

## Empowering Women through Entrepreneurship: A Case Study

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### Abstract

The challenges faced in executing women's empowerment initiatives organized by the government or community organizations reveal that while there is a significant number of women, their potential for development remains underutilized. This is largely due to cultural constraints that prevent women from fully enjoying a better quality of life. The theoretical frameworks surrounding the enhancement of women through entrepreneurship programs serve as a key strategy for empowering them to create business opportunities. This research was conducted using a research and development approach, employing various data collection methods, including literature review, observation, interviews, documentation, questionnaires, and tests. The data were analyzed using descriptive, qualitative, and quantitative techniques. The activities were implemented in West Bengal villages. The findings indicate that the execution of entrepreneurial activities aimed at empowering women can lead to an improved family economy. It can be concluded that the model for empowering women through entrepreneurship is highly effective in fostering self-reliance.

**Keywords:** Women Empowerment, Entrepreneurship, Rural Development, Self-reliance, Skill Development.

### Introduction

Empowering women through targeted skills and education programs is essential for fostering sustainable development in various regions around the globe. In numerous countries, women continue to endure significant oppression and inequality, often representing the majority of those living in poverty. This systemic disadvantage is compounded by the multitude of responsibilities that women shoulder, particularly the extensive burden of domestic work, which is traditionally viewed as their primary duty within the family structure. The concept of 'economic empowerment' (Hakim, 2018) for women transcends mere financial independence; it plays a crucial role in enhancing their overall welfare and well-being. When women gain access to resources and opportunities, the positive ripple effects extend beyond their individual lives, positively influencing their families and the broader community. By increasing women's control over both economic and social resources, we can significantly improve outcomes for children and households alike. This, in turn, enhances the critical intersection of Sex and Development, as empowered women are more likely to advocate for their rights and the rights of their children, leading to a more equitable and sustainable future (Mohammed Tohit & Haque,

2024) for all. Therefore, investing in women's education and skills development is not just a moral imperative but a strategic approach to achieving comprehensive societal progress.

The life of the community must be significantly strengthened by incorporating all essential and tangible elements that are crucial for its development. These elements should not only support the community's daily functioning but also empower it to act as a catalyst for independence in various facets of community existence. By ensuring that these foundational components are in place, the community can foster an environment where individuals feel empowered to take charge of their own lives, make informed decisions, and contribute positively to the collective well-being. This holistic approach will ultimately lead to a more resilient and self-sufficient community, capable of thriving in the face of challenges and pursuing its goals with confidence and determination.

### Literature Review

Numerous studies have been conducted on women entrepreneurs across different countries, including India. Banu and Baral (Banu & Baral, 2022) a case study methodology was employed to investigate the life events and experiences that motivated women to choose entrepreneurship as a career path. Most of these women were propelled into this entrepreneurial venture by a

strong desire for independence and a need to assert control over their lives. Sextan and Kent (Kent et al., 1982) compared 45 women executives and 48 women entrepreneurs, revealing significant profile differences. The study found that women entrepreneurs typically had higher educational attainment and prioritized their careers more than executives, often placing work commitments above family responsibilities. This distinction underscores the differing motivations and life choices between the two groups, indicating that entrepreneurship may attract those more focused on career advancement and personal achievement. Nelson's (O'Meally-Nelson, 1991) research indicated that women in Jamaica engaged in entrepreneurial ventures requiring minimal capital, often linked to their domestic roles. This included small-scale retail and garment manufacturing, utilizing skills honed at home. These choices reflect economic constraints and showcase women's resourcefulness in creating income opportunities. By participating in such enterprises, women contributed to their households while managing limited financial resources and societal expectations. Surti and Sarupriya (Surti & Sarupriya, 1983) examined the psychological influences on women entrepreneurs in India, revealing that unmarried women experience lower stress levels due to fewer familial responsibilities and societal expectations. They also have a smaller self-role distance, indicating a closer alignment between personal identity and professional roles. In contrast, married women encounter greater pressures and a significant separation between personal and professional lives, resulting in increased stress. This study highlights the complex relationship between marital status and psychological factors in women's entrepreneurship, suggesting that unmarried women may have distinct advantages in their entrepreneurial journeys. Mohiuddin (Mohiuddin, 1983) discovered that women pursued entrepreneurship not only due to their pressing economic requirements but also because they harbored a strong desire to fulfill certain personal aspirations and ambitions. This dual motivation highlights the complex interplay between financial necessity and the pursuit of personal goals, illustrating how women are increasingly taking charge of their economic destinies while simultaneously seeking to achieve their dreams and aspirations. The drive for entrepreneurship among women is thus fueled by a combination of practical needs and a quest for

self-actualization, showcasing their resilience and determination in navigating the challenges of the business world.

