

Exploring the Factors of Opportunities and Challenges for Empowering Women Entrepreneurs in the Digital Marketing Era: Kadapa and Rayachoty

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1. Abstract:

The explosive growth of digital technology has transformed company ecosystems, creating new opportunities for female entrepreneurs to launch and grow their businesses. Particularly in semi-urban areas like Kadapa and Rayachoti, digital marketing has become a powerful tool for women-led businesses in India, helping them to overcome traditional challenges to market entry. However, despite these opportunities, women continue to face social and institutional barriers that hinder their full participation in the digital economy. To better understand how digital transformation can empower women entrepreneurs in the digital marketplace, this study examines the key factors influencing these opportunities and challenges.

Four main components that accounted for 74.732% of the variance were identified by the analysis. Among these, two were highlighted as opportunities (Digital Promotion opportunities and Network and Institutional Support), and two were highlighted as Challenges (Gender-Related Barriers and Market and Operational obstacles). These findings demonstrate that while digital marketing platforms offer cost-effective, accessible, and scalable alternatives for women entrepreneurs, persisting obstacles such as gender bias, limited mentorship, and a lack of operational knowledge continue to hamper their entrepreneurial potential.

The study comes to the conclusion that to support women's entrepreneurial empowerment and promote inclusive economic development in line with the Viksit Bharat vision, specific legislative measures, institutional capacity building, and gender-sensitive digital training programs are crucial.

Keywords: Women Entrepreneurs; Digital Marketing; Empowerment; Opportunities and Challenges; Principal Component Analysis (PCA); Gender Barriers; Institutional Support; Digital Promotion; Market Challenges; Viksit Bharat..

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1. Women Entrepreneurs:

A woman entrepreneur is one who starts and runs a business for the economic and social growth of both the individual and the country. They lend their work in various industries like textiles, agriculture, manufacturing, and many others. [1]

Globally, the spread of digital platforms and technologies has transformed how entrepreneurs conduct business by providing micro, small, and medium-sized businesses with access to new markets, reducing transaction costs, and facilitating direct consumer communication. Digital marketing tools, such as social networking, e-commerce marketplaces, search advertising, and content marketing, offer women entrepreneurs scalable and affordable ways to increase their visibility, diversify their revenue streams, and overcome geographical limitations that previously restricted their market reach.[2].

Self-help groups (SHGs), microenterprise programs, and specific government initiatives that aim to reduce barriers to entry, such as limited access to capital, skill development, and market networks, are all strongly linked to women's entrepreneurship in India. According to empirical research conducted in the Kadapa (YSR) district, women's participation in entrepreneurship has increased over time with the support of community networks and local institutions; however, challenges related to education, managerial skills, and market orientation still remain[3] (Bharathi & Masthani, 2014). For women-led businesses operating in semi-urban and rural areas, these structural limitations underline the importance of digital literacy and tailored marketing capacity building.[4]

The environment of Kadapa district (YSR) and its taluk Rayachoti is diverse, with a significant SHG movement and agribusiness base coexisting alongside a lack of official marketing facilities. Many women are organised into Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and produce textiles, food items, handicrafts, and agriproducts with periodic support from the state through credit and market expos, according to media reports and district studies. However, many businesses remain small, informal, and limited by a lack of digital adoption [5](The New Indian Express, 2022; Lakshmi Devi, 2019). Enhancing digital marketing and e-commerce links in Kadapa and Rayachoti may therefore be crucial to transforming small firms into sustainable, market-oriented organisations.[6]

