



# **Role of Social Media in Empowering Women Entrepreneurs in India: A Retrospection**

**\* SANJANA MALKANI \*\*CS PROF.MANISH SITLANI**

**\* PH.D. RESEARCH SCHOLAR, INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES, DEVI AHILYA VISHWAVIDYALAYA, INDORE (M.P.)**

**\*\* PROFESSOR IN MANAGEMENT, INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES, FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT, DEVI AHILYA VISHWAVIDYALAYA, INDORE (M.P.)**

## ***Abstract***

Women's entrepreneurship is a significant driver of economic growth in India, despite contributing a substantial 40% to India's economic growth, women entrepreneurs have traditionally faced hurdles like social norms, limited access to capital and resources. However, the rise of Digital India has empowered them. Social media platforms act as powerful tools, providing a low-cost platform for women to showcase their businesses, connect with potential customers and build strong personal brands. This fosters a more stable business environment, attracting a wider audience and ultimately leading to success. While factors like family support, access to services, and business motivation remain crucial, social media creates a fertile ground for women entrepreneurs to thrive by enhancing visibility, building networks, and directly engaging with customers.

By reviewing the available literature, this paper has attempted to identify the role of social media in the success of initiatives undertaken by women entrepreneurs in establishing their business in India it was found that social media is gradually arriving as one of the key factors affecting women entrepreneurs in India.

**Keywords:** Women entrepreneurship, factors affecting entrepreneurship, digital India, social media.

## 1. Introduction

Entrepreneurship plays a crucial role in economic growth and development. It fosters innovation, creates employment opportunities, and contributes to social change. However, young women remain underrepresented in the entrepreneurial landscape despite demonstrating significant potential. According to GEM reports women constitute only one third of the economic enterprise. But the transition from home maker to entrepreneurs for women is not easy. Women across the India faced many obstacles like gender gap, family support, lack of social networks and socio-culture barriers. Government schemes & policies, economic independence and social status motivates women to become entrepreneurs and become key drivers of the growth and development in the country. According to the report of Indian Human Development Survey (IHDS) women in India still require permissions to go to market or health centres. The emergence of women entrepreneurship depends upon the various factors includes socio-culture, psychological in India. But during this current period, it has been observed that women are more oriented towards social media to earn as well as get recognition in the society. They are using this platform for the Digital marketing also which has changed the methods of establishment of their business

### Concept of women entrepreneurship in India

The hidden entrepreneurial potentials of women have gradually been changing with the growing sensitivity to the role and economic status in the society. Skills, knowledge and adaptability in business are the main reasons for women to emerge into business ventures. "A women entrepreneur is a person who is confident, creative and innovative desiring economic independence individually and creating employment opportunities for others". In India, although women constitute the majority of the total population, the entrepreneurial world is still a male dominated one. Women in advanced nations are recognized and are more prominent in the business world.

**According to the report of NITI AYOOG (2022)** "An enterprise owned and controlled by women having a minimum financial interest of 51% of the capital and giving at least 51% employment generated to women".

### Concept of social media

"A set of software and web tools that enable users to interact online, share content, and develop personalized networks of friends, colleagues, or organizations."

The table below provides a snapshot of major digital empowerment schemes undertaken by government for women entrepreneurs in India.

**Table 1: Snapshot of scheme for digital empowerment of women undertaken by government as analysed from the above literature.**

Scheme	Description of the scheme
Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan (PMGDISHA)	It aims to bridge the digital divide specially targeting rural population including the marginalised sections of society, women and girls by covering 6 crore rural households. As on 08.12.2022, the percentage of women benefited under PMGDISHA is over 53% of total enrolled, over 54% of total trained and over 56% of total certified.
'National Mission on Education through Information and Communication Technology' (NMEICT) Scheme	Improve education standards and increase enrolment in higher education by leveraging ICT.

