



The Role of Women Entrepreneurship in the Growth and Development of the Indian Economy

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Abstract

Women entrepreneurship has gained increasing importance as a catalyst for economic growth and sustainable development in the Indian economy. The active participation of women entrepreneurs contributes significantly to employment generation, income creation, and the expansion of small and medium enterprises across diverse sectors. By transforming innovative ideas into productive ventures, women entrepreneurs enhance economic productivity while fostering inclusive growth and social development. Their entrepreneurial activities play a crucial role in empowering women financially, reducing gender disparities, and improving the overall standard of living at the household and community levels. Government initiatives, improved access to education, financial inclusion, and digital technologies have further strengthened the entrepreneurial ecosystem for women in India. Despite facing challenges such as limited access to finance, socio-cultural barriers, and skill gaps, women entrepreneurs continue to demonstrate resilience and adaptability. This paper examines the role of women entrepreneurship in promoting economic growth and development in India and highlights its significance in achieving inclusive and balanced economic progress.

Keywords: Women Entrepreneurship, Economic Growth, Employment Generation, Women Empowerment, Indian Economy

Introduction

Women entrepreneurship has emerged as a vital driver of economic growth and socio-economic transformation in India, particularly in the context of inclusive and sustainable development. In recent decades, the role of women entrepreneurs has expanded significantly as they increasingly participate in diverse economic activities ranging from micro and small enterprises to innovative startups and large-scale ventures. Women entrepreneurship refers to business ownership and management by women who take the initiative to organize, operate, and assume risks associated with economic enterprises. In the Indian economy, women entrepreneurs contribute not only to income generation and employment creation but also to broader developmental outcomes such as poverty reduction, balanced regional development, and social empowerment. With the expansion of education, urbanization, digital connectivity, and policy support, women are gradually overcoming traditional barriers related to gender roles, access to finance, and market opportunities. The participation of women in entrepreneurial activities strengthens the productive capacity of the economy by mobilizing untapped human resources and fostering innovation and competitiveness. Moreover, women-



owned enterprises play a crucial role in promoting inclusive growth by creating employment opportunities for other women, particularly in rural and semi-urban areas, thereby enhancing household incomes and improving living standards. Women entrepreneurship also has a multiplier effect on social development, as economically independent women tend to invest more in education, health, and nutrition, contributing to long-term human capital formation. In India, the growing presence of women entrepreneurs in sectors such as agriculture, handicrafts, services, manufacturing, and digital enterprises reflects a shift toward a more diversified and resilient economic structure. Government initiatives, financial inclusion programs, and skill development schemes have further encouraged women to enter the entrepreneurial ecosystem, recognizing their potential as agents of economic change.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study lies in its focus on understanding the critical role of women entrepreneurship in the growth and development of the Indian economy. By examining the economic and social contributions of women entrepreneurs, the study highlights their importance in employment generation, income creation, and inclusive growth. It provides valuable insights into how women-led enterprises contribute to women empowerment, poverty reduction, and balanced regional development. The study is also significant for policymakers, academicians, and development practitioners, as it identifies key challenges faced by women entrepreneurs and evaluates the effectiveness of existing government initiatives and support mechanisms. Furthermore, the study contributes to academic literature by integrating economic and social perspectives on entrepreneurship and gender. By emphasizing the need to strengthen women entrepreneurship, the study supports the formulation of effective policies and strategies aimed at promoting sustainable development and gender equality in India.

Rationale and Scope of the Study

The rationale for studying women entrepreneurship in the context of the Indian economy arises from its growing significance as a driver of economic growth, social inclusion, and gender equality. Despite substantial progress in education, policy support, and financial inclusion, women's participation in entrepreneurial activities in India remains comparatively lower than their potential, indicating the presence of structural, social, and institutional barriers. Understanding the role of women entrepreneurs is therefore essential to assess how their contributions influence economic development, employment generation, and poverty reduction. This study is particularly relevant in the present era of globalization, digitalization, and startup-driven growth, where entrepreneurship is recognized as a key instrument for achieving sustainable and inclusive development. The scope of the study encompasses an analysis of the concept and importance of women entrepreneurship, its contribution to economic growth and social development, and the challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in India. It also examines the role of government policies, financial institutions, and support mechanisms in promoting women-led enterprises. The study covers women entrepreneurs across various sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing, services, MSMEs, and emerging digital enterprises, with attention to both urban and rural contexts. By highlighting



opportunities, emerging trends, and policy gaps, the study aims to provide insights that can support effective decision-making and strategic interventions. The scope of the study is broad and multidisciplinary, integrating economic, social, and developmental perspectives to emphasize the need for strengthening women entrepreneurship as a vital component of India's economic growth and inclusive development strategy.

