



## **WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN MICRO ENTERPRISES IN INDIA: ISSUES AND INTERVENTIONS IN WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

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### **ABSTRACT**

In India, women contribute 17% of the GDP, which is less than half the average for the world. When women lost their jobs and means of support due to COVID-19, their income from their businesses fell and the stress of providing unpaid care increased. According to UN Women, 47% of women lost their employment during the first lockdown in 2020, compared to 7% of men. With two-thirds of women attributing recent company closures to

the virus, India suffered the most from the pandemic among the nations in the Central and East Asia region. In India, just 20% of businesses are owned by women. Most of these women-led businesses are centred in the informal sector, and 82% of them are micro units

operated as sole proprietorship. Of the total 8.05 million businesses, 6.36 million are involved in manufacturing, retail, and livestock. According to studies, the data supplied overstates the true level of female entrepreneurship, with 10% to 30% of businesses listed as owned by women being managed by males. In terms of technology-based businesses that are also classified as MSMEs, an RBI study of 1,246 companies reveals that 5.9% of those participating was created by solely women, as opposed to 55.5% by only male founders. Only 38.6% of companies were co-founded by men and women. Female business owners have restricted access to capital, capacity building that is concentrated on a small number of industries, a lack of information, a lack of networking opportunities, and weak market connections. This explores the challenges and issues faced by women entrepreneurs in establishing and managing their micro businesses. Moreover, the paper highlights interventions and strategies aimed at fostering women's entrepreneurship, including training programs, mentorship initiatives, and policy frameworks. By shedding light on the intricacies of women entrepreneurship in micro enterprises, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of the socioeconomic landscape and offers insights into potential pathways for empowerment and sustainable growth. This abstract contributes to both academic and policy domains by offering a holistic perspective on the subject and suggesting targeted strategies for fostering women-led micro enterprises in India. This study highlights the possibility for revolutionary change by examining a



wide range of interventions, from focused training programs to cutting-edge policy frameworks. A deeper understanding of these problems and a proactive commitment to effective interventions will be crucial in fostering an inclusive entrepreneurial landscape, ultimately driving both economic advancement and gender parity in India as women continue to break down barriers and succeed as micro business owners.

**Keywords:** Women Entrepreneurs, Micro Enterprises, Economic Empowerment, Policy Interventions, Women Empowerment

## 1. INTRODUCTION

India, a country known for its vibrant and diverse entrepreneurial landscape, has witnessed a remarkable surge in the participation of women in micro-enterprises. Women entrepreneurs in micro enterprises have emerged as a force to be reckoned with, driving economic growth, employment generation, and socioeconomic empowerment. According to the MSME Ministry's 2021–22 annual report, out of 6.33 crore MSMEs (NSO 73rd) 20.37 per cent were owned by women. Women own about 18 per cent of all MSMEs that are registered. However, their journey is not devoid of challenges and impediments that require thoughtful interventions. This paper delves into the myriad issues faced by women entrepreneurs in India's micro-enterprise sector, shedding light on the barriers they encounter and the strategic interventions needed to bolster women's

entrepreneurship. By analyzing the complex ecosystem that surrounds women in micro-enterprises, we aim to provide insights into fostering a more inclusive and thriving entrepreneurial environment in India.

## Concept of women entrepreneur

A women entrepreneur is a woman who initiates, organizes, operates, and manages a business or enterprise, with the primary objective of achieving profit or other socioeconomic goals. Women entrepreneurs are individuals who take on the risks associated with starting and running a business, often with innovative ideas, and are actively involved in the decision-making and management of their enterprises. According to the Government of India, woman entrepreneur is the one who assumes dominant financial control (minimum financial interest of 51 per cent of the capital) in an enterprise (Government of India, 2012).

## Features of Indian women entrepreneurs

Women entrepreneurship is more common in younger age groups in comparison to older age groups (Dhameja et al 2000). Women entrepreneurs have diverse educational background (Patole, M., & Ruthven, O., 2002). Majority of the women entrepreneurs belong to lower and middle income group (Vinze, M. D., 1987) and have service oriented enterprises (Gupta, 2013). Women entrepreneurship is now progressing from pickles, papads and powders and



becoming visible in fields like engineering (Munshi, S et al, 2011). Women entrepreneurs are now emerging as “techpreneurs” (Charantimath, 2005).

