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The Effect of Husbands' Social Support and Hardiness on Work-Family Balance in Women Entrepreneurs

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Abstract: Women entrepreneurs who are married and have children face dual responsibilities in managing business activities and family life, requiring adequate resources to achieve work-family balance. This study aimed to examine the effect of husbands' social support and hardiness on work-family balance among women entrepreneurs. The study used a quantitative approach with multiple regression analysis. The participants were 309 women entrepreneurs from several regions in Indonesia who were married, had children, and had established, owned, and managed their businesses for at least one year. Data were collected using the Work-family balance Scale, Spousal Support Scale, and Occupational Hardiness Questionnaire. The results showed that husbands' social support had a positive and significant effect on work-family balance, hardiness had a positive and significant effect on work-family balance, and both variables simultaneously influenced work-family balance. The R square value of 0.628 indicated that the husbands' social support and hardiness explained 62.8 percent of the variance in work-family balance. These findings emphasize the importance of partner support and resilient personal characteristics in helping women entrepreneurs balance business and family roles.

Keywords: Hardiness, Husbands' Social Support, Women Entrepreneurs, Work-Family Balance.

INTRODUCTION

The increasing participation of women in entrepreneurship reflects broader social and economic changes that provide opportunities for women to pursue independence, strengthen household income, and contribute to inclusive economic development (Purba, et al., 2025) Entrepreneurship has become a strategic option for women to demonstrate their competence, improve family welfare, and participate in sustainable economic growth (Noor et al., 2025). For married women, however, entrepreneurship does not necessarily replace domestic responsibilities. Instead, it often adds business-related demands to their existing roles as wives and mothers, creating a complex work-family interface that must be managed (Huq & Arenius, 2025). Previous studies have shown that women entrepreneurs commonly face long working hours, business uncertainty, childcare responsibilities, limited access to resources, and

dependence on family support, particularly in contexts where gendered family expectations remain strong (Huq & Arenius, 2025). These conditions make work-family balance an important psychological and practical issue for women entrepreneurs because it is closely related to well-being, family support, business sustainability, and the ability to manage overlapping business and domestic demands (Yang et al.,2025)

Work-family balance refers to the extent to which individuals are able to experience satisfaction, meaningful involvement, and effective functioning in both work and family roles. Although early definitions emphasize balanced satisfaction and engagement across work and family domains, recent studies view work-family balance as a multidimensional condition involving time, energy, attention, role participation, and psychological well-being. In the context of women entrepreneurs, this concept becomes particularly relevant because the boundaries between business and family are often fluid and negotiated in daily life. Business activities may be conducted at home or near family settings, while family responsibilities may interrupt work-related tasks, making the work-family interface more complex for women entrepreneurs (Huq & Arenius, 2025) Therefore, the ability to manage time, maintain role involvement, receive family support, and integrate business and family demands is essential for psychological well-being and business sustainability yang.

Several previous studies have indicated that women entrepreneurs may experience work-family conflict when business growth is not supported by adequate personal, family, and social resources (Brieger, et al,2024). Work-family management strategies are important for women entrepreneurs because unmanaged role demands may influence psychological well-being, business commitment, and venture sustainability. Family support also serves as a key resource that helps women entrepreneurs manage business and domestic roles, reduce work-family tension, and improve subjective well-being. In the Indonesian context,(Riantoputra & Muis, 2020) highlighted that the development of women entrepreneurs is influenced by identity conflict, passion, and future time orientation, while (Prastika & Repi, 2021) explained that mompreneurs attempt to achieve work-life balance through time management, involvement, and satisfaction. These studies suggest that work-family balance among women entrepreneurs should be understood not only as an individual issue but also as a relational and resource-based process involving family support, psychological resources, and sociocultural expectations (Yang et al., 2025b).