Mission Shakti	An Integrated Women Empowerment Programme, as Umbrella Scheme for the Safety, Security and Empowerment of Women. It aims at strengthening interventions for safety, security and empowerment of women in a mission mode through institutional and convergence mechanism for greater efficiency, effectiveness and financial prudence.
Women entrepreneurship platform (WEP)	To create supportive ecosystem for women entrepreneurs in India. It provides access to programs for marketing assistance, community and networking with funding assistance.

**(Source: Processed by authors for this study)**

## 2. Research Question

What had been the role of social media to empower women entrepreneurship in India in recent past?

## 3. Research Objective

The core objective of this research is to explore the role of social media among women entrepreneurship in India in recent past, as evident from existing literature.

## 4. Methodology and Scope of the Study

The study is largely descriptive in nature as an attempt has been made to primary describe the role of social media to empower women entrepreneurship in India along with to identify the factors that have affected women entrepreneurship in India in recent past. The present study is limited only to exploration of related research concerning women entrepreneurship in India in recent past. No attempt has been made to validate the same empirically through concurrent data collection or through other means. Further, the focus of the study is limited to the India only as the role of social media to empower women entrepreneurship largely differ with change of economy and geographical terrain. Further only those available research articles have been reviewed where study has been carried in recent past i.e., 2015 and onwards. Further, the analysis is based on review of the existing literature and no statistical tools have been applied.

## 5. Literature Review

The growing interest in entrepreneurship among women is a notable trend, yet it is not without its challenges. Dr Ravi Chaturvedi (2018) identifies key barriers that women face in entrepreneurship, including the difficulty of balancing family responsibilities with business aspirations, limited access to financial resources, and a lack of technical expertise. Chinmayee Sahoo (2020) highlights the contrast between the entrepreneurial freedom that women in developed nations enjoy compared to the cultural and financial barriers faced by women in developing countries like India. In India, social norms, limited access to capital, and a lack of infrastructure often stymie women's entrepreneurial ambitions. Dr. Subramanyam Mutyala (2024) notes that there is a growing desire among young women in India to explore entrepreneurship, but he emphasizes the need for comprehensive ecosystems of support, including mentorship, training, and access to capital, to nurture these ambitions. These findings underscore the reality that while the entrepreneurial landscape for women is evolving, significant efforts are needed to overcome systemic barriers and create an inclusive business environment that fosters equal opportunities for success.

Social media has provided a platform for women to overcome traditional barriers to entry in the business world. It allows them to bypass gender biases and create their own business opportunities, regardless of their geographical location. In the digital realm, women entrepreneurs are excelling across various fields, including

fashion blogging and technology leadership. They leverage social media to establish their brands and connect with audiences on their own terms, demonstrating that success as an entrepreneur does not depend on gender, privilege, or specific backgrounds. Instead, it requires determination, a brilliant idea, a willingness to adapt, and the ability to engage with one's audience. Consequently, Ashida Singh (2024) argues that for women with an entrepreneurial spirit, there has never been a more opportune moment to share ideas with fans, communities, and audiences. Social media has been a game-changer for women entrepreneurs in India, offering unique opportunities for empowerment and growth. Ena Ahuja (2024) observes that while women have historically been discouraged from working or building independent businesses, contemporary women are beginning to find success by creating microbusinesses that rely on online tools like social media. Indian women, in particular, rely on platforms such as Instagram and Facebook for promotion, with 63% of women-led enterprises using these platforms to attract customers. Social media allows female entrepreneurs to connect with other women building businesses and with their ideal customers, debunking the old fallacy that women are "technologically challenged." This new generation of tech-savvy women entrepreneurs is transforming the traditional goal of finding jobs into creating them.

Despite these advancements, many women in developing countries still lack access to information technologies due to economic and political barriers such as infrastructure deficits, financial limitations, and oppression (Dr. Devendra Kumar, 2022). Social entrepreneurship has also gained prominence, driven by socially aware individuals sceptical of government and businesses' ability to address pressing social issues like poverty. Dacin et al. (2018) emphasize that social entrepreneurship appeals to those seeking innovative solutions to societal challenges.

