

IMPACT OF DIGITAL PLATFORMS AND SOCIAL MEDIA ON WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

The rapid growth of digital technology and social media platforms has transformed the entrepreneurial landscape in India, especially for women entrepreneurs. Digital platforms such as Instagram, WhatsApp Business, Facebook Marketplace, YouTube, and e-commerce applications have enabled women to start and manage businesses with limited investment and greater flexibility. This research paper examines the impact of digital platforms and social media on women entrepreneurship in India. The study analyzes how digital tools help women entrepreneurs increase market reach, customer engagement, branding, and business profitability.

The research is based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected through questionnaires from women entrepreneurs using digital platforms for business purposes. Secondary data was collected from journals, articles, reports, and online publications. The findings reveal that digital platforms significantly contribute to women's economic empowerment, business expansion, and financial independence. However, challenges such as digital illiteracy, online harassment, financial constraints, and limited technological knowledge continue to affect many women entrepreneurs.

The study concludes that digital platforms have become powerful tools for encouraging women entrepreneurship in India and recommends improving digital literacy, cyber security awareness, government support, and access to digital finance



INTRODUCTION

Women entrepreneurship has emerged as a significant contributor to economic growth and social development in India. In recent years, the development of digital platforms and social media has created new opportunities for women to establish and expand businesses from their homes and communities. Digital entrepreneurship has reduced traditional barriers such as lack of capital, mobility restrictions, and limited market access.

Social media platforms including Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp, and YouTube are now



widely used for marketing, communication, product promotion, and customer interaction. Many women entrepreneurs in India are utilizing these platforms to run online boutiques, homemade food businesses, beauty brands, handicraft businesses, tuition services, and freelancing ventures.

The rise of affordable smartphones, internet accessibility, and digital payment systems such as UPI has further accelerated digital entrepreneurship among women. Research published in 2025 and 2026 shows that women entrepreneurs in Tier-II and Tier-III cities are increasingly depending on digital platforms to create sustainable businesses and reach broader markets. Digital platforms have not only improved business visibility but also enhanced women's financial independence and self-confidence. Instagram, for example, has become a major platform for home-based women entrepreneurs to market products through reels, stories, and influencer collaborations.

Despite these opportunities, women entrepreneurs continue to face challenges such as lack of digital literacy, cybersecurity concerns, online harassment, and limited financial support. Studies also indicate that many women intentionally reduce their online presence due to safety concerns.

This study aims to understand the influence of digital platforms and social media on women entrepreneurship in India and evaluate both opportunities and challenges associated with digital business practices.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

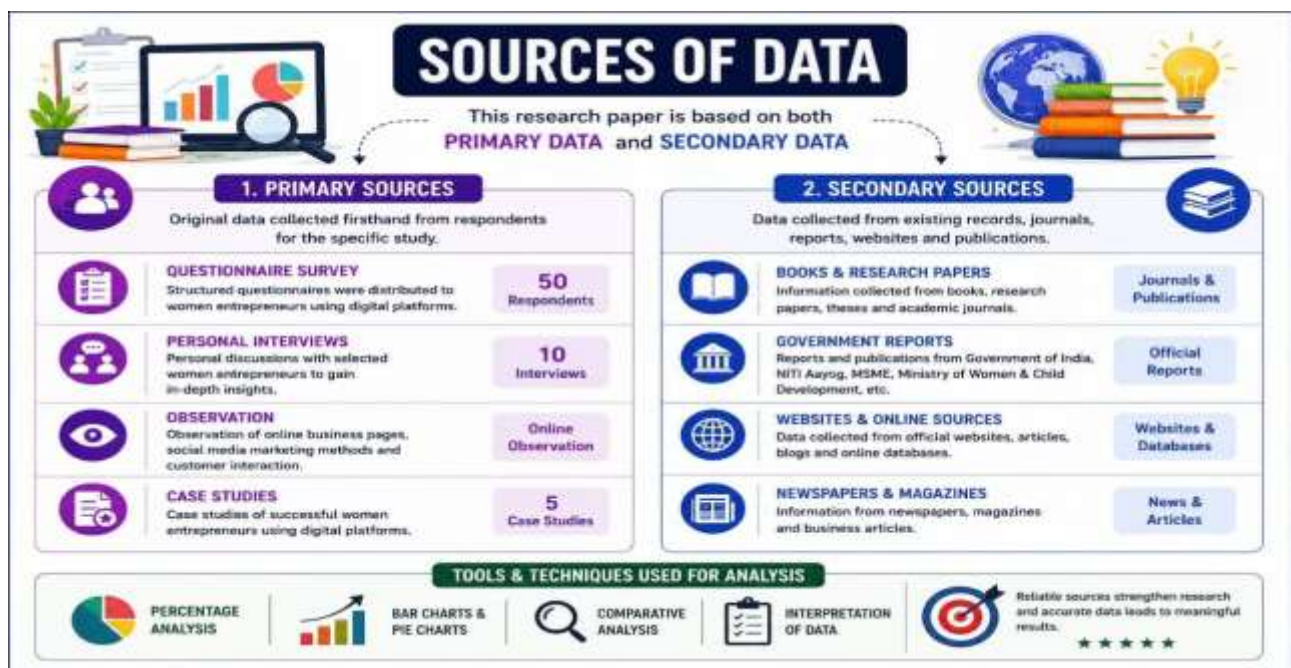
1. To study the role of digital platforms in promoting women entrepreneurship in India.
2. To analyse the impact of social media on business growth and customer engagement.
3. To identify the benefits of digital marketing for women entrepreneurs.
4. To examine the challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in using digital platforms.
5. To provide suggestions for improving digital entrepreneurship among women.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study is descriptive and analytical in nature.

