

# Contemporary tiger girls : women and enterprise in the People's Republic of China, 2003-2005

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## ABSTRACT:

The existing scholarship on women in China suggests that gender inequality still exists against the background of the country's reform and opening in recent years. However, the situation of women in enterprise ownership and leadership seems to indicate that under the surface of women being disadvantaged, some of them are playing a more active and significant role in China's economic development. Based on a series of interviews with women enterprise owners, wives of enterprise owners and women managers conducted in three localities in three difference provinces of China, this research aims to discover the deeper socio-political realities of leading women in enterprises. By analyzing information on these women's personal experiences, career and families, this thesis investigates their status at work and at home, as well as their connections with local politics. The research results suggest that although traces of gender inequality can still be found in these women's lives, they appear to be actively engaged in the business establishment and operation and gradually casting off the leash of domestic responsibilities. At the same time, these women have developed strong connections with the Party-state, not necessarily in their own right, but largely through their family ties. The research has also highlighted that the varied socio-economic development of each locality has its effects on these women's development.

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