



## A Study on the status of Women Entrepreneurship in the E-Commerce Sector in India

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### Abstract

In this emerging world, women entrepreneurship is gaining importance as it helps in achieving growth and development of the country. E-Commerce sector has shown a remarkable growth in the past few years and provided a desirable environment for the women entrepreneurs to show their talent, creativity etc. and transform their ideas into reality. Hence, the E-Commerce sector has provided many opportunities to the women entrepreneurs and also created employment opportunities for them. Though E-Commerce sector has a positive impact on Women Entrepreneurship but also women entrepreneurs have to face lot of hurdles and challenges while doing online business. Therefore, Government and Non-Government financial institutions started several funding programmes and training initiatives to motivate women entrepreneurs. This paper highlights the concept and need of Women Entrepreneurship and also describes the importance of E-Commerce sector. It explores the motivational factors of E-Commerce sector and the successful online women entrepreneurs. This paper also discussed the financial schemes introduced by the Government to promote Women Entrepreneurship.

**Key Words:** Women Entrepreneurship, E-Commerce Sector, Motivating Factors, Financial Schemes.

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Concept of Women Entrepreneurship**

Entrepreneurship is important to achieve national goals and promote economic growth. It is a crucial quality of an entrepreneur and is a dynamic process of starting new companies and processes starting a firm, learning about innovative approaches, taking risks, and seizing advantageous possibilities. A woman is defined as someone who discovers new concepts, ideas, owns, manufactures, coordinates, and sells them, as well as someone who makes decisions, handles business risks, delivers financial returns, creates employment opportunities, and supports her family.

Women today prefer to start their own businesses over staying at home. They are becoming more well-known and respected around the globe and are crucial to the global economy.

Women entrepreneurs perform a variety of tasks, ranging from project screening to concept generation to product analysis and preparation to choosing the best organizational structure. They also raise money, hire resources, gather materials, and manage their businesses. Women are natural leaders and possess the ability to manage both professional and domestic commitments with mbusinesses (60%), and their talents are more likely to be in demand (52%). Each and every female entrepreneur has succeeded after overcoming all of life's obstacles and hardships.

Women are valued as a valuable resource for the nation and play a vital role in business. It is true that when a woman grows, so does her family, her culture, and her entire country.

Women are advancing in all fields of business, acting as the nation's economic force and driving force behind growth; without them, the nation cannot succeed.

Women who start, lead, direct, and organize a business or industry create employment possibilities for others through the process known as women entrepreneurship. Women can readily obtain resources, ownership, and power through entrepreneurship.

### **1.2 Evolution of Women Entrepreneurship in India**

Women are considered as an important asset and a crucial component of our society, yet for a variety of reasons, women consistently fall short of expectations—not because they are incompetent, but rather because of the societal expectations that are still widely accepted. In the 19th century, in ancient India, the idea of an entrepreneur and the growth of entrepreneurship, particularly the phrase "WOMENTREPRENEURS," first appeared.

Women are depicted in Hindu scriptures as the incarnation of Shakti, which is Sanskrit for "source of power," and they have undergone several modifications throughout history. Women assisted males with simple arts and crafts like clay modeling and spinning in Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa civilization, where they also had a position of responsibility alongside men. Women were crucial in the creation of domestic utility needs, agricultural labor, etc. throughout the Vedic era. In the traditional economy, they were crucial to the agriculture sector and the food business. According to the study, women were co-partners in life and held great status throughout the early Vedic period in the Rig Vedic age.

More and more women emerged, developed, and used to operate various enterprises including tiny handloom firms, retail stores, etc. during the 18th and 19th centuries. Women did not have certain privileges or provisions for their advancement until after independence. Early in their 20s,

business women's involvement and contribution have increased. They began investing, employing cutting-edge methods, generating income, and identifying a market niche.

The need for a women's entrepreneurship programme was highlighted in the Industrial Policy Resolution of 1991. There are more than 2, 95,680 women entrepreneurs in India, according to government figures. The status and function of women are fast changing as a result of the development of LPG.

Women's entrepreneurship has grown in popularity and is now seen as a significant contributor to India's economic growth in the twenty-first century. Women are starting businesses in all kinds of industries at an increasing rate. They are capable, competent, and self-assured, and they significantly improve family welfare, alleviate poverty, and empower women.

