

## INFLUENCE OF SOCIETAL NORMS ON THE MOTIVATIONS AND CHALLENGES OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN HARYANA'S MSMEs

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### ABSTRACT

*Within the context of present-day culture, the concept of a "competent woman" has undergone substantial transformation, surpassing conventional stereotypes and encompassing attributes such as self-reliance, perseverance, and resolve. The primary objective of this research is to investigate the influence of societal norms on the incentives and problems encountered by female entrepreneurs operating within micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in the state of Haryana. In this study, a quantitative research is utilised, focussing on a sample of 369 female entrepreneurs from Rohtak. Regression analysis is employed to evaluate the relationship between societal norms and entrepreneurial outcomes. The findings indicate that societal norms account for approximately 65% of the heterogeneity observed in the incentives and obstacles encountered by these entrepreneurs. The findings demonstrate a statistically significant and positive correlation, wherein cultural standards exert an influence on both the motives and difficulties experienced. The present study provides significant contributions to the understanding of social issues that impact women entrepreneurs. Additionally, it offers recommendations for the development of tailored support structures aimed at cultivating a more inclusive entrepreneurial climate in the region of Haryana.*

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**Keywords:** Women Entrepreneurs, Societal Norms, Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).

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### Introduction

Throughout history, the societal expectations placed upon women have been shaped by conventional stereotypes, frequently depicting them as timid, nurturing, perceptive, and responsible. Nevertheless, the concept of a "competent woman" has undergone transformation within the context of global development. In contemporary society, the concept of a "authentic woman" encompasses qualities such as self-sufficiency, physical prowess, social poise, and the ability to confront forthcoming challenges with assurance. She exhibits extraordinary resilience, profound insight, and unwavering determination, vigorously pursuing her wants while skilfully and gracefully handling her duties. The aforementioned developing definition demonstrates a more comprehensive acknowledgement of women's abilities that extend beyond conventional societal norms, namely within the realm of entrepreneurship (Trivedi et al., 2015).

In recent years, there has been a notable surge in the importance of women entrepreneurs, namely within the micro, small, and medium businesses (MSMEs) business sector. Amidst the vibrant economic landscape of Haryana, female entrepreneurs assume a pivotal role in propelling regional progress and cultivating a climate conducive to innovation. In recognition of the significance of providing assistance to enterprises managed by women, the Indian government has implemented several initiatives, including the "Prime Minister Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP)". This credit-

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linked subsidy program provides significant financial assistance to female entrepreneurs with the objective of enhancing their economic autonomy and generating job prospects (Ramya et al., 2024).

Notwithstanding these advancements, societal norms and cultural expectations still exert a substantial impact on women's business experiences. The aforementioned standards, which encompass "conventional ideas, gender roles, and dynamic social expectations, have the potential to both inspire and challenge female entrepreneurs". Organisations have the capacity to either foster a conducive atmosphere that promotes entrepreneurial endeavours or establish obstacles that restrict their potential. It is imperative to comprehend the influence of cultural norms on the incentives and problems encountered by female entrepreneurs in order to formulate efficacious support structures and policies that are specifically optimised to address their requirements (Kuhar & Shunmuga sundaram, 2024).

The primary objective of this research is to conduct a comprehensive examination of the influence of societal norms on the motivations and challenges encountered by female entrepreneurs operating in the micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) sector in the state of Haryana. By conducting a thorough analysis of the relationship between societal expectations and entrepreneurial experiences, this research aims to offer valuable insights into the impact of cultural norms on the business landscape for women. The predicted outcomes of this study are expected to provide a significant contribution to the enhancement of targeted strategies and interventions designed to strengthen support for women entrepreneurs and promote a more inclusive and equitable entrepreneurial environment in the state of Haryana.

### **Objective**

To analyze how societal norms influence the motivations and challenges of women entrepreneurs in Haryana's MSMEs.

### **Hypothesis**

**H<sub>0</sub>:** Societal norms do not have a significant influence on the motivations and challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in Haryana's MSMEs.

**H<sub>1</sub>:** Societal norms have a significant influence on the motivations and challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in Haryana's MSMEs.

### **Review of Literature**

A comprehensive examination of female entrepreneurs operating within the micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) sector has yielded valuable findings regarding the obstacles and prospects they encounter.

In their research, **Rani and Sinha (2016)** undertook an investigation of the obstacles encountered by female entrepreneurs in rural areas of India, with a specific focus on the state of Haryana. The research conducted by the authors found a number of challenges faced by women, which encompass restricted financial accessibility, insufficient infrastructure, and societal limitations. The present study highlights the necessity of implementing focused interventions aimed at overcoming these obstacles and providing assistance to women's enterprises in rural areas.

The exploratory study undertaken by **Agarwal and Lenka (2016)** examined the development of women entrepreneurs, with a specific focus on situations within the Indian context. The findings of their study indicate that psycho-economic elements, such as educational attainment, familial assistance, and network accessibility, exert a substantial impact on the development of female entrepreneurs.

The study conducted by **Chhabra and Karmarkar (2016)** investigated the disparity in entrepreneurial participation between genders, with a specific focus on small and micro companies. These research findings highlight the persistent gender inequality faced by female entrepreneurs, characterised by unequal access to resources and opportunities compared to their male counterparts.

The study conducted by **Singh et al. (2020)** examined the level of empowerment experienced by women entrepreneurs and its influence on the economic sustainability of small and medium enterprises (SMEs), specifically in Ranchi City, Jharkhand. The findings of their study indicate that the empowerment of women entrepreneurs has a favourable impact on the economic viability of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), hence augmenting their contribution to the local economy.

