engage in innovation, which is a specific tool to demonstrate entrepreneurship, and is an activity that gives resources a new ability to become wealth-creating (Strauss 1987) [20]. Therefore, it is relevant to study the motivation of Chinese entrepreneurs to innovate and its influencing factors.

G. Vilas et al. (Eds.): ICEMED 2023, AEBMR 254, pp. 257–271, 2023.
https://doi.org/10.2991/978-94-6463-224-8_33

Innovative motivation is the internal psychological process that causes and sustains the subject's innovative activities, is the internal driving force that forms and promotes innovative behavior, and is the prerequisite for innovative behavior (Zhang and Ding 2005) [29]. Most of attention has focused on the factors influencing employees' innovation motivation, and the research has been conducted from two aspects: individual factors including personality traits(Deci and Ryan 1985) [5], self-efficacy(Tierney et al. 1999; Gu and Peng 2010) [9, 21], cognitive style(Bandura 1997; Utman 1997) [1, 23], etc., and organizational factors including rewards(Eisenberger and Aselage 2009; Merriman and Deckop 2007) [6, 19], innovation support(Wang and Shi 2014; Gupta 2020) [11, 24], managerial style(Deci et al. 1989; Lynch et al. 2005) [4, 18]and job characteristics (Guay et al. 2001) [10].

The entrepreneur's motivation to innovate is more important for business change and growth. If leaders lack the motivation to innovate and do not have a clear direction for innovation, it is difficult for innovation to occur in the organization and its members (Kotter, 1990) [15]. Managers' motivation to innovate is a high level of self-satisfaction that has an absolute impact on innovative decisions (Hansen and Birkinshaw 2007) [12]; firms with entrepreneurs and skilled employees who are more motivated to innovate usually have higher innovation performance (Yu et al. 2015) [26]. Entrepreneurs' motivation and behavior to innovate are also influenced by a variety of factors, including entrepreneurs' innovative thinking, innovative qualities and capabilities (Hu and Wei 2011) [13], awareness of the environment (Yang et al. 2010) [25], social innovation support situations outside the organization (Yu et al. 2015; Kim and Hyunjee 2020) [14, 26], degree of competition in the industrial market, risk of financial control and reputational damage (Cornett et al. 2009) [3], degree of being controlled (García-Meca et al. 2009) [8], the concentration of equity (Yang et al. 2015) [25], etc.

In summary, there are rich research results on the factors influencing employees' motivation to innovate, but there are fewer and less systematic studies on entrepreneurs' motivation to innovate in academia, and there is a lack of research on Chinese entrepreneurs' motivation to innovate. There is still much room for research on the innovative motivation of entrepreneurs or entrepreneurs at the individual level, organizational level, and environmental level. This paper focuses on Chinese entrepreneurs' motivation to innovate, and addresses the issues: 1 What are the dimensions of innovation motivation for Chinese entrepreneurs? 2 What are the factors influencing innovative motivation? 3 What are the local characteristics of these influencing factors? To this end, this paper analyzes the innovation interviews of entrepreneurs in the program "Interviews with Entrepreneurs" based on grounded theory and NVivo12 Plus software, to explore the theoretical model of the dimensional structure of Chinese entrepreneurs' innovation motivation and its influencing factors, and conducts a comparative analysis with existing related studies to understand the characteristics of Chinese entrepreneurs' innovative motivation. The research results of this paper not only enrich the innovative motivation research results, but also enrich the local theoretical results of corporate innovation.

2 Study Design

2.1 Research Methodology

Grounded theory is the most scientific methodology in the field of qualitative research (Gagne and Deci2005) [7]. Contextualized research methodology is the key to resolving the contradiction between rigor and practicality, and it can be employed to construct a "Chinese theory of management", of which grounded theory is one of the most important (Tsui 2009) [22]. At the beginning of a study using grounded theory, the researcher has only a vague research question or domain, and no theoretical assumptions. Through comparison and analysis, concepts, categories, and even core concepts or categories are continuously extracted from empirical materials until a theory is finally constructed (Deci et al. 1985) [5]. To ensure the reliability and validity of the research results, this paper strictly follows the general operating procedures and requirements of grounded theory for coding analysis, successively conducting open coding, spindle coding, and selection coding, and finally constructing a theoretical model of the innovative motivation dimensions of Chinese entrepreneurs and their influencing factors.