There are many successful female entrepreneurs in India nowadays working in many industries. Women are no longer exclusively limited to traditional activities due to the implementation of numerous programmes including the National Skill Development Policy, Vocational education, the National Skill Development Mission, education, and awareness. Women are now also becoming a valuable part of the workforce. The country's demographics and economic growth have evolved as a result of the growing importance and engagement of women entrepreneurs.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

**Hussin et al., 2018** in their study "**Factors Influencing E-Commerce Adoption Among Malay Women Entrepreneurs in Kuching Sarawak**" highlighted various technological, organizational and environmental elements that have impacted Kuching Sarawak's Malay women entrepreneurs' use of e-commerce. According to the study, the perception of relative advantage is the main factor influencing the adoption of e-commerce. Relative advantage, cost, and competitive pressure are the three most crucial variables, according to the study, which employed multiple regression and Pearson correlation.

**Kain & Sharma, 2013** through their study "**Women Entrepreneurship education need for today**" discussed the success stories of the successful women entrepreneurs of India and also discussed the importance of women entrepreneurship to the nation's economic development. The study concluded that the government should initiate certain steps and schemes to promote women entrepreneurship.

**Akter, 2020** in their paper "**Women Entrepreneurship: New Direction for Future Economic Growth through E-Commerce in Bangladesh**" discussed the importance of women entrepreneurship and the current status of E-Commerce sector in Bangladesh. The study also highlighted the importance of E-Commerce for the growth of the business and also presented a model for the establishment of E-Commerce business in Bangladesh by the women entrepreneurs.

**Jetwa, 2016** "**A Study on status of women entrepreneurs in E-Commerce environment in India**" examined the role and importance of women business owners in India's e-commerce sector and also analyzed various motivating factors like vast reach, less clerical work, low cost, absence of middlemen that inspires women entrepreneurs to start online business. The study also discussed the evolution of women entrepreneurship in India and various successful women entrepreneurs in India.

**P.S. & Venugopal, 2019** through their study **“Women entrepreneurship in e-commerce sector - Problems and opportunities”** discussed the importance of women entrepreneurship in the E-Commerce sector and also highlighted the opportunities and problems that women entrepreneurs have to face while doing online business. The study also concluded that various training programmes should be initiated to create awareness on women entrepreneurship.

**Durga Devi, 2020 “Opportunities for women entrepreneurs in E-Commerce industry-An empirical study in India”** explored the various motivational factors that influences women entrepreneurs to start online business and also investigated the problems and challenges that online women entrepreneurs have to face in E-Commerce sector in India. The study also highlighted the various steps and initiatives taken by the financial institutions and government to promote women entrepreneurship.

**Priya & Bose, 2021** in their paper **“A Study on factors influencing E-Commerce adoption among women entrepreneurs”** discussed the factors like knowledge, environmental, organizational and technological aspects that affected how women entrepreneurs adopted e-commerce. The study found that technological factors, such as technology availability and lower costs, had a significant impact on how often women entrepreneurs used e-commerce.

**Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhead Bhardwaj, 2013** in their study **“Women entrepreneurship in India: issues and problems”** highlighted the various motivational factors and also discussed the difficulties that online business women have to face in the field of E-Commerce sector.

**Goyal, Sonia 2016** through their study **“Evolution of the Women Entrepreneurs: A study of different periods of time”** studied the growth and evolution of women entrepreneurs in India during different periods and the emergence and contribution of women entrepreneurs in the growth and development of the nation.

**Priya & Bose, 2021** in their study **“A Study on Women Entrepreneur’s Awareness About Government Schemes- Special Reference to Chennai District, Tamil Nadu”** discussed the various Government schemes that were initiated to create awareness among women entrepreneurs in Chennai and also listed out the successful women entrepreneurs in Chennai. The study used both primary and secondary method to collect data and used statistical tools like one sample t-test, one-way ANOVA, Friedman test, chi-square and ANCOVA to analyze the data. The study suggested various schemes like start-up India, Bhartiya Mahila Bank, Stree Shakti Package, Rashtriya Mahila Kosh etc. to support women entrepreneurs and concluded that training programmes strongly influence women entrepreneurship.

**Goyal & Parkash, 2011** in their research **“Women Entrepreneurship in India-Problems and Prospects”** aimed to discuss the various motivational factors like education, family support, global reach, low cost etc. that motivates women entrepreneurs. The study also suggested various financial schemes and steps taken by the government to promote women entrepreneurship.

**Paulmoni & Geetha, 2019 “A Study on Women Entrepreneurs Awareness about Government Schemes - Special Reference to Kanniyakumari District”** used the rank method to investigate awareness of Women Entrepreneurs on government programmes. According to the study's findings, the Mudra Yojana Program for Women placed first, followed by the Annapurna Scheme in second place, the Micro Credit Scheme in third place, and Mahila Vikas Nithi in fourth place.

