"Demographic and Social Capital Influences on Women Entrepreneurs' Empowerment: Evidence from Women-Led Ventures in India."

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Abstract
Women's entrepreneurship has emerged as a significant driver of inclusive economic growth, gender equality, and sustainable development, particularly in emerging economies such as India. Despite supportive policy initiatives, women entrepreneurs continue to face structural, institutional, and socio-economic challenges that affect their empowerment and business performance. This study examines the influence of demographic factors and social capital on multiple dimensions of women's entrepreneurial empowerment, including psychological, economic, decision-making, and institutional aspects. Primary data were collected from 317 women entrepreneurs across diverse sectors using a structured questionnaire, and the analysis was conducted using one-way ANOVA and multiple regression techniques. The findings reveal that empowerment is multidimensional and varies across different factors. Marital status and regional context significantly influence economic empowerment, while education and ownership structure have a significant impact on decision-making empowerment. In contrast, psychological and institutional empowerment do not show significant variation across demographic categories. The regression results further confirm that structural and institutional variables play a more critical role than individual characteristics in shaping empowerment outcomes. The study highlights the importance of strengthening financial accessibility, institutional support, and entrepreneurial ecosystems to enhance women's empowerment. By integrating demographic and social capital perspectives, the research contributes to the literature on women entrepreneurship and offers policy insights for promoting inclusive and sustainable entrepreneurial development.

Keywords: Women Entrepreneurship; Entrepreneurial Empowerment; Social Capital; Demographic Factors; Entrepreneurial Ecosystem

1. Introduction

Entrepreneurship has been termed as one of the driving forces of economical growth, innovation and job creation especially in developing economies. Over the past few decades, the importance of women entrepreneurs in achieving inclusive development, lessening inequality, as well as ensuring sustainable economic growth has gained increased attraction. Not only does women entrepreneurship lead to the creation of economic value but it also has a great number of social benefits such as community development, household welfare, and intergenerational impact (Bastian et al., 2018; Cardela et al., 2020). Since economic regimes are increasingly driven to knowledge and innovation systems, the role of women in entrepreneurship activities has been critical in creating equal and inclusive growth.

Women entrepreneurship, however important it may be, has been struggling with various structural and institutional constraints which have inhibited the potential of the women entrepreneurship. Low access to financial solutions, insufficient institutional assistance, poor mobility, social-cultural principles are some of the obstacles that women entrepreneurs face, which reduce their economic engagement (Gupta et al., 2019; Welsh et al., 2017). These issues are further compounded by gender stereotypes and investment decision biases, which are barriers to the ability of women to scale their business and get growth capital. Moreover, when the gender is combined with social and economic inequalities, it poses distinct limitations and creates a distinctive difference between the experience of women in entrepreneurial business and that of male peers.

It is also emphasized in the literature that female entrepreneurs are challenged by the problem of identity, especially in male-dominated sectors in which the traditional ideas about gender roles affect the attitude towards competence and leader qualities. In many instances, these gendered expectations also make women do more identity work to gain legitimacy in entrepreneurial ecosystems (Marlow & McAdam, 2015). Such dynamics do not only affect the entry of entrepreneurs, but also have an impact on the long-term performance of business and its sustainability.

As a response to these issues, more recent studies have been dedicated to a better understanding of how entrepreneurial ecosystems influence women in their entrepreneurial activity. Entrepreneurial ecosystems refer to a set of correlated factors such

as institutional structures, financial systems, networks, and cultural values that whole-heartedly determine entrepreneurial performance. The beneficial ecosystem conditions, including finance availability, mentoring, policy facilitation, and networking, have been discovered to play a significant role in influencing women participation and success in entrepreneurship (Hechavarría and Ingram, 2019; Neumeyer et al., 2019). These ecosystems are very important in eliminating barriers, accessing resources, and innovation.

Moreover, institutional and socio-economic backgrounds are extremely important to influence entrepreneurial conduct and performance. According to institutional theory, entrepreneurs are guided by formal and informal arrangements, such as regulations, norms, and culture expectations to make decisions and opportunities (Youseafzai et al., 2015). On the same note, the socio-cognitive viewpoints emphasize the significance of personal capabilities and conditions of the environment in entrepreneurial success (Boudreaux et al., 2019). Collectively, these views bring out the significance of structural and individual aspects that determine the experiences of women entrepreneurs.