Ziauddin Merza (2019) highlights that women are increasingly active on social media, with 71% of women using these platforms compared to 62% of men. Historically considered a male-dominated field, technology is now a domain where women participate actively and equally. Social media also serves as a space for women to challenge traditional gender norms and stereotypes through blogging, activism, and storytelling. Sippy Kumari (2024) notes that women use these platforms to voice concerns, question societal expectations, and foster conversations about gender equality, amplifying their voices and encouraging positive change.

Anamika Srivastava (2020) highlights the role of media in fostering development, emphasizing the need to identify channels that can effectively reach urban and rural populations. She calls for collaborative efforts from government authorities, NGOs, media entities, and researchers to expand communication channels for empowering women. Similarly, Anuradha Choudhary (2019) discusses the disconnection between government policies and their practical implementation, stressing the media's potential to reshape societal perceptions of women through inspiring stories and awareness campaigns. Shweta Gaur (2018) underscores the media's role in addressing gender inequality, illiteracy, and harassment, offering recommendations to enhance its transformative potential for women's empowerment.

Small businesses led by women have become popular on social media platforms. Dr Sulaxmi Toshniwal (2024) observes that women increasingly start businesses offering products like sarees, bakery items, handmade showpieces, customized chocolates, and imitation jewellery, among others. These businesses require minimal financial investment and are promoted through WhatsApp groups, Instagram, and Facebook, allowing women to establish themselves as entrepreneurs. Exhibitions organized by groups of women have also gained traction, with social media playing a pivotal role in publicizing these events, ensuring their success and inspiring others to follow suit.

### **Exploration from the above considered literature**

The finding of the analysis had been produced herein after

10 research papers pertaining to India with time frame of 2015 and onwards, have been reviewed for further detailed analysis. The table below provides a snapshot of all 10 research articles shortlisted for this study

**Table2: Snapshot of Analysed Research Articles related to factors affecting women entrepreneurs in India**

Sr. No.	Title of the Article	Author(s)	Year
1	Challenges & opportunities for women entrepreneurs in India	Dr Ravi Chaturvedi	2018
2	Women entrepreneurship in India: An insight into problems, prospects and development.	Chinmayee Sahoo	2020
3	Sustainable factors affecting women entrepreneurs: A comprehensive review	Dr Mamatha & Dr Subramanyam Mutyala	2024
4	Factors affecting women empowerment in India	Dr Ankita Agarwal	2017
5	Pull and Push factors for women entrepreneurship in India: A Survey based analysis	Bijaya Laxmi Thapliyal	2018
6	Women entrepreneurship in India: A literature review	Neha Tiwari	2017
7	Constraints of women entrepreneurs: A literature review	Kriti Suri	2023
8	Women entrepreneurship in India: what is holding them back	Sarbina Korreck	2019
9	A structure of women entrepreneurship in urban and semi urban areas of Indore district	Ms. Anita Ahuja Dr Kanhaiya Ahuja & Dr Ganesh kawadia	2015
10	The antecedents of entrepreneurial intention among women entrepreneurs in India	Sakshi Chhabra	2019

(Source: Processed by authors for this study)

10 research papers pertaining to India with time frame of 2016 and onwards, have been reviewed for further detailed analysis.

The table below provides a snapshot of all 10 research articles shortlisted for this study

**Table 3: Snapshot of Analysed Research Articles related to role of social media to empower women entrepreneurs in India**

Sr No.	Title of the Article	Author(s)	year
1	Role of social media in empowering women entrepreneurs in India	Ashida Singh & Vinay Vikram Singh	2024
2	Social media: Empowering Women Entrepreneurs	Ena Ahuja & Aruna Asaf Ali	2016
3	The Role of social media in the women empowerment	Dr Devendra Kumar Dixit	2020
4	Organization Science inform Social Entrepreneurship: A Critique and Future Dire	M. Tina Dacin & Peter A. Dacin	2018
5	The role and importance of social media on Women Entrepreneurship	Merza Ziauddin	2019
6	Role of social media in women empowerment: A sociological study	Sippy Kumari	2024
7	Empower Women with Self Help Group	Anamika Srivastava	2020
8	Social media: A boon to women empowerment	Dr Sulaxmi Toshniwal	2019
9	Social media in the Succes of Female Entrepreneurship in India	Drishti J Verma & Prakriti Gugliani	2018
10	Impact of social media participation on female entrepreneurs towards their digital entrepreneurship intention and psychological empowerment	Uttam Chakraborty & Santosh Kumar Biswal	2023

(Source: Processed by authors for this study)

## 6. Findings From the literature

The literature review indicates that several authors have explored the positive and negative impact of social media in fostering entrepreneurial intentions among women.