One external resource that is particularly relevant for married women entrepreneurs is husbands' social support. Social support refers to interpersonal assistance that may take emotional, instrumental, informational, or appraisal-based forms (Sarafino & Smith, 2017). In business and family contexts, husbands' support may include encouragement, household assistance, financial support, help in solving business problems, and constructive communication about business decisions (Kiruthika & Geetha, 2024). A supportive spouse can reduce role pressure, strengthen confidence, and help women entrepreneurs allocate attention between business and family responsibilities. Recent studies show that family-to-work support can reduce tension between business and family roles among women entrepreneurs, while spousal support is also associated with lower work-family conflict and better role satisfaction (Huq & Arenius, 2025). Therefore, husbands' social support can be understood as an important relational resource that contributes to women entrepreneurs' success, subjective well-being, and work-family balance (Brieger et al., 2024).

In addition to external support, internal personal resources also influence women entrepreneurs' ability to manage role demands. One important personal resource is hardiness, a personality characteristic that enables individuals to interpret stressful events as manageable challenges rather than threats. Hardiness is commonly reflected in three dimensions: commitment, control, and challenge (Bartone, 2020). Individuals with high hardiness tend to remain engaged in meaningful activities, believe that they can influence events, and view

change as an opportunity for growth. In entrepreneurial contexts, hardiness is particularly relevant because business activities often involve risk, uncertainty, and fluctuating performance, requiring women entrepreneurs to remain adaptive and psychologically resilient (Ahmed et al., 2022; Essuman et al., 2024). Recent studies also show that resilience, psychological capital, and other personal resources can reduce stress and support work-family balance, well-being, and business sustainability among women entrepreneurs (Pahrijal et al., 2025). Therefore, hardiness can be understood as an internal resource that helps women entrepreneurs maintain commitment to their business and family roles while responding constructively to pressures arising from both domains.

The relationship among husbands' social support, hardiness, and work-family balance can be explained through Conservation of Resources Theory. This theory argues that individuals strive to obtain, protect, and build resources, including social support, personal characteristics, time, and energy (Hobfoll et al., 2018). Within this framework, husbands' social support can be understood as an external relational resource, while hardiness represents an internal personal resource that helps individuals cope with role pressure (De Clercq et al., 2023). Women entrepreneurs who receive strong support from their husbands and possess high hardiness are likely to have greater resources to manage business and family demands (Brieger et al., 2024). Husbands' support may reduce practical and emotional burdens, while hardiness may strengthen women entrepreneurs' ability to respond positively to pressure, maintain commitment, and remain involved in both business and family roles (Pahrijal et al., 2025). Based on this framework, the present study examines whether husbands' social support and hardiness influence work-family balance among women entrepreneurs. Specifically, this study investigates the partial and simultaneous effects of husbands' social support and hardiness on work-family balance among women entrepreneurs.

METHOD

This study employed a quantitative approach with an explanatory correlational design. The dependent variable was work-family balance, while the independent variables were husbands' social support and hardiness. This design was selected because the study aimed to examine the predictive effects of husbands' social support and hardiness on work-family balance through statistical analysis. A quantitative explanatory design is appropriate when a study seeks to test relationships among variables, measure the strength of associations, and explain the extent to which independent variables predict a dependent variable (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, assumption tests, simple regression analysis, and multiple regression analysis with the assistance of SPSS version 24.0.

The population of this study consisted of women entrepreneurs operating in micro, small, and medium enterprise contexts in Indonesia. This focus is relevant because women entrepreneurs in Indonesian MSMEs often face specific challenges related to business sustainability, family responsibilities, and limited access to resources (Riantoputra & Muis, 2020). This study focused on women who were married, had children aged 0 to 18 years, had established, owned, and managed their businesses on a daily basis, and had operated their businesses for at least one year. The sampling technique used was accidental sampling, which is appropriate when respondents are selected based on accessibility and their suitability with predetermined research criteria (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Although the minimum sample size was calculated using the Lemeshow formula and yielded approximately 100 respondents, the final sample consisted of 309 women entrepreneurs from several regions in Indonesia. This number was considered adequate for regression analysis because it exceeded the minimum sample size requirement and provided broader representation of the target respondents.