Women entrepreneurs are individuals who initiate and manage businesses, demonstrating ownership and control over key decision-making processes. They often bring innovative solutions to the market, take calculated risks, and value the independence and autonomy that entrepreneurship offers. Adaptability and leadership skills are common traits among successful women entrepreneurs, allowing them to navigate changing market conditions. Their contributions extend beyond profit, as they play a vital role in economic growth by creating jobs, generating income, and enhancing the prosperity of their communities across various sectors and business scales, reflecting the significant impact of women in the business world and their contribution to broader economic and social development goals.

### **Categorization of Women Entrepreneurs in India:**

Women entrepreneurs can be categorized based on their motivation and financial background into the following groups:

#### **Motivation Categories:**

**Passion-Driven Entrepreneurs:** These women start businesses primarily because they are passionate about a particular product, service, or industry. Their motivation is rooted in their love for what they do, and they are often

willing to invest time and effort to pursue their interests.

**Opportunity-Seeking Entrepreneurs:** These women are motivated by identifying opportunities in the market. They are keen observers of trends and gaps in the business landscape and create enterprises to capitalize on these opportunities.

**Necessity-Driven Entrepreneurs:** Women in this category start businesses out of necessity. They may face financial challenges, unemployment, or difficult family situations, leading them to entrepreneurship as a means of survival and income generation.

#### **Financial Background Categories:**

**Affluent Entrepreneurs:** These women come from financially well-off backgrounds, often with access to significant resources, including capital, networks, and support. They have the financial stability to invest in and sustain their businesses comfortably.

**Middle-Class Entrepreneurs:** Women in this group have a moderate financial background. They may not have access to substantial resources but can secure funding through savings, loans, or support from family and friends.

**Low-Income Entrepreneurs:** These women start businesses with limited financial resources. They may have to rely on microloans, grants, or bootstrap their ventures from personal savings. Their businesses are often small-scale and focused on basic survival needs.



Resourceful Entrepreneurs: Some women entrepreneurs are highly resourceful, regardless of their initial financial background. They excel in utilizing available resources efficiently, which may include access to community networks, mentor ship, or shared facilities to build and sustain their businesses.

By considering both motivation and financial background, these categories capture the diversity of women entrepreneurs, reflecting their personal aspirations, circumstances, and the resources at their disposal as they embark on their entrepreneurial journeys. Top of Form

**Concept of Micro Enterprises:**

According to the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Development Act of 2006, (India) a micro enterprise is where the investment in Plant and Machinery or Equipment does not exceed one crore rupees and turnover does not exceed five crore rupees;

Micro enterprises hold immense importance in India as they are critical for employment generation, contributing significantly to the country's economic growth and fostering inclusive development. These enterprises empower marginalized populations, especially women and those in rural areas, offering opportunities for entrepreneurship and income generation. They also encourage grassroots innovation, play a role in poverty alleviation, and facilitate skill

development. Additionally, micro enterprises are essential for supply chain integration, connecting producers to consumers, and they demonstrate resilience in the face of economic uncertainties, making them crucial components of India's economic landscape and development goals.

Current Scenario of women entrepreneurs in Micro enterprises in India:

Broad composition of MSMEs in India in 2019-2020	
Total number of MSMEs	73.2 Million
Men owned Enterprises	58.3 Million (79.6%)
Women Owned Enterprises	14.9 Million (20.4%)
Composition of Women owned Micro Enterprises	
Manufacturing Enterprises	71.5%
Services Enterprises	6.9%

*Source : Derived from the report titled 'Opportunities and Constraints of Women owned very small enterprises in India' by International Finance Corporation.*

In India, there are roughly 15 million MSMEs with female ownership, and manufacturing accounts for more than 70% of these businesses. In India, around 90% of women business owners do not use conventional financial institutions for financing. This data



highlights the substantial number of women-owned micro, small and medium enterprises in India. However, the challenges they face, especially concerning access to formal financial institutions (FIs), and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on these entrepreneurs, are quite noteworthy.

**Objectives of the study:**

To comprehensively identify and analyze the key challenges and issues faced by women entrepreneurs operating micro-enterprises in India. This objective aims to understand the structural, cultural, economic and regulatory obstacles that prevent women from participating in entrepreneurship.

To assess the effectiveness of existing government policies, programs and support initiatives designed to promote and empower women entrepreneurs in micro-enterprises. This objective seeks to evaluate the outcomes and impact of such interventions and identify the areas of improvement.