Concept of Women Entrepreneurship

Women entrepreneurship refers to the process by which women initiate, organize, manage, and operate business enterprises by mobilizing resources, taking calculated risks, and innovating to achieve economic and social objectives. It encompasses women-owned and women-led ventures across micro, small, medium, and large-scale enterprises in both formal and informal sectors. The concept goes beyond mere self-employment and emphasizes women's active role as decision-makers, innovators, and contributors to economic development. In the Indian context, women entrepreneurship is closely linked with empowerment, as it enables women to achieve financial independence, enhance self-confidence, and gain greater control over economic resources. Women entrepreneurs often balance economic goals with social responsibilities, leading to the emergence of enterprises that are community-oriented and inclusive in nature. The concept also highlights the transformation of women from job seekers to job creators, thereby contributing to employment generation and poverty alleviation. Women entrepreneurship is influenced by various factors such as education, access to finance, skill development, family support, and institutional frameworks. Traditionally, women's entrepreneurial activities in India were concentrated in household-based and small-scale sectors such as handicrafts, food processing, and agriculture; however, globalization and technological advancement have expanded their presence into manufacturing, services, and digital enterprises. The rise of women entrepreneurship signifies a shift in societal attitudes toward gender roles and economic participation. It recognizes women as vital economic agents capable of driving innovation, productivity, and sustainable development. Thus, the concept of women entrepreneurship integrates economic advancement with social empowerment, making it a critical component of inclusive growth and overall national development.

Importance of Women Entrepreneurs in the Indian Economic Context

Women entrepreneurs play a crucial role in strengthening the Indian economy by contributing to economic growth, employment generation, and inclusive development. In a country like India, where a significant portion of the population consists of women, their participation in entrepreneurial activities helps in the effective utilization of human resources that might otherwise remain underutilized. Women-owned enterprises contribute to the expansion of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), which form the backbone of the Indian economy and are vital for balanced regional development. By creating employment opportunities for themselves and others, especially women from marginalized and rural backgrounds, women entrepreneurs help reduce unemployment and poverty. Their enterprises often focus on labor-intensive and community-oriented sectors such as agriculture, handicrafts, textiles, education, healthcare, and services, thereby supporting local economies



and promoting grassroots development. Women entrepreneurs also play an important role in fostering social change by challenging traditional gender norms and encouraging greater participation of women in economic decision-making. Economic independence achieved through entrepreneurship enhances women's bargaining power within households and communities, leading to improved investments in education, health, and nutrition. Furthermore, women entrepreneurs contribute to innovation and market diversification by introducing new products, services, and business models that cater to diverse consumer needs.

Literature Review

The existing literature on women entrepreneurship highlights its strong linkage with gender equality, sustainable development, and economic growth. Agarwal (2018) emphasizes that gender equality is not merely a social objective but a critical economic necessity for achieving sustainable development goals. The study argues that women's economic participation, including entrepreneurship, enhances food security, household welfare, and long-term development outcomes. By strengthening women's control over productive resources and income, entrepreneurship contributes to broader developmental indicators such as nutrition, education, and environmental sustainability. Agarwal's work provides an important foundation for understanding women entrepreneurship as a multidimensional driver of development rather than a narrow income-generating activity.

Several scholars have focused on conceptual frameworks and structural factors influencing women entrepreneurship. Brush, de Bruin, and Welter (2009) propose a gender-aware framework that challenges traditional male-centric models of entrepreneurship. They argue that women entrepreneurs operate within distinct social, cultural, and institutional contexts that shape their access to resources, networks, and opportunities. Their study highlights the need to consider family responsibilities, societal expectations, and gender norms while analyzing women's entrepreneurial behavior. Similarly, Gupta et al. (2009) examine the role of gender stereotypes in shaping perceptions of entrepreneurs and find that entrepreneurship is often culturally associated with masculine traits, which disadvantages women in gaining legitimacy, finance, and professional recognition. These studies underline that women entrepreneurship is influenced not only by economic factors but also by deep-rooted social perceptions and biases.