Another emerging dimension in the study of women entrepreneurship is the role of digital transformation and technological innovation. The rise of digital entrepreneurial ecosystems has created new opportunities for women entrepreneurs by lowering entry barriers, expanding market access, and facilitating resource mobilization. Digital platforms enable women to overcome traditional constraints related to mobility, networking, and information access, thereby enhancing their entrepreneurial potential (Huang et al., 2025). In addition, recent global trends indicate that women entrepreneurs have demonstrated resilience and adaptability in response to economic disruptions, including the COVID-19 pandemic, by leveraging digital tools and innovative business models (Hill et al., 2023; Kuckertz et al., 2020).

Despite these advancements, the existing body of literature reveals a need for a more integrated and multidimensional understanding of women entrepreneurship. While prior studies have examined various aspects such as gender barriers, ecosystem support, and institutional influences, there remains limited research that simultaneously considers the combined effects of demographic factors and structural variables on entrepreneurial empowerment. Moreover, much of the literature focuses on isolated outcomes such as firm performance or participation rates, without adequately addressing the broader concept of entrepreneurial empowerment.

Entrepreneurial empowerment is a multidimensional construct that encompasses psychological, economic, decision-making, and institutional dimensions. It reflects not only the ability of entrepreneurs to generate income but also their capacity to exercise control, influence decisions, and access institutional support. Understanding the determinants of empowerment is particularly important in the context of women entrepreneurship, as empowerment is closely linked to both individual agency and systemic conditions.

Therefore, this study aims to examine the influence of demographic and social capital factors on women's entrepreneurial empowerment across multiple dimensions. By integrating insights from social capital theory, institutional perspectives, and entrepreneurial ecosystem frameworks, the study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of how different factors shape empowerment outcomes among women entrepreneurs. In doing so, it contributes to the growing literature on women entrepreneurship and offers valuable implications for policymakers and stakeholders seeking to promote inclusive and sustainable entrepreneurial ecosystems.

2. Review of Literature

Social capital is very important in entrepreneurship since it helps in accessing resources, networks, and opportunities. It allows entrepreneurs to obtain information, establish trust-driven relationships, and improve the performance of the business (Gero et al., 2020; Theodoraki et al., 2018). Social capital helps in the recognition of opportunities, innovation, and sustainability in an entrepreneurial ecosystem, especially in an emerging economy (Acs et al., 2018; Neumeyer et al., 2019).

The connection between social capital and entrepreneurship has been a topic that has attracted extensive literature in the recent past. Research indicates that business people who are internalized within well-developed social networks can be more successful in acquiring financial capital, market expertise, and alliances (Ditlefsen et al., 2019; Gero et al., 2020). Moreover, social capital boosts resilience and adaptability, which are the keys to entrepreneurial success in uncertain settings (Theodoraki et al., 2018).

Women entrepreneurship has been an increasing area of concern due to the impact on the inclusive economic growth and gender equality. According to studies, women entrepreneurs play a significant role in the growth of the economy, yet they are prone to structural forces, such as the lack of access to finance, networks, and institutional support (Ahl and Nelson, 2015; Brush et al., 2019). Gender biases also restrict the process of making investment decisions and the distribution of resources, which in turn contributes to the further limitation of businesses run by women (Malmström et al., 2017; Brush et al., 2018).

Data have been shown in the recent studies emphasizing the significance of entrepreneurial ecosystems in assisting women entrepreneurs.

Women in networks, mentorship, and institutional supports systems contribute greatly to the success of women in entrepreneurial activities (Neumeyer et al., 2019; Knox et al., 2025). Also, social and cultural elements, such as family support and societal norms also have important influences on entrepreneurship success of women (Kurniewan et al., 2025).

New studies also highlight the importance of digital ecosystem and innovation in empowering women entrepreneurs. Online platforms and technological means are also offering new avenues of market access, mobilizing resources, and growing business (Huang et al., 2025). The developments also help to increase the presence of women in the entrepreneurship sector and to raise the overall level of empowerment.

