Drivers of Behaviors of Sustainable Development, Evidence of Chongqing, China

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Abstract—This paper explores the drivers influencing the rural industry operators᾽ behaviors of sustainable development. Unlike previous researchers who have emphasized the role of government agencies in providing policy assistance to rural industry operators to promote sustainable development, this paper focuses on the role of individual endowments in stimulating behaviors of sustainable development. Elements of an individual's endowment include cognition and financial awareness to manage a business. Using data from a questionnaire study of 507 rural industry operators from Chongqing, China, this paper finds that rural industry operators᾽ cognition and financing awareness positively influence their motivations of sustainable development, and the motivation of sustainable development positively influence behaviors of sustainable development. Then, this paper propose that rural government agencies promote the traditional Chinese culture of self-reliance to enhance the cognition of rural industry operators for sustainable development; In the context of the globalization of capital, rural industry operators need to learn about financial awareness drawing investments to stimulate the sustainable development of industries. This insights contribute substantively to the ongoing discourse on rural revitalisation, offering pragmatic solutions geared towards sustainable development within rural regions.

Keywords— Behaviors of sustainable development of industries; Rural revitalisation; Sustainable development of rural industries.

I. INTRODUCTION

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGS) are global development goals set by the United Nations to address the three dimensions of development - social, economic and environmental - in an integrated manner between 2015 and 2030. Eradication of poverty is one of the key goals. In the process of eradication of flat poverty, rural industry operators play an important role as a driving force, which not only provides jobs to the population in rural areas, but also provides the population in rural areas with knowledge and information from urban areas. The sustainable development behaviour of rural industry operators also contributes to the sustainable development of the rural economy in order to achieve a balanced development of the rural and urban economy. Sustainable development of rural industry operators has gained extensive studies by researchers in related fields.

Entrepreneurship is crucial in creating jobs, boosting the economy, launching new businesses, and influencing social change and the sustainability of businesses (Muñoz & Cohen,

2017; Terán-Yépez et al. 2020; Yaşlıoğlu, 2020). Business model research is relevant to socio-technical systems change and sustainability transitions (Kiefer et al., 2019). Sustainable business models are based on the positive interrelationship between business success and contributions to the natural environment, society and economic sustainability (Schaltegger et al., 2019). Passion for identifying and solving pressing challenges is an influential factor in sustainable development motivation (Wong et al., 2019). Empathy is an influential factor in sustainable development motivation (Ghatak et al., 2020). Digital logistics based on connectivity, openness, accessibility and generation promote a combination of roles in community formation, co-creative activities and wider stakeholder integration, thus laying the foundation for sustainable development (Gregori & Holzmann, 2020). sociability is one of the influences associated with positive motivation for sustainable development behaviors (Ryu and Kim, 2018; Sharma et al., 2021; Suseno and Abbott, 2021). In a comprehensive overview of the research literature on business development over the decades, focusing on the areas of sustainability and the business environment, Brychko et al. (2022) found that changes in the internal and external business environments positively affect corporate sustainability. Suriyankietkaew (2023), after collecting data from a sample of 280 business leaders and entrepreneurs of cross-industry small businesses in Thailand's emerging economies and conducting multiple regression analyses, found that trust, innovative team orientation, and a strong shared vision enhanced two sustainable performance outcomes, which consisted of i.e. financial performance and stakeholder satisfaction.

The above researchers have focused on business models, enthusiasm, empathy, sociability, team orientation, shared vision, digital technology adoption, and internal and external business environment influences that affect sustained business growth. However, few studies have been conducted on the mental dimensions, which include cognition and financial awareness, have an impact on rural industry operators' sustainability behaviors. There is a gap. This paper gathers to study this gap area and expects to address the following questions. How do the cognition, financial awareness affect the rural entrepreneurs᾽ behaviors of sustainable entrepreneurship? What roles do sustainable development motivations play in this process? And research objects of this paper are to find out the links between cognition, financial awareness and rural industry operators' behaviors of

sustainable development, the role of sustainable development motivation of rural industry operators in the linkage.

The main contribution of this paper is to unite the elements of an individual's endowment which include personal cognition, financial awareness, and quantitatively analyse the paths and the extent of their impacts on rural industry operators' motivations and behaviors for sustaining development. Research at the level of individual factors influencing rural industry operators' behaviors of sustainable development is important to stimulate the sustainable development of rural industries (Brychko et al., 2022; Audretsch & Fiedler, 2023).

