



ROLE OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN DIGITAL PLATFORMS

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Abstract:

Digital platforms in the recent past have brought about a major shift in the entrepreneurial world, creating new opportunities for women to start and run businesses across the world. New roles of Women entrepreneurship in the digital space has proved to be very effective in empowering women economically and socially, Companies founded by women entrepreneurs are now breaking barriers such as geographical restrictions, capital restrictions, and societal restrictions. E-Commerce platforms and social networks, freelance platforms are not only affordable but also convenient working places for women with children or other family responsibilities. The major factors that have shaped the women's participation in digital business include; enhanced internet connectivity, uptake of smartphones, and legal backing of governance bodies in the provision of funds in the digital business. They allow women to grow their businesses, access and penetrate other markets and also create employment. But issues remain; technology issues, limited financing, cyber security and also culture that thwarts women and hinder the development of alternative opportunities. This article is dedicated to reveal the advantages of women's participation in digital economy: financial security, performing innovations, and cooperation in community level. It also brings examples of extraordinary women in business who have expanded digital venues to promote and free themselves from barriers. Possible measures how the usage of the potential of women entrepreneurs can be further increased include increasing digital literacy, adoption of policies that are inclusive of women, and providing and encouraging for safe online spaces for women.

Introduction:



Over the last decade interest in women entrepreneurship has been recognised as a major factor spearheading economic development and growth. Earlier, women have many challenges in entrepreneurship, such as restricted resources, stereotype perspective of the society, and no possibility of flexibility as traditional businesses. That is why, despite the current situation where the rights of women in the countries of the prior are still violated, digital platforms open up incredible opportunities for women and make it possible to become involved in business activities, implement innovations, and earn money. A number of social sites, e-commerce websites, freelancing sites, virtual learning management systems etc. are inexpensive or Gratis which enable women to start their own business with little investment or even start-ups. As these platforms provide flexibility for working both for and with women, digital entrepreneurship becomes even more appealing. Additionally, somehow, digital technologies recommend the signal to women entrepreneurs to join the global marketplace, shareholders, and customers.

The availability of the internet, more access to mobile phones, and properly executed policy regimes like DigitalIndia and Start-up India have boosted the involvement of women in the digital economy. The promotion of women via digital platforms has gone further than helping in their contribution to the incomes of their households; they are turning into economic and social transformation agents as well. However, women entrepreneurs operating in the digital environment continue to have issues, including, digital literacy, lack of capital, cyber security, and cultural values. Overcoming these challenges is therefore important if the female entrepreneurship is to get the desired benefits from the available digital technologies.

Growth or Development of Women Entrepreneurship:

The history of women taking up the culture of entrepreneurship has gone through a trough in the decades of change in social, economic and technological practice. A woman used to be restricted to house wife hood and the informal sector with little prospects of venturing into business. The initial studies identified women entrepreneurs as operating in small home based enterprises in handicrafts, food processing and cottage industries. Such ventures were mainly considered as an avenue of extension of the domestic chores as opposed to being real business ventures. The



Industrial revolution and the post-World War periods can be stated as landmark periods by which women started working and started engaging in businesses to support families and economies in crisis. However, they remained limited by social expectations, inability to go to school, and little capital to help them expand our businesses. The second half of the twentieth century saw various transformations such as emergence of the women's liberation movement; girls' access to education; and newly established microfinance new organizations offering small credit amount male female traders.

The 21st century has heralded a revolution in education by the innovation of digital technologies. Innovative skills have made it progressive for ladies to undertake businesses with little capital, and flexible working environment. Some of the platforms that have help women market their products and services with some operating their business from the comfort of their homes include e-commerce websites, social media networks and freelancing services. The advancement of digital technologies and skills remains precipitated by government and organizational efforts in digital literacy and skills and financial support. Today women are not only joining sectors which have been prevalent for many years but are actively starting and managing businesses in technology, education, health, and creative start-ups sectors. Their operations have shifted from mere offering micro-enterprise businesses to offering high impact start-ups offering innovation, employment and economic value. The analysis of women entrepreneurship over a period reveals that women are very productive and flexible and are asserting themselves in the world economy.

Digital Platforms:

The technological breakthrough of digital technologies has brought new opportunities for women entrepreneurs, revolutionizing the ways companies are created, run, and grown. With the help of the Internet and new technologies, women can work on e-trade sites, social networks, as Heather sets free lancing platforms for independent workers, e-learning platforms, etc. Having embraced technology, these platforms make it easy and inexpensive for women to set up and run their businesses without the limitations of location or low capital base.



Web-based selling, through websites such as Amazon, Etsy, and Shopify enables women to set up online shops and market goods to international markets without establishing selling premises. Like the examples highlighted, Instagram, Facebook Marketplace, Pinterest are other forms of media that current and aspiring female entrepreneurship ventures can harness to reach out to the customers, endorse their brands and seek to build customer loyalty through excellent storytelling and use of appealing images. Current establishment of freelance marketplaces like Upwork, Fiverr, and Freelancer have allowed women to enter the market and perform tasks like writing, graphics designing, programming and consulting in addition to their conventional professions and motherhood responsibilities. Besides, such online courses as Udemy, Coursera help women get knowledge, learn business techniques, and gain access to the mentorship, which also became a valuable asset for them.