2.2 Major factors of opportunities and challenges:

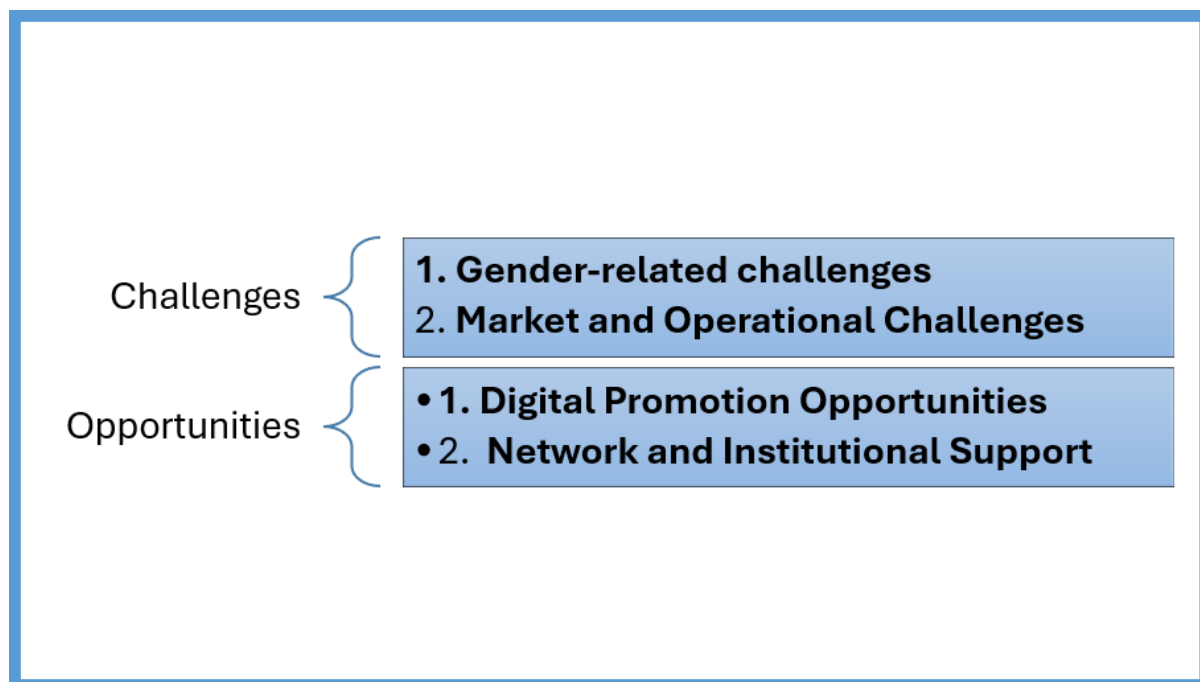


Figure 1: Major factors of opportunities and challenges:

2.2.1 Challenges

1. Gender-related challenges

Gender-related challenges continue to prevent many women from starting and running businesses, particularly in semi-urban and rural regions. Traditional beliefs, limited freedom to move around, pressure from family, and lack of equal access to tools and support often stop women from making their own business choices. Many also face unfair ideas that doubt their ability to lead and discourage them from trying new things or taking risks. These issues not only affect how confident

women feel but also stop them from joining training sessions, connecting with others in their field, and using new technologies.

2. Market and Operational Challenges

Women who start and run their own businesses often face problems like not having easy access to reliable markets, good supply chains, and ways to price their products competitively. Running the business can also be tough because of issues like keeping track of stock, unpredictable customer orders, and not having enough information about the market. Plus, competition from bigger companies or those using better technology makes it harder for small businesses owned by women to stand out. These challenges often slow down growth and push women-owned businesses to stay small.

2.2.2 Opportunities:

1. Digital Promotion Opportunities

Even though there are difficulties, digital marketing has become a strong way to help women entrepreneurs succeed. Websites, social media, and online ads let them promote their businesses affordably and reach more customers. Women can run their businesses from home, have flexible hours, and enter new markets without spending a lot of money. These online tools also let them create their own brand, talk directly to customers, and learn more about what people want—giving them new chances to grow their businesses.

2. Network and Institutional Support

Strong support systems are very important for helping women succeed in starting and running their own businesses. Groups like self-help groups, women's business organizations, government programs, and training initiatives offer important help, such as advice, money support, and learning opportunities. These supports help women deal with challenges like getting loans, understanding technology, and connecting with markets. Good connections also allow women to share ideas, learn from experienced people, and work together to solve problems. This helps build their confidence and encourages more women to take part in the digital world.

3. Literature review:

Ingle, Sudha. C, & Sable, Ram (2006). This study employed the analytical method of performance analysis to evaluate the challenges faced by female entrepreneurs. The advancement of their businesses was aided by the supportive assistance that some women entrepreneurs, especially those in single-parent families, received from their partners. But they also had to deal with things such as family-related concerns, domestic duties, and frequent grievances from relatives. Even with the help of business, many people still struggled to balance their duty to their families.

