

# Understanding Female Entrepreneurship in India - A Review

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**Abstract** - Changes in the social texture of the Indian culture, such as increased educational opportunities for females and fluctuating aspirations for a higher standard of living, necessitated that Indian women make adjustments to the way they lived their lives. Entrepreneurs provide an essential function in every economy. This is the population that possesses the abilities and activity necessary to bring outstanding project ideas to market and make the decisions necessary to make the idea profitable. They are the people who have the talents and activity necessary. The prospective financial rewards that could be gained by the entrepreneur are the payoff for the risks that they are willing to take. The development of female's entrepreneurialism is an essential component of human resource management. In comparison to other countries, the rate of female entrepreneurship in India is rather low, particularly in more rural areas. Given the state of India's economy at the moment, it is encouraging to see an increase in the number of women starting their own businesses there. It has been recognized as a significant step forward in the nation's fight against poverty and has garnered a lot of praise for doing so. There is a list of outstanding business persons and entrepreneurs in India, which includes people from both the social and economic areas. In point of fact, the term "women entrepreneur" refers to any woman who organizes and manages any enterprise, typically one that involves a large amount of work and risk. The current inquiry has been an attempt to cultivate awareness as well as to appreciate significance and the purpose for growing. A comprehensive written survey on the subject of female business owners in India is carried out.

**Keywords** - Female, Entrepreneurship, India, Business, Entrepreneurs.

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## INTRODUCTION

The overwhelming bulk of the workers in India is employed by the informal economy. Due to the variable working conditions, women with low socioeconomic level who work in the informal economy of the nation are one of the most marginalized communities in the nation as a whole. **The National Policy for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (2015)** suggests entrepreneurship education as one strategy for helping women reach their full potential. The government has implemented a number of programmes, including the Skill Enhancement Awareness Campaign Schemes, which are run by the Directorate General of Employment and Training, to help women learn new skills and increase their knowledge base. This programme, which aims to produce somewhere in the vicinity of 10,000 training service providers, has already benefited 12.6 lakh women. Along with them, 1,41,907 additional women receive training annually at one of the 402 ITIs exclusively for women or one of the 1134 women-only wings housed within ITIs. Ten of the country's Regional Vocational Training

Institutes (RVTIs), which are spread out around the nation, also provide training programmes in women's vocational education. The government is thinking about proposing the creation of eight more Regional Vocational Training Institutes (**Swaniti initiative 2015**).

The proportion of women in the world's population is close to 50% (**Malyadri 2014**). In order to increase women's involvement in economic and educational initiatives at the local, regional, national, and international levels, it is necessary to use resources more effectively. Understanding how female-led companies contribute to the growth of the national economy is therefore crucial at the moment. Women who take part in a range of entrepreneurial activities gain influence in a number of linked fields, such as socioeconomics, finance, philosophy, and other fields. This is plainly obvious when one considers the substantial contributions made by female company owners to the economies of

industrialized nations like Canada, the British Isles, Europe, Australia, and the Americas.

## ENTREPRENEURSHIP

In the present era, when the global economy is facing a misalignment due to connected marketplaces in the age of enlightenment, entrepreneurship has steadily gained enormous importance. **Rama (2003)** asserts that in order to be successful during this time, improving economic growth in particular needs to restructure ongoing trade conflicts, entirely abolish jurisdictional control, privatize state-owned enterprises, and lower excessive staff turnover in organizations. The economy will see a high unemployment rate if these policies are not put into action. India has 300 million younger generations, but only 100 million jobs are being created (**Naidu 2009**). There are 200 million fewer jobs as a result. From 6.8 percent in 2001 to a staggering 9.6 percent in 2011, the jobless rate increased dramatically. (**Arun and Punj 2016**).

