



**ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER**

**Sociology**

**WOMEN EMPOWERMENT: ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA THROUGH GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES.**

**KEY WORDS:** Skill, empower, entrepreneur, initiatives, technology

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**ABSTRACT**

The word entrepreneur is derived from the French verb *entreprendre* and its literally meaning is "to undertake". Women entrepreneurs play an important role in the process of economic development in societies and carry it forward. It acts as a catalyst of change in modern days of liberalization, globalization, and transformation in the world. Economy has changed due to knowledge and skill based industrial development in India. In the developing nations entrepreneurship is an important base for progress and prosperity. Women play a key role in "care economy" but this work is not remunerated, and it is undervalued which lies outside the general framework of the economy. This paper analyses the barriers and stereotypes faced by women in society and what are the major initiatives taken by the Indian government to combat these issues.

**METHODOLOGY:**

This paper is mainly based on secondary data collections from different sources like books, journals, government officials' documents, internet, newspaper. It focuses on how women are empowered through skill development and entrepreneurship in India and how government schemes empower women to face major issues of entrepreneurship.

Women in India have traditional roles and fighting stereotypes in the business community. The Government of India has defined women entrepreneurs as -an enterprise owned and controlled by women having the minimum financial interest of 51 percent of the capital and giving at least 51 percent of the employment generated in the enterprise to women. Women entrepreneurs engaged in business due to push and pull factors which encourage women to have an independent occupation and stand on their own legs. The interim budget of 2024 highlighted the four pillars on which the government is working tirelessly, and women empowerment is one of the main pillars in which the budget laid down several provisions that benefit women. The union budget 2024 has allocated 3 lakh crore benefiting women and girls. The MSME sector has the maximum number of women who struggle to get collateral free loans.

Max Weber who first of all took the stand that entrepreneurial growth was dependent upon the ethical value system of the society. In his book "The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism" highlights that capitalism growth depends upon a rationalized technology, acquisition of money and its rational use for productivity and multiplication of money. Cochrane emphasizes cultural values, role expectations, social sanctions as the key elements that determine the supply of entrepreneurs. According to him, "an entrepreneur is neither a super-normal individual nor a deviant person but represents a society's model personality".

The greatest challenge to women entrepreneurs is that they are women. In a male dominant social order women are not treated as equal to men; it is a big hurdle for them towards business success. Male members think it is a big risk financing the ventures run by women. India has the world's third-largest startup ecosystem, the share of funding raised by women-led startups from 2020-2022 was a mere 15 percent of the overall startup funding (Tracxan report). Systemic biases and perception challenges often limit their ability to secure financing. Conscious prejudices among investors and a lack of female representation in funding institutions exacerbate the situation.

women entrepreneurs often have less experiences than male dealing with complicated procedures. Surveys of financial

literacy find that women have less understanding and confidence in making financial decisions than men do (OCED, 2018). Gender equality should be the norm as the global community faces challenges of sustainable development. G7 Gender Equality Advisory Council (August 2019) recommends governments to establish initiatives that help women and girls overcome barriers to entry and full participation in the workforce. Women's economic empowerment is a transformational process achieved through skills training, a positive workplace that allows for work-life balance and access to public services in childcare. The role of skill development in women's empowerment to make gender equality in India.

Giving women greater access to leadership positions in both private and public sectors at all levels of decision-making can help to focus priorities on sustainable development goals. Women feeling less skilled than men and underrepresented in fast-growing green energy sectors that require advanced level technical skills in business development's green energy for the future will require STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) skills and knowledge which will contribute to a shift in the green economy. More women are likely to start businesses focused on sustainability (World Bank 2023). Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) increased women's participation in skill development.