2.2 Data Sources and Sample Selection

In this paper, 113 images from "Interviews with Entrepreneurs" are selected as the data source. "Interviews with Entrepreneurs" is an interview program for entrepreneurs produced by Hangzhou Yueli Culture Planning Co. in 2016. The program has a lot of interactive communication with ordinary entrepreneurs from various industries and levels through semi-structured interviews, which involve several parts of the entrepreneurial background, entrepreneurial process, problems encountered and solutions, and advice to future entrepreneurs, which are interspersed with a lot of innovation-related information and suitable for analysis using grounded theory.

To facilitate the analysis using the qualitative data analysis tool Nvivo12 Plus, the researchers converted all 113 dialogues in the video files into electronic files. After proofreading the content for accuracy, samples that did not reflect the innovation were removed, and 51 video materials were finally identified as the study sample. In this paper, 39 samples were randomly selected for coding, the other 12 samples were used for the saturation test of the theory. Thirty-eight interviewees were male and 13 were female, and the duration of entrepreneurship was long or short, and the exact duration was unclear. The entrepreneurial projects in the sample according to the National Economic Sector Classification (NESC) implemented in 2017 involved 11 industry sectors such as manufacturing, education, and finance, and some of the interviewees' information is shown in Table 1.

3 Data Analysis and Coding

3.1 Open Coding

The open coding process is a theoretical sampling based on the concepts and categories revealed by the information, and then collecting data, finding new categories, and continuously revising the theory until saturation is reached (Zeng et al. 2019) [27]. According

Table 1 Information related to some interviewees

Respondents	Gender	Industry (according to the National Economic Classification of Industries)
Guo XX	Male	C manufacturing - 38 electrical machinery and equipment manufacturing
He XX	Male	R culture, sports, and entertainment - 88 culture and arts industry
Hu XX	Male	C manufacturing - 38 electrical machinery and equipment manufacturing
Hu XX	Female	C manufacturing - 18 textile and apparel, apparel industry
Hua XX	Female	J Financial Industry - 67 Capital Market Services

to the open coding requirements, this paper uses Nvivo12Plus to conceptualize and categorize the original data in three steps. The first step is to "label". Around the innovative point, mark the innovation-related sentences in the image data in the order of "Innovative behavior - Innovative Motivation - Factors Influencing Innovative Motivation - Innovation Effect "and and code them with "C + entrepreneur number + innovation-related statement number" (e.g., C1 05; C10 03), forming 175 labels in total. The second step is to "conceptualize" the tags and compare them; the third step is to compare 49 concepts across categories through "Categorization", and combine them to form 14 categories. (See Table 2 for an example of open coding).

To ensure coding rigor, three researchers coded together, two of them collected data and coded independently, and the coding was verified and tested by the third researcher. The three researchers kept comparing and repeatedly discussing and verifying for inconsistent concepts, concept classes, and their relationships, and tried to guarantee the research confidence through the strategy of triangulation of mutual evidence (Zhang et al. 2021) [31].

3.2 Spindle Coding

The spindle coding aims to further generalize and rearrange the categories obtained by open coding, establish links between different categories through class clustering analysis, and develop master categories (Li et al. 2018) [16]. Four main categories were developed through spindle coding (See Table 3).