Artur Sawicki, (2016). The study explained that digital marketing involves more than just internet advertising; it also includes software, computers, and other digital instruments that facilitate data sharing between companies. He explains that network and digital technology enable companies to operate on several platforms and personalize goods for each client. According to Sawicki, digital marketing helps firms more precisely target their clients, which makes life easier.

Kalpana, Koneru. (2017). This research study explained the concept of women entrepreneurs. Women comprise about 45% of the population of India, and their advancement in entrepreneurship is very slow. Preparing pickles, powders, and Pappad are examples of traditional businesses. Women entrepreneurs face several challenges to reach financial stability. Women entrepreneurs are defined by the Indian government as individuals who own 51% of a company and have 51% female employees. It is essential to provide supportive programs as well as opportunities for female entrepreneurs.

Suhail Sultan, Wasim I.M. Sultan, (2020). This study focused on the difficulties faced by female entrepreneurs in online advertising, such as social limitations, financial limitations, and a lack of computer expertise. It also highlights the advantages of digital marketing, like access to international markets and low-cost advertising. The report promotes an integrated strategy that includes awareness efforts, training initiatives, and policy assistance. The goal of these initiatives is to support female business owners in making the most of digital marketing resources for expanding their enterprises.

Kumar & Raj, (2021). This research study explored that, even though there are chances for

growth, women who start and run businesses still struggle a lot with using and keeping up with digital marketing. They often run into problems like not knowing enough about digital tools, not getting enough training, and not having proper help from organizations. These issues make it hard for them to use online methods well.

V.Chenchu Ramaiah, (2022). This research study intended to analyze the various factors influencing the location choice of women entrepreneurs, and this study explored their motivational factors, identified the challenges they encountered, and proposed various measures to support and empower the women entrepreneurs in Andhra Pradesh to strengthen women entrepreneurship. According to this study, India is one of the fastest-growing economies, where the significance of entrepreneurship is widely recognized. As per the Government of India, a business is classified as a women-owned enterprise if a woman holds at least 51% of the capital and employs at least 51% women.

Vosuri Sandya Rani, et.al. (2023). This study looked at the difficulties Indian women entrepreneurs face, including their limited access to technology, markets, and funding. It emphasized how increasing market access and consumer involvement through digital marketing might aid in removing these obstacles. To assist the success of women entrepreneurs, the study highlighted the significance of digital literacy courses specialized to their needs. According to the findings, using digital tools might greatly increase the visibility of companies run by women. In the end, it proved that internet marketing was a major factor in the success of female businesses.

Vosuri Sandhya Rani, et al. (2024). This study was conducted among 300 respondents in the Chittoor district in Andhra Pradesh and identified significant challenges encountered by women entrepreneurs, such as fierce competition, lack of family support, lack of professional and technical skills, and work overload

Suneetha Kondeti, et al. (2024). This research identified numerous problems faced by women entrepreneurs. Also, this study explained various government initiatives to train women entrepreneurs to overcome the problems, such as Mahila Mandal, STEP (Support of Training and Employment Programmes, Training cum production center, RMK (Rashtriya Mahila Kosh), TRYSEM (Training of Rural Youth for Self Employment), DWCRA (Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas).

Erni Arum Nursanti, Sri Nurhayati (2024). This study examined how digital marketing might support the expansion of female entrepreneurs' enterprises. It made the point that online platforms are an affordable means of expanding the number of customers, developing ongoing connections, and increasing revenues. The survey also underlined the importance that is to developing digital marketing plans that address the particular difficulties faced by female entrepreneurs, such as their lack of finances and lack of computer knowledge.

4.Research Methodology:

Research Type: Descriptive research design is used to explore the research problem.

Sampling Procedure: Here researcher has used convenience sampling for selecting the sample size in Kadapa and Royachoti of Andhra Pradesh. The data has been collected from 105 respondents.

Data Collection Methods: Primary data was collected from Women Entrepreneurs in Rayachoti, Kadapa. And, secondary data from sources like research articles, textbooks, and Government websites.

Tools for Data Collection and Data Analysis: The tool used for data collection was a questionnaire, and responses were measured through the **Likert-Five-Point Scale** from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

Statistical tools:

Reliability Test, Cronbach's Alpha was used to check internal consistency of the scale items ($\alpha > 0.7$ indicated reliability). **KMO and Bartlett's Test:** To test sampling adequacy and sphericity before applying factor analysis. **Factor Analysis (Principal Component Analysis with Varimax Rotation)** Used to identify the underlying structure among 20 observed variables. **Varimax Rotation with Kaiser Normalization** was applied to simplify the factor structure.