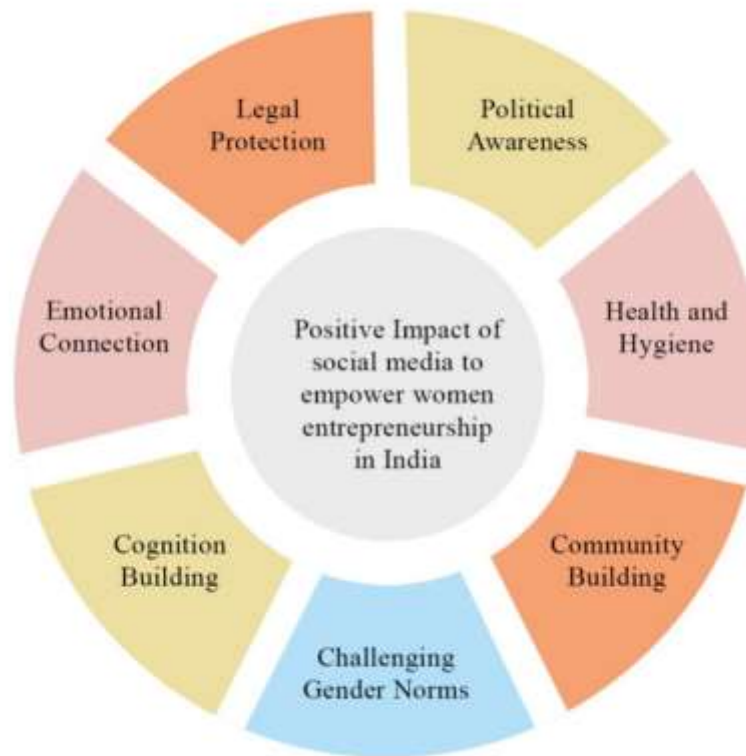
### 6.1 Positive impact of social media to empower women entrepreneurship in India, as explored from the literature, have been reported below:

- **Emotional Connections:** Social media facilitates connections with others, improving emotional well-being and reducing social isolation.



- **Cognition Building:** Provides access to a vast amount of information, including empowerment-related resources, facilitating learning and skill development.
- **New Information and Opportunities:** Connects women with job opportunities, work-related news, and entrepreneurial ventures.
- **Legal Protection:** Provides access to legal information and resources, enabling women to understand and exercise their rights.
- **Political Awareness:** Facilitates access to political information, news, and discussions, enabling women to engage in political processes.
- **Health and Hygiene:** Provides access to health information, awareness campaigns, and online communities focused on health and well-being.
- **Community Building:** Enables the formation of online communities and networks of women, fostering support and collaboration.
- **Challenging Gender Norms:** Provides a platform for women to challenge traditional gender roles, voice their concerns, and advocate for gender equality.