3.3 Selective Coding

The selective coding aims to develop a theoretical framework by excavating the "core category" from the main categories and systematically analyzing the relationship between the core category and other categories (Zhang et al. 2020) [28]. Based on the repeated review of concepts and categories in the open and main codes, this paper finally identifies the core category of "Chinese entrepreneurs' motivation to innovate and its influencing factors" and obtains the following storyline: Chinese entrepreneurs generate intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to innovate under the influence of personal, environmental, and

Table 2 Open coding example

Labeling	Conceptualization	Categorization
A year down, after the production of that, the first year down or loss ah. So how to get out of this predicament, and in front of us a new difficult task. (C_2 01)	Getting out of the woods	Business survival
The market standard is constantly improving, your product and your model may not fit this standard anymore, because you may finish 4.0 when others 5.0 has already come out, so I think we have to keep on innovating, and keep on thinking new. (C_{11} 01)	Maintaining a competitive edge	Enterprise development
We are equipped with an intelligent large screen, through which we hope to upgrade the conference room, intelligent upgrade, so that this conference room can have more use-value. (C_{15} 01)	Improve management efficiency	
Because the Internet industry should have experienced the second half by now, what kind of things will happen in the second half? One is artificial intelligence, the second is 5G and big data operation. In these industries, how can we be one step ahead of others to seize the market opportunity? (C_{20} 04)	Seize business opportunities	
So that we must stand on the world stage to let the world know how the old Chinese products are quality controlled, control this quality? (C_{10} 02)	Protecting and passing on national brands	Family-national sentiment
That's why I named it Yibaba, more of a call for our dad to enter the role of this family to return to the place. (C_6 01)	Let dads take on the family role	

(*continued*)

Table 2 (*continued*)

Labeling	Conceptualization	Categorization
Flaxseed oil is good, but to benefit more ordinary people, it is necessary to develop more deep processing products that meet market demand. (C_{37} 06)	Consumer benefits	
I think, we want to do something, that is, we changed an advertising word this year called "different", that is, something different (different things), and we want to convey that our brand is different from other brands. (C_{11} 17)	Pursuit of difference	Intrinsic motivation
Against the flood of the times is our attitude of work and life, and the Buddha time chaos is our ability to make something different from this society, to make something that we think can be above this society, I think this is our spiritual image. (C_{34} 03)		
Feeling that I should explore a new personal path, I went to try something that I had not done in my previous experience. (C_5 05)	Try new things	

resource conditions, and thus generate innovative behavior. The theoretical model is shown in Fig. 1.

3.4 Theoretical Saturation Test

To verify the theoretical saturation of the coding results, this paper coded 12 additional samples, and no new concepts and categories were found, and no new logical relationships between concepts and categories were generated. Therefore, this paper concludes that Chinese entrepreneurs' innovative motivation and influencing factors reach saturation.

4 Analysis of Chinese Entrepreneurs' Innovative Motivation and Its Influencing Factors

This paper proposes core categories based on the analysis of interview content using grounded theory and further constructs a preliminary theoretical model. On this basis, we analyze in-depth the dimensions of Chinese entrepreneurs' innovative motivation,

Table 3 Spindle coding results

Main Category	Category	Concept
Innovative behavior	Product Innovation	Product Innovation
	Technology Innovation	Innovation of the production process; innovation of marketing method; innovation of service method
	Market Innovation	Market Innovation
	Resource allocation innovation	Business Model Innovation
	Organizational Innovation	Creation of new organizations; organizational structure change; organizational culture innovation; institutional innovation; team innovation
Innovative motivation	Intrinsic motivation	The pursuit of different; trying new things; the pursuit of the ultimate
	Extrinsic motivation	Business survival: getting out of the woods and not getting shut down Enterprise development: grasp business opportunities; maintain competitive advantages; make good products; refine products to promote sales; open up the market; reduce costs; use the development platform; improve core competitiveness; enhance personality; improve management efficiency; promote the company; complement each other to do great things Family-national sentiment: protecting and inheriting national brands; family reasons; returning prisoners to society; shaping the first Chinese international top brand; improving the emotional intelligence of college students; filling market gaps or shortages; benefiting users, society, and the country; employee development

(*continued*)

Table 3 (*continued*)

Main Category	Category	Concept
Influencing factors of innovative motivation	Personal factors	Personal experience; personal character; spiritual factors; study abroad experience; own strengths
	Environmental Factors	Family environment: life difficulties; family educational needs Internal organizational environment: development dilemma; organizational development; organizational management inconvenience; internal management pressure Organizational external environment: national requirements; market vacancies or deficiencies; external competitive pressures; cultural environment; overall environment
	Resource conditions	Tangible resource conditions: physical resources (including good products and other material resources conducive to innovation); social network relationships; quality platforms and samples Intangible resource conditions: founder's philosophy; national recognition; conditions of the times; cultural environment; cultural resources; organizational support

and influencing factors of innovative behaviors. According to the coding results, the classification of innovative behaviors is in line with Schumpeter's "five types of innovation" concept, and will not be described.

