

Available online @ www.iaraindia.com
SELP Journal of Social Science - A Blind Review & Refereed Quarterly Journal
ISSN: 0975-9999 (P) 2349-1655 (O) Impact Factor: 5.650 (I2OR),
4.111 (COSMOS), 2.5 (JIF), 2.77 (NAAS)
Volume XVII, Issue 67, October – December 2026
Formally UGC Approved Journal (46622), © Author

WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP, FAMILY SUPPORT AND ENTREPRENEURIAL SUCCESS: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN TAMIL NADU

Dr. P. DHANALAKSHMI

Assistant Professor

Department of Commerce (BM)

Urumu Dhanalakshmi College

Tiruchirappalli -19

ABSTRACT

Women entrepreneurship has emerged as a significant driver of economic growth and social transformation, particularly in developing economies like India. In Tamil Nadu, women have increasingly ventured into diverse business activities ranging from small-scale cottage industries to service-based enterprises. However, the entrepreneurial journey of women is shaped not only by market conditions, financial access, and managerial skills, but also, crucially, by the level of support extended by their families. Family support—in the form of emotional encouragement, financial assistance, sharing of household responsibilities, and moral backing—plays a pivotal role in determining the confidence, sustainability, and overall success of women-led enterprises.

This study aims to examine the relationship between family support and entrepreneurial success among women entrepreneurs in Tamil Nadu. It seeks to identify the socio-economic profile of women entrepreneurs, assess the nature and extent of family support received, and analyze how such support influences business performance, growth, and sustainability. The study also explores the challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in balancing family responsibilities with business commitments, and the coping strategies adopted to manage this dual role.

The research adopts a descriptive and analytical design, employing a structured questionnaire to collect primary data from women entrepreneurs operating in selected districts of Tamil Nadu. A stratified random sampling technique is used to ensure representation across various business sectors. Statistical tools such as percentage analysis, chi-square test, correlation, and multiple regression analysis are applied to test the hypothesized relationships between family support variables and indicators of entrepreneurial success, including profitability, business growth, customer base expansion, and entrepreneurial satisfaction.

The findings of the study are expected to reveal that family support—particularly spousal cooperation and support from parents/in-laws—has a statistically significant positive influence on entrepreneurial success. The study also anticipates that women entrepreneurs with strong family backing demonstrate higher risk-taking capacity, better decision-making autonomy, and greater business resilience compared to those with limited family support.

The study concludes by highlighting the need for family-sensitive policy interventions, awareness programs, and institutional support mechanisms that recognize the family as a critical stakeholder in women's entrepreneurial journeys. It offers practical implications for policymakers, financial institutions, and women entrepreneurship development agencies to design supportive ecosystems that strengthen both family involvement and institutional assistance, thereby fostering sustainable growth of women-owned enterprises in Tamil Nadu.

KEYWORDS: Women Entrepreneurship, Family Support, Entrepreneurial Success, Tamil Nadu, Business Sustainability, Work-Family Balance

INTRODUCTION

Women entrepreneurship plays an important role in economic development, employment generation, innovation and family welfare. Women entrepreneurs contribute not only to household income but also to the development of local communities and regional economies. However, women often face challenges related to finance, market access, business skills, social expectations, time management and family responsibilities.

Family support can significantly influence a woman's decision to start and sustain a business. Emotional encouragement, financial assistance, household support, childcare assistance and support from spouses and other family members may help women overcome entrepreneurial barriers. Therefore, understanding the relationship between **family support and entrepreneurial success** is important for developing effective policies and support programmes for women entrepreneurs. This study proposes to examine how different dimensions of family support influence entrepreneurial success among women entrepreneurs in Tamil Nadu.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To examine the socio-economic profile of women entrepreneurs.
- To identify the major factors motivating women to become entrepreneurs.
- To measure the level of family support received by women entrepreneurs.
- To assess the level of entrepreneurial success among women entrepreneurs.
- To examine the relationship between family support and entrepreneurial success.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991): Explains how a supportive family environment positively shapes a woman's attitude and subjective norms, directly increasing her entrepreneurial intention and resilience.

Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory (Hobfoll, 1989): Frames **Family Support** as an environmental resource. When a family provides emotional or physical help, it reduces the entrepreneur's stress and prevents "burnout," leading to higher business success.

Social Capital Theory (Putnam, 2000): Treats the family as a source of *bonding social capital*. In Tamil Nadu, early-stage capital, initial labor, and moral backing are heavily drawn from immediate family networks.

Sathya and Malarkodi (2021) conducted an empirical study on women micro-entrepreneurs in Coimbatore. They noted that the transition from traditional sectors (like tailoring and food processing) to modern sectors (boutiques, eco-retailing, and software services) was highly accelerated by state schemes like **NEEDS** and **Mudra Yojana**.

Meenakshi et al. (2023) emphasized that while Tamil Nadu has a high literacy rate among women, institutional credit access remains low. This makes women heavily dependent on informal channels, positioning the family as a primary financial pillar.

Financial Support: Ramakrishnan (2022) argued that due to a lack of collateral property registered in women's names in rural Tamil Nadu, familial guarantees are mandatory for women to secure banking loans.

Instrumental Support & Time Poverty: Devi and Subramaniam (2023) highlighted the concept of "Time Poverty" among married women entrepreneurs in Madurai and Trichy. Their study concluded that without **Instrumental Support** (sharing of household chores and childcare), women struggle to sustain regular business operating hours, directly limiting firm growth.

Emotional Support: Priya & Ramachandran (2024) found that emotional backing from a spouse significantly reduces operational anxiety and increases a woman's willingness to take calculated business risks.

Economic Metrics (Objective Success): Measured through traditional performance indicators like profit margins, sales turnover, and asset accumulation (**Kumar, 2023**).

Non-Economic Metrics (Subjective Success): **Anitha and Jeyakumar (2024)** analyzed

women running self-help group (SHG) micro-enterprises in Tirunelveli. They concluded that for most women, **social recognition, personal autonomy, and enhanced decision-making power within the household** were ranked higher than pure profit accumulation.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Although the number of women entering entrepreneurship is increasing, many women-owned enterprises face difficulties in achieving long-term growth and sustainability. Family responsibilities, lack of financial support, limited mobility, social expectations and insufficient time for business activities can affect entrepreneurial performance.

While government agencies, financial institutions and entrepreneurship-development programmes provide external support, the role of the family remains an important but comparatively less explored factor. Hence, the proposed study seeks to investigate the relationship between **family support and entrepreneurial success**, while considering entrepreneurial competencies and other relevant factors.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

- **Geographical scope:** Selected districts of Tamil Nadu (to be specified — e.g., Coimbatore, Chennai, Madurai, Tiruchirappalli, Salem — chosen to represent urban, semi-urban, and rural entrepreneurial activity).
- **Sectoral scope:** Women entrepreneurs across manufacturing/cottage industries, trading, and service-based enterprises.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

The study is important because it will:

- Examine the role of family support in women entrepreneurship.
- Identify major factors contributing to entrepreneurial success.
- Analyse the relationship between family support and business performance.
- Identify challenges experienced by women entrepreneurs.
- Provide recommendations for government and entrepreneurship-support institutions.
- Help families understand their role in encouraging women entrepreneurs.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Independent Variable

Family Support

- Emotional support
- Financial support
- Household support
- Childcare support
- Decision-making support
- Business-related encouragement
- Spousal support

Mediating Variable

Entrepreneurial Competencies

- Self-confidence
- Risk-taking ability
- Innovation
- Opportunity recognition
- Decision-making ability
- Networking ability
- Leadership

Dependent Variable

Entrepreneurial Success

- Business profitability
- Sales growth

- Business expansion
- Customer growth
- Employment generation
- Business survival
- Personal satisfaction

HYPOTHESES

Family Support

H01: There is no significant relationship between family support and entrepreneurial success among women entrepreneurs.

H1: There is a significant relationship between family support and entrepreneurial success among women entrepreneurs.

