



# Opportunities and Obstacles Indian Women Entrepreneurs Face

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## Abstract:

Women entrepreneurs are a driving force behind global economic growth, operating over one-third of businesses worldwide. In India, the rise of female entrepreneurship is fueled by economic development, improved education, urbanization, and increasing social acceptance. Despite this progress, many Indian women face poverty, motivating them to start small businesses or cottage industries to achieve economic stability. Grounded in Maslow's theory, this study explores how unmet needs inspire women to transition from necessity-driven ventures to successful enterprises. Government initiatives such as Startup India, Standup India, and the Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP) aim to support this shift, offering programs like SEWA and PMRY. This research identifies key opportunities, examines barriers such as funding and technical expertise, and evaluates the effectiveness of government policies. Data collected from 50 respondents and secondary sources highlights the critical role of financial, familial, and technical support in empowering Indian women entrepreneurs to overcome challenges and thrive.

**Keywords:** Women, Entrepreneurship, Government scheme, Entrepreneurs, startup, digital.

## Introduction:

Entrepreneurship plays a pivotal role in driving economic growth, fostering innovation, and generating employment. In India, women entrepreneurs have emerged as powerful agents of change, contributing significantly to diverse sectors, from traditional crafts to cutting-edge technology. Despite these contributions, their journey remains fraught with challenges, both systemic and societal. The interplay of opportunities and obstacles forms a complex narrative that reflects India's evolving socio-economic landscape.

On one hand, favorable government policies, increased access to education, and growing awareness about gender equity have opened new doors for women entrepreneurs. Digital platforms and globalization have further amplified their reach and market access, creating unprecedented opportunities for growth and innovation. However, on the other hand, entrenched cultural norms, limited access to financial resources, and inadequate support systems act as significant barriers. Women often face a dual burden of managing professional responsibilities alongside societal expectations, which hinders their entrepreneurial aspirations.

This research aims to explore the intricate dynamics of opportunities and challenges faced by Indian women entrepreneurs. By identifying key factors that promote or hinder their progress, the study seeks to provide actionable insights for policymakers, educators, and stakeholders to foster a more inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem in India.

**Objectives of the Study:**

- To identify key opportunities for Indian women entrepreneurs' sectors.
- To analyze the significant obstacles faced by Indian women entrepreneurs.
- To assess the results of government programs and policies.

**Research Methodology:**

The study includes primary and secondary data. Primary data has been collected by questionnaire. The sample size is of 50 respondents. The secondary data was gathered from several researchers and experts who wrote books and articles that were published in various newspapers, journals, websites, reports, magazines, and conference papers.

**Review of Literature:**

**Ameena Begum, Badiuddin Ahmed, S Sreenivasa Murthy (2023)**, examined the obstacles and difficulties that female entrepreneurs most frequently face were low literacy, marketing, and money. Due to their domestic duties, women are primarily engaged in small-scale enterprises. Their energy, self-assurance, optimistic attitude, and drive for independence are what keep them growing in spite of all these obstacles. They are using institutional assistance and support to learn and manage how to get past these obstacles.

**R Tamil Selvi and G Anitha Rathna (2023)**, reviewed that Female entrepreneurs globally face challenges like raw material supply, education, training, and financing. Despite this, many women have thrived in a male-dominated field. For India, recommendations include conducting meta-analyses to identify specific needs, launching programs, promoting women-made products with tax incentives, teaching soft skills, and implementing community support and mentorship initiatives. Success requires determination, clear goals, and resilience. The Indian government prioritizes women's empowerment, focusing on finance, education, and new initiatives to elevate their status. Recent changes like liberalization, digitization, and social media growth have transformed the landscape, with women increasingly co-founding and leading businesses across India.