To formulate evidence based, context specific intervention strategies that address the identified challenges in a more sustainable manner. This objective aims to provide practical recommendations and solutions to enhance women's participation in entrepreneurship

**2. METHODOLOGY**

The research is exploratory in nature and seeks to understand the issues faced by women entrepreneurs in micro enterprises in India without

preconceived notions or specific hypotheses. The methodology of the study involves the selection of the most recent research studies accessible on Google Scholar. Annual Report of the sixth economic census published by the Government of India along with Census reports specifically focusing on Micro enterprises in India are utilized as quantitative data sources. These databases have been instrumental in tracing the emergence and growth of women entrepreneurs in the Indian Context. Furthermore, reports from the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor published by Global Entrepreneurship Development Institute is also being referred to

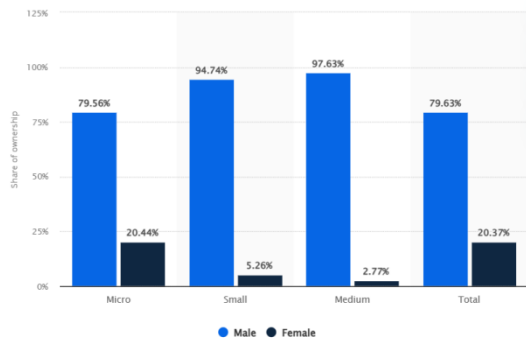
**3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**3.1 CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED BY INDIAN WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN MICRO ENTERPRISES:**

Women entrepreneurs in micro-enterprises in India confront numerous challenges. They often encounter gender bias and cultural norms that limit their access to resources and support. Access to finance can be a significant hurdle, with limited access to capital and higher interest rates compared to their male counterparts. Additionally, balancing family responsibilities with business operations presents a complex juggling act. Skill gaps, limited market access, and regulatory barriers further compound their challenges. Nonetheless, despite these obstacles, many women in India are demonstrating resilience and resourcefulness in their pursuit of



entrepreneurial success, contributing to the country's economic growth. These challenges can be categorized into several key areas:



Source: India; GIZ; Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (India); FY 2022

In financial year 2022, males constituted over 79 percent of the total ownership in micro enterprises in India, while females accounted for approximately 20.4 percent of ownership. The ownership distribution in small and medium enterprises exhibited a similar pattern, with a notable skew towards male ownership.

### Social and Cultural Norms:

According to the International Finance Corporation (IFC), as of 2021, women-owned businesses in India face a credit gap of about \$287 billion, indicating a significant lack of access to finance.

**Gender Bias:** Gender bias is a pervasive problem in women entrepreneurs in micro enterprises in India as it leads to unequal access to resources, financing, and opportunities. This bias stems from deep-rooted cultural norms and stereotypes, limiting women's ability to start and grow businesses. Gender bias

often results in limited recognition of women's contributions to the economy, hindering their economic empowerment and potential to drive economic growth. Overcoming gender bias is crucial to creating a more inclusive and equitable environment for women entrepreneurs in India's micro-enterprise sector.

**Family Responsibilities:** Balancing the demands of running a business with traditional gender roles and expectations related to care giving and homemaking can be particularly complex. Many women face pressure to fulfil both roles simultaneously, which can result in time constraints, stress, and limited availability to focus on their businesses. This balancing act can impact their entrepreneurial journey, often requiring creative strategies and support systems to manage effectively.

### Access to Finance:

According to the International Finance Corporation (IFC), as of 2021, women-owned businesses in India face a credit gap of about \$287 billion, indicating a significant lack of access to finance.

**Limited Access to Capital:** Women often have difficulty accessing loans and financial resources due to lack of collateral and financial literacy. It hampers their ability to start or expand businesses, limiting economic growth and opportunities. Addressing this challenge through inclusive lending practices, financial literacy programs, and targeted policies is essential for fostering women's entrepreneurship and economic empowerment in India.



**Informal Financing:** Many women turn to informal sources of financing, which can be unreliable and expensive. Women entrepreneurs in Indian micro-enterprises may rely on informal financing due to limited access to traditional banks. This can involve borrowing from moneylenders, using personal savings, seeking help from family and friends, or accessing micro credit. While it can provide crucial capital, informal financing often comes with higher interest rates and fewer legal protections. Promoting responsible lending practices and improving financial inclusion are essential steps to support women entrepreneurs and enhance their access to formal financing options

### **Skill Gaps:**

Data from the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship in India indicates that there is a need for targeted skill development programs to enhance the capabilities of women entrepreneurs.

