



A COMPARATIVE STUDY ON SUSTAINABILITY OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN TRADITIONAL VS. MODERN ENTERPRISES

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ABSTRACT

Women entrepreneurs are crucial contributors to socio-economic development, but the nature and sustainability of their ventures vary significantly depending on whether they operate in traditional or modern sectors. This conceptual study explores the comparative sustainability of women entrepreneurs in classic versus modern enterprises through extensive secondary research. The paper sheds light on the diverse strategies, support systems, and challenges experienced by these two groups. Polic...

Keywords: Women entrepreneurship, classic enterprises, modern enterprises, sustainability, gender in business, entrepreneurial challenges.

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1. Introduction

Women have been integral to business activities for centuries, often working behind the scenes in family-run ventures or informal sectors. However, the formal recognition and rise of women-led businesses have gained momentum only in recent decades. In India, entrepreneurship among women has grown notably, yet their success remains hindered by social, economic, and structural barriers. This paper focuses on understanding the sustainability of women entrepreneurs by contrasting those involved in ...

2. Literature Review

The scholarly work on women entrepreneurs spans topics such as motivation, barriers, economic impact, and innovation. Traditional or 'classic' women entrepreneurs often emerge in cultural or necessity-driven roles—starting home-based businesses such as tailoring, handicrafts, food processing, or livestock. In contrast, modern entrepreneurs include digital marketers, app developers, and consultants leveraging internet technologies. Literature also suggests that modern entrepreneurs have higher ch...

According to Deshpande (2017), traditional entrepreneurs struggle with scalability and funding, while Singh and Shukla (2019) argue that digital tools have empowered modern women to access international markets. Gupta (2020) emphasizes the need for better support systems, and Kumar (2021) discusses how policy interventions have aided modern startups but often neglect grassroots entrepreneurs.

3. Objectives of the Study

- To understand the evolution of women entrepreneurship
- To compare the sustainability of classic vs. modern women-led businesses
- To identify major challenges and enabling factors
- To suggest actionable recommendations to improve outcomes

4. Research Methodology

This paper adopts a qualitative approach relying entirely on secondary data sources. The study synthesizes information from journal articles, policy documents, and government databases. A thematic framework was used to compare classic and modern entrepreneurship across parameters such as market access, capital sources, training, societal attitudes, and technological adoption.

5. Comparative Analysis

The following table offers a detailed comparison of key characteristics of classic versus modern women entrepreneurs:

Aspect	Classic Entrepreneurs	Modern Entrepreneurs
Type of Business	Local services/products	Digital and innovation-based
Capital Source	Personal savings, informal lending loans	Angel investors, venture capital,
Market Reach	Local or regional	National/international
Skills & Training literacy	Skill-based, generational learning	Formal education, digital literacy
Technology Use	Minimal	High
Support System	Family/community-based	Peer networks, accelerators
Challenges	Patriarchy, finance, mobility	Competition, tech access, scalability

6. Findings and Discussion

- Majority respondents are between 15 to 25 age groups of entrepreneurs from Modern World of Entrepreneurship.
- Majority of respondents are from Under Graduate (UG) with 58%
- Majority of classic entrepreneurs face potential of facing negative social judgment.
- Majority of classic entrepreneurs face gender-specific obstacles while operating the set-up.
- Majority of classic entrepreneurs use Motivation as a strategy to overcome the challenges.
- Majority of classic entrepreneurs face lack of family support as a main external barrier.
- Majority of classic entrepreneurs use Motivation as a strategy to overcome the challenges.
- Majority of modern entrepreneurs have been motivated to pursue entrepreneurship in modern context under Technological advancement.
- Majority of modern entrepreneurs up to 47% would agree by facing unique challenges compared to men in entrepreneurship.

- Majority of women entrepreneurs in modern world require the essential skill or experience of Adaptivity.
- Majority of women entrepreneurs in modern world face Balancing work and life.
- Majority of women entrepreneurs in modern world the need the adaptation to technological advancement to ensure the sustainability of business by Social media is Development and Upgradation of Technology.
- Majority of the significant differences in sustainability factors between classic and modern entrepreneurship for women entrepreneurs in entrepreneurs opinion is Technology and Advancement.
- Majority of the offers and better opportunities held for sustainable growth of women in led business for Modern entrepreneurship
- Majority of the women entrepreneurs has no support from society in both (Classic and Modern) Environment
- Majority of the women entrepreneurs are not satisfied with the available support and resources.
- Majority of the women entrepreneurs are not satisfied with the available support and resources.
- Majority of the women entrepreneurs expect Encouragement from the society for their Development and Sustainability.

7. Conceptual Case Illustrations

Consider the example of a woman in rural Tamil Nadu who runs a weaving business handed down through generations. Her enterprise, though rich in tradition, faces limited market access. Now contrast this with a young urban woman running a successful Instagram-based boutique, reaching clients across India. These cases illustrate the vast differences in support systems, visibility, and growth potential.

8. Suggestions

- Modern entrepreneurship offers better opportunities for sustainable growth of women-led businesses. In the modern entrepreneurial environment, there is greater awareness and support for diversity and inclusion, including initiatives specifically aimed at empowering women entrepreneurs. Access to funding, mentorship, networking, and resources tailored to the unique challenges faced by women in business is more prevalent in the modern landscape.