**Chauhan A. S., Agarwal P., Tiwari R., Das M. K., Nautiyal S., & Joshi, D. (2022)**, reviewed the situation of women entrepreneurs, noted issues that women encounter when starting and operating businesses in Uttarakhand, offered solutions for current issues, and came to conclusions about how to overcome these obstacles. Magd, H., & Thirumalaisamy, R. (2021) examine the potential and limitations faced by Omani women who work for themselves. Furthermore, taking into account the obstacles that women entrepreneurs encounter, the study aims to offer ideas and recommendations that will support women's business in Oman. The study makes the assumption that Omani women entrepreneurs are inclined to run family-run, self-help businesses. The development of female entrepreneurs is not significantly impacted by gender restrictions. It has been discovered that university graduates are very driven to start their own business.

Data Interpretation:

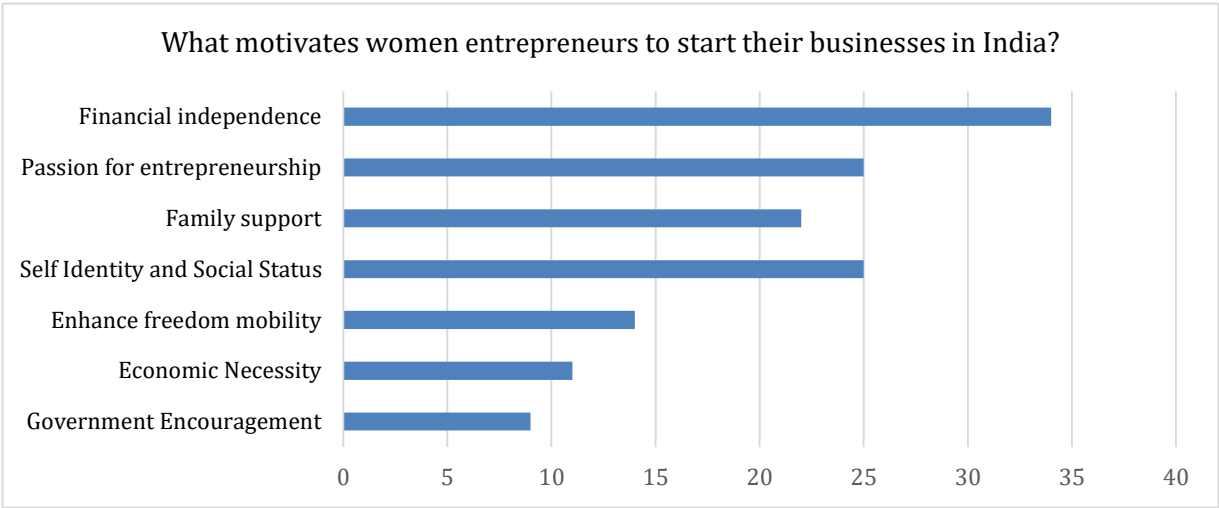


Fig. 1