4.1 Innovative Motivation Dimension

Based on the open, main axis, and selection coding of all samples, it was concluded that the innovative motivation of Chinese entrepreneurs includes two main dimensions: intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

1) Intrinsic motivation

Self-determination theory suggests that individuals with higher intrinsic motivation tendencies have stronger focus, persistence, and willingness to work hard (Gagne and Deci 2005) [7]. According to the coding results, the innovation motives of entrepreneurs

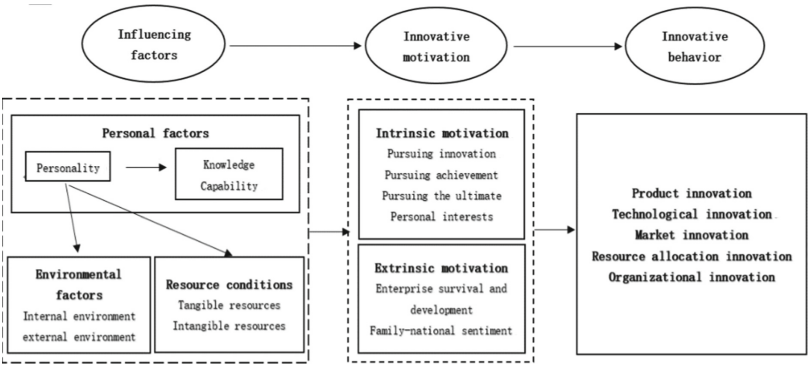

Fig. 1. Theoretical model of Chinese entrepreneurs' innovative motivation and its influencing factors

include pursuing different; trying new things; and pursuing the ultimate (specific examples are shown in Table 2), but only 5 free nodes belong to intrinsic motives, accounting for 7.35% of the total free nodes in terms of motives, while the others are extrinsic motives, indicating that Chinese entrepreneurs have fewer innovative behaviors triggered by intrinsic motives.

2) Extrinsic motivation

According to the coding results, the majority of entrepreneurs' innovative motivation belongs to extrinsic motivation, including the pursuit of enterprise survival and development, and family-national sentiment (including meeting the needs of the family, society, and the country) (as shown in Table 2). Although both extrinsic and intrinsic motivation can lead individuals to innovative behavior, their concentration, persistence and, willingness to work hard are relatively insufficient, and the extrinsic motivation decays immediately once the result is achieved; therefore, it is important to pay attention to the cultivation of the intrinsic motivation of entrepreneurs' innovation. In addition, it is worth noting that, probably because of the strong influence of traditional Chinese thought, 23 free nodes belong to the entrepreneur's family-national sentiment, accounting for 33.82% of the total free nodes in motivation.

4.2 Factors Influencing Innovative Motivation

According to the coding results, the factors influencing innovative motivation include three aspects: personal factors, environmental factors, and resource conditions.

1) Personal factors

Personal factors include personal experience; personal character; spiritual quality; learning experience outside; own advantages, etc. For example, I went to North America and drank American enzymes, and drank them for several years to recover my body. So I think if this can be spread to China, it will save many people's lives (C_{38} 02) I am the type of person who likes to do some challenging things. Especially to do something, let's say there is no before through my creation, or research, to make it out. That feeling of

success is different from making money (C_{17} 05). This is not even the ultimate ideal of Professor Wang XX, who has been working tirelessly for the health of Chinese people all his life (C_{37} 07). It is because I want to create more miracles, Yongqi is someone else to create miracles, and I want to create a miracle of my own (C_{34} 03). What he said inspired me a lot and made me feel that it is very scary for an entrepreneur to have no one to lead him on the way to start a business. I was feeling my way, just like a headless fly. I went to Canada to study for my master's degree, and I felt that I had changed again, and I thought differently from before (C_{16} 06). Maybe I am more familiar with this counseling work, including the work of marriage and family counseling, may understand more. So, at this time, we started to establish the Zhejiang Marriage and Family Association (C_{30} 02) in 15 years.