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Motivation and behaviour theory

The theory of motivated behaviour considers self-efficacy as the cause of induced behaviour (Pezzulo et al., 2018). Individual endowment variability, such as cognitive and financial literacy, plays a stimulating role for self-efficacy among the behaviour of the industrial sustainability process.

B. SOR model

The SOR model is a theoretical model proposed by Russell, Mehrabian et al (1974), using to analyse how environmental factors affect human behaviour, which argues that external stimulus Individuals, individuals will have intrinsic emotional and perceptual changes and thus respond accordingly. In this paper, it use the SOR theoretical model to study drivers of rural industry operators' behaviors of sustainable development, taking cognition and financial awareness as "S", rural industry operators' motivation as "O", and rural industry operators' behaviors as "R".
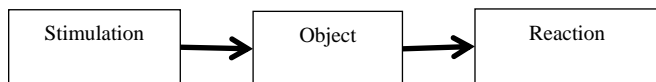

Figure 1. SOR model

III. HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Haider et al. (2019) discoursed that effective stimulation of the psychological aspirations of people in rural areas can have a surprising effect, often stimulating them to expand their production and opening up a path to prosperity. Government departments invest heavily in improving the mental health of the poor, instead providing healthy workforce conditions for industrial clustering, Since poor people often suffer from mental illnesses such as depression, their cognition is often limited and their thinking tends to fall into a dead end (Ridley et al.,2020). According to the above scholarly research clues, this paper proposes the H1 hypothesis.
H1: The cognition of rural industry operators has an positive impact on their motivations of sustainable development of industries

After studying the development of the tourism industry in Indonesia, where Islamic banks are widely distributed, Ameraldo et al. (2019) advised that Islamic banks could establish specialised institutions to run microfinance schemes in rural areas to accommodate the expansion's motivation of

the tourism industry in rural Indonesia and to minimize potential risks. The study by Anand et al. (2023) found that financial awareness had a comprehensive mediating effect on individuals' personal finance behaviour during the COVID-19 pandemic. Lone & Bhat (2024) collected data from 203 business school faculty members through Simple Random Sampling (SRS) technique and conducted a study to find out that financial awareness has a significant positive impact on financial self-efficacy and financial investment behaviour. According to the above scholarly research clues, this paper proposes the H2 hypothesis.
H2: The financial awareness of rural industry operators has an positive impact on their motivations of sustainable development of industries

The study of the economic and social attributes of foreign operators in China's institutional context has found that the correlation between the motives of foreign operators, the mode of business operation, and the tendency of behaviour is significant (Wu & Qiao, 2023). Gross et al. (2023), while studying the behavioural influences of German adventure travellers, found that extroverts were more likely to take part in strenuous adventure travel activities because of their creative abilities, as well as well-being-related motivations that were important to the respondents' adventure travel behaviour. According to the above scholarly research clues, this paper proposes the H3 hypothesis.
H3: Rural industry operators' motivations of sustainable development has an positive impact on their behaviors of sustainable development of industries

Through the above literature collections, the conceptual research model of this paper takes the cognition of rural industry operators (variable referred to cognition), the financial awareness of rural industry operators (variable referred to financial awareness) as the independent variables, the rural industry operators' motivation of sustainable development (variable referred to motivations of sustainable development) as mediator variable, and the rural industry operators' behaviors of sustainable development (variable referred to behaviors of sustainable development) as the dependent variable, shown in Figure 2.
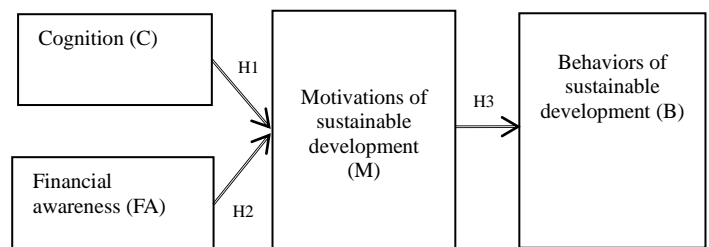

Figure 2. Conceptual model

IV. METHODOLOGY

A. Study areas

The research is located in Chongqing, China. Chongqing located in the west of China is typical rural areas, with most mountains and less arable land. The research object are the rural areas in Chongqing. According to the statistics of Chongqing Poverty Alleviation Office disclosed by

Chongqing Daily, there are 1 918 poverty-stricken villages in Chongqing, accounting for 22% of the total administrative villages, accounting for a relatively large proportion. So, Chongqing's industrial development in rural areas is one of the representatives of China's industrial development in rural areas. The study of rural industrial operators' behaviors of sustainable development is great significance for government departments in other rural areas to formulate management policies.