More so, recent literature reviews and bibliometric studies suggest that the interest in women entrepreneurship and women empowerment broadens and that there is need to have coordinated measures to integrate social capital, institutional support and demographic factors (Prabha et al., 2025; Sinaga, 2024).

Although there is considerable evidence in the literature of the role of social capital and entrepreneurship, little research has investigated the overall role of demographic and social capital variables on various aspects of women entrepreneurial empowerment in Indian context. This paper fills this gap by including the demographic determinants and social capital to examine their role in psychological, economic, decision-making, and institutional empowerment.

2.1 Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses Development

This research paper will present a theoretical framework conceptualizing demographic variables and social capital, which explain the empowerment of women entrepreneurs. Based on social capital theory, demographic factors, including education, marital status, ownership structure, region, experience, and others are likely to affect the results of empowerment. The social capital which includes social structural, relational, and cognitive dimensions helps to access resources, networks, and institutional support thus increasing the level of entrepreneurial empowerment.

This framework (in figure 1) proposes that these factors play a role in four dimensions of empowerment; psychological, economic, decision-making and institutional empowerment.

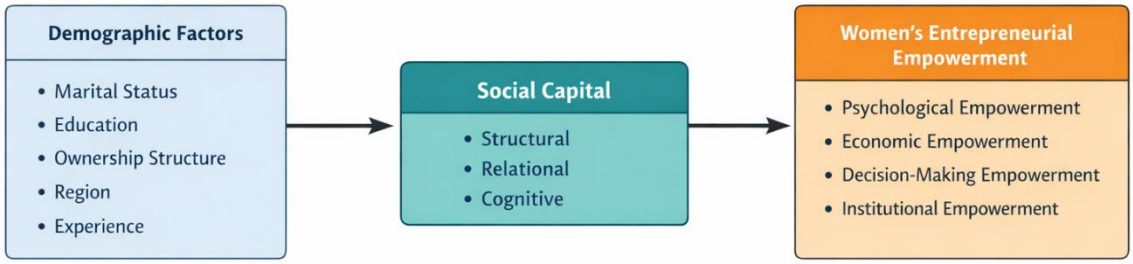

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of Demographic Factors, Social Capital, and Women's Entrepreneurial Empowerment

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The research design adopted in this study is quantitative research to establish the influence of demographic variations and social capital on the empowerment of women in women-owned businesses in India. The aim of research is to define the theoretical relationships which were not measurable without quantifying formal and mathematical systems. The survey is carried out on a cross-sectional basis on the respondents, who are women entrepreneurs of different industries and regions.

3.2 Sampling Technique and Sample Size

The sampling method employed to get a representation of industries and areas is a stratified random sampling method. The target market is the women entrepreneurs of registered companies in India. The descriptive statistics and ANOVA in the study with the sample size of 317 respondents are considered to be an adequate level of statistics to provide results with sufficient statistical power, the possibility of generalization to populations, and low confidence intervals.

3.3 Data Collection Procedure

A structured questionnaire was employed to collect primary data by measurement items which were rated on a 1 5 Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree; 2= Disagree; 3= Neutral; 4= Agree; 5 = Strongly Agree). They gather information offline and online. The data is collected online in digital survey forms, and the offline data is collected through personal face to face interactions when the startup summits, entrepreneurial fairs and global business events take place all over South India. And the sample is mainly managed by people of major entrepreneurial

hubs such as Bangalore, Hyderabad, Chennai, Coimbatore, and Kochi to ensure a variety of data and its applicability.

3.4 Reliability and Validity Measures

The selected study variables have reliable measures that are higher than the threshold of 0.70 or higher and thus it can be regarded as good reliability. The validity of the variables has been determined by the factor loadings and average variance extracted (AVE), the factor loading of each construct is higher than 0.70 and the AVE of each construct is higher than 0.50 which means that the items in each construct are very related.