The United States Department of State claims that the 1700s saw the emergence of entrepreneurship. Since then, many intellectuals have contributed to our understanding of what constitutes a businessman, an entrepreneur, and an entrepreneurial enterprise. The French verb "entreprendre," which means "to undertake," is the source of the term "entrepreneur" (**Desai 2014**). Scholars have been working to define entrepreneurs and the area of entrepreneurship since the field's birth. In his "Essai sur la Nature du Commerce en Général" (**Miryala & Aluvala 2015**), the French economist Richard Cantillon coined the term "entrepreneurship," loosely defining it as "self-employment of any nature" and designating "entrepreneur" as the person who takes a risk by buying things at a certain cost and selling them for a profit. According to tradition, Jean Baptiste Say is credited with coining and subsequently expanding the phrase (**Ahmad & Seymour 2008**).

## WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN INDIA

Women make up 495.74 million people in the country, or 48.3% of the entire population, as per the findings of the 2001 census. Women and men should be treated equally during the development phase (**Mallikarjun and Paramanand 2013**). But throughout history, Indian women have continued to be the principal targets of violence despite centuries of captivity and subjection. Men have traditionally been given more value than women. The proportion of women in the world's population is almost half. Yet, they have made only a small amount of contribution to national economies. Despite making up the same percentage of the labor force, they have not yet fully integrated themselves into the development process. There has been a noticeable change in the general public's image of women in a significant number of developing countries over the

course of the past 20 years (**Phurailatpam 2007**). In every sector, women are actively exploring who they are and trying to make a place for themselves. Having the abilities necessary to progress enterprises is becoming more and more crucial in the quickly changing climate of today. Many various industries, such as clothing, computers, electronics, healthcare, agribusiness, and food science, have numerous new business options. As a result, women's acquisition of money in these professions can increasingly be seen as a strategy for their own economic growth.

**Sundaram (1998)** conducted case studies of eight female entrepreneurs. According to the study, there are a variety of reasons why someone might want to initiate their own business, such as: a high unemployment rate; a daughter who required a service that didn't exist; a lack of career progression; and the ambition to establish a sizable architectural firm and to create a high-profit business. **Preeti, Sharma, and Shashi Kanta (2008)** investigated the potential for entrepreneurship inside self-help groups to empower women. The study's major objectives were to investigate how women's empowerment through involvement in particular entrepreneurial activities and to categories the elements affecting empowerment. Women can be empowered via education, thought, recruitment awareness, and involvement to make their own decisions, become independent, and develop confidence. The modification claims that SHGs have been successful in empowering rural women through business ventures.

Another research on women's entrepreneurship was with an emphasis on self-help groups explored the potential of microfinance programmes for empowering and employing women as well as the benefits and drawbacks of using microfinance to begin the feminization of poverty (**Harish 2012**). He considered the role that self-help organizations may play in empowering women through entrepreneurship. He gave examples of the various difficulties female business owners encounter while trying to buy property, establish contacts, etc. SHGs play a crucial role in the economic independence of rural women. They were establishing their own financial independence and, as a result, expanding work options for others. SHGs not only increase microfinance but also provide their members with private living quarters, leadership development programmes, and training for self-employment.

## SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

**Anjali and Semwal (2009)** stated that gathering relevant data regarding the socioeconomic level of the women was the study's main objective. The

socioeconomic status of 240 rural females from the Uttarkashi district was randomly selected for study, and the degree of women's backwardness in these rural areas was also looked at. Lack of education, inadequate training and skill development, a lack of economic independence, and a lack of aspiration for career advancement in the educational system all contributed to the poor socioeconomic situations of rural women.

Women's health, education, and work conditions have significantly improved during the last ten years in several Indian regions (Masih and Anu Singh et al. 2009). But in this new millennium, the persistent and, in some cases, growing concept of hostility toward women, the marginalization of women in decision-making across all domains and tiers, the enduring existence of biased rules governing wedding, territory, estate, and legacy, and the fact that women's shortcomings continue to be exaggerated, are intolerable. The study was to assess the level of empowerment and independence felt by employing women professionals. The most important conclusion is that the real difference won't show up, though, until there has been a significant shift in our society's underlying structures.