Scope of the Study: The study intends to find the opportunities and challenges for women entrepreneurs in digital marketing. In India,

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Sampling Procedure:

This study used a convenience sampling technique for collecting primary data from Women running micro, small, and home-based businesses. 105 female entrepreneurs from Kadapa and Rayachoti were chosen for the study based on their availability and willingness to take part. Digital platforms, trade associations, local networks, and Self-Help Groups were used to contact respondents. This method was appropriate for exploratory research, allowing for the effective gathering of information about their difficulties and digital marketing opportunities.

Objectives of the Study:

To identify the Key opportunities available for women entrepreneurs to marketing their products in the digital marketing era at Kadapa Rayachoti.

To discover the major challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in digital marketing practices.

Hypothesis

H₁: There are statistically significant factors underlying the opportunities and challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in digital marketing.

Sampling process:

5.Data Analysis:

Table 1: Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	17.712	63.258	63.258	17.712	63.258	63.258	10.652	38.041	38.041
2	1.267	4.524	67.782	1.267	4.524	67.782	6.086	21.737	59.778
3	1.128	4.030	71.812	1.128	4.030	71.812	2.135	7.625	67.403
4	.818	2.920	74.732	.818	2.920	74.732	2.052	7.329	74.732
5	.766	2.737	77.469						
6	.640	2.285	79.755						
7	.576	2.057	81.812						
8	.555	1.984	83.796						
9	.456	1.628	85.424						
10	.413	1.476	88.411						
11	.360	1.285	89.696						
12	.355	1.267	90.963						
13	.311	1.112	92.075						
14	.299	1.068	93.143						
15	.229	.816	94.885						
16	.214	.763	95.647						

17	.153	.545	97.579						
18	.109	.389	98.968						
10	.064	.229	99.797						
20	.057	.203	100.000						
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.									

Inference: Based on Varimax Rotation with Kaiser Normalization, 4 factors have been extracted. Each factor is constituted of all those variables that have factor loadings greater than 0.5. Twenty-eight variables were grouped into four factors. Four factors were extracted from the 20 variables used in the study. These 4 extracted factors explained 74.732 percent of the variability in opportunities and challenges of women entrepreneurs in digital marketing.

5.1 Factors of opportunities and challenges

Four significant underlying elements influencing the Opportunities and challenges experienced by female entrepreneurs were found by the study's factor analysis. The factor loadings and total variance explained were used to determine the extraction of these factors. When taken as a whole, they explain a sizable amount of the variance, suggesting that they accurately reflect the main aspects of the Opportunities and challenges faced by women entrepreneurs.

Challenges:

Table 2: Major Factors of Challenges

Factor No:	Statements	Loading	Factor Name
A 38.041	Gender-specific challenges affect my ability to compete in the marketplace.	0.798	Gender-Related Challenges
	I often face discrimination or bias from clients or suppliers because I am a woman entrepreneur.	0.771	
	Balancing family responsibilities and business commitments is a major challenge for me.	0.739	
	Lack of role models and mentorship opportunities for women limits my professional growth.	0.668	
	I have difficulty accessing financial and institutional support.	0.519	
B 59.778	Marketplace challenges negatively impact the sustainability of my business.	0.790	Market and Operational Challenges
	I face significant challenges in marketing my products/services effectively.	0.781	
	I lack adequate knowledge and training in Digital marketing and branding strategies.	0.764	
	Facing difficulties in identifying and reaching the target customers.	0.743	
	I often struggle with pricing my products/ services competitively.	0.698	

Factor A: Gender-Related Barriers:

38.041 percent of the variation was explained by the factor that was extracted for this study. It included five factors: gender-specific obstacles that hinder women's competitiveness in the market; bias or discrimination from customers or suppliers; challenges in juggling work and family obligations; a dearth of role models and mentorship opportunities for women; and obstacles in obtaining institutional and financial support. Together, these problems reflect the institutional and sociocultural barriers that female entrepreneurs face when running and expanding their businesses. This element was thus designated as "Gender-Related Barriers." All five variables had significant factor loadings, with values ranging from 0.798 to 0.519.