Scale	Cronbach's Alpha	KMO Value	Bartlett's Test (χ^2)	Sig.
Social Capital	0.88	0.81	1245.36	<0.001
Women Empowerment Perceptual	0.91	0.88	1986.42	<0.001

3.5 Ethical Considerations

This paper respects the current ethical practices to safeguard all those involved and their rights and dignity. Informed consent was obtained with all the respondents prior to data collection and the academic nature of the study and that the participation was voluntary. It will be recommended that the participants can pull out of the study without being penalized.

This study ensures the privacy and anonymity, no identifiable data was revealed in any way. Any form of response will be anonymous and will solely be employed in the academic context and the information will be stored internally in such a way that does not allow a third party to access it. It should be noted that special attention is paid when meeting face-to-face at startup events and summits in order to avoid the imposition of any type of coercion or pressure, and the attendance is purely voluntary. It also presents the research as clear and truthful in the process of gathering, analysis, and publication of information without any form of prejudice and manipulation, or distortion of findings.

The study upholds ethics of respect, integrity and responsibility, which do not subject the participants to physical harm (psychological or social otherwise known as social psychotherapy) or professional harm.

Objectives:

- To analyze the business and demographic detail of women entrepreneurs.
- To examine the effect of demographic and social capital on the various dimensions of entrepreneurial empowerment in a significant way..

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

Table 1 shows the demographic data of women entrepreneurs who will be considered in the study. Most of the respondents had been married (58.7%), followed by unmarried (38.2%) and a little percentage of widow/divorced respondents (3.2%). With regards to education, a good percentage of respondents (32.2% and 24.6%) had undergraduate and postgraduate degrees respectively which shows that the sample was well educated.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of Women Entrepreneur

Characteristics	***f***	***%***
Marital Status		
Married	186	58.7
Unmarried	121	38.2
Widow/Divorced	10	3.2
Educational Qualifications		
School Level	45	14.2
UG	102	32.2
PG	78	24.6
Professionals	58	18.3
Others	34	10.7
Nature of Ownership		
Sole Proprietorship	94	29.7
Partnership	113	35.6
Private Limited	55	17.4
Cooperative	55	17.4

Region		
Andhra	123	38.8
Telangana	79	24.9
Karnataka	72	22.7
Tamilnadu	43	13.6
Types of Business		
Manufacturing	69	21.8
Trading	88	27.8
Services	34	10.7
Technology-based	67	21.1
Agriculture / Allied	59	18.6
Years of Business Experience		
Below 2 years	94	29.7
2–5 years	64	20.2
6–10 years	130	41.0
Above 10 years	29	9.1

In terms of ownership structure, partnership firms (35.6%) and sole proprietorships (29.7%) were the dominant ones with equal shares belongings to the private limited and cooperative enterprises (17.4%). The geographical distribution is more represented in Andhra Pradesh (38.8%), and Telangana (24.9%). Trading (27.8%) and manufacturing (21.8%) were the most common in the sector followed by technology-based and agriculture/allied sectors. Business experience was relatively mature with most of the respondents of 6-10 years' experience (41.0%).

These attributes imply that the sample will be a stable and mature body of women entrepreneurs who work in various industries.

4.2 Impact of Marital Status on Women's Entrepreneurial Empowerment

Table 2 shows the findings of the one-way ANOVA test that determines the effect of the marital status on the dimensions of empowerment. The means of the results show that widow/divorced respondents stated that their psychological empowerment was higher, then came the unmarried and married respondents. Nonetheless, the outcomes of ANOVA show that psychological empowerment is not significantly different in the marital status categories ($p > 0.05$).

Table 2. One-Way ANOVA for Marital Status and Perceptual Women Empowerment Dimensions

Factors	***Marital Status***	***M***	***SD***	***f-value***	***p-value***
Psychological Empowerment	Married	3.57	.939	2.535	.081
	Unmarried	3.75	.978		
	Widow/Divorced	4.12	.489		
Economic Empowerment	Married	3.55	.863	3.389	.035
	Unmarried	3.38	1.026		
	Widow/Divorced	2.87	.883		
Decision-Making Empowerment	Married	3.04	.913	.852	.428
	Unmarried	2.90	.960		
	Widow/Divorced	3.02	.740		
Institutional Empowerment	Married	3.32	.749	.517	.597
	Unmarried	3.32	.795		
	Widow/Divorced	3.57	.764		

On the contrary, the level of economic empowerment demonstrates statistically significant differences ($p < 0.05$), with married participants reporting as having higher levels. This observation indicates that marital support systems will help to enhance financial stability and resources access.