Research on how social networks assist rural women in starting their own businesses discovered that the majority of women in rural areas are illiterate, undereducated, ignorant, and un-explorative due to social and cultural limitations (Rajani 2008). In such communities, intermediaries and landlords profited from the skill of the women. These support mechanisms have been successful in assisting the women in finding their own enterprises, honing their entrepreneurial abilities, and starting to promote their products without the aid of intermediaries and landlords. It improved their financial status and gave them more confidence.

Women's choices regarding having more children were disregarded and frequently overturned by those of their husbands (Farhat 2010). Traditional thinking and attitudes were against working women, according to 37% of married respondents, who also believed that they would never make excellent housewives, would neglect their children while working, and would overall lead sad lives. Both primary and secondary sources were employed. A survey approach was used.

Research was done on the factors that influence women to launch their own enterprises (Vijyalakshmi.T. 2007). She compared the two countries and found that while progress is faster in India. She was aware of the challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in India as well as the steps that needed to be taken to support them and came to the conclusion that it is possible to improve women's status in society as well as make significant progress toward the objectives of general economic and social development, including improved wealth distribution,

a decrease in deprivation, and a decrease in unemployment, by empowering them to launch their own businesses and participate fully and more effectively in a wider range of economic activities.

A case study on the empowerment of rural women through locally based income-generating activities in 2013 stated that personal, educational, economic, social, and psychological empowerment are all types of empowerment (Jyoti Kumari 2014) and the main objective of the study was to ascertain the significance of locally based income-generating activities. Using purposive sampling, the researcher selected 30 examples. She found that 86.7% of respondents believed their confidence had increased, and that the majority of respondents (93.3%) believed their communication abilities had improved.

### CHALLENGES AND PROBLEMS OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

(Shankar 2012) listed absence of institutionalism, dearth of experience with native people, lack of qualified teachers, narrow focus on outcomes, restrictions on teaching methods, subject not regarded as essential are top 6 barrier found in Indian entrepreneurship education.

Women have actively fought against both direct and indirect barriers to their self-actualization and full involvement in the social, political, economic, and educational realms. To bring about reforms in these domains, some mental alterations, such as altered contracts, altered relationships, and new values, are necessary. According to Kamaraju (2006), who investigated the difficulties affecting rural entrepreneurs in Tamil Nadu, women firm founders were mostly unaware of the state, federal, and banking institutions' support programmes and special offers. The report suggested that the government give the development of women-owned enterprises more consideration.

Women are now not treated similarly to men and work primarily in low- or semi-skilled occupations (Sonawane, Minal Bhagwan 2019). They also have less access to higher education than men. Attaining women's financial independence and educational opportunities will go a long way toward establishing women's autonomy, the authors found. People need a range of abilities to accomplish this, including knowledge, consciousness, competency, resolve, conviction, self-motivation, and encouragement. Another exploratory study revealed that the majority of respondents identified a lack of resources as their primary restriction. Overall, it was evident that women lacked the majority of the material and human resources required to participate in independent

income activities (**Singal Savita and Srinivasan Kamala 1989**).

**Garima (2014)** examined the challenges women face at work, taking into account their educational and professional backgrounds, balancing work and family responsibilities, raising start-up small businesses, locating funding, the existence of small businesses, and problems with suppliers and raw materials.

More women were joining the workforce (**Chaudhury 2005**). They were found to lack a strong personal commitment to working hard and provide high-quality service, nonetheless. Women contributed around two thirds of the labor hours to the world economy without obtaining enough recompense. The interactions that working women had in the workplace and at home were sufficient to convince one that family life was difficult. It also brought up more serious issues including the weakening of family relationships, the rise in individualism, spousal abuse, and issues with childrearing and security.

