

Women Entrepreneurship in Madhya Pradesh: An Analytical Study of NEP 2020 and Indian Knowledge Systems

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Abstract

Women's entrepreneurship makes a substantial contribution to social empowerment, job creation, and economic prosperity. NEP 2020 creates possibilities for women entrepreneurs by promoting skill development, vocational education, innovation, and self-reliance. Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) use indigenous talents, traditional knowledge, handicrafts, and cultural practices to promote sustainable entrepreneurship. Using secondary data, the paper examines how NEP 2020 and IKS support women entrepreneurs in Madhya Pradesh. It concludes that industries including handicrafts, textiles, food processing, Ayurveda, and traditional arts can benefit from skill-based learning, digital education, and traditional knowledge. However, financial constraints, ignorance, social barriers, and inadequate training continue to be barriers for female entrepreneurs. The study comes to the conclusion that women's empowerment and the growth of entrepreneurship in Madhya Pradesh can be strengthened by the successful implementation of NEP 2020 and the promotion of Indian Knowledge Systems.

Keywords: Women entrepreneurship, Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS), NEP 2020, entrepreneurial development.

Introduction

Women entrepreneurship has emerged as an important component of economic growth and social transformation in India. Women entrepreneurs not only contribute to income generation and employment creation but also play a crucial role in achieving gender equality and inclusive development. In Madhya Pradesh, the participation of women in entrepreneurial activities has increased in recent years due to educational advancement, government support, and changing socio-economic conditions.

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 introduced by the Government of India focuses on holistic, multidisciplinary, and skill-oriented education. The policy aims to develop creativity, innovation, vocational skills, and entrepreneurship among learners. NEP 2020

encourages women to become self-reliant and capable of starting their own enterprises through practical and skill-based education.

Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) represent the rich cultural and traditional heritage of India, including indigenous knowledge, local crafts, Ayurveda, handloom, agriculture, and traditional business practices. These traditional systems provide sustainable and culturally rooted opportunities for women entrepreneurship, especially in rural and semi-urban areas. This study attempts to examine how NEP 2020 and Indian Knowledge Systems can support and strengthen women entrepreneurship in Madhya Pradesh.

Background of the Study

Women entrepreneurs in Madhya Pradesh are actively involved in sectors such as handicrafts, food processing, tailoring, textiles, agriculture, and small-scale industries. Despite government initiatives and policy support, many women continue to face barriers such as lack of education, financial limitations, social restrictions, and limited market access. NEP 2020 promotes vocational training, digital literacy, entrepreneurship education, and innovation-driven learning, which may improve women's participation in business activities. Similarly, Indian Knowledge Systems can help women transform traditional skills into profitable enterprises. Therefore, it is important to study the combined impact of NEP 2020 and IKS on women entrepreneurship.

Statement of the Problem

Although several policies and programs have been introduced to support women entrepreneurship, many women entrepreneurs in Madhya Pradesh still struggle with limited resources, inadequate training, and lack of awareness. There is a need to analyse whether NEP 2020 and Indian Knowledge Systems are contributing to entrepreneurial development among women.

Review of Literature

Review of literature is an essential part of research that provides understanding about previous studies, theories, concepts, and research gaps related to the topic. The present study reviews literature related to women entrepreneurship, National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, and Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) to understand their contribution toward entrepreneurial development and women empowerment in Madhya Pradesh.

Joseph Schumpeter (1934) explained entrepreneurship as a driving force of economic development and innovation. According to him, entrepreneurs introduce new ideas, products, and methods that contribute to economic growth and employment generation. His theory established entrepreneurship as an important factor for social and economic transformation.

Vasant Desai (2009) highlighted that women entrepreneurship in India is increasing gradually due to education, urbanization, and government support. However, women entrepreneurs continue to face challenges such as lack of finance, limited managerial skills, social barriers, and inadequate training. The study emphasized the importance of entrepreneurial education and skill development for women empowerment.

C. B. Gupta and N. P. Srinivasan (2010) stated that entrepreneurship development programs play an important role in improving women's economic participation. Their work suggested that vocational education, technical training, and government support are necessary for the growth of women entrepreneurship in India.