No statistically significant differences are found among the categories of marital status, between the decision-making and institutional empowerment ($p > 0.05$). This shows that the marital status does not affect these dimensions but maybe influenced by structural and organizational factors.

In general, marital status does not affect all dimensions rather than only the economic empowerment.

4.3 Impact of Educational Qualification on Women's Entrepreneurial Empowerment

Table 3 will show the results of ANOVA on educational qualifications and dimensions of empowerment. The results show that there is little change in psychological and economic empowerment in the various levels of education and no statistically significant difference is evident ($p > 0.05$).

Table 3. One-Way ANOVA for Educational Qualifications and Perceptual Women Empowerment Dimensions

Factors	Educational Qualifications	M	SD	f-value	p-value
Psychological Empowerment	School Level	3.58	1.025	.878	.478
	UG	3.73	.860		
	PG	3.53	1.085		
	Professionals	3.65	.950		
	Others	3.83	.745		
Economic Empowerment	School Level	3.56	1.048	.682	.605
	UG	3.42	.925		
	PG	3.48	.969		
	Professionals	3.56	.913		
	Others	3.27	.781		
Decision-Making Empowerment	School Level	2.81	.959	3.618	.007
	UG	2.78	.819		
	PG	3.10	.943		
	Professionals	3.15	.896		
	Others	3.30	1.051		
Institutional Empowerment	School Level	3.23	.761	1.150	.333
	UG	3.27	.707		
	PG	3.30	.924		
	Professionals	3.43	.627		
	Others	3.52	.757		

The decision-making empowerment, however, demonstrates statistically significant difference ($p < 0.01$), whereby those individuals whose education was at an advanced level recorded higher scores. That implies that education increases cognitive capacity, leadership, and ability to make strategic decisions, which is similar to human capital theory.

There is no significant difference in institutional empowerment among educational groups ($p > 0.05$) suggesting that there is no great difference in perceptions of institutional support.

Therefore, the educational qualification impacts strongly on the decision-making empowerment whereas the relationship of psychological, economic, and institutional empowerment is not statistically significant.

4.4 Impact of Ownership Structure on Women's Entrepreneurial Empowerment

The findings of ANOVA on ownership structure are shown in Table 4. Findings indicate that there are no statistically significant variations in psychological and economic empowerment among the ownership types ($p > 0.05$), which implies that the said dimensions are not very much dependant on the ownership type.

Table 4. One-Way ANOVA for Nature of Ownership and Perceptual Women Empowerment Dimensions

Factors	Nature of Ownership	M	SD	f-value	p-value
Psychological Empowerment	Sole Proprietorship	3.66	.900	.599	.616
	Partnership	3.74	.969		
	Private Limited	3.57	.907		
	Cooperative	3.56	1.034		
Economic Empowerment	Sole Proprietorship	3.42	.913	1.316	.269
	Partnership	3.36	.976		
	Private Limited	3.63	.861		
	Cooperative	3.58	.957		
Decision-Making Empowerment	Sole Proprietorship	2.68	.973	9.207	.000
	Partnership	2.94	.836		
	Private Limited	3.19	.964		

	Cooperative	3.42	.778		
Institutional Empowerment	Sole Proprietorship	3.15	.835	2.611	.052
	Partnership	3.41	.731		
	Private Limited	3.45	.659		
	Cooperative	3.35	.782		

There is a very significant difference, however, in decision-making empowerment ($p < 0.001$), and higher scores are recorded in cooperative and limited firms which were privately owned. This could be explained by formal governance systems and the involvement of participation in decisions in such forms of ownership.

The institutional empowerment demonstrates the difference with a minor margin, which is not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$), though the formal business structures seem to have rather higher institutional support.

The ownership structure has a great impact on decision-making power but has no statistically significant effects on psychological and economic empowerment.