In order to comprehend the consequences of women entrepreneurs' financial realities, **Das Marami (2012)** researched at how families and society view women company owners, identified the difficulties they face, and developed ways to assist them succeed. Study revealed that women who ran their own enterprises viewed as extensions of their personal lives. Their marriage, their children, and their connections with them were of the utmost importance to them. Promotion ranked as the second-biggest problem for female business owners, per their reports.

## DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

For the purpose of empowering rural women, **Nagarajan (2013)** studied self-help groups. A survey methodology was used in the investigation. Both primary and secondary data were used. Two SHGs were chosen for the study, which was carried out in the Tamilnadu districts of Dindigul, Madurai, and Thani, out of seven non-governmental organizations. The study came to the conclusion that the foundation of women's under-empowerment is gender stratification, not caste or class. In terms of their ability to make autonomous judgements and in their families, society, and rural women have climbed to positions of strength.

**Sugna B and Sandhya Rani G (2017)** conducted a study aiming to look into how self-help groups function, how they support women's social, economic, and political power, and how they ultimately intended to save money. The findings of the study demonstrated that the women actively participated in cooperative activities, saved money through SHGs with their earnings, used their earnings for an immediate need. The financial situation of women has improved, group cohesion has increased, social mobility and freedom of movement within and outside of the village have

improved, and interactions with government officials and the beginning of questioning the federal agencies to obtain their privileges have increased in relation to the role of SHGs in empowering women.

**Vijya.M. (2007)** came to the conclusion that the rise of women entrepreneurs has socio-economic relevance in a country like India where economic involvement has been minimal in an effort to examine the issues facing rural women entrepreneurs in-depth and the measures that could be taken to boost their well-being in terms of national programmes and initiatives. By launching several small commercial enterprises, female entrepreneurs can strengthen the industrialized base, generate job opportunities, and guarantee balanced territorial expansion. The nation's industrial growth can therefore be significantly aided by the expanding economic influence of female entrepreneurs.

**Narain and Meera (2008)** provided illustrations of the deplorable status of women and the necessity for their empowerment. The Indian government and certain state governments have begun a variety of measures to better the status of women and give them more possibilities, which have been discussed. They have concentrated on the Self-Help Group movement, microfinance, and the function of NGOs in fostering development.

In the southern Orissan districts of Ganjam, Gajapati, Koraput, Malkangiri, Nawarangapur, Rayagada, Boudh, and Kandhamal by **Sahoo, Sudhansu Mohan(2014)**. The scope of the study only covers business owners who have obtained loans under the government's PMRY self-employment programme. It takes into account the 11-year study period from 1993–1994 to 2003–2004. The research employed both primary and secondary data. 1200 samples have been gathered by utilising the random sampling method to select 150 samples from each district. The analysis demonstrated that the government gave women entrepreneurs under the PMRY initiative greater consideration than it did for enterprises owned by men.

## CONCLUSION

In India, a society where men predominate, women are seen to be just as economically dependent on male relatives. Women entrepreneurs faced a variety of issues, including lack of education, societal constraints, legal conventions, exorbitant manufacturing costs, male-dominated society, limited management potential, lack of confidence, and more. Despite the fact that there have been several studies on various aspects of entrepreneurship and women's entrepreneurship in India, no systematic effort has been made to take the development of women entrepreneurs at the micro level into consideration. Even if there are many successful female entrepreneurs in our

country, it is still important to double-check with actual business owners. We are undoubtedly in a better position than ever before, with women's interest in entrepreneurship growing at a notable rate. In an effort to ensure that Indian women have equal opportunities and rights in all spheres of life, the economy has taken steps to assure this, and legislation ensuring parity with regard to political procedure as well as equal opportunities and rights in education and employment have been ordered. It is obvious that female entrepreneurs have emerged as a strong driving force in the modern business environment. From the perspectives of finances, marketing, wellbeing, families, and other issues, women entrepreneurs face an enormous number of challenges. Periodically, governments and financial institutions must impose some measurable regulations for women business owners. To overcome economic obstacles, more women need to engage in entrepreneurship.

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