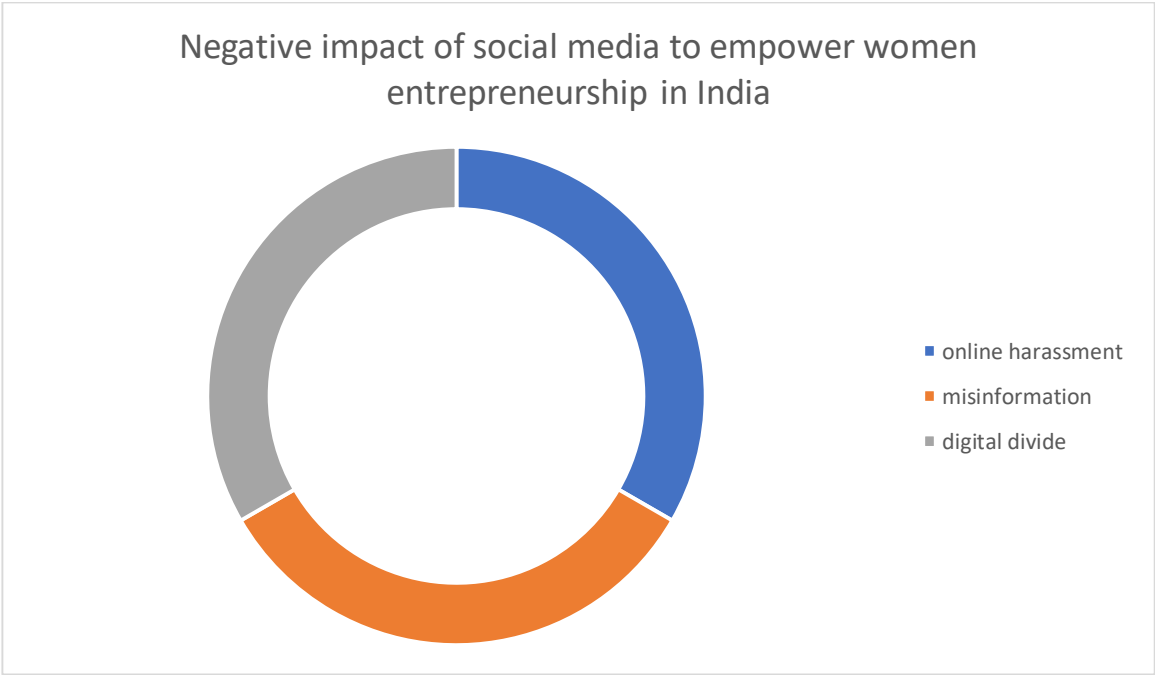
**Visual representation of the above discussed positive impact of social media to empower women entrepreneurship in India, as explored from the literature**



6.2 Negative impact of social media to empower women entrepreneurship in India, as explored from the literature, have been reported below:

- **Online Harassment:** Experiencing online harassment can significantly damage a woman's self-esteem and confidence, making it difficult to pursue entrepreneurial goals. The fear of facing online abuse can deter women from sharing their business ideas, seeking feedback, and engaging with potential customers
- **Misinformation:** The spread of misinformation can erode public trust in women-led businesses, making it difficult for them to attract customers and secure funding.
- **Digital Divide:** The digital divide can exclude women from participating fully in the digital economy, hindering their entrepreneurial opportunities and limiting their economic empowerment.

Visual representation of the above discussed negative impact of social media to empower women entrepreneurship in India, as explored from the literature



7. Conclusion

In conclusion, the literature review presents a comprehensive examination of the role of social media in women entrepreneurship, particularly in the context of India the findings reveal that while social media holds great potential to enhance women entrepreneurs’ endeavours, it falls short in addressing the multifaceted challenges they face, including societal constraints, gender stereotypes, and limited access to financial support. Moreover, the review underscores the critical role of government support and policy reforms in empowering women entrepreneurs and driving sustainable development. While social media has emerged as a powerful tool for empowering young women entrepreneurs in India. It provides a platform to overcome traditional barriers, build brands, connect with customers, and challenge



societal norms. While challenges persist, social media is playing a crucial role in driving women's economic empowerment and fostering a more inclusive business environment in India.

From the above research, it can be concluded that both positive and negative impact of social media play major role in the execution of women entrepreneurship in India. Presently, this impact is being addressed by our country at a very rapid pace. India is moving from a developing nation to becoming a developed nation where the country needed to boost self-employment generation including women entrepreneurship.