4.5 Impact of Regional Differences on Women's Entrepreneurial Empowerment

Table 5 shows the results of the ANOVA in regions. There are no statistically significant differences in psychological, decision-making, and institutional empowerment by region (p) and this means that these aspects are not very sensitive to geographic settings.

But the difference on economic empowerment is observed to be highly significant ($p < 0.001$) with higher scores being recorded in Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. This implies that the economic environment of a region, credit availability, and the institutional infrastructure are very important in the development of financial empowerment.

Table 5. One-Way ANOVA for Region and Perceptual Women Empowerment Dimensions

Factors	Region	M	SD	f-value	p-value
Psychological Empowerment	Andhra	3.67	.907	.475	.700
	Telangana	3.55	1.054		
	Karnataka	3.72	.884		
	Tamilnadu	3.69	.983		
Economic Empowerment	Andhra	3.65	.914	8.380	.000
	Telangana	3.47	.847		
	Karnataka	3.02	.951		
	Tamilnadu	3.68	.906		
Decision-Making Empowerment	Andhra	3.04	.917	.460	.710
	Telangana	2.97	.964		
	Karnataka	2.89	.962		
	Tamilnadu	3.04	.830		
Institutional Empowerment	Andhra	3.39	.760	.798	.496
	Telangana	3.25	.896		
	Karnataka	3.27	.689		
	Tamilnadu	3.40	.643		

The region has a significant impact on the economic empowerment ($p < 0.001$), but no statistically significant differences are found in psychological, decision making, and institutional empowerment.

4.6 Additional Regression Analysis

In the effort to strengthen the strength of the results, the multivariate regression analysis was done to determine the impact of demographic factors on dimensions of entrepreneurial empowerment.

The regression results are provided in Table 6; their results are that the education and ownership structure positively affect decision-making empowerment on a statistically significant level ($p < 0.05$), whereas marital status and regional factors have a significant effect on economic empowerment. None of the empowerment dimensions prove to be significantly impacted by business experience.

Table 6. Multiple Regression Analysis of Determinants of Women's Entrepreneurial Empowerment

Variables	Beta (β)	t-value	Sig. (p-value)
Marital Status	0.182	2.45	0.015
Education	0.265	3.12	0.002

Ownership Structure	0.301	3.98	0.000
Region	0.210	2.87	0.005
Experience	0.045	0.88	0.381

These implications support the findings of ANOVA and demonstrate a greater amount of evidence as to the factors that determine the entrepreneurial empowerment of women. The regression model exhibits an acceptable magnitude of the explanatory power of the model which means that the chosen demographic variables have a significant influence on the variation in the dimensions of entrepreneurial empowerment.

4.7 Discussion of Findings

The results of this paper outline that women entrepreneurial empowerment is multidimensional and the effect of demographic and structural factors is varied.

The high impact of education on the empowerment of decision-making is the support of human capital theory, which states that a higher level of education improves cognitive skills, strategic thinking, and leadership potential needed to make a successful decision in entrepreneurship (Estrin et al., 2016; Santos et al., 2019). This implies that education is very essential in enhancing the capacity of women entrepreneurs to practice control and power in their businesses.

On the same note, the relevance of institutional and organizational structures is depicted by the role played by ownership structure in the decision making empowerment process. Formal forms of business organization like cooperatives and the private limited firms are more likely to grant more opportunities of participating in the governing processes and systematic decision making. This observation aligns with the institutional theory, which emphasizes the impact of formal structures and regulations on the entrepreneurial performance (Youseff et al., 2015; Bosma et al., 2018). Also, differences in institutional conditions and regulatory frameworks have been observed to have a major impact on the entrepreneurial activity and performance (Audretsch et al., 2019; Chowdhury et al., 2015).

Marital status and area of residence affecting economic empowerment shows that the economic performance is highly dependent on external support systems and situational factors. Household-level financial assistance can be availed to married entrepreneurs and regional disparities indicate differences in access to credit, infrastructure and economic opportunities. The presented results correlate with previous studies that indicate that the institutional conditions as well as socio-economic factors determine the impact of entrepreneurial activities (Bosma et al., 2018; Hill et al., 2023).