Factor B: Market and Operational Challenges

59.778 percent of the variation was explained by the factor that was extracted for this study. It included five factors: market challenges that impact the viability of a business; challenges in effectively marketing goods and services; insufficient expertise and training in digital marketing and branding strategies; difficulties in identifying and connecting with target consumers; and difficulties in setting competitive prices for goods and services. These factors show the operational and market-based barriers that restrict women entrepreneurs' ability to expand, compete, and run their businesses. Consequently, the term "Market and Operational Challenges" was used to describe this element. All five variables had significant factor loadings, with values ranging from 0.790 to 0.698.

5.2. Opportunities:

Table 3: Major factors of Opportunities

Factor No:	Statements	Loading	Factor Name
A 67.403	Social media platforms offer cost-effective opportunities to promote my business.	0.824	Digital Promotion Opportunities
	Using digital campaigns has significantly improved my business sales and outreach.	0.743	
	Digital advertising allows me to reach my target audience effectively.	0.711	
	Online marketing tools help me increase customer engagement and brand visibility	0.689	
	Digital platforms have opened new opportunities for me in the marketplace.	0.651	
B 74.732	I feel supported by local trade associations or women's entrepreneur networks.	0.772	Network and Institutional Support
	I can adapt my business easily to changes in customer demand or market trends.	0.753	
	Mentorship and training programs from institutions have enhanced my business management skills.	0.761	
	Government schemes and initiatives have helped me strengthen my entrepreneurial activities.	0.678	
	The competition in the marketplace limits my business growth.	0.595	

Factor A: Digital Promotion Opportunities

67.403 percent of the variation was explained by the factor that was extracted for this study. Five factors were included: the role of online marketing tools in boosting customer engagement and brand

visibility; the improvement in sales and outreach through digital campaigns; the effectiveness of digital advertising in reaching target audiences; the role of social media platforms in providing cost-effective opportunities to promote the business; and the opening of new marketplace opportunities through digital platforms. These variables collectively show how digital promotion has become a powerful and accessible tool for women entrepreneurs to enhance visibility, reach customers, and expand their business presence. As a result, this element was given the name "Digital Promotion Opportunities." All five variables had significant factor loadings, with values ranging from 0.824 to 0.651.

Factor B: Network and Institutional Support

74.732 percent of the variation was explained by the factor that was extracted for this study. Support from local trade associations or women entrepreneur networks, the capacity to modify business practices in response to market shifts or customer demand, the value of mentorship and institutional training programs in enhancing management abilities, the beneficial role of government initiatives in bolstering entrepreneurial endeavours, and the effect of market competition on business expansion were its five components. These components emphasise how crucial social networks, formal support networks, and governmental initiatives are in fostering resilience and success in entrepreneurship. As a result, this component was given the name "Network and Institutional Support." All five variables had significant factor loadings, with values ranging from 0.772 to 0.595.

6. Conclusion

The study "Exploring the Factors of Opportunities and Challenges for Empowering Women Entrepreneurs in the Digital Marketing Era: Kadapa and Rayachoti" provides a comprehensive understanding of the complex factors influencing women's experiences as entrepreneurs in the digital market. Four main components were identified through the use of Principal Component Analysis (PCA), which together accounted for 74.732% of the variance. Gender-Related Barriers and Market and Operational Challenges were the two factors that emphasised challenges, while Digital Promotion potential and Network and Institutional Support indicated opportunities.

The results show that women entrepreneurs may increase market reach, boost consumer engagement, and improve business performance with the help of affordable, scalable, and easily available digital marketing technologies. Particularly for women in semi-urban locations like Kadapa and Rayachoti, where traditional market constraints still exist, digital platforms, social media channels, and online branding tools have created new growth opportunities. Government initiatives, mentorship programs, and institutional networks also strengthen women's confidence and ability to adapt to business.

Although these opportunities exist, the report notes enduring challenges, including gender discrimination, balancing family obligations, restricted financial access, a lack of digital marketing Knowledge, and difficulty in reaching out to target consumers. These challenges limit women's access to the full benefits of digital transformation and impede the long-term expansion of their businesses.

The study comes to the conclusion that certain policy interventions, like gender-sensitive digital training, better access to funding, organized mentorship programs, and institutional ecosystem building, are necessary to empower women entrepreneurs in the digital age. In order to fulfill the larger goal of Viksit Bharat and guarantee that women play a significant role in inclusive digital economic growth, such actions are crucial.

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