Sources of Data



Primary Data

Primary data was collected through structured questionnaires distributed to women entrepreneurs operating online businesses through digital platforms.

Secondary Data

Secondary data was collected from:

- * Research journals
- * Government reports
- * Articles and publications
- * Online databases
- * Websites and academic papers

Recent studies on digital entrepreneurship and women-led businesses were used to support the research findings.

Sample Size

The study considered a sample of 50 women entrepreneurs from different sectors including fashion, food services, beauty products, handicrafts, and online services.

Sampling Technique

Convenience sampling method was used.

Tools Used for Analysis

- * Percentage analysis
- * Bar charts
- * Pie charts
- * Comparative interpretation
- *

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Priyanka Dale et al. (2026)

The study titled **“Digital Platform Ecosystems as Drivers of Innovation among Women Entrepreneurs in Informal Economies”** explained how women entrepreneurs in Indian Tier-II cities use digital platforms to sustain online ventures and improve innovation.

2. Purvi Jain & Shikha Yadav (2025)

The researchers analyzed digital solopreneurship among women in Tier-II and Tier-III cities and found that social media platforms such as Instagram, Meesho, and WhatsApp Business have improved business accessibility and income opportunities.

3. Jiří Balcar et al. (2026)

This study highlighted that social networks and social media significantly influence entrepreneurial entry among Indian women by providing networking opportunities and market exposure.

4. Manimegalai D. et al. (2025)

The study emphasized that Instagram enables Indian housewives to become digital entrepreneurs by using reels, visual storytelling, and influencer marketing strategies.

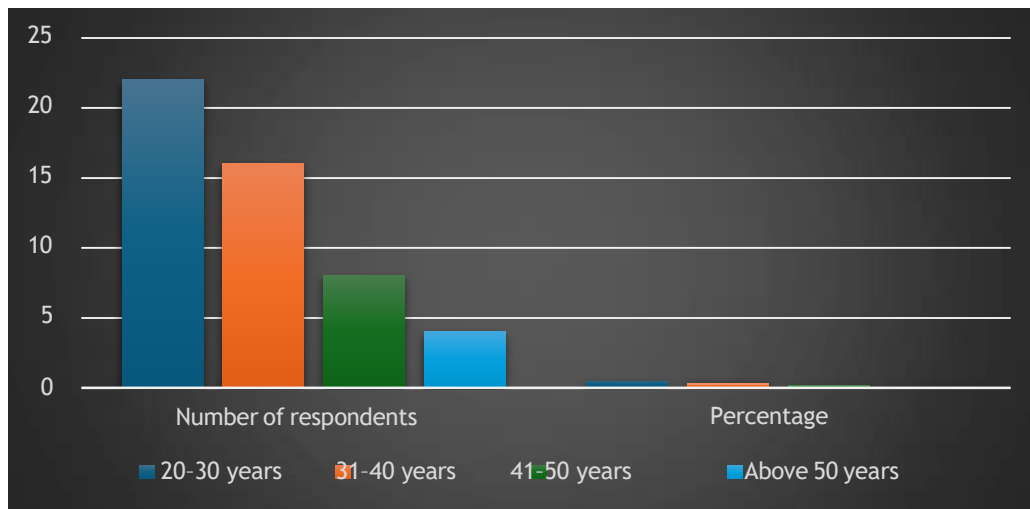
5. Mohana Rani et al. (2025)

