

A Study on the Growth of Women Entrepreneurs in India

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ABSTRACT

Women entrepreneurs are reshaping India's socio-economic landscape. The paper looks at their growth, contribution, sector-wise participation, challenges, and role of government initiatives. Based on secondary data and sectoral trends, the study identifies opportunities to further empower women in business and promote national development objectives.

1. INTRODUCTION

Women entrepreneurship in India has come to be a major impetus to economic development, poverty reduction, and social transformation. Limited to household functions traditionally, Indian women are increasingly becoming a part of traditionally male domains such as agriculture, IT, health, and finance. This is made possible with increased literacy rates, inclusion of technology, and enlightened government policies.

Entrepreneurship enables women to attain economic independence, defy gender stereotypes, and participate in nation-building. Women entrepreneurs introduce innovation, moral practices, and community orientation, generating sustainable economic value.

2. OBJECTIVES

- To examine sector-wise growth of women entrepreneurs in India.
- To determine the key challenges and opportunities for women entrepreneurs.
- To assess the influence of government programs on women-owned business ventures.
- To research the connection between women entrepreneurship and women empowerment.

3. IMPACTS OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Women entrepreneurs play a major role in contributing to GDP, employment generation, rural empowerment, and gender empowerment. Their involvement increases innovation and supports sustainable development in accordance with global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Areas of impact:

- Economic growth: Growth of MSMEs and local economies.
- Job creation: Specifically in rural and semi-urban sectors.
- Social inclusion: Empowerment of the marginalized through self-employment.
- Innovation: Environment-friendly products and community-based solutions.

4. SECTORAL GROWTH TRENDS

4.1 Production: Expansion from 7% (2015-16) to 10% (2018-19). Contraction in 2019-20 (- 3%) due to financial difficulties. Post-pandemic recovery, 8% in 2022-23.

4.2 Farming: Consistent increase from 4.5% (2015-16) to 13% (2022-23). Organic farming, FPOs, and SHGs fuel growth.

4.3 IT: Expansion from 10.2% (2015-16) to 26% (2023-24). Spurt from digital media, freelancing, and start-ups.

4.4 Services: Increase from 7.8% (2015-16) to 15.6% (2023-24). Growth segments: education, healthcare, beauty, wellness.

4.5 Finance: Participation increased from 20.7% to 25.2% (2015-24). Growth associated with fintech, microfinance, advisory services.

4.6 Eco-friendly sector: Increase from 8.6% (2015-16) to 14.6% (2023-24). Indicates increasing awareness of sustainability.

5. CHALLENGES CONFRONTED BY WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

- Financial limitations: Inability to get loans because of no collateral.
- Socio-cultural impediments: Stereotypes and family pressures.
- Skill deficiency: Requirement of digital literacy, financial management, and marketing.
- Weak networks: Men have weaker access to mentorship and market connections.
- Work-family balance: Family responsibilities constrain time for business growth.

6. GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS

- Stand-Up India: Financial assistance of ₹10 lakh - ₹1 crore for women's enterprises.
- MUDRA Yojana: Micro-loans without collateral.
- TREAD Scheme: Training and credit grant through NGOs.
- STEP Scheme: Skills training across industries.
- Mahila Coir Yojana: Encourages coir-based micro-enterprises.
- Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP): Online platform for mentorship and support.

7. OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

- Digital commerce: Amazon Saheli, Flipkart Samarth.
- Sustainability: Environment-friendly products, organic farming, biodegradable products.
- Urban services: IT services, education, wellness, e-commerce.
- Rural ventures: Handicrafts, dairy, food processing.
- Emerging sectors: Fintech, health tech, and edtech.

8. COMPARISON: MALE VS. FEMALE ENTREPRENEURS

Risk-taking: Male (Higher financial risk); Female (Cautious, prefer stability) Motivation: Male (Profit, market share); Female (Independence, flexibility) Finance access: Male (Easier); Female (Face collateral,

bias issues)

Management style: Male (Aggressive, competitive); Female (Collaborative, empathetic) Sector focus: Male (Manufacturing, tech); Female (Services, retail, social ventures)

Networking: Male (Wider access); Female (Limited support systems)

9. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Design: Descriptive

Data: Secondary sources, charts, official reports

Scope: Urban, semi-urban, and rural women entrepreneurs Limitations: Small sample, self-reported data

Ethics: Voluntary participation, confidentiality

10. CONCLUSION

Indian women entrepreneurs are central to India's growth inclusivity. In the face of societal, financial, and infrastructural issues, their rising numbers in every sector are transforming the economy. Government policy, digital platforms, and social welfare are key to continuing this trend.

Efforts in the future must be towards:

- Broader financial inclusion.
- Improved skill building.
- Increased digital literacy.
- Fostering positive social attitudes.

Enabled women entrepreneurs not only fuel business prosperity but overall national development.

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