Ministry of Education (2020) The Government of India introduced the National Education Policy 2020 to transform the education system through skill-based, multidisciplinary, and vocational learning. The policy promotes entrepreneurship, innovation, digital literacy, and self-reliance. NEP 2020 encourages experiential learning and vocational education from an early stage, which can strengthen entrepreneurial abilities among women.

Studies related to NEP 2020 indicate that entrepreneurship education can help women become self-dependent and financially empowered. Researchers have observed that practical learning, vocational training, and digital education improve entrepreneurial capabilities and increase employment opportunities for women.

Kapil Kapoor (2019) explained that Indian Knowledge Systems preserve India's intellectual and cultural heritage and can contribute significantly to education, innovation, and sustainable entrepreneurship. The study emphasized integrating traditional knowledge with modern education systems to create employment and entrepreneurial opportunities.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the status of women entrepreneurship in Madhya Pradesh.
2. To analyse the role of NEP 2020 and Indian Knowledge Systems in entrepreneurial development among women.

Research Methodology

The study is conceptual and analytical in nature mainly based on secondary data and focuses on understanding the role of National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) in promoting women entrepreneurship in Madhya Pradesh. A descriptive and analytical research design has been adopted for the study. The descriptive approach helps in explaining the present status and opportunities of women entrepreneurship in Madhya Pradesh, while the analytical approach is used to examine the relationship between NEP

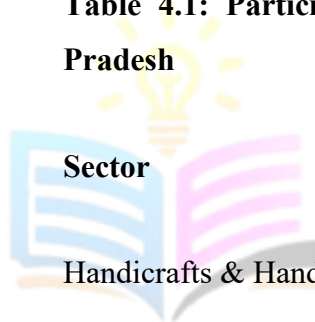
2020, Indian Knowledge Systems, and entrepreneurial development among women. The study is based on secondary sources of data. Relevant information has been collected from books, research journals, published research papers, government reports, policy documents, conference proceedings, magazines, newspapers, and authentic online sources. For analysis and interpretation, the study uses conceptual analysis method. Different theories, educational policies, and previous research findings have been analysed to understand the impact of NEP 2020 and Indian Knowledge Systems on women entrepreneurship. The collected information has been organized systematically to draw meaningful conclusions and suggestions.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The present study is conceptual in nature and based on secondary data collected from government reports, policy documents, journals, research papers, books, and online sources related to women entrepreneurship, National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, and Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS). The analysis is presented according to the objectives of the study.

To Study the Status of Women Entrepreneurship in Madhya Pradesh

Table 4.1: Participation of Women Entrepreneurs in Different Sectors in Madhya Pradesh



Sector	Percentage of Women Entrepreneurs
Handicrafts & Handloom	30%
Food Processing	25%
Beauty & Wellness	15%
Tailoring & Textile	20%
Traditional Arts & Others	10%
Total	100%

Interpretation

The above table shows that the highest participation of women entrepreneurs in Madhya Pradesh is in the handicrafts and handloom sector (30%), followed by food processing (25%) and tailoring & textile (20%). This indicates that women entrepreneurs are more engaged in traditional and skill-based sectors, which require limited investment and are connected with local knowledge and cultural practices.