The study concluded that social media adoption positively affects business growth and market expansion for women-led MSMEs.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1: Age Group of Respondents

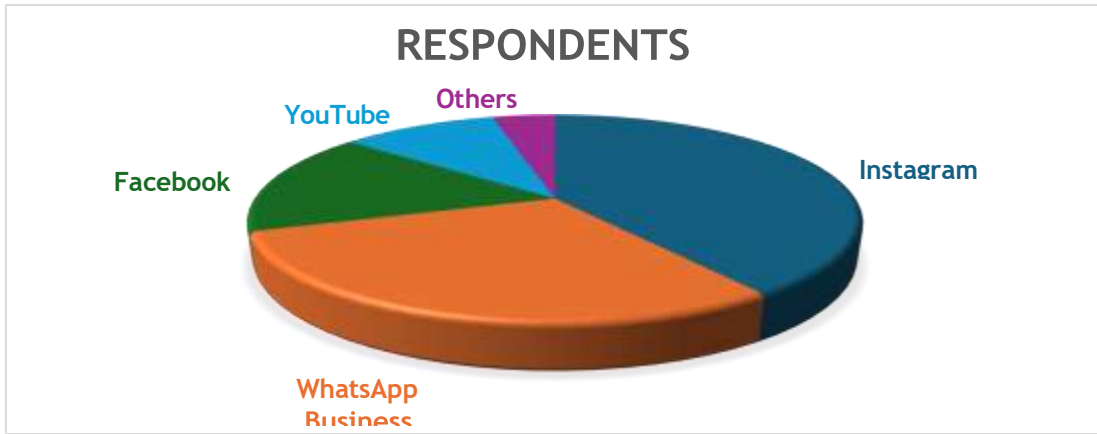
Age Group	Number of respondents	Percentage
20–30 years	22	44%
31–40 years	16	32%
41–50 years	8	16%
Above 50 years	4	8%



The majority of women entrepreneurs belong to the age group of 20–30 years, indicating that younger women are more active in digital entrepreneurship.

Table 2: Digital Platforms Used for Business

Platform	Respondents	Percentage
Instagram	20	40%
WhatsApp Business	15	30%
Facebook	8	16%
YouTube	5	10%
Others	2	4%

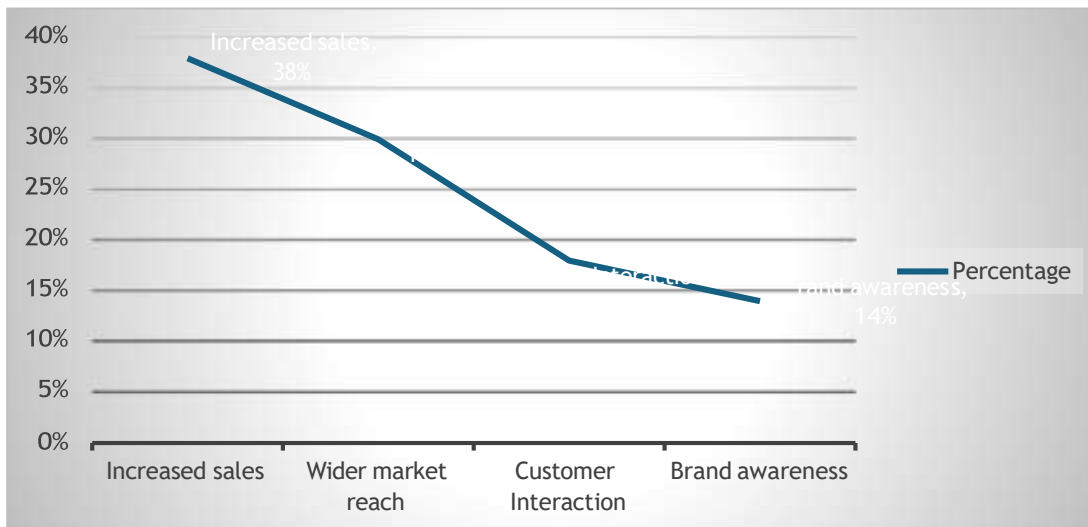


Interpretation

Instagram is the most preferred platform among women entrepreneurs due to its visual marketing features and wider customer reach.

