

Women Empowerment Through E-Commerce: A Study in Indian Context

Revista Review Index Journal of
Multidisciplinary | e-ISSN: 2583-0031
Double-blind peer-reviewed | Refereed
Quarterly Online Journal
4(1) 113-117, 2024
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DOI: 10.31305/rrijm2024.v04.n01.013
<https://rrijm.com/>



Date of Publication: 31 Mar, 2024

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Abstract: Economic progress is significantly impacted by the entrepreneurship of women. Women are gaining economic and social power these days by starting their own businesses. In recent times, there has been a notable upsurge in women-led e-commerce enterprises and their entrepreneurship, with contributing significantly to the growth of both national and global economies. Information technology has made the world much smaller, faster, and easier for people to access it through internet. The internet has completely changed the businesses operation through Online sales and digital marketing. Moreover, the pandemic has proven the value of digital technologies. In recent years, with the use of technology women entrepreneurs can easily enter new markets and having wider range of customer. Web based businesses / E-commerce has given huge opportunities to the business sector. This study is qualitative in nature. The conclusions will inspire more women entrepreneurs to continue thriving in the ever-expanding e-commerce landscape. This present study explains the role of women entrepreneur as a driving force in E-commerce in India.

Keywords: Women Entrepreneur, women Empowerment, E-Commerce.

1 | INTRODUCTION

The Indian economy has grown steadily over the last decade. A majority business establishes by men in India but now a days it is found that many Indian women have started showing interest towards entrepreneurship as well. In fact, in India women are struggling with socio-economic condition and cultural biases.

With the rise of Globalization, e-commerce has increasingly become an essential skill for every business including all transactions and services that take place online. The growth of women entrepreneurship and empowerment has seen a sharp increase in recent years. E-commerce businesses led by women have played a significant role in strengthening the global and domestic markets. These women have

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shown great strength and flexibility and are not only succeeding but also contributing to the Indian economy. They have gone from being entrepreneurs to strategists to philanthropists and consultants.

The concept of minimum investment and maximum return on e-commerce allows women to start online businesses and provides opportunities to expand their businesses by working from anywhere and any time according to their convenience. Global e-commerce platforms like Amazon have given women entrepreneurs virtual spaces and flexible technologies to set up and expand their businesses. Not only have these platforms enabled business growth, but they have also liberated women from the restrictions of traditional business practices.

By breaking down old boundaries, India's e-commerce market is altering the entrepreneurial journey for women. This digital space promotes equality by giving skills and creativity over gender. The flexibility and expandability of online businesses enable women entrepreneurs to run their business on their terms and adjust to changing market conditions.

2 | OBJECTIVES

Following are the main objectives of the research work.

1. To know the concept of E-Commerce.
2. To study women empowerment and E-Commerce in context of India.
3. To review Role of women entrepreneur in E-Commerce in India.

3 | RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is experimental and descriptive in nature. Data collected is purely based on secondary sources. Authentic data was collected from the websites of Government of India, National and International e-journal related with education, books, and research articles.

4 | LITERATURE REVIEW

Nehru and Bhardwaj (2013) analysed the factors which motivate women to start their own venture and the problems faced by them when they ventured out to shape their own position in the competitive world of business environment.

Siddiqui (2012) highlighted the problems and challenges faced by women entrepreneur in India and identified some of the major problems such as women's family obligations, gender difference, difficulty of finance and low-level risk attitude.

Singh (2008) indicates the underlying factors behind the initiating of women entrepreneurship in India. Also, the challenges to entering a business venture were also identified. The study mentioned that obstacles which lies within the path of women entrepreneurship is mainly associated with social un-acceptance as female entrepreneurs, lack of interaction with other successful entrepreneurs, gender discrimination, less priority given to women entrepreneurs by bankers to provide business loans, missing network as well as family responsibility.

Mellita, D., and Cholil, W. (2012) portrayed the perspectives and function of web-based business for sexual orientation potentiation in creating nation. Potentiating ladies through web-based business require preparing, sexual orientation examination, organizing, structuring, execution and observing appraisal and focusing impact on ladies' live and their conditions.

5 | E- COMMERCE AND WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

E-Commerce/Electronic Commerce refers to buying and selling of goods and services over internet and transfer of money and data to complete the sales process using electronic devices and applications.

E-commerce is defined as the process of buying, selling, transferring or ex-changing products, services, or information via computer networks, including the Internet [Turban et al., 2008].

Hunt (2007:1) provided a complete definition of e-commerce: "e-commerce is the use of electronic communications and digital information processing technology in business transactions to create, transform, and re-define relationships for value creation between or among organizations, and between organizations and individuals."

Women entrepreneur is termed as a process when women and group of women initiate organization, runs and controls entrepreneurial activities together in an enterprise.

Women have been playing a growing role in digital platforms over the past few decades. An e-Commerce platform offers women entrepreneurs support and flexibility to start their business according to their convenience.

The Government of India has defined women entrepreneurs as "An enterprise owned and controlled by women having a minimum financial interest of 51% of the capital and giving at least 51% of the employment generated in the enterprise to women."

According to a Bain & Company report, India has the third largest online shopper base in the world, with an estimated 180-190 million shoppers in 2021, India is expected to overtake the US and claim the second rank in the next two years.