Figure: 01

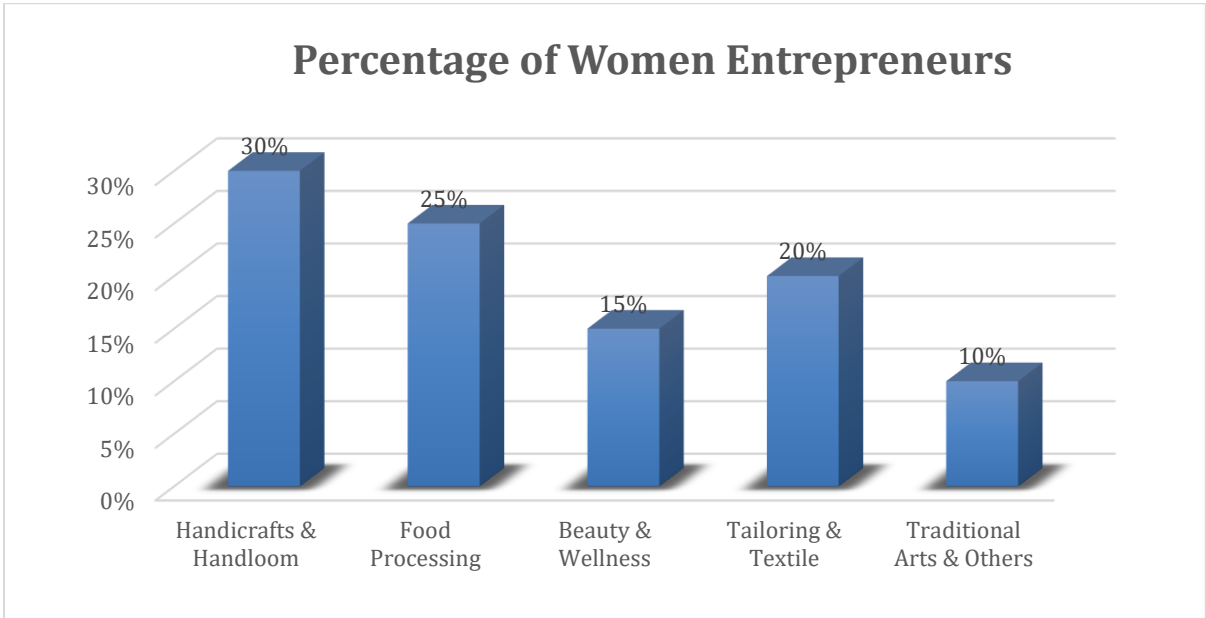


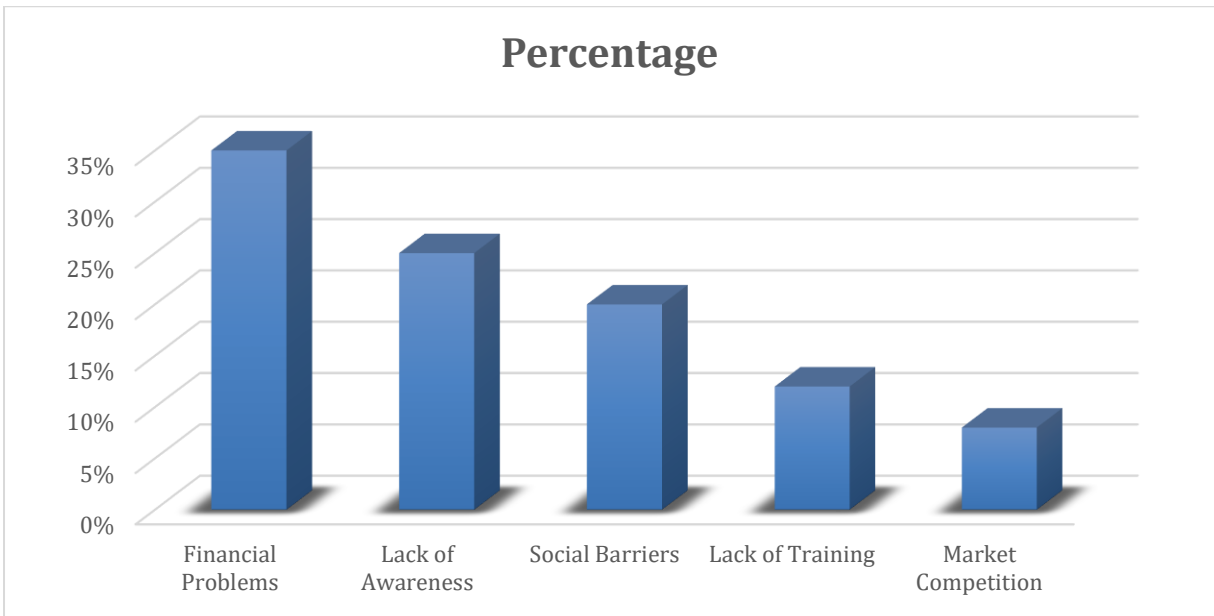
Table 4.2: Major Challenges Faced by Women Entrepreneurs in Madhya Pradesh

Challenges	Percentage
Financial Problems	35%
Lack of Awareness	25%
Social Barriers	20%
Lack of Training	12%
Market Competition	8%
Total	100%

Interpretation

The table reveals that financial problems are the major challenge faced by women entrepreneurs (35%). Lack of awareness regarding government schemes and entrepreneurial opportunities accounts for 25%, while social barriers contribute 20%. This indicates that economic and social factors continue to affect women entrepreneurship in Madhya Pradesh.