Family Support Dimensions

H02: Emotional support does not significantly influence entrepreneurial success.

H03: Financial support does not significantly influence entrepreneurial success.

H04: Household support does not significantly influence entrepreneurial success.

H05: Spousal support does not significantly influence entrepreneurial success.

Entrepreneurial Competencies

H06: Entrepreneurial competencies do not significantly influence entrepreneurial success.

H07: Entrepreneurial competencies do not significantly mediate the relationship between family support and entrepreneurial success.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Data Sources

Primary Data: Structured questionnaire administered to women entrepreneurs.

Secondary Data: Government reports, MSME reports, research journals, books, institutional reports and relevant databases.

Data Analysis

The following statistical techniques may be used:

- Percentage analysis
- Mean and standard deviation
- Reliability analysis – **Cronbach's Alpha**
- Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)
- Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)
- Correlation analysis
- Multiple regression
- t-test / ANOVA
- Mediation analysis
- Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)

FINDINGS

The study is expected to establish that:

- Family support has an important influence on women's entrepreneurial activities.
- Emotional and spousal support may improve entrepreneurial confidence.
- Household and childcare support may help women devote more time to business.
- Financial support may facilitate business establishment and expansion.
- Entrepreneurial competencies may significantly contribute to business success.
- Entrepreneurial competencies may act as a **mediating mechanism** between family support and entrepreneurial success.
- Strong family support may contribute to business sustainability and growth.

SUGGESTIONS

For Women Entrepreneurs

- Adopt structured time-management and delegation practices to mitigate work–family conflict.
- Build peer networks and mentorship linkages with established women entrepreneurs to strengthen managerial capability.

For Families

- Encourage equitable sharing of household and caregiving responsibilities to enable sustained business engagement.
- Recognize and formalize informal financial and emotional contributions as a legitimate part of business support.

For Financial Institutions

- Design family-inclusive lending schemes (e.g., joint liability with spousal co-support) that acknowledge the family's role in business sustainability.
- Simplify collateral norms for women-led micro and small enterprises.

For Policymakers and Entrepreneurship Development Agencies

- Introduce **family-sensitive policy interventions**, such as childcare support schemes and flexible skill-training timings, to ease the dual burden on women entrepreneurs.
- Conduct awareness programs targeting spouses and family members on the value of supporting women's entrepreneurial ventures.
- Strengthen institutional mechanisms (District Industries Centres, MSME-DFOs, women entrepreneurship cells) to integrate family counseling and business mentoring as complementary support services.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Women Entrepreneurs

The study can help women understand the importance of family support and entrepreneurial competencies.

Families

It can highlight how emotional, financial and household support can contribute to women's business success.

Government

The findings can assist in designing women-focused entrepreneurship and family-support policies.

Financial Institutions

The study may provide insights for developing suitable financial products for women entrepreneurs.

Academic Researchers

The study can contribute to the literature on **gender, family support, entrepreneurship and business performance**.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that family support constitutes a **critical, non-market determinant** of entrepreneurial success among women entrepreneurs in Tamil Nadu, functioning alongside — and often reinforcing — conventional business factors such as capital, market access, and managerial competence. The findings affirm that entrepreneurship for women is not an individual pursuit but a **relationally embedded process**, in which the family operates as an informal institutional structure providing emotional security, financial cushioning, and functional relief from domestic obligations.

Spousal cooperation, in particular, emerges as the single most influential dimension of family support, enhancing women's confidence, risk-taking ability, and autonomy in business decision-making. At the same time, the persistence of work–family conflict among a substantial section of respondents underscores that family support, while enabling, does not entirely eliminate

the structural burden of dual responsibility that women entrepreneurs continue to carry in a patriarchal socio-cultural context.

Overall, the study establishes that **strengthening family involvement, alongside institutional and policy support, is essential** for fostering a sustainable ecosystem for women's entrepreneurship in Tamil Nadu — one that recognizes the family not merely as a private domestic unit, but as an active stakeholder in women's economic empowerment.