Data were collected using psychological scales. Work-family balance was measured using a scale adapted from (Valcour, 2007), focusing on time, attention or energy, and the

integration of work and family demands. This measurement is consistent with the view that work-family balance reflects satisfaction, involvement, and effective management of demands across work and family domains (Valcour, 2007). Husbands' social support was measured using the Spousal Support Scale adapted from (Gudmunson et al., 2009), which includes support provided for business concerns, support received in relation to business concerns, and satisfying communication about the business. This scale is relevant because spousal support represents an important interpersonal resource in managing business and family responsibilities (Gudmunson et al., 2009). Hardiness was measured using the Occupational Hardiness Questionnaire developed by (Jimenez et al., 2014), consisting of three dimensions: commitment, control, and challenge, as conceptualized in hardiness theory (Kobasa et al., 1982). All scales used Likert-type response formats, with higher scores indicating higher levels of the respective variables.

Before hypothesis testing, the research instruments were examined through validity and reliability procedures to ensure that each scale was appropriate for measuring the intended variables. Content validity was assessed through expert judgment using Aiken's V, which is commonly used to quantify expert agreement on the relevance of instrument items. This procedure was important because the instruments used in this study were adapted from previous scales and needed to be adjusted to the characteristics of married women entrepreneurs in the Indonesian context. The Work-Family Balance Scale and the Spousal Support Scale obtained Aiken's V coefficients ranging from 0.833 to 1.000, indicating good content validity, while the Hardiness Scale also demonstrated a high content validity range. These results suggest that the items were considered relevant, clear, and representative of the constructs being measured.

Construct validity was examined through item evaluation by considering factor loading values, as factor loading is commonly used to determine whether items adequately represent the measured construct (Hair et al., 2022). Items that met the validity criteria were retained for further analysis, while items that did not meet the criteria were excluded from the final instruments to improve measurement accuracy. Reliability analysis showed that the Work-Family Balance Scale had a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.858, indicating good internal consistency. This means that the items in the scale were sufficiently consistent in measuring work-family balance. The data analysis procedures included descriptive categorization, normality testing, linearity testing, multicollinearity testing, simple regression analysis for the first and second hypotheses, and multiple regression analysis for the simultaneous hypothesis. These procedures were applied to ensure that the data met the assumptions required for regression analysis and that the hypotheses could be tested appropriately (Creswell & Poth, 2018)

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Participant Characteristics

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Demographic Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age	<20 years	18	5.83
	21–30 years	133	43.04
	31–40 years	70	22.65
	41–50 years	68	22.01
	>50 years	20	6.47
Number of Children	1–2 children	206	66.70
	3–5 children	93	30.10
	6–8 children	10	3.20
Education Level	Primary and Secondary Education	149	48.20

Demographic Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
	Diploma	32	10.40
	Undergraduate and Postgraduate	128	41.40
Business Type	Culinary	134	43.40
	Fashion	62	20.10
	Agribusiness	3	1.00
	Electronics	5	1.60
	Furniture	4	1.30
	Services	53	17.20
	Retail	37	12.00
	Others	11	3.60
Business Duration	1–10 years	278	90.00
	11–20 years	27	8.41
	>20 years	5	1.61
Number of Employees	No employees	93	30.09
	1–4 employees	181	58.57
	5–19 employees	29	9.40
	20–99 employees	6	1.90
	>100 employees	0	0.00
Business Location	South Sulawesi	116	37.54
	East Java	40	12.94
	West Java	39	12.62
	Central Sulawesi	20	6.47
	Central Java	14	4.53
	Other regions	80	25.89
Total		**309**	**100.00**

Table 1 indicates that the participants represented women entrepreneurs who were actively involved in managing micro, small, and medium enterprises while also carrying family responsibilities. The dominance of participants with young to middle adulthood characteristics and one to two children suggests that most respondents were in a life stage where business responsibilities and family demands are likely to occur simultaneously. This condition makes them relevant participants for examining work-family balance.

The participants were mostly engaged in small-scale businesses, particularly in sectors that are commonly associated with daily consumer needs, such as culinary and retail activities. This profile reflects the practical context of women's entrepreneurship, in which business activities often require direct involvement, flexible time management, and continuous interaction with customers. In addition, the concentration of participants in businesses with relatively few employees indicates that many respondents still played a central role in daily operational tasks. Therefore, the demographic characteristics of the participants support the relevance of examining husbands' social support and hardiness as resources that may help women entrepreneurs manage business and family roles.