### 8. Limitations of the study

1. The study is exclusively based on review of existing literature on the subject matter and no empirical investigation is done by the authors.
2. The study exclusively reviewed literature relating to the India, and no inter -state or international comparison has been done.
3. The study is limited to only the role of social media to empower women entrepreneurship in India

### 9. Scope for future research

1. Future researchers may conduct their studies empirically by collecting primary data from women entrepreneurs in India to draw better conclusions and arrive at possible suggestions for women entrepreneurial ecosystem.
2. Geographical comparison at pan India level as well as global level, of role of social media in empowering women entrepreneurship may be conducted by future researchers.
3. Future researchers may also consider the Indian and International women entrepreneurship including the threats, opportunities and impact of social media related to women entrepreneurs.

### Bibliography

1. Ashima, S., & Vinay, V. S. (2024). Role of social media in empowering women entrepreneurs in India. *Global Media Journal*, 22(69).
2. Ahuja, E., & Ali, A. A. (2024). *Social media: Empowering women entrepreneurs*. ISBN: 978-81-955611-2-4, pp. 85–92.
3. Dixit, D. K. (2020). The role of social media in women empowerment. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention (IJHSSI)*, 9(6), 62–66.
4. Dacin, M. T., et al. (2018). Organization science inform social entrepreneurship: A critique and future directions. *Organization Science*, 22(5), 1203–1213.
5. Merza, Z. (2019). The role and importance of social media on women entrepreneurship. *SSRN*. <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3408414>
6. Kumari, S. (2024). Role of social media in women empowerment: A sociological study (With special reference to Ranchi Municipal Corporation).
7. Srivastava, A. (2020). Empower women with SHG: A print media view. Laxmi Book Publications, pp. 31–35.
8. Toshniwal, S. (2019). Social media: A boon to women empowerment. *Global Impact Factor (GIF)*, 2(3), 256–258.

9. Verma, D. J. (2018). Role of government policies and social media in the success of female entrepreneurship in India.
10. Chakraborty, U., & Biswal, S. K. (2023). Impact of social media participation on female entrepreneurs towards their digital entrepreneurship intention and psychological empowerment. *Journal of Research in Marketing and Entrepreneurship*, 25(3), 374–392. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JRME-03-2021-0028>
11. Tiwari, N. (n.d.). Women entrepreneurship in India: A literature review. *Amity Journal of Entrepreneurship*, 2, 47–60.
12. NITI Aayog. (2022). Decoding government support to women entrepreneurs in India. <http://www.niti.gov.in>
13. Korreck, S. (2019). Women entrepreneurship in India: What is holding them back? *ORF Issue Brief*, (317).
14. Sahoo, C. (2020). Women entrepreneurship in India: An insight into problems, prospects, and development. *International Journal of Engineering Research & Technology*, 9(9).
15. Thapliyal, B. L. (2018). Pull and push factors for women entrepreneurship in India: A survey-based analysis. *Journal of Algebraic Statistics*, 9(1), 145–149.
16. GEM Global Entrepreneurship Monitor. (2021). *Global entrepreneurship monitor report*. <https://www.gemconsortium.org>
17. GEM Global Entrepreneurship Monitor. (2023). *Global entrepreneurship monitor report*. <https://www.gemconsortium.org>
18. Ahuja, M., Kawadia, G., & Ahuja, K. (2015). A structure of women entrepreneurship in urban and semi-urban areas of Indore district. *IBMR, IPS Academy; School of Economics, DAVV*.
19. Suri, K. (2023). Constraints of women entrepreneurs: A literature review. *ORF Issue Brief*.
20. Indian Human Development Survey-II (IHDS-II). (2011–2012). <https://ihds.umd.edu>
21. Agarwal, N. R., Khanna, S., & Agarwal, A. (2017). Factors affecting women empowerment in India. *Wilsonia Degree College*, 3, 2348–6848.
22. Mamatha, S., & Mutyala, S. (2024). Sustainable factors affecting women entrepreneurs: A comprehensive review. *Bangalore*.
23. Chhabra, S. (2019). The antecedents of entrepreneurial intention among women entrepreneurs in India. *Asian-Pacific Journal of Innovation and Entrepreneurship*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/APJIE-06-2019>