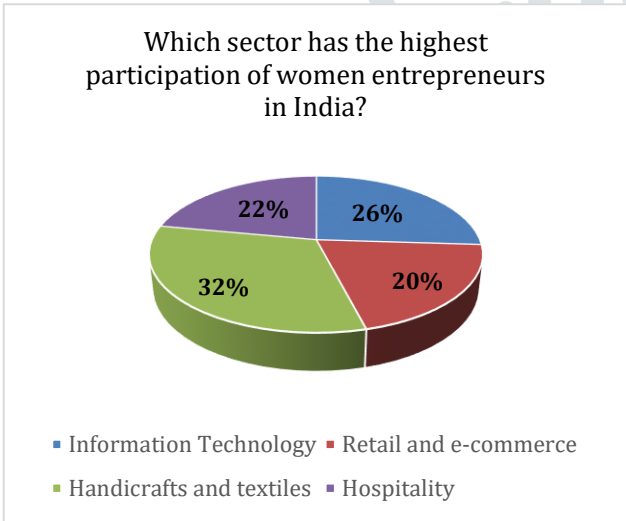


Fig. 2

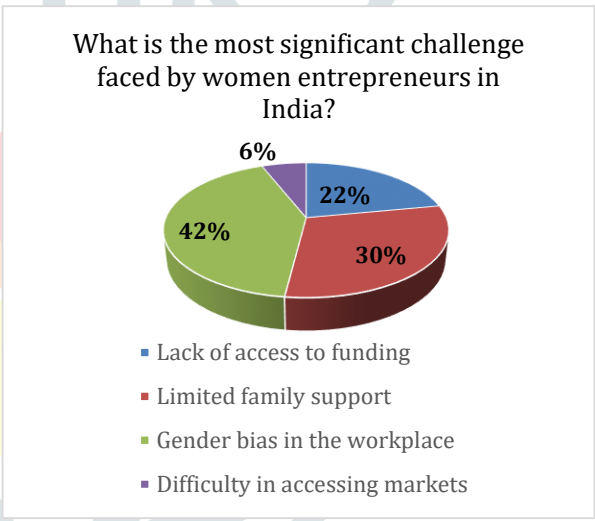
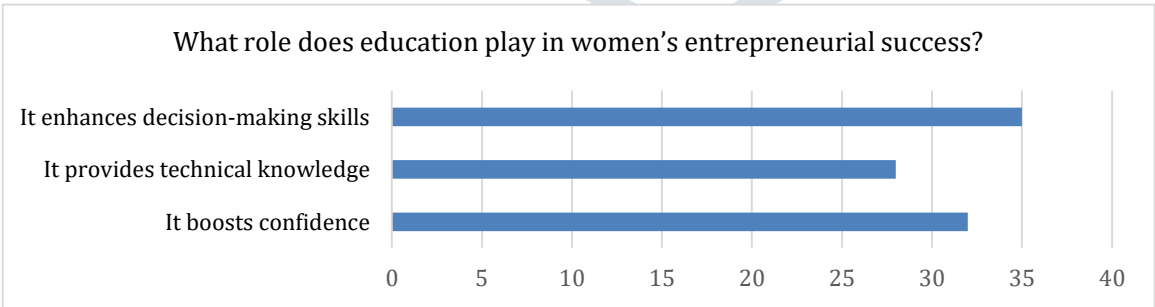
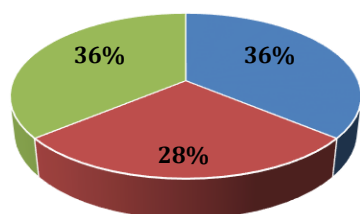


Fig. 3



What is a significant opportunity for women entrepreneurs in India today?

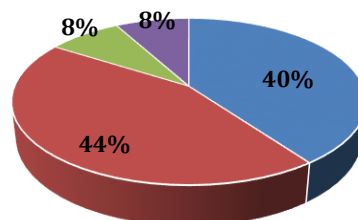


- Access to government schemes and policies
- Rising demand for women-led businesses
- Growth in digital and e-commerce platforms

Fig. 5

How does cultural perception impact women entrepreneurs in India?

Fig. 4



- Positively encourages women to lead businesses
- Creates hurdles due to traditional gender roles
- Has no significant impact
- Enhances global opportunities

Fig. 6

What is the primary source of funding for women entrepreneurs in India?



Fig. 7

Which government scheme specifically supports women entrepreneurs in India?

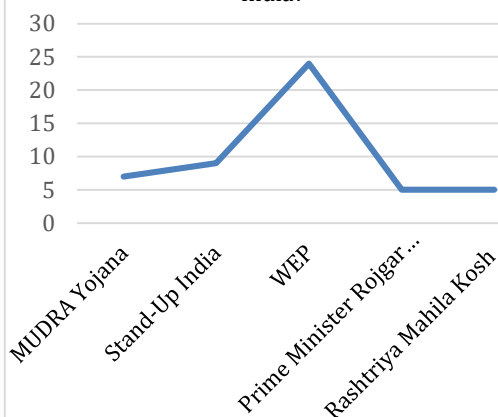
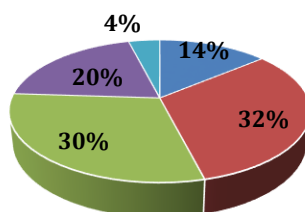


Fig. 8

What is the key factor to ensure the growth of women entrepreneurs in India?