### **3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

- [i] To understand the concept of Women Entrepreneurship and the evolution of Women Entrepreneurship in India
- [ii] To study the factors that inspires women to start online business.
- [iii] To recognize the various opportunities of E-Commerce sector to women entrepreneurs.
- [iv] To list out the successful women entrepreneurs in the E-Commerce sector in India.
- [v] To study various government financial schemes and initiatives to promote women entrepreneurship

### **4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The study uses secondary data to collect information and various research papers have been studied to understand the concept of women entrepreneurship in India. Newspapers, periodicals, books, journals, conference proceedings, websites and government reports are among the secondary data sources that are used to collect the information.

### **5. MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS THAT INSPIRES WOMEN TO START ONLINE BUSINESS**

Women primarily choose online businesses because of their flexibility to work from home, low startup costs, and vast customer. Internet platforms assist female business owners in creating and managing business networks, as well as in making money and contributing to their particular households' revenue. Women entrepreneurs are embracing e-commerce in today's environment and contributing significantly to society. They are crucial to the nation's politics, society, and economy. Women are breaking out of their traditional roles in India, which is regarded to be a male-dominated society, with great ideas and concepts. They are also emerging as great entrepreneurs by creating their own trends and inspiring millions of other women around the nation.

In recent years, women entrepreneurs in India have drawn more attention. They have had surprising effects on the economy. Women are inspired to enter the world of entrepreneurship due to variety of factors.

#### **I. Family Level of Income**

Family level of income encourages women to start their own businesses. Women who want to improve their family's status and generate more money choose entrepreneurship, which can transform their way of life, their income, their standard of living, and makes them more responsible.

#### **II. 24\*7 Business**

Unlike traditional marketing, which has set hours for company transactions, online business allows owners to operate their companies around the clock, seven days a week.

#### **III. Absence of Middlemen**

By eliminating middlemen and conducting all transactions electronically, E-commerce brings people from all over the world closer together and lowers transaction costs.

#### **IV. Less Clerical Work**

E-commerce requires less administrative work than other types of business because it is computer-driven and hence requires less clerical work.

#### **V. Family and Social Support**

Family and social support networks have a significant role in motivating women at every stage of their careers and fostering their success as entrepreneurs. Family support is essential and one of the main factors in the success of women entrepreneurs since it gives them the confidence they need to succeed as business owners.

#### **VI. Secured Platform**

Digital marketing is regarded as a secure platform that allows for the simple execution of E-Commerce operations from home with the help of passwords that maintain the privacy, security, and safety of transactions.

### **6. SUCCESSFUL WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN THE E-COMMERCE SECTOR IN INDIA**

There are plenty of skilled and talented female business owners in India. Every year, new female business owners emerge with original and unique concepts, demonstrating their capacity to manage both their homes and their businesses simultaneously. Due to the advancement of science and technology, businesswomen are developing original ideas, concepts, and new e-commerce ventures. In the past, women were not regarded equally to men and faced many difficulties on their path to becoming business owners. Nevertheless, today's successful women have overcome these challenges by stepping outside of their personal comfort zones.

Here is a list of the top female business owners in India's e-commerce industry who have demonstrated that, if they can do it, so can others.

#### **I. Falguni Nayar**

Nykaa, India's largest online retailer of beauty, wellness, and fashion products was started in 2012 by Falguni Nayar. Nykaa.com, a Mumbai-based online retailer, sells high-quality and health-related products from all the major brands. In 2012, Falguni Nayar, a managing director who later founded her own company, left Kotak Mahindra Bank. It has turned into a one-stop shop for all the women shopping for economical cosmetic goods. Nykaa is a company that was formed in India and began as a purely online shopping platform. One of the major companies in the cosmetics sector, Nykaa sells their goods to both online and offline customers.

#### **II. Rashmi Daga**

Rashmi Daga, the founder and CEO of Fresh Menu, a Bangalore-based online meal delivery service platform, launched the business in 2014. Fresh Menu delivers fresh cuisine to your home. It has many satellite kitchens and runs 22 kitchens in Bengaluru. She received the EY Prime Women Entrepreneur Award in 2019.

The food on the fresh menu is both fresh and unusual from the usual meal alternatives. Customers of Fresh Menu can order delicious and healthy food online through their smartphone application.

### **III. Shradha Sharma**

Shradha Sharma created Your Story in 2008; it is one of India's top media outlets for business people. In addition to discussing commercial opportunities, it also discusses individuals' entrepreneurial journeys. It offers the biggest startup database available online. Shradha Sharma, the company's founder, CEO, and chief editor, launched Your Story.com in September 2000 as India's largest online media platform for business owners and startups. It is the top media platform for start-ups, investors, entrepreneurs, and change makers in Asia and India, and it has published more than 20,000 entrepreneurial tales.