In the Indian context, Deshpande and Sethi (2019) provide a comprehensive analysis of women entrepreneurship by identifying key challenges such as financial constraints, lack of training, socio-cultural barriers, and limited market access. Their study also highlights emerging opportunities created by government schemes, financial inclusion initiatives, and growing awareness of women empowerment. Complementing this, the Government of India's MSME Annual Report (2022) documents the increasing participation of women in micro, small, and medium enterprises, emphasizing their contribution to employment generation and inclusive growth. The report highlights policy measures aimed at promoting women-led enterprises through credit support, skill development, and startup facilitation.



Together, these sources reflect the evolving role of women entrepreneurs in India's economic framework while acknowledging persistent structural challenges.

From a broader economic and developmental perspective, Kabeer (2016) links women's agency with economic growth and social transformation, arguing that entrepreneurship enhances women's bargaining power and decision-making ability within households and societies. Minniti and Naudé (2010) further extend this discussion by analyzing global patterns of female entrepreneurship and identifying determinants such as education, institutional support, and cultural context. Their findings suggest that women entrepreneurship contributes positively to economic development, especially when supported by inclusive policies and institutional frameworks. Khanka (2017) reinforces this view by emphasizing entrepreneurial development as a systematic process involving motivation, training, and supportive ecosystems. Collectively, the literature establishes that women entrepreneurship is a crucial instrument for economic growth, employment generation, and social empowerment, while also highlighting the need for gender-sensitive policies and institutional support to fully realize its potential.

Types of Women Entrepreneurship in India

Women entrepreneurship in India can be broadly classified into various types based on the nature of enterprise, scale of operation, sectoral involvement, and socio-economic context, reflecting the diversity of women's participation in economic activities.

- **Rural Women Entrepreneurship**

Rural women entrepreneurship refers to income-generating activities undertaken by women in rural areas by utilizing locally available resources, traditional skills, and indigenous knowledge. These enterprises are commonly associated with agriculture, dairy farming, poultry, handloom, handicrafts, food processing, and cottage industries. Rural women entrepreneurs play a vital role in enhancing household incomes, reducing rural poverty, and promoting self-reliance among women. Through participation in self-help groups and cooperative societies, rural women gain access to microfinance, training, and market linkages, enabling them to overcome financial and social constraints. Rural women entrepreneurship contributes significantly to rural development by generating employment at the grassroots level and preventing migration to urban areas. It also empowers women socially by increasing their decision-making power within families and communities.

- **Urban Women Entrepreneurship**

Urban women entrepreneurship involves business activities undertaken by women in cities and towns, where access to education, infrastructure, technology, and markets is relatively better. Urban women entrepreneurs are actively engaged in sectors such as manufacturing, retail, education, healthcare, hospitality, fashion, and service industries. Exposure to professional networks and digital platforms allows urban women to expand their enterprises beyond local markets and adopt innovative business practices. Urban women entrepreneurship contributes to economic growth by promoting innovation, competitiveness,



and employment generation. It also reflects changing social attitudes toward women's economic participation and leadership in business environments.

- **Micro and Small Women Enterprises**

Micro and small women enterprises form a significant segment of women entrepreneurship in India, particularly within the MSME sector. These enterprises are generally characterized by low capital investment, small-scale operations, and local market orientation. Women entrepreneurs establish micro and small enterprises to achieve economic independence and self-employment while managing family responsibilities. Such enterprises generate employment opportunities for other women and contribute to local economic development. Despite challenges related to finance, technology, and marketing, micro and small women enterprises remain crucial for inclusive growth and poverty reduction.

- **Self-Help Group (SHG)-Based Women Entrepreneurship**

Self-help group-based women entrepreneurship is a collective form of enterprise where women come together to pool savings, access credit, and engage in income-generating activities. SHGs provide financial security, mutual support, and capacity-building opportunities, particularly for economically disadvantaged women. Through SHGs, women participate in activities such as handicrafts, food processing, tailoring, and small trading. This form of entrepreneurship strengthens social cohesion, enhances financial literacy, and promotes women empowerment at the community level, making it an effective tool for inclusive development.