Among them, spiritual quality among personal factors is a very important influencing factor. According to the coding results, among 98 free nodes of all innovative motivation influencing factors, 25 are spiritual quality factors, accounting for 25.51%, including full of dreams, grateful heart, craftsmanship, passion, noble value pursuit, persistence, hardworking spirit, enduring loneliness, sense of mission, work attitude, belief, willpower, and sense of responsibility, etc., indicating that whether Chinese entrepreneurs can actively play well their knowledge, It shows that whether Chinese entrepreneurs can make good use of their knowledge, ability, and experience, or actively and effectively use the surrounding environment and resources to innovate is closely related to their spiritual qualities. For example, I can skip meals and forget to eat for this matter. I can discuss with them all until late, study late, even until dawn. And when a thing is finished, it is very comfortable and gratifying in the heart. That's how I found my own goal, what I like to do myself, I will do it with 100% effort (C_1 19). For more than 30 years, we have been insisting that we have been at the forefront of this industry with technology, and our original intention has not changed. We have always wanted to help hotels improve their efficiency and to change and enhance the consumer experience. That's our mission, that's how it's always been, we want to keep going along with the development of the hotel industry, and to develop (C26 06). I think, we want to do something, that is, we changed this year an advertising slogan called "different", that is, something different (different things), and we want to convey that our brand is different from other brands (C_{11} 17). Technology is still a small problem, what needs to be solved is this manufacturing culture of the company you mentioned, to use the more popular words now is the spirit of craftsmanship, which is a focused, serious, to have a strong sense of honor for their professional reputation of such a dedicated attitude to do things (C_{28} 01).

2) Environmental factors

Environmental factors include family environment, internal organizational environment, and external environmental factors (as shown in Table 3). For example: I am a cat lover, and then I have two cats, one is Garfield, especially cute and docile, but when raising cats, I encountered one of the biggest problems is take care of them. Because I have to go to work, I don't have that much time to take care of my pets every day, so I had this idea to make an automatic caregiver (C_4 03). On the other hand, my partner, my family, and many other people who have helped us, are quite supportive of the idea. He

felt that the project is good is the most important (C_{24} 04). By 2012, our output value was stable at 30 million. At that time, from August 2013, we started to reorganize (C_{31} 01). So, since you are an industrial project, there is an industrial chain with your suppliers and the whole environment, it is not that it depends on how strong your innovation ability is or how it can be achieved. We feel that the biggest difficulty is that in this process, we have a lot of ideas cannot be realized, that is, at present, the domestic support with our other industries has not reached our expected level (C_{28} 02).

3) Resource Conditions

The resource condition factor of innovation is including the tangible resource condition and intangible resource condition factor.

Tangible resource conditions include visible and tangible resources such as human, financial, material. This includes physical resources, social network relationships, quality platforms, and samples.

Such as: eating this flaxseed will have such a great impact on this IQ, so that this child becomes smart (C_{37} 01); and the small meeting rooms of high star hotels, for them to be an idle resource. They are not rented out all year round, even according to my statistics, probably the occupancy rate is less than 1%, and the annual occupancy rate is less than 1% (C_{15} 05). So, in our cooperation with iMusic School, he is more of an inspiration to us, giving us some samples of platform construction, such a role. So with these samples, it is convenient for us to do i-School today can be more innovative and the pattern can be bigger (C_5 02).

Intangible resource conditions are those resources that cannot be seen or touched. Including the founder's philosophy, national recognition, the conditions of the times, cultural environment, cultural resources, organizational support, etc. For example: the hotel has a lot of culture, which is inseparable from President Wu's many design languages and many service product explorations at the beginning of the establishment of the hotel, which contain some service cultural connotation (C_{32} 07); anyone's choice in will be based on two factors, one is personal, his ideal. The second is the change of the times, that from the change of the times, China has proposed the mass entrepreneurship, innovation (C_5 01). The whole transformation of our group in the second half of last year. In the change, encourage the whole group internal personnel or team, are going to find a new direction (C_{15} 08).