### **IV. Richa Kaur**

Zivame.com, which was launched in August 2011 as a multi-brand online shopping service for women is run by Richa Kaur. Richa Kaur introduced hundreds of styles for Indian women with incredible confidence, comfort, and choice after discovering that lingerie is an underserved market in women's clothing. She also entered other categories including active-wear, sleepwear, and shop wear.

### **V. Sairee Chahal**

Sairee Chahal established the women-only social network platform SHEROES in Delhi in 2013. It is a chat-based hotline that assists women in finding employment from home and launching their professions. It is absolutely safe and reliable. It is a vast platform that offers assistance, resources, opportunities, and interactions.

### **VI. Mehak Sagar**

Mehak Sagar launched the Indian wedding planning website Wed me good in 2014. It is an app that makes wedding planning simpler by allowing users to find the best wedding vendors, along with their costs and reviews.

### **VII. Sabina Chopra**

The most well-known online travel agency in India, Yatra.com, was co-founded and has Sabina Chopra as its EVP operator. It was established in August 2006 and offers consumers a one-stop shop for all of their travel needs, tailoring the journey from beginning to conclusion by locating appropriate flights.

## **7. GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES AND FINANCIAL SCHEMES TO SUPPORT WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS**

Government agencies and international organizations are now aware of the crucial role that women's entrepreneurship plays in advancing women's advancement and national economic expansion. By creating a supportive legislative environment for e-commerce, and providing e-commerce services to the public, the government contributes significantly to the growth and encouragement of the sector. The government has introduced a number of programmes to encourage women's entrepreneurship because it directly results in employment and financial independence for women. A number of awareness-raising initiatives have been launched by the government, including free training sessions and workshops on E-Commerce, information centers, and security and privacy. The government should start an E-SME development

programme to support E-Commerce by offering technical assistance to diverse industries. It is important to encourage banks, financial institutions, and businesses to create SME desks.

The Government of India has launched a number of training initiatives and programmes for women, including the Women Entrepreneurship Development and National Skill Development Corporation, which includes promoting and identifying entrepreneurs, selecting, training, and follow-up. As a result, India has emerged as one of the most dynamic nations for successful women entrepreneurship.

The government has created a number of programmes to encourage women business owners in India-

#### **I. PMMY (Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana)**

It serves more than 50 million small business owners who are women by making loan repayment simple and offering them other forms of financial assistance

#### **II. Start-up India**

Start-up India is one of the largest steps our Prime Minister Narendra Modi has done to give employment, job creation, and boost the involvement of women entrepreneurs in the area of innovation and technology. It aims to promote women's entrepreneurship. The programme offers loans between Rs. 10 lakh and Rs. 1 crore, and it has helped a lot of women entrepreneurs by giving them financial support.

#### **III. Bhartiya Mahila Bank**

It is a unique bank established for female Entrepreneurs in the retail industry. The bank was established primarily to target uneducated women who come from economically disadvantaged groups in order to support female entrepreneurship and women's empowerment. The programme offers collateral-free loans for new enterprises including beauty salons, restaurants, daycare centers, etc. up to a maximum of one crore.

#### **IV. Stree Shakti Package**

SBI made it available to women who wish to establish a business or grow an existing one and own 50% of it. Women company owners who work in retail, professional services, and small-scale enterprises can apply for loans. The interest rate is 0.5% with no requirement for collateral for those who borrow more than Rs 2 crore.

#### **V. Rashtriya Mahila Kosh**

It was established in March 1993 by the Indian government under the name National Credit Fund for Women (NCFWF) with the goal of assisting impoverished women, particularly those engaged in the dairy, agricultural, and handicrafts industries, in obtaining credit and generating revenue.

#### **VI. STEP (Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women)**

The ministry of women and child development of the Indian government created it to educate and train rural women who lack access to formal skill-training programmes.



## 8. CONCLUSION

Today there is an increased participation of women in the field of entrepreneurship due to the emergence of the E-Commerce sector. E-Commerce sector is an efficient and effective platform for the Indian business women and leads to Women Empowerment. The study indicates various motivational factors like Global reach, Absence of middlemen, low cost etc. that inspires women to start online business. Women entrepreneurs are still facing many problems and challenges while doing online business and the Government should take certain steps to support Women Entrepreneurship. Various financial schemes and training programmes should be initiated by the Government and Non-Government agencies in order to create awareness among the women entrepreneurs.

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