The economic survey 2024 shows that how entrepreneurship among women is on the rise, with 68 million loans under the PM Mudra Yojana sanctioned to female entrepreneurs and 77.7 percent of beneficiaries of the stand-up India scheme are women. Women constitute over half of the beneficiaries from the Prime Minister Rural Digital Literacy Campaign. Lakhpati Didi schemes raised the target from 20 million to 30 million aiming to transform women into successful entrepreneurs through dedicated support. Approximately 30 crore loans under the Mudra Yojana were disbursed to female entrepreneurs.

In the union budget 2024 Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman highlighted enhancing women's participation in the labor workforce. This initiative will support the establishment of hostels and collaborations aimed at developing specialized skill training programs for women which promote market access for women SHG enterprises. She also highlighted the substantial progress made in the empowerment of women over the past decade, significantly enhancing their dignity and ease of living.

Chief Economic Advisor V. Anantha Nageswaran said that India was transitioning from women's development to women-led development. Mission Shakti is a women empowerment

program launched by the ministry of women and child development (MWCD) for period 2021-2025 aims to strengthen interventions for women's welfare, safety and empowerment for making equal partners in nation building.

"In the era of Indian entrepreneurship, women are not just participants, they are game changers rewriting the rules of game, one enterprise at a time". Right efforts on all areas are required in the development of women entrepreneurs and their greater participation in the entrepreneurial activities. Consider women as a specific target group for all developmental programmers. Women development corporations must gain access to open ended financing and making micro - credit system and enterprise credit system to the women entrepreneurs at local level. A women entrepreneur's guidance cell should be set up to handle the various problems of women entrepreneurs all over the country. Training for entrepreneurship should be started at school level through well designed courses which build confidence through behavioral games. Reimagining skilling would involve integrating traditional skills with advanced digital technology that huge digital gap that women face is essential to make to make skilling programs efficient in both digital training as well as digital access.

In India the scheme of micro financing through self-help groups (SHGs) has transferred the real economic power into the hands of women reduced their dependency on men. It also promotes entrepreneurial skills among women and generated trends and financially strong groups. Special women centric projects focus on inclusive skill development with the objective of increased women participation for better economic productivity. To achieve this creating additional infrastructure both for training and apprenticeships for women and flexible training delivery mechanism such mobile training units. Flexible afternoon batches along with local need-based training to accommodate women, insuring safe and gender sensitive training environment, employment of women trainers, equity in remuneration and complaint redresser. The skill gap reports have also identified sectors which are likely to have a higher percentage in women workforce. Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas yojana promotes increased participation in the workforce through appropriate skilling and gender mainstreaming of skills.

18 national skills institutes for women are imparting skills training exclusively for women. National Council for Vocational Training (NCVT) approved skills training programs under craftsmen training schemes acts and craft instructors' training schemes in several areas such as office management, electronics, fashion design and technology computer aided embroidery and designing etc. Skill India has partnered with government initiatives like Ayushman Bharat, Swachh Bharat Mission, Smart City Mission etc. to align skill development efforts to these national missions by ensuring a steady flow of skilled workforce.

Women dominated sectors such as apparel, beauty and wellness and health care are significant presence in nontraditional roles such as electronics and hardware with large number of female involvement in computing and peripheral job role in this sector. Partnership with Hamara Bachpan Trust in Odisha aims to give employment and entrepreneurship opportunities about 1500 women belonging to the economically marginalized section. Partnership with youth net home stay project in northeast (Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh) is improving the quality of home stays and providing the source of income to 200 residents. Under a PMKVY project amrita Bishwa Vidyapeetham is targeting remote villages and marginal tribal groups. To foster women empowerment through skill development and creation of occupational opportunities skill India has also partnered with global industry and leaders like SAP, ADOBE, IBM to create skill development aligned to the of

industry 4.0 .

National Entrepreneurship award are also recognized for the entrepreneurial journey of women in India also "role model" women entrepreneurs are needed for motivation. The voice of women should be heard for better opportunities in male dominant environment. Integrating role models into entrepreneurship programs and support initiatives can help combat stereotypes and trigger change in India.

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