### **Methods**

The research focused on women's empowerment in fostering entrepreneurship in West Bengal. This study examined entrepreneurship activities within the culinary sector and employed a research and development (R&D) (Borg & Gall, 1983) methodology. R&D (Gustiani & Sriwijaya, 2020) is a strategy designed to enhance educational quality through literature reviews, observations, interviews, documentation, questionnaires, and tests. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive, qualitative, and quantitative methods. This research engages the community, advocates for women's empowerment, and local leaders, aiming to deliver a thorough and unbiased overview of the findings. This is particularly relevant for women's empowerment initiatives that include multiple stakeholders, such as government policies. The execution of women's empowerment programs necessitates diverse viewpoints to create well-rounded research outcomes.

### **Results and Discussions**

Investing in educated women stands out as one of the most significant and impactful contributions that a State can make to foster sustainable development initiatives (Chege & Sifuna, 2012) and enhance national prosperity. This importance stems from the fact that women constitute over half of the global population, which positions them uniquely to actively engage in and contribute to the generation of self-sustaining revenues. When women are educated, they not only improve their own lives but also positively influence their families and communities, creating a ripple effect that can lead to broader economic growth and social stability. Locally educated women (Mangla, 2022) who have attained higher levels of education have increasingly taken on leadership roles within their communities. These women serve as mentors and role models, guiding their peers in both political and economic advancement. Their involvement is crucial, as they bring diverse perspectives and innovative solutions to the table, ultimately driving progress and fostering an environment where sustainable development can thrive. By empowering women through education, States can harness this potential, leading to a more equitable and prosperous society for all.

Individuals in this context require comprehensive skills training (Chitrakala, 2024) that is

specifically designed to foster entrepreneurship. This training is crucial as it not only equips them with the necessary tools and knowledge to start and manage their own businesses but also significantly enhances their self-reliance. By developing these entrepreneurial skills, they can improve their overall quality of life, as they gain the ability to generate income and create opportunities for themselves and their families. Furthermore, this empowerment serves as a powerful motivator (Phillips, 2024), encouraging them to actively fulfill their responsibilities as engaged citizens. As they become more self-sufficient, they are better positioned to contribute to ongoing community and economic development. This, in turn, enables them to stand independently, relying on their own capabilities and resources, which fosters a sense of pride and accomplishment in their personal and professional lives.

Empowering women in West Bengal is a key focus in enhancing community life in the region. This initiative addresses the ongoing gender disparities in social perceptions. A significant factor is that a larger number of men opt to work outside the city, leading to a depletion of human resources. This situation hampers the community's social system in addressing its challenges, particularly in fostering the capabilities of women themselves. As a result, women's empowerment in West Bengal is expected to be instrumental in creating a more stable social environment.

Gender inequality poses a barrier to improving women's lives. The scarcity of productive men influences women's capability to carry out work that is conventionally expected to be performed by men, including menial labor and related activities. While it is true that women possess the capability to tackle various issues effectively, it is essential for them to embrace a method that honors and respects their intrinsic nature and qualities. This understanding leads to the development of an empowerment strategy that not only seeks to uplift women but also aims to cultivate a more supportive and nurturing culture. By fostering an environment that encourages comprehension and acceptance, women can find empowerment in a way that aligns harmoniously with their identities and roles as women. This thoughtful approach has the potential to significantly enhance family life (Ambler et al., 2021), particularly in contexts where a husband or a productive-aged man is expected to return home after a long day of work outside the city. In

such scenarios, the empowerment of women can create a more balanced and fulfilling family dynamic, allowing for a richer and more meaningful interaction between family members (Purnamasari et al., 2025). Ultimately, this strategy not only benefits women but also contributes to the overall well-being of the family unit, reinforcing the importance of mutual respect and understanding in the pursuit of empowerment.

The empowerment of women is essential for societal independence and advancement. Empowered women gain access to resources, education, and opportunities, allowing them to contribute meaningfully to their communities and economies. This not only benefits individual women but also fosters broader societal transformations, promoting independence and self-sufficiency. Independence is influenced by initiatives that support women's entrepreneurship. Encouraging women to pursue entrepreneurial ventures can lead to a more dynamic economy, driving innovation, job creation, and economic stability.

Entrepreneurial behaviour is linked to cultural values, as outlined in Hofstede's cultural dimensions framework (Taras et al., 2010), which explains how cultures perceive business and entrepreneurship. Factors like individualism versus collectivism and uncertainty avoidance significantly impact entrepreneurial practices. Research shows that national culture affects entrepreneurial attitudes. Cultures that value individual achievement and risk-taking encourage entrepreneurship, while those emphasizing collectivism may hinder it. Understanding cultural context is crucial for developing strategies to promote women's entrepreneurship and enhance societal independence (Radziszewska, 2014).

