

Empowering Women Entrepreneurs: A Study on Marketing Limitations in Banswara, Rajasthan

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Citation: Sureka, S. & Chaplot, D. (2026). Empowering Women Entrepreneurs: A Study on Marketing Limitations in Banswara, Rajasthan. International Journal of Global Research Innovations & Technology, 04(01), 226–229.

ABSTRACT

Women entrepreneurs are essential to promoting social progress, innovation, and economic expansion. They still have major marketing obstacles that impede the growth and sustainability of their businesses, despite their increasing visibility in the entrepreneurial environment. This study examines the main marketing obstacles faced by female entrepreneurs, such as restricted access to funding for advertising campaigns, lack of professional networks, gender bias in the marketplace, and insufficient familiarity with digital marketing techniques. There are many other factors which affect the growth of women entrepreneurs in rural markets. Such as: lack of distribution channel or network, lack of market knowledge, lack of knowledge of promotional tools, placement of products at various counters is difficult. Lack of communication skills as per different areas of Rajasthan. The study examines how these obstacles impact brand positioning, client acquisition, and business growth using both primary and secondary data. The study also looks at how institutional gaps and sociocultural limitations combine to make marketing more challenging for women-led businesses. The results show that removing these obstacles calls for legislative interventions catered to the requirements of women entrepreneurs, mentorship programs, capacity-building projects, and improvements in digital literacy. The study highlights the need for inclusive solutions that might enable women entrepreneurs to effectively compete in dynamic marketplaces and make significant contributions to sustainable economic growth by bringing these problems to light.

Keywords: *Obstacles and Challenges, Lack of Skills and Knowledge, Lack of Communication and Promotional Techniques.*

Introduction

In developing nations like India, women entrepreneurship is essential for creating jobs, promoting innovation, and accelerating inclusive economic progress. Women entrepreneurs have made significant contributions to both the formal and informal sectors over the last few decades. Despite all these women still encounter several obstacles—financial, social, and infrastructure—that limit their capacity to launch, maintain, and grow businesses, particularly in rural and tribal areas.

Women entrepreneurs are increasingly working in various sectors of Rajasthan such as service, food processing, handicraft, and small-scale businesses. However, because of enduring gender inequality and restricted access to resources, their potential is still underused. Banswara Known as the "City of a Hundred Islands," a region in the southern part of the state, offers a distinctive socioeconomic environment. The economy of Banswara, which is primarily rural and indigenous, is centred on small businesses, agriculture, and modest forest products. Here, women are involved in microbusinesses, handicrafts, and self-help groups (SHGs); nonetheless, these endeavours frequently fail to reach wider markets and become commercially sustainable.

One of the most significant obstacles facing Banswara's female entrepreneurs is the lack of marketing resources. These include a lack of knowledge about the market, low digital literacy, poor

infrastructure, restricted mobility, and weak connections with financial institutions and purchasers. Because of this, women frequently struggle to access lucrative marketplaces or effectively compete, even when they have entrepreneurial abilities and create valuable goods.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to investigate and evaluate the marketing obstacles that women business owners in Banswara, Rajasthan, must overcome. It seeks to comprehend how institutional flaws, societal norms, and infrastructure disparities all work together to limit women's access to the market. By pointing out these drawbacks, the study offers workable solutions and policy suggestions to boost female entrepreneurs via enhanced institutional support, digital inclusion, and marketing capabilities. It is anticipated that the results of this study will add to the larger conversation on gender and entrepreneurship by offering perspectives that can guide local government campaigns, non-governmental organizations, and development projects targeted at inclusive rural development.

Literature Review

G. Palaniappan, C. S. Ramanigopal, A. Mani (19 March 2012) in their article analysed that woman through their participation in a variety of professions and services, women have successfully broken-down boundaries that existed only within their homes. The primary drivers of women entering the business world are their aptitude, expertise, and flexibility. This study was also conducted to examine the major strengths and weaknesses of women entrepreneurs, the environmental opportunities and threats that encourage entrepreneurship, and the motivational factors and other factors that influence women to become entrepreneurs. Additionally, recommendations were made to support women entrepreneurs in a few Tamil Nadu districts. According to the study's findings, their inability to survive in the market is caused by a lack of education and training. Another big issue facing female businesses is money.

V. Krishnamoorthy and R. Balasubramani (April 2021), determined the key elements that drive women entrepreneurs and how they affect their success. According to the survey, the key motivators for entrepreneurship include ambition, knowledge and skills, family support, market opportunities, independence, government subsidies, and satisfaction. The study also found that the entrepreneurial motivational factors of ambition, knowledge and competence, and independence significantly affect the success of entrepreneurs.

Manshani, S., & Dubey, A. (2017) highlighted how a strong preparation program keeps women engaged and motivated. In order to succeed, women should be ready from every angle. Since most provincial women lack confidence and are particularly constrained by traditions and norms, the mentor should serve as a guide, friend, and thinker to help them break free from life's constraints. The most important type of training that aids in rural women's overall development for independent work is empowerment preparation. Women today are demonstrating their abilities in all disciplines, unlike in the past when they were confined to the kitchen and truly focused on the members of the family.