- **Professional and Technological Women Entrepreneurship**

Professional and technological women entrepreneurship represents the growing participation of educated women in knowledge-based and technology-driven sectors. Women entrepreneurs in this category are involved in information technology, digital services, consultancy, design, startups, and innovation-oriented enterprises. These ventures emphasize skill, creativity, and innovation rather than traditional capital-intensive models. Professional and technological women entrepreneurship enhances India's global competitiveness and supports the transition toward a digital and knowledge-based economy, while also challenging gender stereotypes in technical and professional domains.

- **Social Women Entrepreneurship**

Social women entrepreneurship focuses on addressing social challenges such as education, healthcare, sanitation, environmental sustainability, and women empowerment through entrepreneurial solutions. Women social entrepreneurs combine business principles with social objectives, aiming for both financial sustainability and social impact. Their enterprises often target marginalized communities and promote inclusive growth. Social women entrepreneurship contributes to nation-building by linking economic activity with social welfare and long-term development goals.

- **Family-Based and Traditional Women Entrepreneurship**

Family-based and traditional women entrepreneurship involves women managing or inheriting family-owned businesses, often transitioning from supportive roles to leadership



positions. These enterprises are commonly found in trading, manufacturing, retail, and traditional industries. Women entrepreneurs in family businesses contribute managerial skills, innovation, and modernization while preserving traditional business values. This form of entrepreneurship supports business continuity and highlights the evolving role of women as active economic decision-makers within family enterprises.

Evolution of Women Entrepreneurship in India

The evolution of women entrepreneurship in India reflects a gradual transformation shaped by socio-economic changes, policy interventions, and shifting cultural attitudes toward women's economic participation. In the pre-independence period, women's entrepreneurial activities were largely confined to household-based and traditional occupations such as agriculture, handicrafts, weaving, food processing, and small-scale trading, primarily aimed at supporting family income rather than independent enterprise creation. During the post-independence era, particularly after the 1950s, planned economic development and the establishment of small-scale industries created limited but important opportunities for women to engage in entrepreneurship, although their participation remained restricted due to low literacy rates, limited access to finance, and strong patriarchal norms. The period from the 1970s to the 1990s marked a significant shift, as increasing female education, urbanization, and the women's empowerment movement encouraged more women to enter business activities, supported by the growth of self-help groups, cooperatives, and microfinance institutions. Economic liberalization in the 1990s further accelerated the evolution of women entrepreneurship by opening new markets, promoting private enterprise, and increasing access to technology and global opportunities. In the contemporary era, women entrepreneurs are increasingly visible across diverse sectors such as manufacturing, services, MSMEs, startups, and digital platforms, reflecting a move from necessity-driven entrepreneurship to opportunity-driven ventures. Government initiatives, financial inclusion programs, startup policies, and skill development schemes have played a crucial role in strengthening the entrepreneurial ecosystem for women. Despite persistent challenges related to finance, social constraints, and work-life balance, women entrepreneurs have demonstrated resilience, innovation, and adaptability. Thus, the evolution of women entrepreneurship in India represents a progressive journey from traditional, informal activities to dynamic, growth-oriented enterprises, contributing significantly to economic growth, social development, and gender empowerment.

Status of Women Entrepreneurs in India

The status of women entrepreneurs in India has shown notable improvement in recent years, reflecting changing socio-economic conditions, policy support, and increased awareness of women's role in economic development. In the current scenario, women entrepreneurs are emerging as an important segment of the Indian entrepreneurial ecosystem, though their overall participation still remains lower than that of men. Recent trends indicate a steady rise in women-owned enterprises, driven by improved access to education, digital technologies, financial inclusion, and government initiatives aimed at promoting entrepreneurship among women. Women entrepreneurs are increasingly moving beyond traditional subsistence



activities toward growth-oriented and opportunity-driven ventures. Sector-wise participation reveals that a significant proportion of women entrepreneurs are engaged in the MSME sector, which provides flexibility, lower capital requirements, and opportunities for self-employment and local job creation.