- Improved access to funding
- Skill development programs
- Reduction in gender bias
- Support and Cooperation of the Family
- Innovative Thinking

Fig. 9

How has digital transformation impacted women entrepreneurs?

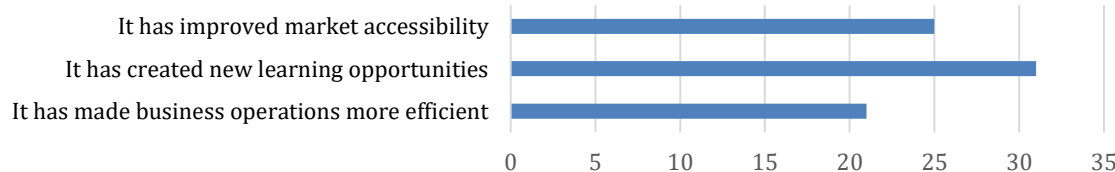


Fig. 10

## Findings:

➤ The study highlights that financial independence, cited by 68% of respondents, is the primary motivation for women entrepreneurs to start their businesses. Additionally, a passion for entrepreneurship and the desire for self-

identity also drive women to venture into business. Despite these motivations, the study reveals limited government support for women entrepreneurs.

- Women entrepreneurs are actively participating across various sectors such as Information Technology, Retail and E-commerce, and Hospitality, with a notable dominance in Handicrafts and Textiles. However, significant challenges persist, including gender bias in the workplace, limited family support, and traditional gender roles that hinder their growth.
- Education plays a crucial role in their success by enhancing decision-making skills, confidence, and technical knowledge. Key funding sources include personal savings, bank loans, and venture capital.
- The study underscores opportunities in the growth of digital and e-commerce platforms, along with increased access to government schemes and policies. The Women Entrepreneurship Platform has been instrumental in supporting women entrepreneurs, while digital transformation provides new opportunities to adopt technology and expand market access.

### Suggestions:

**Enhancing Financial Independence for Women Entrepreneurs:** Explore strategies to provide accessible financial resources, such as microfinance schemes and tailored bank loans, to encourage more women to start their businesses.

**Addressing Gender Bias and Family Support:** Investigate the societal and workplace reforms needed to reduce gender bias and increase family support, enabling women entrepreneurs to overcome traditional gender role barriers.

**Improving Government Support and Policies:** Analyse the effectiveness of existing government initiatives and propose improvements or new policies to enhance support for women entrepreneurs across various sectors.

**Promoting Education and Skill Development:** Study the impact of targeted educational programs and skill development initiatives on enhancing women's entrepreneurial success, focusing on decision-making, technical expertise, and confidence building.

**Leveraging Digital and E-commerce Opportunities:** Examine the role of digital transformation in creating market access and technological advancement opportunities for women entrepreneurs, particularly in emerging sectors.

**Sector-Specific Growth Analysis:** Conduct an in-depth analysis of women's contributions and challenges in dominant sectors like Handicrafts, Textiles, and IT, while identifying untapped sectors for future opportunities.

### Conclusion:

Women entrepreneurs play a pivotal role in driving economic growth and societal change. Financial independence, passion, and self-identity are key motivators, yet challenges like gender bias, limited family support, and insufficient government assistance persist. Education, digital transformation, and targeted funding are essential enablers of entrepreneurial success. Promoting accessible financial resources, enhancing government policies, and fostering education and skill development can significantly empower women entrepreneurs. Furthermore, leveraging opportunities in digital platforms and conducting sector-specific analyses will unlock untapped potential. Strengthened efforts to address these areas will ensure inclusive growth and sustained contributions from women entrepreneurs across sectors.

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