Descriptive Findings

Descriptive analysis was conducted to examine the general levels of work-family balance, husbands' social support, and hardiness among women entrepreneurs. The empirical mean scores for all variables were higher than their respective hypothetical mean scores, indicating that participants generally reported high levels of work-family balance, social support, and hardiness. The descriptive statistics are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Hypothetical And Empirical Scores Of Research Variables

Variable	N	Score Type	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Work-family balance	309	Hypothetical	5	25	15	3.33
Work-family balance	309	Empirical	10	25	21.40	3.523
Husbands' Social Support	309	Hypothetical	6	30	18	4.00
Husband' Social Support	309	Empirical	6	30	26.20	4.037
Hardiness	309	Hypothetical	14	70	42	9.33
Hardiness	309	Empirical	28	70	61.56	7.784

Source: Research data

The empirical mean score of work-family balance was 21.40, which was higher than the hypothetical mean score of 15. The empirical mean score of husbands' social support was 26.20, exceeding the hypothetical mean score of 18, while the empirical mean score of hardiness was 61.56, exceeding the hypothetical mean score of 42. These results indicate that the participants generally showed favorable conditions across the three research variables. In other words, most women entrepreneurs in this study tended to perceive themselves as capable of managing work and family roles, receiving adequate support from their husbands, and possessing strong personal resilience in facing business and family demands.

The higher empirical mean scores also suggest that work-family balance among the participants may be supported by both relational and personal resources. From a resource-based perspective, individuals are more likely to maintain balance when they have sufficient social and psychological resources to manage competing role demands. Husbands' social support may provide emotional encouragement, practical assistance, and constructive communication in managing business and family responsibilities. Such support can help reduce the pressure experienced by women entrepreneurs when they have to divide their attention between business activities, household duties, and childcare responsibilities. Meanwhile, hardiness may help women entrepreneurs remain committed, maintain a sense of control, and respond positively to challenges in both work and family domains. Women with higher hardiness are more likely to perceive difficulties as manageable and continue carrying out their roles despite uncertainty or pressure. Therefore, the relatively higher empirical mean scores indicate that most participants possessed favorable relational and personal conditions that could strengthen their ability to manage multiple roles. To provide a clearer description of the distribution of respondents in each variable category, further categorization is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Categorization Of Research Variables

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Work-family balance	Low	2	0.6%
	Moderate	51	16.5%
	High	256	82.8%
Husbands' Social Support	Low	1	0.3%
	Moderate	9	2.9%
	High	299	96.8%
Hardiness	Low	1	0.3%
	Moderate	26	8.4%
	High	282	91.3%

Source: Research data

Table 2 shows that work-family balance among the participants was predominantly in the high category, with 256 participants or 82.8%. Similarly, husbands' social support was

mostly categorized as high, as reported by 299 participants or 96.8%. Hardiness was also found to be high among 282 participants or 91.3%. These findings indicate that most women entrepreneurs in this study experienced a positive balance between work and family responsibilities, received strong support from their husbands, and possessed resilient personal characteristics. The high level of husbands' social support may help reduce the emotional and practical burdens faced by women entrepreneurs, particularly in balancing business demands with household and family responsibilities. In addition, strong hardiness reflects participants' ability to remain committed, adapt to challenges, and maintain a sense of control when facing pressure. Overall, these conditions may serve as important psychological and social resources that support women entrepreneurs in managing multiple roles effectively.

Assumption Testing And Hypothesis Testing

The normality test using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov method showed a significance value of $p < .001$, indicating that the data were not normally distributed. Although non-normal data may affect the stability of parametric statistical estimation, this condition can be addressed by using a resampling procedure such as bootstrapping. Therefore, the analysis was conducted using a bootstrap method with 2,000 samples to obtain more robust estimates of the regression coefficients and confidence intervals. Bootstrapping was considered appropriate because this method does not strictly depend on the assumption of normal distribution and can improve the reliability of statistical inference when the data deviate from normality.

The linearity test showed a linear relationship between work-family balance and husbands' social support, with $p < 0.001$. A linear relationship was also found between work-family balance and hardiness, with $p < 0.001$. These findings indicate that both independent variables met the linearity assumption required for regression analysis. Furthermore, the multicollinearity test showed that the variance inflation factor value for both independent variables was 1.975, which was below the commonly accepted threshold of 10.00 (Hair et al., 2019). This result indicates that the regression model did not have multicollinearity problems, meaning that husbands' social support and hardiness could be included together in the multiple regression model without excessive overlap between predictors. Thus, the data were considered suitable for further regression analysis.