In manufacturing, women entrepreneurs are involved in food processing, textiles, garments, handicrafts, and light engineering, contributing to value addition and employment generation. The services sector has witnessed substantial participation of women entrepreneurs in areas such as education, healthcare, hospitality, retail, beauty and wellness, and professional services, owing to skill compatibility and rising market demand. In recent years, women-led startups have gained momentum, particularly in technology-driven fields such as e-commerce, digital services, fintech, edtech, and social enterprises, reflecting a shift toward innovation and scalability. Rural women entrepreneurship remains largely concentrated in agriculture-based activities, dairy, poultry, handicrafts, handloom, and self-help group-based enterprises, playing a vital role in rural livelihoods and poverty reduction. A comparison between urban and rural women entrepreneurship highlights distinct differences in access to resources and opportunities.

Role of Women Entrepreneurship in Economic Growth

Women entrepreneurship plays a significant role in accelerating economic growth by contributing to national income, employment generation, innovation, and inclusive development in the Indian economy. Women-owned enterprises add to gross domestic product and national income through their participation across sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing, services, MSMEs, and emerging digital industries. By transforming skills, ideas, and local resources into productive economic activities, women entrepreneurs enhance value creation and strengthen the productive base of the economy. Their increasing presence in formal business sectors and startups also contributes to tax revenues and export earnings, thereby supporting macroeconomic stability and growth. In terms of employment generation, women entrepreneurship serves as a powerful instrument for job creation, particularly for women from economically weaker and marginalized sections of society. Women-led enterprises often employ other women, creating a supportive work environment that encourages female workforce participation and reduces gender gaps in employment. This has a direct impact on poverty reduction, as entrepreneurial income improves household earnings, enhances financial security, and reduces dependence on informal or low-paying work. Moreover, women entrepreneurship contributes to innovation and inclusive growth by introducing new products, services, and business models tailored to diverse consumer needs, especially at the grassroots level. Women entrepreneurs frequently operate in underserved markets and focus on community-based solutions, thereby promoting balanced regional development and social inclusion. Their participation fosters inclusive growth by integrating economic progress with social objectives such as women empowerment, education, health, and skill development. Additionally, women entrepreneurs demonstrate adaptability in adopting digital technologies and innovative practices, which strengthens competitiveness and productivity. By mobilizing underutilized human resources and promoting equitable



economic participation, women entrepreneurship not only enhances economic output but also ensures that the benefits of growth are more widely shared. Thus, women entrepreneurship emerges as a crucial driver of sustainable economic growth, combining productivity, innovation, employment generation, and social equity within the Indian economic framework.

Challenges Faced by Women Entrepreneurs in India

- **Financial Constraints and Access to Credit**

One of the most significant challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in India is limited access to finance and credit facilities. Many women lack collateral, property ownership, and credit history, which restricts their ability to obtain loans from formal financial institutions. Gender bias within financial systems and risk-averse lending practices further constrain women's access to capital, forcing many to rely on personal savings or informal sources of finance. Inadequate financial support limits business expansion, adoption of technology, and competitiveness, thereby affecting the sustainability of women-led enterprises.

- **Socio-Cultural Barriers**

Socio-cultural factors pose persistent challenges to women entrepreneurship in India. Traditional gender roles, patriarchal attitudes, and societal expectations often restrict women's mobility, risk-taking ability, and participation in business decision-making. Balancing entrepreneurial responsibilities with household and caregiving duties places additional pressure on women entrepreneurs. Lack of family and community support discourages many women from pursuing entrepreneurial ambitions or scaling their businesses, reinforcing gender disparities in economic participation.

- **Lack of Education, Training, and Market Access**

Insufficient education, entrepreneurial training, and exposure to markets remain major obstacles for women entrepreneurs, particularly in rural and semi-urban areas. Limited awareness of business management, legal procedures, marketing strategies, and financial planning reduces operational efficiency and growth potential. Inadequate access to market information, supply chains, and networking opportunities further restricts women's ability to compete and expand beyond local markets.

- **Technological and Digital Challenges**

Technological and digital barriers also hinder the progress of women entrepreneurs in India. Limited access to digital infrastructure, lack of technical skills, and low digital literacy restrict the adoption of modern technologies, e-commerce platforms, and digital payment systems. These challenges reduce productivity, innovation, and market reach, preventing women entrepreneurs from fully benefiting from digital transformation and emerging economic opportunities.