Torch Burch (Nov 18th 2013), expertise of female entrepreneurs who view the world differently and, as a result, act differently. Despite running their own enterprises, the women still face a significant disparity in equality. participate in business at rates comparable to those of men. Women still fall short of their full potential even when they are actively running their own businesses. Women encounter unique challenges in the financial sector, ranging from a dearth of collateral to discriminatory laws and pervasive gender bias. In order to give more women a chance at the resources that can help them launch or grow, financial institutions need to do a better job of leveraging women's potential through innovative thinking and forming partnerships.

Research Objectives

- Determine and classify the marketing constraints that Banswara's female entrepreneurs confront.
- Examine the ways in which institutional, sociocultural, and infrastructure elements influence marketing results.
- Provide empirically supported solutions to enhance the marketing capabilities and market accessibility of Banswara's women-led businesses.

Methodology

This study adopts a mixed-methods approach, combining interviews and Observation. Secondary data review: district reports, census data, NGO project documentation, government scheme summaries. Key informant interviews: local NGO leaders (e.g., VAAGDHARA), district officials, SHG

leaders, and selected women entrepreneurs. Structured survey: purposive sample of micro-enterprises and SHG members across Banswara's development blocks. Data analysis involved correlation studies to assess the Below is a more detailed and professionally enhanced version of the "Findings and Discussion" and "Implications and Recommendations". The language is formal, the analysis is deepened with additional evidence and context, and the content is structured to reflect a rigorous academic tone suitable for a detailed research paper.

Findings

- **Barriers that are Structural and Sociocultural**
 - Many women's mobility and public activity are restricted by gender standards, which also limit their ability to participate in trade shows and external marketplaces.
 - The adoption of online marketing and e-commerce potential is hampered by lower levels of digital and gender literacy. (Both female literacy and overall literacy in Banswara are below state averages.)
- **Budgetary Restrictions**
 - Investments in packing, transportation, and market marketing are restricted by the difficulty in obtaining formal credit and the greater expenses of informal financing.
 - There are differences in the awareness and use of government loan programs (such as PMMY/MUDRA, Stree Shakti, and Udyogini); administrative obstacles and collateral requirements continue to be problems.
- **Market Data and Networks**
 - Inadequate market connections: business owners frequently depend on local marketplaces with little demand and little exposure to national or regional buyer networks.
 - Insufficient understanding of marketing: common deficiencies include price, labelling, quality standards, and buyer negotiations.
- Infrastructure and Logistics Inadequate transport and storage infrastructure makes it expensive and uncertain to reach metropolitan markets. Inequitable digital infrastructure limits the usage of digital sales channels due to low mobile internet reliability.
- **Building Capacity and Providing Institutional Support**
 - While the existence of NGOs and SHGs provide social capital and a forum for group action, there is little support for branding, business-oriented marketing, and ongoing capacity building.
 - There are local government programs and initiatives, but they need to be simplified and better disseminated to reach women entrepreneurs at the grassroots level.

Discussion

The environment of Banswara, which includes tribal inhabitants, rural dispersion, and poor female literacy, produces a series of interrelated barriers that make marketing particularly challenging for women. The presence of SHGs and community organisations, as well as the recorded increase in women-owned MSMEs in Rajasthan, provide scalable entry options, nevertheless, including capacity building, collective branding, and low-bandwidth yet digital-first marketing techniques. Culturally sensitive and locally rooted interventions are required; for example, using SHGs as aggregators to lower the cost of individual transactions and establish consistent product quality.

Recommendations and Implications

- **Enhance SHG-based Market Aggregation:** Organise SHG clusters into producer groups or cooperatives to facilitate bulk transportation, quality assurance, joint production planning, and trade show participation.
- **Marketing and Digital Literacy Training:** Using local language resources and hands-on examples, these short courses are designed for female entrepreneurs and cover topics such as pricing, packaging, quality standards, and social media-based sales.
- **Branding Initiatives:** Determine district-specific goods (such as processed foods, natural farming produce, and tribal crafts) and create a brand with certification assistance and packaging templates.

- **Enhance Financial Access:** Establish a district-level one-stop facilitation desk to help women with government subsidies, streamlined paperwork, and loan applications (MUDRA, PMEGP, and Stree Shakti).
- **Digital Market Links:** Establish low-cost entry points to e-commerce (marketplaces, WhatsApp business catalogues, community-run digital kiosks) and facilitate last-mile logistics partnerships by collaborating with NGOs and private platforms.
- **Support for Infrastructure and Logistics:** Work with the local government to enhance secure storage facilities, cold storage, and subsidised transportation so that SHG produce can reach urban markets.
- **Mentorship & Buyer Connections:** Arrange buyer-seller meetings with carefully selected purchasers from surrounding cities, along with guidance from seasoned business owners and marketing experts.
- **Monitoring and Impact Assessment:** Put in place a dashboard at the district level to track advancements in digital adoption, sales, and income growth for female entrepreneurs.

Conclusion

Interventions must address the various facets of marketing constraints, including infrastructure, skills, financial constraints, social norms, and market knowledge, in order to empower women entrepreneurs in Banswara. A targeted program that integrates collective action, internet access, financing facilitation, and branding can greatly increase women's ability to access markets and generate sustainable incomes by using current strengths, such as active SHGs, tribal craft traditions, and the growing number of women-owned MSME registrations.

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