Table 3. Regression Results for the Main Hypotheses

H	Predictor	B	R	R2	F	p	Note
H1	Social support	0.675	0.773	0.598	-	0.000	Significant
H2	Hardiness	0.302	0.667	0.445	-	0.000	Significant
H3	Social support + hardiness	-	0.793	0.628	258.43	0.000	Significant

Source: Research data

The aspect analysis showed that satisfying communication about the business made the strongest contribution among the dimensions of husbands' social support, with an R-squared value of 0.644. This finding indicates that the quality of communication between spouses regarding business goals, strategies, and finances plays an important role in women entrepreneurs' work-family balance. Support received from spouses for business concerns contributed 32.9%, while support provided to spouses for business concerns contributed 29.1%. These findings indicate that spousal support in business contexts involves both direct assistance and satisfying communication. The results also show that effective communication and shared role management can contribute to work-family balance satisfaction.

Among the dimensions of hardiness, commitment made the strongest contribution, with an R-squared value of 0.465, followed by challenge with an R-squared value of 0.366 and

control with an R-squared value of 0.355. Commitment reflects the ability to remain engaged in meaningful activities and maintain responsibility in challenging situations. For women entrepreneurs, commitment may help them stay involved in both business and family roles without perceiving one role as a complete barrier to the other. Challenge and control also made significant contributions, indicating that women entrepreneurs who perceive change as a natural part of development and believe that they can influence events tend to report better work-family balance.

When the aspects were analyzed simultaneously using multiple regression, satisfying communication about the business and commitment emerged as significant predictors of work-family balance. Satisfying communication about the business had a beta coefficient of 0.638 with $p < 0.001$, while commitment had a beta coefficient of 0.338 with $p < 0.001$. The other aspects were not significant in the simultaneous model. These findings suggest that the quality of spousal communication and the commitment dimension of hardiness may serve as the most central mechanisms linking social and personal resources to work-family balance.

Discussion

The finding that husbands' social support positively affects work-family balance confirms the role of spouses as key external resources for women entrepreneurs. Women who receive emotional encouragement, direct assistance, and constructive communication from their husbands are more likely to manage business and household responsibilities effectively. This result supports previous studies showing that family and spousal support can reduce work-family tension, improve role satisfaction, and strengthen women entrepreneurs' well-being (De Clercq et al., 2023; Huq & Arenius, 2025). For women entrepreneurs, husbands' support is particularly important because business activities often require flexibility, decision-making, and emotional stability. When spouses share responsibilities or discuss business concerns constructively, women entrepreneurs may experience reduced pressure and greater confidence in balancing their roles.

The positive effect of hardiness on work-family balance also strengthens the argument that personal resources play an important role in the work-family interface. Women entrepreneurs with higher levels of hardiness are better able to remain committed, exercise control, and view challenges as opportunities for development. This personal characteristic may reduce the negative effects of stress and help entrepreneurs adapt to changing family and business situations. This result is consistent with recent studies showing that resilience, psychological capital, and personal coping resources help entrepreneurs manage stress, uncertainty, and role demands more effectively (Ahmed et al., 2022). In entrepreneurship, where uncertainty and risk are common, hardiness can help women interpret business difficulties and family demands more positively.

The simultaneous influence of husbands' social support and hardiness provides empirical support for Conservation of Resources Theory. This theory explains that individuals strive to obtain, maintain, and protect valuable resources, and that the loss or lack of these resources may increase stress (Hobfoll, 1989). In this study, husbands' social support represents an interpersonal resource, while hardiness represents a personal psychological resource. These two resources complement each other. Support from husbands can provide emotional and practical assistance, while hardiness can help women entrepreneurs utilize such support effectively, remain resilient, and cope with role pressures. Therefore, work-family balance among women entrepreneurs can be understood as an outcome of the interaction between relational resources and individual psychological resources (De Clercq et al., 2023).