Flexible working supported by various online platforms enables women to work remotely and flexibly contribute to their careers and businesses and family responsibilities without compromising any of them. Digital tools of communication and publicity do not demand huge capital investment making entrepreneurship popular among women from all classes. Nonetheless, there is still potential for; for example, coverage of barriers, technology existing as a double-edged sword, and featuring digital literacy as a complex issue. This to a large extent can only be dealt with through education, policy support and increased technological awareness of these challenges to allow women to optimally exploit the opportunities underway in the digital domain. Through the use of ICTs, women entrepreneurs are participating in economic growth, supporting innovation, and full effect of girlhood worldwide.

Main Factors That Support Women Entrepreneurs on Digital Platforms:

Some of these areas of convergence include the following describable factors that have contributed to the emergence of women entrepreneurs in the new world of digital business opportunities. All these key drivers have helped in breaking the traditional constraints and have encouraged women for higher entrepreneurial freedom.

1. Increased Internet Penetration and Smartphone Usage:

The carriage of the internet and the coming of the age of the smartphone have made it possible for women from both the rural and urban areas to get onto the digital media. This has spanned geographical barriers enabling women to access markets and potential customers while working from the comfort of their homes.

2. Flexibility and Work-Life Balance:

Mobile selling platforms enable women since they can run businesses even when they are dealing with families and other issues. The opportunity to work from home, to control time and, therefore, have no need in large material resources for starting and maintaining a business significantly influenced the opportunities for women engaged into entrepreneurship.

3. Low-Cost Business Models:

In fact, digital entrepreneurship is relatively characterised by low levels of capital intensity when compared to conventional entrepreneurship. Sites like Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, online shops and various freelance platforms enable women to start and develop their businesses with little or no capital.

4. Empowerment through Financial Independence:

Virtual systems give women an element of attaining financial freedom and hence steer up their decision-making abilities within families as well as other families' settings.

5. Government Policies and Initiatives:

Other such schemes such as Digital India and Startup India have helped women acquire digital literacy, financial assistance and skills. These have somehow prompted women into considering digital entrepreneurship.

6. Changing Societal Mind-sets and Role Models:

Many women entrepreneurs have come out with success stories, encouraging more women to get into the digital world. This momentum has been occasioned by increasing social acceptance of women in leadership and or, entrepreneurship.

Opportunities Homebred from Women Entrepreneurship on Dispersed Selling Channels

The new entrepreneurial roles that women play through innovations in digital systems as seen to

hold great social-cultural importance in addition to economic benefits. Technology enables women to change their roles, and have a role to play in contributing back to their families as well as for supporting sustainable development in the communities.

1. Economic Empowerment:

Through usage of digital platforms women are able to earn an income, be financially independent and help provide for the household and even the nation's economy. Female entrepreneurs contribute to employment opportunities and economic development because they take their products into different markets and different customers.

2. Flexibility and Work-Life Integration:

To me, the top advantage of the digital platforms we have is one of the most obvious; flexibility. It empowers the women by extending the privileges of operating business from home so as to compete with the male counterparts expected to attend business premises regularly. This flexibility appeals to more women into business as compared to other places that are culturally more restrictive.

3. Cost-Effective Business Opportunities:

Conventional entrepreneurship entails high capital investments in physical infrastructure as a way of breaking even. Women can begin the business with little capital, expand gradually, and make use of facilities, such as social media, online stores, and freelance marketplaces to sell products to consumers across the world.

4. Innovation and Creativity:

There are socially beneficial lessons that come out of female entrepreneurship since they trigger the development of new ideas. Social networks help women be engaged in the creative sectors including fashion, crafts, education and others which can provide innovative enterprises.

5. Social Impact and Community Development:

In fact, female entrepreneurs have an essential function in the enhancement of the collective quality of life of the people in society. Their businesses focus on social needs that include education, health, and sustainability which have a multiplier effect on everyone in society.

6. Bridging Gender Gaps:

As a result, digital platforms facilitate among others, access to technology, resources, and markets, thus minimising gender gaps in entrepreneurship. Women participating in the economic events provides for the diversity, inclusion as well as gender parity in the economies.

Conclusion

Women entrepreneurship particularly via web based platforms is undoubtedly a revolution that has hit the international economy and society. Flexible, cheap, and available to anyone with Internet access, technological intermediaries have allowed women to break through the barriers to entrepreneurship and become more engaged in such initiatives. Having adopted e-commerce, social media and freelancing business models, women entrepreneurs have created new business ideas, grown their businesses and in the process helped generate massive household revenues, community and national economic revenues. Women entrepreneurship in the digital environment has a number of positive roles, which include economic independence and paid work, creativity and innovation, gender perspective, and others. Internet-based opportunities enable women meet family obligations while pursuing their careers thus making business viable even where conservatism and limited resource base exist. Also, female entrepreneurs' performances are examples, and the next generation has to take advantage of a digital environment for its development.

However, challenges persist. Some of the barriers include; digital literacy, inadequate finance, cyber security, socio-cultural factors that interfere with women's interaction in the digital economy. For these barriers to be dismantled, and for the benefits of equal internet use to be sustained high-quality, targeted interventions need to be implemented; these include digital skills training for women, friendly policies inclusive of gender, and funding and safer online spaces. It has been revealed that women entrepreneurs are critical to attaining equal opportunity and economic growth and innovation in the digital world. There is the need for policy makers as well as governments and other private entities to encourage the formation of environment which will support women fully participate in business realm especially during the era of the digital

business economy. To sum up, the promotion of women's employment through digital entrepreneurship is a move towards the positive change of society in terms of inclusiveness, equality, and sustainability. In this way, societies can unleash the productivity of women across the digital platforms which will embark tremendous number of changes for the better future on a global level.

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