The advancement of entrepreneurship within its operations is acknowledged through a series of well-organized activities aimed at empowering entrepreneurs. These activities are extensive and encompass critical stages such as planning, implementation, and evaluation, all of which are vital for the successful cultivation of entrepreneurial skills. Specifically, these activities cover a broad spectrum of elements essential for effective entrepreneurship training. These elements include clearly articulated learning objectives that steer the educational process, the identification of target demographics who will gain from the training, and the selection of qualified resource persons who have the

requisite expertise to facilitate learning. Moreover, the creation of a comprehensive curriculum is essential, as it delineates the content and framework of the training program (Patel, 2025). Additionally, the provision of suitable learning materials and instructional media is imperative, as these resources enhance the learning experience and ensure that participants can effectively engage with the material. The teaching methods employed, the time allocated for each session, and the evaluation mechanisms are also critical components that contribute to the overall success of the program. Collectively, these indicators play a crucial role in promoting women's empowerment by nurturing entrepreneurship. By equipping women with the essential skills and knowledge, these initiatives foster self-reliance within women's groups (Fonchingong & Fonjong, 2002), enabling them to take control of their economic destinies and make positive contributions to their communities. Ultimately, the emphasis on entrepreneurship empowerment not only benefits individual women but also has a wider impact on societal development, as empowered women are more inclined to drive innovation and economic growth.

Women's empowerment is not merely a goal but a continuous process; it requires sustained support that strengthens both the character of the community and its resilience in overcoming adversity. This path is complex; it demands not only elevating the status of women at an individual level but also radically transforming the social structures that have historically hindered the full realization of their potential. It is crucial to acknowledge that women's empowerment enhances the overall well-being and vitality of the entire community, fostering an environment where everyone can thrive.

In the villages of West Bengal, an entrepreneurial mindset is being encouraged that aligns with local natural resources. Agriculture forms the bedrock of livelihood and economic activity in this region. Local ecological potential is not merely a backdrop; it is a vital element that helps the community gain a deeper understanding of its own strengths and self-reliance. This awareness is critical, as it reduces dependence on external aid, assistance that often fails to grant the community, and women in particular, genuine autonomy or freedom. Instead, the emphasis is placed on utilizing local resources and knowledge, enabling women to take charge of transforming their own destinies. By harnessing

these inherent strengths, it is anticipated that the community's collective capacity to improve living standards will increase significantly. Through the acquisition of necessary resources and skills, women become better equipped to tackle their daily economic challenges.

West Bengal has created a unique opportunity for women to acquire the skills needed to transform agricultural produce into marketable economic goods (Sabhlok, 2011). This not only generates income but also acts as a catalyst for enhancing the economic agency of rural women. As women achieve greater economic empowerment, they are able to make significant contributions to their families and society, ultimately fostering a more equitable and prosperous community for all.

The empowerment of women is a continuous process that necessitates support aimed at enhancing the community's character. Developing entrepreneurship programs requires both awareness and readiness to recognize potential, transforming it into opportunities and strengths that contribute to an improved quality of life. In West Bengal, a women's empowerment initiative was established through ongoing training sessions led by experienced instructors in their respective fields. This approach enables participants to effectively understand and utilize the potential within their environment, fostering sustainable economic independence, despite the prevailing social conditions that often favor men who predominantly work outside urban areas.

### **Conclusion**

Comprehensive research indicates that the framework for empowering women entrepreneurs is based on key pillars. It emphasizes the establishment of women-owned enterprises, fostering autonomy and economic empowerment. The framework also highlights creativity, essential in today's competitive market, and values artistic pursuits like photography, which can serve as both creative outlets and profitable ventures. Creativity and innovation are vital strategies for enhancing product quality and competitiveness across sectors, particularly in the culinary field, where unique cooking styles can elevate businesses. By harnessing creativity, women can develop (Pawni & Kumar, 2025) distinctive products or services that attract customers and build loyalty. 'Capability factors' are crucial for achieving genuine success and sustainable opportunities in entrepreneurship. These factors encompass various skills and traits that motivate women in their pursuit of success, encouraging proactive

steps toward their goals. Focusing on these capability factors enables women to cultivate the skills and confidence necessary to navigate entrepreneurial challenges, leading to greater success and satisfaction in their endeavors.

Perseverance, an unwavering spirit, and autonomy are vital for establishing a business and achieving success in a competitive marketplace. These attributes enable entrepreneurs to overcome challenges during business development. Additionally, creativity is essential for achieving objectives and launching a successful business. Creative individuals are proactive in seeking innovative solutions to enhance operations and ensure long-term viability. They can think outside traditional boundaries, adapt to changes, and develop unique methods to meet customer demands—skills (Harianto & Listyani, 2025), crucial in today's fast-paced business environment. In executing this project, entrepreneurship has emerged as an effective solution for women to navigate the complexities of the business world. This strategy aligns with a women's empowerment model designed to promote female entrepreneurship in the culinary and food sectors. The model effectively enhances family socio-economic conditions, addresses employment needs, fosters self-sufficiency, improves self-awareness, and encourages networking among entrepreneurs and stakeholders, creating a collaborative environment that promotes growth.

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