The aspect-level results provide more detailed implications. Satisfying communication about the business emerged as the strongest dimension of husbands' social support. This indicates that women entrepreneurs may not only need practical assistance from their spouses

but also require open and satisfying communication regarding business decisions. Such communication allows couples to negotiate time allocation, financial matters, childcare, and household responsibilities. Previous studies also show that family and spousal support can help women entrepreneurs reduce role pressure and manage work-family demands more effectively (Huq & Arenius, 2025). Without effective communication, support may become inconsistent or may fail to address the actual needs of women entrepreneurs. Meanwhile, commitment emerged as the strongest dimension of hardiness. Commitment enables women entrepreneurs to remain engaged in their roles and perceive both business and family responsibilities as meaningful parts of life. This finding is consistent with the view that psychological resources, including commitment, resilience, and self-efficacy, are important for maintaining well-being and business sustainability among women entrepreneurs (Pahrijal et al., 2025). These two aspects, communication and commitment, may serve as key targets for interventions or counseling programs designed for women entrepreneurs and their families.

Additional demographic analysis showed that work-family balance differed significantly based on business duration, education level, and number of employees. Women entrepreneurs with longer business duration may have more experience, more stable routines, and better strategies for managing multiple roles. Higher education may also provide broader access to knowledge, problem-solving skills, and business management capacity. In addition, having more employees may reduce the burden of daily operational tasks, allowing entrepreneurs to allocate more time and energy to family roles. In contrast, the number of children, age, and business type did not show significant differences in work-family balance. These findings indicate that structural and business management factors may be more relevant than certain demographic characteristics in shaping role balance.

This study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, data were collected through an online form, which limited the researcher's ability to directly monitor the accuracy, seriousness, and consistency of participants' responses. Because participants completed the questionnaire independently, there is a possibility that some responses were influenced by misunderstanding of the items, lack of concentration, or differences in interpretation. Second, this study relied on self-report scales, which may increase the possibility of social desirability bias. This is particularly relevant because the variables examined, namely husbands' social support, hardiness, and work-family balance, are closely related to marital relationships, personal resilience, and family functioning. Participants may have tended to provide socially acceptable responses rather than fully reflecting their actual experiences.

Third, the use of accidental sampling may limit the generalizability of the findings. Although the number of respondents was adequate for regression analysis, the sample may not fully represent all women entrepreneurs in Indonesia, especially those from different regions, business sectors, socioeconomic backgrounds, or cultural contexts. In addition, this study used a quantitative design, which was useful for examining statistical relationships among variables but did not provide a deeper understanding of how husbands' support and hardiness are experienced in daily entrepreneurial and family life.

Future research is therefore recommended to use qualitative or mixed-method approaches to obtain richer and more detailed explanations of the forms of husbands' support and hardiness needed by women entrepreneurs. Interviews or focus group discussions may help explore how women entrepreneurs negotiate business responsibilities, household duties, childcare, and emotional demands with their spouses. Future studies may also compare women and men entrepreneurs to examine whether work-family balance is shaped differently by gender roles. In addition, organizational support, community support, extended family support, and business characteristics can be included as additional variables to provide a more

comprehensive understanding of the factors that influence work-family balance among entrepreneurs.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that husbands' social support has a positive and significant effect on work-family balance among women entrepreneurs. Women entrepreneurs who receive higher levels of support from their husbands tend to have a greater ability to balance business and family roles. Hardiness also has a positive and significant effect on work-family balance, indicating that resilient personal characteristics help women entrepreneurs manage pressure, adapt to challenges, and maintain satisfaction across multiple roles. Simultaneously, husbands' social support and hardiness significantly influence work-family balance, explaining 62.8% of its variance.

At the aspect level, satisfying communication about the business emerged as the most influential dimension of husbands' social support, while commitment was the most influential dimension of hardiness. These findings highlight that women entrepreneurs need both supportive marital communication and strong personal commitment to maintain balance between entrepreneurial and family responsibilities. Practically, women entrepreneurs are encouraged to develop open communication with their spouses, share role expectations, and strengthen personal resilience in facing business challenges. Institutions that support micro, small, and medium enterprises should also consider family-based and psychological support programs for married women entrepreneurs.

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