B. measurements

The items of each construct were measured by a 5-point Likert scale, with values ranging from "1 = Strongly disagree" to "5= Strongly agree". Considering the validity of the adapted items, the measurements were sent to five experts in the field before the actual survey was carried out, in order to ask for an evaluation of its appropriateness and advice for improvement. The measurements were revised several times following expert's advice and pretests, then the new scales were adapted to suit the current setting under study.

C. Sample process

The sampling design of this article is probability sampling and the sampling technique is stratified random sampling. The population size is 2723.

According to Cohen(1969),Krejcie&Morgan(1970),cited from Sekaran & Bougie (2016) and Bougie & Sekaran (2020), the sample size of research is 338 at least. In fact, the amount of valid questionnaires for this study was 507, which fulfilled the requirement. 507 entrepreneurs came from 26 rural regions in Chongqing, as shown in Table 2.

TABLE 1. Items' measures and sources.

Variables	Items	No. of items	Source
Cognition	C1: If the government distributes the production or equal cash, I would prefer to have the production.	5	Wu et al., 2023
	C2: If I had enough money, I would spend it to improve industrial productivity, not for enjoyment. (Note: enjoyment is e.g. spending on luxury cars, luxury clothes)		
	C3: I believe it's hard to sustainable development on our own, only if the neighbouring villages join together and collaborate with each other to form a scale can the village keep developing.		
	C4: I believe the industry can develop on its own without state subsidies at the current level.		
	C5: When I realise that someone else's industry is doing better than mine, I will work hard to catch up with it.		
Financial Awareness	FA1: I believe that there are diversified sources of funding for industrial operations in the region where my industry is located.	5	Lone, U. M., & Bhat, 2024
	FA2: I believe that the capital required for industrial operations should be based on own savings and should not be borrowed.		
	FA3: I believe that a bad credit history affects the financing loan process for industrial business financing.		
	FA4: I believe that the process for financial institutions to approve financing for industrial operations is moderate.		
	FA5: I can finance loans for funds needed for industrial operations based on my family's risk tolerance.		
Motivations of sustainable development	M1: I would rather stay in the village and continue to operate my industry than go to the city to work.	3	Hendriks & Stokmans, 2020
	M2: I believe that continuing to operate my business can boost my income.		
	M3: I believe that sustainably operating my business will lead to greater prestige and recognition in the local area.		
Behaviors of sustainable development	B1: I am happy to share my experience of operating my business with others.	6	Hendriks & Stokmans，2020
	B2: I would be happy to refer family or friends to operate in the same industry that I operate in.		
	B3: I employed more labour into my business.		
	B4: I have purchased more equipment to invest in the development of my business.		
	B5: I have expanded the scales of my business.		
	B6: I have increased the financing of funds required for the operation of my business.		

TABLE 2. Regional distribution of respondents

Areas	Number of actual surveys	Percentage	Areas	Number of actual surveys	Percentage
Kaizhou	34	6.7%	Wanzhou	28	5.5%
Youyang	31	6.1%	Pengshui	27	5.3%
Zhongxian County	31	6.1%	Kaixian County	26	5.1%
Wuxi	30	5.9%	Fengjie	26	5.1%
Yunyang	30	5.9%	Xiushan	24	4.7%
Shizhu	22	4.3%	Jiangjin	15	3.0%
Fuling	22	4.3%	Nanchuan	11	2.2%
Chengkou	23	4.5%	Qijiang	11	2.2%
Wushan	20	3.9%	Changshou	8	1.6%
Fengdu	20	3.9%	Liangping	6	1.2%
Tongnan	20	3.9%	Hechuan	2	0.4%
Wulong	20	3.9%	Banan	2	0.4%
Qianjiang	18	3.6%	Total	507	100%