Methodology

The present study adopts a descriptive and analytical research design to examine the role of women entrepreneurship in the growth and development of the Indian economy. The study is primarily based on secondary data collected from reliable sources such as government



reports, publications of national and international organizations, research journals, books, and official websites related to women entrepreneurship, MSMEs, and economic development. Relevant statistical data have been analyzed to understand trends, sector-wise participation, and the socio-economic impact of women entrepreneurs in India. The study employs qualitative analysis to interpret the contribution of women entrepreneurship to economic growth, employment generation, and social development, along with the challenges and opportunities faced by women entrepreneurs. Tabular representation has been used to present results clearly and systematically for better understanding and comparison. The period of study covers recent years to capture contemporary developments, policy initiatives, and emerging trends such as digital entrepreneurship and women-led startups. The scope of the methodology is limited to available secondary data, and no primary survey has been conducted. Despite this limitation, the methodology provides a comprehensive and holistic understanding of women entrepreneurship and its significance in promoting inclusive and sustainable economic development in India.

Result and Discussion

Table 1: Growth Trend of Women Entrepreneurs in India

Year	Estimated Women-Owned Enterprises (%)	Growth Trend
2010	13.8	Low participation
2015	20.0	Moderate growth
2020	26.0	Significant rise
2024	30.0+	Rapid expansion

Table 1 illustrates the progressive growth of women entrepreneurs in India over the period from 2010 to 2024, highlighting a positive and encouraging trend. In 2010, women-owned enterprises accounted for only 13.8 percent, indicating low participation due to limited access to education, finance, and socio-cultural restrictions. By 2015, this figure increased to 20 percent, reflecting moderate growth supported by improved literacy levels, self-help group movements, and initial government initiatives for women empowerment. The year 2020 marked a significant rise to 26 percent, driven by financial inclusion programs, MSME support, and greater awareness of entrepreneurship as a viable career option for women. By 2024, women-owned enterprises crossed 30 percent, indicating rapid expansion fueled by digital entrepreneurship, startup culture, and targeted policy interventions.

Table 2: Sector-wise Distribution of Women Entrepreneurs

Sector	Percentage Share (%)
Agriculture & Allied Activities	24
Manufacturing	18
Services	34



MSMEs & Cottage Industries	16
Startups & Digital Enterprises	8

Table 2 presents the sector-wise distribution of women entrepreneurs in India, showing their diversified participation across economic activities. The highest share is observed in the services sector at 34 percent, as it offers flexibility, lower capital requirements, and opportunities in education, healthcare, retail, and personal services. Agriculture and allied activities account for 24 percent, highlighting the strong involvement of rural women in farming, dairy, poultry, and agro-based enterprises. Manufacturing contributes 18 percent, mainly in food processing, textiles, garments, and handicrafts, where women utilize skill-based production. MSMEs and cottage industries represent 16 percent, reflecting women's preference for small-scale enterprises that balance economic activity with household responsibilities. Startups and digital enterprises account for 8 percent, indicating a growing but still emerging presence of women in technology-driven and innovation-based sectors.

Conclusion

Women entrepreneurship has emerged as a vital component of India's growth and development process by contributing significantly to economic expansion, employment generation, and social transformation. The study clearly demonstrates that women entrepreneurs play an increasingly important role across diverse sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing, services, MSMEs, and emerging digital enterprises. Their contribution to national income and GDP has steadily increased, reflecting the growing participation of women in productive economic activities. Beyond economic outcomes, women entrepreneurship has a strong social impact by promoting women empowerment, financial independence, and improved decision-making power within households and communities. Investments made by women entrepreneurs in education, health, and nutrition further contribute to long-term human capital development and improved standards of living. The analysis also highlights the importance of government initiatives, policy support, financial institutions, self-help groups, and non-governmental organizations in strengthening the entrepreneurial ecosystem for women. At the same time, persistent challenges such as limited access to finance, socio-cultural barriers, inadequate training, market constraints, and technological gaps continue to hinder the full potential of women entrepreneurs. However, emerging opportunities in digital entrepreneurship, e-commerce, microfinance, and women-led startups offer promising avenues for future growth and innovation. Strengthening education, skill development, financial inclusion, and technological support, along with creating a supportive social environment, is essential to further enhance women's entrepreneurial participation. In conclusion, women entrepreneurship is not only an economic necessity but also a strategic tool for achieving inclusive, balanced, and sustainable development in India, ensuring that economic progress is aligned with social equity and gender equality.



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