The findings also bring out the gender-related challenges in the field of entrepreneurship. Stereotypes related to genders and social norms still affect the availability of resources and opportunities, which in turn impacts the entrepreneurial performance of women (Gupta et al., 2019). The policy-oriented research also indicates that such gendered limitations should be handled though specific interventions and facilitating institutional systems (Foss et al., 2019).

On the contrary, there are no significant relationships between psychological and institutional empowerment meaning that these are less reliant on the demographic characteristics and could be subjected to intrinsic motivation, personal traits, and systemic factors. This conclusion is justified by some studies, which underline the importance of the entrepreneurial traits and personal abilities in the development of the entrepreneurial behavior and the output (Anwar and Saleem, 2019).

On the whole, the results support the argument that structural and institutional conditions are more important determinants of entrepreneurial empowerment of women compared to the personal traits. The findings imply that a combination of the development of human capital, the support of institutions, and strengthening of the ecosystem would enable the further empowerment of women.

5. Key Findings

It is found that the empowerment of women to be entrepreneurs is a multidimensional phenomenon that is differently affected by demographic and structural issues. The economic empowerment is largely influenced by the marital status and the regional context, and the decision-making empowerment depends largely on education and ownership structure. On the contrary, demographic differences do not have a significant impact on psychological and institutional empowerment. The experience of the business does not indicate a substantial change on any of the empowerment dimensions. In general, the results indicate that the structural and institutional characteristics are more important than the personal traits in the development of the entrepreneurial empowerment.

6. Policy Implications

6.1 Financial Policy Implications

The findings show that a marital status and regional factors play a significant role in economic empowerment and financial access and support systems are important. The policymakers must then work on improving accessibility of credit by women entrepreneurs by using gender sensitive financial programs, no collateral loans and special purpose financing programs. Enhancing digital financial

infrastructure and developing microfinance schemes can also help to better eliminate financial obstacles and increase economic activity among women entrepreneurs.

6.2 Institutional Policy Implications

The researchers conclude that the ownership structure has a strong impact on the empowerment of decision-making, and more empowerment is detected in cooperative and in the case of the private limited firms. This implies that there is a need to have policies that promote formalization of the women-owned companies. Some of the ways through which institutional participation and governance capacity among women in entrepreneurships can be improved include simplification of the process of registration, legal and administrative assistance, and incentives on formal business structures. The solutions also include enhancing the institutional support systems to increase the access to the government programs as well as the business development services.

6.3 Ecosystem-Level Implications

The results indicate the relevance of social capital and structural factors in determining entrepreneurial empowerment. Consequently, the enhancement of the entrepreneurial eco-systems by creating networking platforms, mentorship and incubation centers should be targeted. Such initiatives have the potential to increase market access to information, strategic resources as well as business opportunities. Encouraging the industry, academia, and government cooperation can also encourage women entrepreneurs to establish a sustainable and competitive business.

7. Conclusion

This study examines the influence of demographic factors and social capital on women's entrepreneurial empowerment, highlighting the multidimensional nature of empowerment in the context of entrepreneurship. The findings indicate that empowerment is not uniform across dimensions and is influenced differently by various structural and demographic variables. Marital status and regional context are found to significantly affect economic empowerment, suggesting the importance of financial support systems and local economic conditions. In contrast, education and ownership structure play a crucial role in enhancing decision-making empowerment, reflecting the significance of human capital and formal organizational frameworks in strengthening leadership and governance capabilities. However, psychological and institutional empowerment do not show significant variation across demographic categories, indicating that these dimensions may be shaped more by intrinsic factors and broader systemic influences. The results also demonstrate that business experience alone does not significantly contribute to empowerment, emphasizing the greater importance of structural and institutional support mechanisms. Overall, the study underscores the need for a comprehensive approach to women's entrepreneurial empowerment that integrates financial inclusion, institutional development, and strengthening of social capital networks. Policymakers and stakeholders should focus on creating supportive entrepreneurial ecosystems, improving access to resources, and promoting formal business structures to enhance women's participation and success in entrepreneurship. By providing empirical evidence from the Indian context, the study contributes to the growing literature on women entrepreneurship and offers insights for promoting inclusive and sustainable economic development.

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