"Skill gaps" in the context of women entrepreneurs in micro-enterprises in India refer to the disparity between the skills and knowledge needed to run a successful business and the skills possessed by these entrepreneurs. Many women may lack essential business management, financial literacy, marketing, and technology skills. These skill gaps can hinder their ability to effectively operate and grow their micro-enterprises.

### **Market Access:**

While specific data may vary by sector, women-owned micro and small enterprises in India have been found to have limited access to domestic and international markets, particularly for export-oriented businesses.

**Limited Networking Opportunities:** Women may face challenges in building business networks and accessing markets. They often struggle to reach markets and expand their customer base. Additionally, they may have fewer opportunities to build professional relationships and networks critical for business growth.

**Market Bias:** Some industries may be perceived as male-dominated, making it difficult for women entrepreneurs to establish themselves. Presence of discriminatory practices or prejudices within certain industries or sectors that favor one group or gender over another poses a severe problem to women entrepreneurs. In the context of women entrepreneurs in micro-enterprises in India, market bias can manifest as barriers or disadvantages that women face when trying to establish or grow their businesses in specific industries or sectors perceived as male-dominated. This bias can include limited access to opportunities, resources, or customers, hindering women's entrepreneurial success and market competitiveness.

### **Technology and Infrastructure:**

Disparities in access to digital infrastructure and technology have been reported, affecting women entrepreneurs



in technology-driven businesses, particularly in rural areas.

**Limited Access to Technology:** In rural areas, women may lack access to modern technology, hindering their ability to compete effectively. This limitation can result from factors such as inadequate infrastructure, lack of affordable devices, and limited digital literacy. It hinders their ability to adopt technology-driven solutions, engage in e-commerce, and stay competitive in a digitized business landscape.

**Infrastructure Constraints:** Inadequate infrastructure, such as transportation and power supply, can affect business operations. These constraints can encompass inadequate transportation networks, unreliable power supply, limited access to technology and communication services, and subpar facilities for production and distribution. For women entrepreneurs, such constraints can lead to higher operational costs, reduced competitiveness, and logistical challenges.

### **Legal and Regulatory Barriers:**

India's ranking in the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business Index has improved over the years, but complex regulations and administrative hurdles can still pose challenges for entrepreneurs, including women.

**Complex Regulations:** Navigating the legal and regulatory environment can be daunting, particularly for women with limited resources. These complexities can include burdensome licensing

requirements, intricate tax regulations, and bureaucratic hurdles, which can be time-consuming and expensive to navigate. For women entrepreneurs, especially those with limited resources and legal knowledge, complex regulations can deter them from formalizing their businesses, resulting in informality and missed growth opportunities. Simplifying and streamlining regulatory processes is crucial to support and promote the ease of doing business for women entrepreneurs in India.

**Property Rights:** In some regions, women may face discriminatory inheritance laws that limit their rights to inherit or own property. Women may have limited access to property or assets that can be used as collateral for loans, hindering their access to capital. Legal disputes over property ownership or inheritance can divert valuable time and resources away from business operations. This limitation impacts their ability to use property as collateral for loans and obtain the necessary capital for business growth.

### **Work-Life Balance:**

The National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) in India has reported that many women entrepreneurs work long hours, often exceeding 10 hours per day, while also managing household responsibilities.

**Work-Life Integration:** Balancing work and personal life can be especially challenging for women entrepreneurs, impacting their overall well-being.





Cultural expectations, limited support systems, and stress can make this balance difficult to achieve. Solutions include flexible work arrangements and support for family responsibilities to enhance well-being and the sustainability of their micro-enterprises.

### **Healthcare Access and Safety Concerns:**

Reports from organizations like UNICEF have highlighted gaps in healthcare access and safety concerns for women in India, which can impact their overall well-being and business operations.

**Healthcare Access:** Access to healthcare services can be limited in some regions, affecting the well-being of women entrepreneurs. Limited access to healthcare can arise from factors like geographical barriers, high costs, time constraints, lack of insurance, and safety concerns. Addressing these challenges through policy initiatives, community healthcare programs, and awareness campaigns is crucial to ensuring the well-being and productivity of women entrepreneurs and their micro-enterprises.

**Safety Concerns:** Safety issues and harassment can deter women from participating in economic activities. These concerns can limit mobility, business operations, and overall well-being. Addressing safety concerns involves comprehensive measures to enhance public safety, create harassment-free workplaces, and provide support systems to ensure the

safety and confidence of women entrepreneurs in their businesses.