Figure: 02



To Analyse the Role of NEP 2020 and Indian Knowledge Systems in Entrepreneurial Development among Women

Table 4.3: Key Features of NEP 2020 Supporting Women Entrepreneurship

Features of NEP 2020	Expected Impact
Skill-Based Education	Improves entrepreneurial skills
Vocational Training	Encourages self-employment
Digital Learning	Supports online business opportunities
Innovation & Creativity	Promotes startup culture
Financial Literacy	Enhances business management

Interpretation

The table highlights that NEP 2020 focuses on skill development, vocational training, innovation, and financial literacy, which can strengthen entrepreneurial capabilities among women. The policy encourages practical and employment-oriented education, helping women become self-reliant.

Table 4.4: Contribution of Indian Knowledge Systems in Women Entrepreneurship

Indian Knowledge Areas

Handicrafts

Ayurveda & Herbal Products

Traditional Food Processing

Handloom & Textile

Folk Art & Culture

Entrepreneurial Opportunities

Small-scale business

Wellness enterprises

Home-based industries

Rural employment

Creative entrepreneurship

Interpretation

The above table indicates that Indian Knowledge Systems provide employment and entrepreneurship opportunities in traditional sectors such as handicrafts, Ayurveda, food processing, and handloom industries. These traditional skills help women establish small and sustainable enterprises, especially in rural and semi-urban areas.

Table 4.5: Overall Impact of NEP 2020 and IKS on Women Entrepreneurship**Impact Areas****Level of Impact**

Skill Development

High

Self-Reliance

High

Employment Generation

Moderate

Innovation

High

Rural Women Participation

Moderate

Interpretation

The table shows that NEP 2020 and Indian Knowledge Systems have a positive impact on women entrepreneurship, especially in the areas of skill development, innovation, and self-reliance. These initiatives support entrepreneurial growth and women empowerment in Madhya Pradesh.

Overall Findings

- Women entrepreneurs in Madhya Pradesh are mainly engaged in traditional and skill-based sectors.
- Financial constraints and lack of awareness are major barriers to entrepreneurial growth.
- NEP 2020 promotes entrepreneurship through vocational and skill-oriented education.

- Indian Knowledge Systems create sustainable business opportunities for women.
- Integration of modern education and traditional knowledge can strengthen women entrepreneurship and women empowerment.

Conclusion

The study entitled highlights the growing importance of women entrepreneurship in economic development, employment generation, and women empowerment. The study reveals that women entrepreneurs in Madhya Pradesh are actively participating in sectors such as handicrafts, food processing, tailoring, textiles, beauty services, and traditional arts. These sectors are closely connected with local culture, indigenous skills, and traditional knowledge systems. The analysis of secondary data indicates that the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has significant potential to promote entrepreneurial development among women through skill-based education, vocational training, digital learning, innovation, and financial literacy. The policy encourages self-reliance and practical learning, which can help women develop entrepreneurial abilities and improve employment opportunities. NEP 2020 also supports multidisciplinary and flexible education, which can strengthen women's participation in startups and small business activities.

The study further shows that Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) provide valuable opportunities for women entrepreneurship by preserving traditional knowledge, cultural heritage, handicrafts, Ayurveda, handloom, and food-processing practices. These traditional skills support sustainable and low-investment business models, especially for rural and semi-urban women. Indian Knowledge Systems not only contribute to economic empowerment but also help in preserving India's cultural identity and local traditions.

On the basis of the analysis, the study concludes that NEP 2020 and Indian Knowledge Systems have a positive and significant influence on women entrepreneurship in Madhya Pradesh. The integration of modern educational reforms with traditional knowledge can create a strong foundation for women empowerment and sustainable entrepreneurial development. Therefore, effective implementation of NEP 2020, promotion of Indian Knowledge Systems, financial assistance, entrepreneurship training, and awareness programs are essential for strengthening women entrepreneurship in the state.

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