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D. Data collecting

The data for the study was collected through an online questionnaire, and lasted approximately 9 months. The survey respondents were industrial operators in poverty-eradicating areas of Chongqing, as population introduction. The link to the questionnaire was pushed through the working group of Chongqing Rural Revitalisation Bureau (CQRRB) to the Rural Revitalisation Bureaus of Chongqing districts and counties, which then pushed it to the industrial operators in the poverty eradication areas to encourage them to fill it out and get the corresponding incentive. Some of the industrial operators in the target areas of Chongqing received the link and participated in the survey. It is important to note that the valid questionnaires came from industry operators who have operated their industries in the poverty areas, answered for a long enough period of time, and the key value information was sound. Two sections of this online survey were created to examine the following influencing factors, one of which consisted of questions aimed at obtaining personal information from the participants, and the other section was used to measure the hypothetical model established in the research model. The questionnaire was translated into Chinese for industry operators to complete, so industry operators had enough time to complete the questionnaire in Chinese. Finally, More than 900 questionnaires were distributed to industrial operators in poor areas, Chongqing, China, and 679 sample data were returned. After sorting the questionnaires by the time taken to answer, deleting the top 10% that took the shortest time, deleting those with more missing values, those that did not meet the requirements of the research subjects, and those with the same answers to multiple consecutive questions, the study used a total of 507 valid samples, accounting for 74.6% of the recovery rate. According to the research results of Cohen (1969), Krejcie & Morgan (1970), Sekaran & Bougie (2016), the sample size is adequate.

V. DATA ANALYSIS

A. Reliability and validity

As showing in table 3, all of Cronbach's alpha values are above 0.7, all of AVE values are above 0.5, all of CR values are above 0.6. Therefore, the results of this data indicate that the constructed model has good reliability and validity.

TABLE 3. Reliability and validity analysis of variables

Constructs	Items	Loadings	α	CR	AVE	B	C	FA	M
B	B1	0.772	0.896	0.897	0.591	0.769			
	B2	0.754							
	B3	0.782							
	B4	0.767							
	B5	0.757							
	B6	0.779							
C	C1	0.797	0.889	0.889	0.617	0.473	0.785		
	C2	0.774							
	C3	0.787							
	C4	0.779							
	C5	0.789							
FA	FA1	0.788	0.888	0.888	0.614	0.456	0.496	0.784	
	FA2	0.792							
	FA3	0.773							
	FA4	0.787							
	FA5	0.778							
M	M1	0.828	0.849	0.849	0.652	0.401	0.481	0.457	0.807
	M2	0.791							
	M3	0.803							

Note: α=Cronbach's alpha; AVE = average variance extracted; CR = construct reliability; Off diagonal factors = correlations; Bold diagonal factors = square root of variance shared; B=Behaviors of sustainable development; C=Cognition; FA=Financial Awareness; M=Motivations of sustainable development.

B. Model fit

On the results presented in Table 4, it can be observed that the CMIN/DF is 1.264, less than 3. And the RMSEA is 0.023, less than 0.05. While the test results for IFI, TLI, and CFI are all above 0.8. Therefore, considering these results collectively, it can be concluded that the structural model demonstrated a relatively good model fit.

TABLE 4. Indicators of goodness of fit

Index	Threshold Values	Actual Results
CMIN/DF	< 5	1.648
RMSEA	< 0.08	0.036
IFI	> 0.8	0.982
TLI	> 0.8	0.979
CFI	> 0.8	0.982

Note: df = degrees of freedom; CFI = comparative fit index; IFI = incremental fit index; TLI = Tucker–Lewis index; RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation.

C. Analysis of hypotheses

According to the analysis of Table 5, it is evident that in the path hypothesis testing of this research model, the cognition of rural industry operators significantly and positively influences the motivations of sustainable development ($\beta = 0.355$, $p < 0.001$), therefore, Hypothesis H1 is supported. The financial awareness of entrepreneurs in rural areas has a significant and positive effect on the motivation for sustainable development ($\beta = 0.305$, $p < 0.001$), therefore, Hypothesis H2 is supported. The motivation of sustainable development positively influences the behaviors of sustainable development ($\beta = 0.442$, $p < 0.001$), therefore, Hypothesis H3 is supported.

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TABLE 5. Testing of hypotheses

Hypotheses			Direct effects (β)	SE	CR	p-value	Decision
Cognition	→	Motivations of sustainable development	0.355	0.059	6.454	0.000***	S
Financial awareness	→	Motivations of sustainable development	0.305	0.062	5.594	0.000***	S
Motivations of sustainable development	→	Behaviors of sustainable development	0.442	0.045	8.588	0.000***	S

Note: ***p <0 .001; S = supported; SE = standard error; CR = critical ratio.