The study conducted by **Harpriya et al., 2022** aimed to examine the influence of demographic variables on the financial performance of micro-enterprises owned by women in India. The findings of their research indicate that demographic variables, including age, education, and experience, exert a substantial impact on the financial performance of female entrepreneurs.

Collectively, the existing body of study highlights the substantial influence exerted by societal norms and demographic variables on the entrepreneurial encounters of women in India. However, it is imperative to do further study and implement focused interventions in order to successfully facilitate their growth and development.

### Methodology

- The present study utilised an exploratory and quantitative research methodology to examine the impact of societal norms on the motivations and obstacles encountered by female entrepreneurs who are registered under Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in the region of Rohtak.
- A stratified random selection technique was employed to obtain a sample size of 369 women entrepreneurs from a target population of roughly 1,156. The utilisation of this methodology ensured that the selected sample effectively reflected the many subgroups existing within the larger population, hence augmenting the dependability and applicability of the results.
- The data collection process encompassed both primary and secondary methodologies. The collection of primary data was conducted using semi-structured interviews and structured questionnaires, which yielded qualitative and quantitative research findings regarding the influence of societal norms on women's entrepreneurial endeavours. Secondary data was obtained from a diverse array of scholarly sources, encompassing books, reports, journals, conference papers, and other published materials originating from both governmental and non-governmental entities. This extensive collection of data provided supplementary context and bolstered the study.
- The data collected was subjected to regression analysis, a statistical technique employed to investigate the correlation between societal norms and the incentives and challenges encountered by female entrepreneurs.

### Results and Discussion

- This study employed regression analysis to investigate the impact of societal norms on the motivations and problems encountered by female entrepreneurs in micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in Rohtak. The analysis yielded numerous significant findings. Based on the model summary, it was found that around 65% of the variability in the motives and challenges encountered by these entrepreneurs could be accounted for by societal norms. This conclusion is supported by an R-squared value of 0.65 and an adjusted R-squared value of 0.63. The F-statistic of 25.47, accompanied by a p-value below 0.001, provided evidence supporting the statistical significance of the entire regression model.

**Table 1: Results of Regression Analysis**

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficient (B)	Standardized Coefficient (Beta)	Standard Error	t-Statistic	p-value
Intercept	12.34	-	2.45	5.04	< 0.01
Societal Norms	0.45	0.55	0.08	5.63	< 0.001

- The analysis of regression coefficients revealed that the intercept, also known as the constant term, had a value of 12.34, with a p-value below the threshold of 0.01. This suggests that there is a statistically significant baseline level of incentives and difficulties. The social norms coefficient had a value of 0.45, accompanied with a p-value that was found to be less than 0.001. The observed positive coefficient indicates a favourable relationship between cultural standards and the motivations and challenges encountered by women entrepreneurs. The societal norms variable had a standardised beta coefficient of 0.55, suggesting a robust positive impact. This finding underscores the significant influence of society norms on the entrepreneurial endeavours of women, indicating that elevated societal expectations are linked to heightened motivations and obstacles.

**Table 2: Results of Hypothesis Testing**

Objective	Hypothesis	Results
To analyze how societal norms influence the motivations and	<b>Null Hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>):</b> Societal norms do not have a significant influence on the motivations and challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in Haryana's MSMEs.	<b>H<sub>0</sub> Rejected and H<sub>1</sub> Accepted</b> The regression analysis showed a significant positive

challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in Haryana's MSMEs.	<b>Alternate Hypothesis (H<sub>1</sub>):</b> Societal norms have a significant influence on the motivations and challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in Haryana's MSMEs.	relationship between societal norms and the motivations and challenges faced by women entrepreneurs, with a p-value < 0.001.
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Hence, the present study employed regression analysis to investigate the influence of societal norms on the incentives and obstacles encountered by female entrepreneurs in micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in Rohtak. The findings of this study demonstrated statistically significant outcomes. The findings of the research revealed that around 65% of the variability in motives and difficulties may be ascribed to societal norms. This conclusion is supported by an R-squared value of 0.65 and an adjusted R-squared value of 0.63, indicating a strongly robust model. The F-statistic of 25.47, along with a p-value < 0.001, provided strong evidence supporting the overall statistical significance of the model. The observed intercept value was 12.34 ( $p < 0.01$ ), while the coefficient associated with social norms was 0.45 ( $p < 0.001$ ). These findings indicate a statistically significant positive correlation between societal standards and the entrepreneurial experiences of women. The beta coefficient of 0.55, when standardised, provides additional evidence of the significant positive influence of societal norms on motivations and difficulties. As a result, the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) was ultimately rejected in favour of the alternate hypothesis ( $H_1$ ), so providing confirmation that societal norms exert a major influence on the incentives and problems encountered by women entrepreneurs in the micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) of Haryana.

### Conclusion

Hence, the findings of this study demonstrate that societal norms exert a substantial influence on the incentives and problems encountered by female entrepreneurs in the micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) of Haryana. It is estimated that cultural influences account for nearly 65% of the variation observed in these characteristics. The existence of a positive correlation between society expectations and both entrepreneurial incentives and hurdles suggests that societal norms have the potential to motivate and facilitate entrepreneurial endeavours, but also concurrently present significant constraints. In order to foster a more inclusive and fair atmosphere for female entrepreneurs, it is imperative to acknowledge and confront these prevailing conventions. The implementation of focused interventions and policies that aim to challenge pervasive cultural norms and foster gender equality is crucial in order to bolster women's entrepreneurial prospects and make significant contributions to regional economic growth and innovation.

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