Eighty-three percent of Indian small firms have taken their operations online in the past five years, and sixty-five percent of them depend on internet sales for up to half of their total income. The trend toward e-commerce shows how much scope there is for female entrepreneurs to succeed in this quickly expanding online sector.

By leveraging the transformative power of e-commerce, female entrepreneurs may overcome geographical limitations, reach a wider audience, and realize their full potential, resulting in a lasting impact on the business landscape.

With aspirations to become a \$5-trillion economy, India recognizes the critical role of supporting the digital transformation of the MSME sector, particularly women-led enterprises. The envisioned 'women-led development' can boost women to the forefront of India's progress.

E-commerce drives women empowerment. The nature of employment for women is increasingly changing in more ways than one:

- Selling products in several categories, including fashion wear, home furnishings, jewellery, handicrafts, and health care, is helping thousands of women to achieve financial independence.
- Women are starting to work as independent suppliers and eventually as employers.
- women can work from home; women are able to balance the demands of their careers and
- their homes at the same time.

The Government of India expects to accelerate the financial independence of a new generation of women with the formation of Mahila-e-Haat, an online portal that gives access to markets countrywide where thousands of women can display and sell their articles. It is expected that 1.25 lakh Indian women and about 10,000 self-help groups will benefit from the internet marketing facility. Every year new women leaders are emerging and creating their own trends. Millions of people across the nation will be inspired by their lives and accomplishments. Several women entrepreneurs, corporate executives, and other inspiring women have overcome obstacles to pursue their goals and succeed.

Some of the women entrepreneurs who are marching ahead in the sphere of e-commerce, named Aditi Avasthi, Aditi Gupta, Ajaita Shah, Anu Sridharan, Arpita Ganesh, Ashwini Asokan, Chitra Gurnani Daga, Debadtta Upadhaya, Garima Satija, Harpreet Kaur and some more. There are many corporate leaders, businesspeople and a few other inspiring women who overcame all the obstacles to pursue their goals and achieve success.

Here are the Top 10 women business visionaries who acknowledged all demands and arrived at that high level.

Name	Position	Start-up
Aditi Avasthi	CEO and Founder	Embibe , it is a Mumbai based startup that combines data sciences and technology helping students prepare for all kinds of competitive exams.
Aditi Gupta,	CEO	Menstrupedia , educating many women around the society regarding menstrual health as well as hygiene with the help of her website
Ajaita Shah	CEO and Founder	Frontier Markets which is generally an organization managing in appropriation of results of different makers.
Anu Sridharan	CEO	Nextdrop , benefits in giving solid just as exact data in regard to dihydrogen monoxide dissemination with the profit of informing.
Arpita Ganesh	Founder	Buttercup , a lingerie company helping women find right size with the help of personalized fittings and retails
Ashwini Asokan	CEO and Founder	Mad Street Den and Founder of Mad Street Lab Providing artificial intelligence for all modern-day applications.
Chitra Gurnani Daga	CEO and Founder	Thrillophilia , giving easy answers for visits, peregrinates and occasions.
Debdatta Upadhaya	CEO and Founder	Timesaverz , a mobile first marketplace that is connecting several home service providers with seekers.
Garima Satija	CEO and Founder	PoshVine , which helps in providing user unique experience for their loved ones.
Harpreet Kaur	CEO Co-Founder	Love 4 Apple

There are some big challenges that every Women entrepreneur must face. **Here are some challenges that every women entrepreneur faces.**

6 | SOCIAL OBSTACLES IN WOMEN EMPOWERMENT:

A developing nation like India where most people live in rural areas. Women in rural areas face discrimination based on both social status and caste. The patriarchal system prevalent in rural India is another barrier to women's technological empowerment. Women's empowerment is hampered by the lack of access to financial stability, healthcare, and education that results from all these societal barriers.

Lack of Education:

Lack of education for women forced them into low-paying jobs. Most women spend long hours in farms, doing household chores, or engaging various agricultural activities like raising cattle, growing poultry, dairy products etc. Women must be technologically literate and educated.

Fund:

Every female e-commerce entrepreneur faces lot of trouble to raise enough capital for their venture. It is difficult for firms to run the business without the constant flow of fund. Consistently obtaining funding is a significant barrier for female entrepreneurs.

Finding Suitable Market:

The consumers who are eager to transact online for any desired commodity are thought to be the core of the e-commerce industry. One of the most critical tasks facing every female e-commerce business is locating an appropriate market.

7 | CONCLUSION

E-commerce has provided a significant growth for women entrepreneurs. Many women have benefited financially from e-business nowadays by selling goods online. In the modern economy, Indian women must handle two very different tasks: taking care of household chores and working a fictitious job. Fortunately, with the success of their online businesses, they can effectively fulfil both roles from home.

E-commerce helps the women to beat the global market with limited initial investment. Additionally, it gives them the necessary financial independence and social standing. Various state governments have framed legislation and formed numerous associations to encourage women to maximize their participation. India has a unique opportunity to take a progressive stance at this critical juncture, creating a welcoming and empowering atmosphere that would enable female entrepreneurs to thrive in the rapidly growing e-commerce sector. As we prepare the way for a more promising, just, and affluent future that is genuinely focused on women, the time to act is now.

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How Cite this article?

Bhatt, M. (2024). Women Empowerment Through E-Commerce: A Study in Indian Context. *Revista Review Index Journal of Multidisciplinary*, 4(1), 113-117.
<https://doi.org/10.31305/rrijm2024.v04.n01.013>