### **Mentorship and Training:**

The Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP) in India has reported that only a small percentage of women entrepreneurs have access to mentorship opportunities, and there is a need for more role models in the field.

### **3.2 INTERVENTIONS IN WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN INDIA:**

The Indian government has implemented various interventions and initiatives to enhance women entrepreneurship in micro-enterprises. These initiatives aim to provide women with the necessary support, resources, and opportunities to start and grow their businesses. Some of the key interventions include:

#### **MUDRA Yojana (Micro Units Development and Refinance Agency):**

MUDRA is a flagship scheme of the Indian government that provides financial assistance and support to micro-enterprises, including those run by women. Under this scheme, women entrepreneurs can access loans through various financial institutions to start or expand their businesses.

#### **Stand Up India Scheme:**

This scheme is designed to promote entrepreneurship among women, Scheduled Castes (SC), and Scheduled Tribes (ST). It provides bank loans between Rs. 10 lakhs to Rs. 1 crore to at least one woman entrepreneur and one



SC/ST entrepreneur in each bank branch for setting up greenfield enterprises.

### **Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP):**

Launched by NITI Aayog, WEP is an online platform that offers support and resources to women entrepreneurs. It provides access to mentor-ship programs, networking opportunities, and skill development courses.

### **National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) Programs:**

The NSDC offers various skill development programs and courses to empower women with the skills and knowledge needed to run successful micro-enterprises.

### **Udyogini Scheme:**

This scheme provides financial assistance to women entrepreneurs in the form of subsidies for setting up small-scale enterprises in non-farm activities.

### **Rashtriya Mahila Kosh (RMK):**

RMK is a national credit fund established to support women's self-help groups (SHGs) and women entrepreneurs by providing micro-credit and financial services.

### **Support through SIDBI (Small Industries Development Bank of India):**

SIDBI offers financial and non-financial support to women entrepreneurs through various schemes and initiatives.

### **Incubation Centers:**

The government has set up incubation centers and women entrepreneurship development cells at various educational institutions and industry hubs to provide training, mentor-ship, and access to resources for aspiring women entrepreneurs.

### **Skill India Programs:**

Under the Skill India mission, various skill development and entrepreneurship programs are run to empower women with relevant skills for starting and managing micro-enterprises.

### **Startup India:**

While not exclusively for women, the Startup India initiative offers various benefits and incentives to startups, which can be availed by women entrepreneurs as well. It includes tax exemptions and simplified regulations to encourage entrepreneurship.

### **Mahila Coir Yojana:**

This scheme focuses on the development of coir-based micro-enterprises by providing financial assistance and training to women entrepreneurs in the coir sector.

### **Shree Shakti Package for Women Entrepreneurs:**

Offered by various banks, this package provides financial incentives to women entrepreneurs, including lower interest rates on loans and reduced processing charges.

### **STEP (Support to Training and Employment Program for Women):**



STEP is a government scheme that supports projects aimed at enhancing women's employability and entrepreneurship by providing training, counseling, and market linkages.

### **PMEGP (Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme):**

While not exclusive to women, this program offers financial support to set up micro-enterprises, including women-owned businesses, through the establishment of self-help groups and the creation of rural industrial clusters.

### **Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao Scheme:**

This initiative focuses on promoting the education and welfare of girls, which indirectly supports women's entrepreneurship by increasing their access to education and skills.

### **Van Dhan Yojana:**

This scheme aims to empower tribal women by promoting value addition and marketing of non-timber forest produce. It provides training and capacity-building support to tribal women entrepreneurs.

### **Women Entrepreneurship and Empowerment (WEE) Program:**

Various state governments have introduced WEE programs to promote and support women entrepreneurs. These programs often include financial assistance, training, and market linkages.

### **Skill Development Initiatives:**

Various skill development schemes, such as Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), offer skill training programs that women can leverage to acquire skills relevant to their micro-enterprises.

### **Cluster Development Programs:**

The government supports the development of women-centric micro-enterprise clusters in sectors like handloom, handicrafts, and food processing. These clusters promote collective entrepreneurship and enhance market access.

### **Digital Literacy Initiatives:**

To bridge the digital divide, the government has launched programs like Digital India and PMGDISHA (Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan) to provide digital literacy training, benefiting women entrepreneurs in the digital space.

### **Export Promotion Initiatives:**

Schemes like the Market Access Initiative (MAI) and Market Development Assistance (MDA) support women-owned micro-enterprises in expanding their market reach globally.