- Classic entrepreneurship for women often faced more barriers to entry, such as limited access to capital and networks, whereas modern entrepreneurship provides more opportunities for women to access funding, mentorship, and support networks through initiatives like women-focused accelerators and crowd funding platforms.
- Women entrepreneurs have also communicated several financial problems in relation their business. Attention of the Government as well as the voluntary organizations should be drawn in rectifying these problems y making liberal assistance and gearing up the various facilities of the status of the enterprises.
- Adequate training program on management skills to be provided to women community.
- Skilling and micro financing can get women financially stable and therefore she is no longer dependent upon others in the society.
- The mind-set of the society in the study area must be changed over women. The burden of family i.e., caring of children, day-to-day household activities, etc. should be equally borne by all family members.
- Sound and continuous promotions of women entrepreneurship must be given priority to help in solving problems of unemployment in unorganized sector. Because entrepreneurship among women will not only enable them to get better jobs and economically self-sufficient, but at the same time, society will also gain by their creative and risky decisions.
- Educational has been instrumental in increasing the participation of women in entrepreneurial activities. The formal education not only helps in acquisition of requires knowledge for a job, which demands non-traditional skills but also imparts knowledge about the different occupational opportunities. Good academic background makes women confident in dealing with problems in business in an effective manner. Although it is a fact that entrepreneurship is not a special preserve for the educated but in the case of women already burdened with many social pressures, education is a powerful tool in breaking down the barriers to successful Entrepreneurship.
- Awareness programmes should be conducted on a mass scale with the intension of creating awareness among women about the various areas to conduct business.
- Vocational training to be extended to women community that enables them to understand the production process and production managements.
- In the initial stages women entrepreneurs may face problems but they must pursue belief in themselves and not give-up mid-way.

9. Conclusion

This research works aims to gain more knowledge on the role of women entrepreneurs. It is concluded that most of the women entrepreneurs are facing the constrains in aspects of financial, marketing, production, health, works place facility problems. Majority faces problem of lack of risk bearing capacity. Another major problems are non availability of long term fiancé, tough competition in the market, non availability of place, tension problems, lack sufficient area for business.

Self-employed women should be encouraged to employ on a part-time or full-time basis at least one person so that they have more time for their family and can take interest in other occupations, actively participate in decision-making bodies. Training, advice or consultancy targeted solely or mainly at women entrepreneurs Start-up programmes for women, particularly those returning to the labour market. Special targeting of women in general campaigns to boost levels of entrepreneurship. Equal opportunities policies aiming for equal access for women to services. Need to have network with other firms to generate business and access informal advice. Encouraging and assisting relevant business support initiatives.

Empowering women entrepreneurs is crucial for achieving the goals of sustainable development and the bottlenecks hindering their growth must be reduced to enable full participation in the business. Apart from training programs Newsletters, mentoring, trade fairs and exhibitions also can be a source for entrepreneurial development. As a result, the desired outcomes of the business are quickly achieved and more of remunerative business opportunities are found. Therefore promoting entrepreneurship among Indian women is certainly a short-cut to rapid economic growth and development.

A STUDY ON SUSTAINABILITY OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEUR AMONG CLASSIC VS MODERN ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Questionnaire

1. Age:

- a) 15-25 Years
- b) 25-35 Years
- c) 35-45 Years
- d) 45-55 Years
- e) Above 55

2. Type of Entrepreneur

- a) Classic

b) Modern

3. Educational Background:

Respondents for Classic Entrepreneurs

4. What are the internal challenges have you faced in sustaining your business in a Classic Entrepreneurial Environment?

- a) Self doubt due to lack of experience
- b) Fear of failure
- c) Potential of facing negative social judgment

5. Have you experienced any gender-specific obstacles while operating the set-up?

- a) Yes
- b) No

6. In your opinion, what are the main external barriers facing by women entrepreneurs?

- a) Lack of funding
- b) Lack of family support
- c) Lack of business knowledge

7. What strategies have you employed to overcome challenges?

Respondents for Modern Entrepreneurs

8. What motivated you to pursue entrepreneurship in a modern context?

9. Do you feel women entrepreneurs in modern world face unique challenges compared to men in entrepreneurship?

- a) Agree
- b) Neutral
- c) Disagree
- d) Strongly Disagree

10. What skills or experience do you believe are essential for a women entrepreneur in modern world?

- a) Creativity

- b) Problem-solving
 - c) Adaptivity
11. What challenges have you faced as a woman entrepreneur in modern world?
- a) Gender and Discrimination
 - b) Work life Balance
 - c) Society's expectations
12. How do you adapt to technological advancement to ensure the sustainability of your business in this set-up?
- a) Social media
 - b) Development and Upgradation of Technology
 - c) Mobile Technology
 - d) Social Development
 - e) Human Behavior

Comparative Analysis

13. In your opinion what are significant differences in sustainability factors between classic and modern entrepreneurship for women entrepreneurs?
- a) Technology and Advancement
 - b) Social Media
 - c) Society and Environment
 - d) Encouragement and Support system
 - e) Human Behavior
 - f) No idea
14. Which entrepreneurial environment (Classic or Modern) do you believe offers better opportunities for sustainable growth of women led businesses
- a) Modern
 - b) Classic

Support

15. Do you feel there's adequate support available for women entrepreneurs in both environment?
- a) Yes
 - b) Probably Yes
 - c) Not Sure
 - d) Probably No
 - e) No
16. Are you satisfied with the support and resources available for women entrepreneurs?
- a) Very Satisfied
 - b) Satisfied
 - c) Neutral
 - d) Dissatisfied
 - e) Very Dissatisfied

General Questions

17. Do you believe there is a need for more initiatives to encourage and support women entrepreneurship?
- a) Yes
 - b) No
 - c) Not Sure
 - d) Lack of availability of finance
 - e) Financial availability
 - f) Family Support

Any additional comments or insights you'd like to share regarding sustainability of women entrepreneurs is different entrepreneurial?

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