5 Main Research Findings and Discussion

In this paper, 51 images from "Interviews with Entrepreneurs" were selected as the data source, and the Nvivo12 Plus software was used to analyses the innovation process of Chinese entrepreneurs. It is found that, firstly, the innovative motivation of Chinese entrepreneurs mainly includes two main dimensions: intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. Among them, intrinsic motivation includes the pursuit of difference; trying new matters; and the pursuit of extremes; extrinsic motivation includes the pursuit of enterprise survival and development, and family-national sentiment (including satisfying the needs of family, society, and country) in two aspects. According to the coding results, current Chinese entrepreneurs have much more extrinsic than intrinsic motivations. It is noteworthy that family-national sentiment account for a higher proportion of

extrinsic motivations. Second, the influencing factors of innovative motivation include three aspects: personal factors, environmental factors, and resource conditions. Among them, personal factors include personal experience; personal character; spiritual quality; learning experience outside; own advantages; environmental factors include family environment, the internal environment of the organization, and external environmental factors; resource condition factors of innovation are including tangible resource conditions and intangible resource condition factors. According to the coding results, spiritual quality among the personal factors is a very important influencing factor.

Main theoretical contributions: 1) A theoretical model of Chinese entrepreneurs' innovative motivation and influencing factors is constructed, which systematically reveals the logical relationship and logical chain of Chinese entrepreneurs in the process from the background of innovative motivation to the production of innovation results, forming a more complete theoretical analysis framework; 2) The theoretical system and content framework of organizational leaders' innovative motivation and its influencing factors are refined and enriched. 3) Explored the local innovative motivation research in China. This paper conducts an exploratory study on Chinese entrepreneurs' innovative motivation and its influencing factors, and discovers family-national sentiment as an innovative motivation, as well as spiritual qualities and other important influencing factors, which provides a theoretical reference for future research on Chinese entrepreneurs' innovation.

Management Insights: 1) Pay attention to nurturing and enhancing entrepreneurial innovative motivation, especially intrinsic motivation. Innovative behavior lies first and foremost in the generation of innovative motivation; therefore, nurturing and enhancing entrepreneurial innovative motivation is significant for corporate innovation as well as China's overall innovation level. Although extrinsic motivation can also promote innovation, it's quick-acting, short-term, and relatively passive nature determines that innovation cannot be sustained and stable, whereas the principle of intrinsic motivation is the social-psychological basis of creativity, and people show the most creative when they are motivated by the satisfaction and challenges of the work itself, rather than by extrinsic pressure. 2) Pay attention to cultivating and enhancing spiritual qualities that are conducive to innovation. 3) Actively reserve and develop the resource conditions needed for innovation. According to expectation theory, entrepreneurs often make prospect predictions and risk assessments of innovation activities by assessing their ability and resource conditions before the innovative behavior is generated. When the resource conditions are more abundant, the greater the certainty of the goal, the higher the entrepreneur's enthusiasm for innovation. 4) Efforts to create an environment for entrepreneurial innovation. According to the coding results, entrepreneurs' motivation to innovate is closely related to the family environment and the internal and external environment of the organization. Entrepreneurs are often motivated to innovate because they are facing difficulties or pressure, or they are aware of the existing environment or new opportunities after environmental changes.

Limitations of this paper: First, this paper selects professional interview programs as the sample, which has some authority and saves time in obtaining data, but the content of the interviews is not directly focused on innovative motivation, so it cannot provide a more systematic and in-depth understanding of the motivation and influencing factors

of the innovation process of entrepreneurs. Therefore, targeted interviews and content analysis of Chinese entrepreneurs are needed in the future to verify the reliability and validity of the study results. Second, qualitative research using grounded theory can eventually construct a theoretical model, but the exact relationship between the variables in the model needs to be statistically tested with a large sample, so quantitative research is needed in the future to determine the exact relationship between the variables.

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