Table 3: Benefits Experienced from Digital Platforms

Benefits	Percentage
Increased sales	38%
Wider market reach	30%
Customer Interaction	18%
Brand awareness	14%

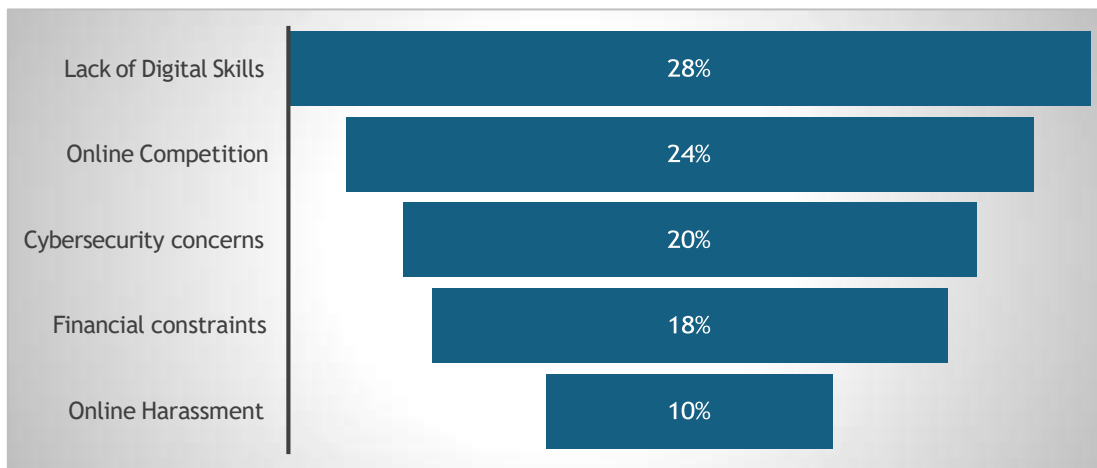


Interpretation

Most respondents reported increased sales and wider market reach as the major benefits of digital platforms.

Table 4: Challenges Faced by Women Entrepreneurs

Challenges	Percentage
Lack of Digital Skills	28%
Online Competition	24%
Cybersecurity concerns	20%
Financial constraints	18%
Online Harassment	10%



Interpretation

Lack of digital skills and online competition are the major challenges faced by women entrepreneurs.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

1. Digital platforms have significantly increased business opportunities for women entrepreneurs.
2. Instagram and WhatsApp Business are the most commonly used platforms.
3. Social media marketing helps women entrepreneurs improve sales and customer engagement.
4. Online businesses provide flexibility and work-from-home opportunities.
5. Younger women are more interested in digital entrepreneurship.
6. Lack of technical knowledge and cyber security concerns remain major barriers.
7. Digital entrepreneurship contributes to women’s financial independence and self-confidence.
8. Government initiatives and digital literacy programs positively influence women entrepreneurship.

Recent studies also show that digital platforms are encouraging women-led MSMEs and expanding market opportunities across India.

SUGGESTIONS

1. Government should conduct more digital literacy and entrepreneurship training programs for women.
2. Financial institutions should provide easy loans and startup support for women-led digital businesses.
3. Awareness programs on cyber security and online safety should be increased.
4. Women entrepreneurs should be encouraged to adopt advanced digital marketing strategies.
5. Colleges and universities should introduce entrepreneurship and digital business courses.
6. Social media companies should strengthen online safety measures for women entrepreneurs.
7. Rural women should receive better internet accessibility and digital infrastructure support.

CONCLUSION

Digital platforms and social media have revolutionized women entrepreneurship in India by creating accessible, flexible, and cost-effective business opportunities. Women entrepreneurs are increasingly using social media and digital tools to establish successful businesses, achieve financial independence, and contribute to economic development.

The study reveals that digital entrepreneurship has reduced traditional barriers and empowered women to participate actively in the business world. Platforms such as Instagram, WhatsApp Business, Facebook, and YouTube have enabled women to reach wider audiences and build strong customer relationships.

However, challenges such as digital illiteracy, financial limitations, cyber security concerns, and online harassment continue to hinder growth. Addressing these issues through policy support, training, and technological infrastructure is essential for sustainable women entrepreneurship.

Overall, digital platforms have become a transformative force in empowering Indian women entrepreneurs and strengthening inclusive economic development.

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