D. Discussion

This paper conducts empirical evidence by constructing a structural system of equations model, and on the results of the empirical study, the following conclusions are drawn. The industrial operator's cognition and financial awareness have a positive impact on their motivation of sustainable development of industries, with their cognition being the most significant influence on their motivation, followed by financial awareness. Rural industry operators need to realise first and foremost that waiting for policies and relying on support from the authorities is not a sustainable way to develop their business. Rural industrialists need to proactively adjust their psychological cognition and realise that relying on their own struggles is one of the core drivers of sustainable business development. At this level, the level of cognition and the level of sustainable development behaviors of rural industry operators are the same. Ridley et al. (2020) found that taking a pro-poor approach to mental health outcomes (depression, anxiety, stress, MHI, and psychological well-being) was beneficial for development in pro-poor programme in low- or middle-income countries. In the process of developing industries by rural industry operators, relying only on their own funds cannot meet the needs of commercial scale development, and loans and financing are the financial instruments that must be used for the expansion of commercial operations.
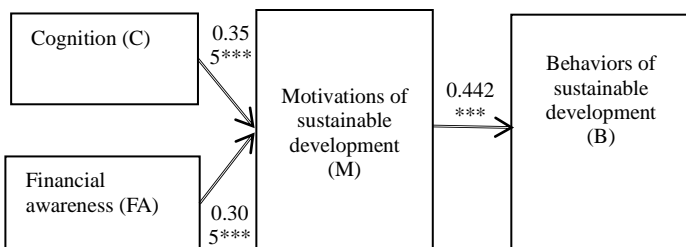

Figure 3. SEM model

Note: ***p < 0.001

Therefore, if rural industry operators have a certain degree of financial awareness, they can pay attention to the financial instruments needed in the process of sustainable development of business, so as to ensure the sustainable development of business from the financial level. From this point of view, the higher the level of financial awareness of rural industry operators, the more likely they are to develop their businesses in a sustainable manner. Ameraldo et al. (2019), in analysing the potential contribution of Islamic banks to the development of halal tourism and the enhancement of the welfare of local communities in rural areas, argued that financing mechanisms from external sources (including donations, third aid) can only be used for the basic needs and the security of productive activities of the operators of the rural industry, and that it is their financial literacy that is one of the drivers that will allow the continuation of the business.

VI. MANAGEMENT INSIGHTS

On the findings of the study, the following suggestions are made to the rural area's relevant government administrations and rural industry operators.

Firstly, it is important to raise the awareness of rural industry operators that they can only develop sustainably through self-struggle. The relevant agencies of the rural government can build a case bank of local outstanding industrial operators, organize the rest of the rural industrialists to study, as well as to exchange ideas at the business premises of the industrial operators in the case bank, in order to promote the traditional cultural virtues of the Chinese nation of self-improvement and hard work, and to break the mode of industrial development that relies on preferential tax policies and financial subsidies. The rural landscape design industry in Zhongyi Township, Shizhu County, Chongqing, China, is a typical example. The industrial operators of this industry, relying on the three characteristic resources of Zhongyi Township in terms of natural resources, characteristic rural landscape and industry types, design a landscape development strategy for the characteristic industry by relying on their own hard work for several years, and rely on the e-commerce platform to vigorously publicize and promote the marketing and promotion, so as to make the countryside industry and the landscape develop together in a sustainable manner.

Finally, training rural industry operators in financial awareness is essential. Rural industry operators are not well educated. Financial literacy includes processes, policies and varieties and is specialised. Financial knowledge of rural industry operators is very poor. And, the financial awareness of rural industry operators is one of the factors affecting the sustainable development of their industries on a large scale. Therefore, relevant government departments and rural industry operators should work together to create a learning platform to learn financial knowledge. Relevant government departments and financial enterprises should provide necessary financial knowledge training to rural industry operators, including loan process, loan interest rate, financing methods, equity incentives, etc., so that rural industry operators can find appropriate financing methods according to their own industrial needs. Rural industry operators can make full use of social platform tools such as Tik Tok and Facebook to follow relevant channels and enrich their financial knowledge.

VII. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This paper's empirical research argument on cognition and financial awareness and sustainability behaviors is commendable, but acknowledges the specificity of its target

population, which is industrial operators in rural areas. This has limitations. This focus, whilst inextricably linked to the objectives of the study, provides an opportunity for future research to explore the decision-making behaviors of key stakeholders such as the general public.

Secondly, by broadening the scope of the study, subsequent research can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the complex dynamics from a globalized international perspective, which can help to develop more effective and inclusive policies to address the different needs and challenges of rural industry operators in different regions.

Finally, it is crucial to include ecology and innovation as key variables in research. Future research can argue for the role and importance of ecology and innovation in sustainable development behaviors in the context of the green economy and innovation economy.

APPENDIX

Ethic statement: The ethics committee＇s approval is waived because all participants voluntarily provide information about various issues on their own, based on an anonymous questionnaire.

Data Availability Statement: The data are currently not publicly available due to participant privacy, but they are available from the first author upon reasonable request.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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