### **Awareness Campaigns:**

The government and various organizations conduct awareness campaigns to encourage women to explore entrepreneurship as a viable career option.

## **4. IMPLICATIONS:**

### **4.1 Theoretical Implications:**



**Gender Studies:** The challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in micro-enterprises provide valuable insights for gender studies researchers. These challenges highlight the persistence of gender biases, cultural norms, and social structures that impact women's participation in entrepreneurship.

**Resource-Based View:** The Resource-Based View theory in management can be applied to understand how limited access to financial and human resources affects the growth and sustainability of women-led micro-enterprises.

**Institutional Theory:** The challenges related to regulatory barriers and property rights underscore the importance of institutional theory in explaining how formal and informal institutions influence entrepreneurship.

#### 4.2 Practical Implications:

**Access to Finance:** Practical solutions include creating specialized financial products with lower interest rates for women entrepreneurs and increasing financial literacy programs tailored to their needs.

**Skill Development:** Providing practical and industry-relevant training programs can enhance women's skills and empower them to operate micro-enterprises more effectively.

**Mentorship Programs:** Establishing mentorship programs can help women entrepreneurs access guidance, build networks, and gain practical insights into business operations.

#### 4.3 Managerial Implications:

**Diversity and Inclusion:** Managers should actively promote diversity and inclusion within their organizations and supply chains, ensuring equal opportunities for women-owned micro-enterprises.

**Work-Life Balance:** Organizations can adopt flexible work policies and support mechanisms to help women entrepreneurs balance their personal and professional lives.

**Market Access:** Managers can explore partnerships and collaborations to facilitate market access for women entrepreneurs, helping them expand their customer base.

#### 4.4 Policy Implications:

**Gender-Responsive Policies:** Policymakers should design and implement gender-responsive policies and programs that address the specific needs and challenges faced by women in micro-enterprises.

**Access to Finance:** Policy interventions should focus on improving women's access to formal financial institutions and providing financial incentives to lenders who support women entrepreneurs.

**Legal Reforms:** Policymakers can work on legal reforms to address property rights and inheritance issues, ensuring that women have secure access to assets for their businesses.

**Awareness Campaigns:** Public awareness campaigns can challenge gender stereotypes and promote the importance of women's



entrepreneurship, both in urban and rural areas.

**Capacity Building:** Government agencies and NGOs can collaborate to offer capacity-building programs that include training, mentorship, and access to markets for women entrepreneurs.

**Data Collection:** Policymakers should invest in gender-disaggregated data collection to monitor the progress of women entrepreneurs and evaluate the impact of policy interventions.

#### 4.5 Limitations

The challenges faced by women entrepreneurs can vary greatly depending on factors such as region, sector, and socioeconomic status. Generalizing findings across diverse contexts in present study may not provide a comprehensive understanding. Lack of longitudinal studies that track the progress of women entrepreneurs over an extended period in current study makes it challenging to assess the long-term impact of interventions and challenges.

#### 4.6 Future scope of the study:

**Intersectionality:** Future research can explore how intersectionality, which considers the interconnectedness of gender with other social identities, affects the experiences of women entrepreneurs in micro enterprises.

**Longitudinal Studies:** Conducting long-term studies to track the evolution and growth of women-led micro-enterprises can provide insights into the

sustainability and success factors over time.

**Impact Assessment:** Evaluating the effectiveness of various government policies and interventions targeted at women entrepreneurs in micro enterprises is essential to determine their actual impact on empowerment and economic growth.

### 5. CONCLUSION

Women entrepreneurs in micro-enterprises in India face a multifaceted landscape of challenges. Access to finance remains a critical issue, with limited capital accessibility, high interest rates, and inadequate financial literacy. Societal norms and deep-rooted gender biases further restrict their opportunities. Balancing the demands of entrepreneurship with family responsibilities is an ongoing struggle, leading to work-life imbalances. Insufficient market access, limited training opportunities, and complex regulatory environments add to their burdens. Women entrepreneurs in micro-enterprises in India face a multifaceted landscape of challenges. Access to finance remains a critical issue, with limited capital accessibility, high interest rates, and inadequate financial literacy. Societal norms and deep-rooted gender biases further restrict their opportunities. Balancing the demands of entrepreneurship with family responsibilities is an ongoing struggle, leading to work-life imbalances. Insufficient market access, limited training opportunities, and complex



regulatory environments add to their burdens.

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