

The role of women entrepreneurs in Mangalore's economic growth

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Abstract: Women entrepreneurs play a pivotal role in driving Mangalore's economic growth by contributing to various industries, creating employment opportunities, and fostering innovation. Despite their increasing presence in the business landscape, they continue to face significant challenges. Key barriers include a lack of financial and institutional support, limited access to mentorship, and insufficient knowledge of digital media tools crucial for business expansion. Many women struggle with navigating modern marketing strategies, digital payment systems, and e-commerce platforms, which limits their reach in an increasingly digital economy. Additionally, societal expectations and work-life balance pressures further hinder their entrepreneurial journey. This paper explores the role of women entrepreneurs in Mangalore's economic development, analyzing the challenges they encounter and proposing strategic solutions to enhance their participation in the business ecosystem. Encouraging digital literacy, providing financial assistance, and fostering supportive networks are crucial to unlocking the full potential of women entrepreneurs in the region.

Keywords: Women entrepreneurs, Mangalore, economic growth, business challenges, financial support, digital literacy, entrepreneurship, gender barriers, digital marketing, e-commerce, work-life balance, business sustainability, mentorship, small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

●INTRODUCTION

Women entrepreneurs are playing a transformative role in Mangalore's economic landscape, contributing to various sectors such as retail, hospitality, education, healthcare, and technology. Their businesses not only generate employment but also drive innovation and economic diversification. However, despite their growing influence, women entrepreneurs in Mangalore face persistent challenges that hinder their business growth and sustainability.

One of the major obstacles is the lack of financial support and access to capital. Many women struggle to secure funding due to limited collateral, lack of awareness about financial assistance programs, and gender biases in lending practices. Additionally, mentorship and networking opportunities are often scarce, leaving women entrepreneurs without the necessary guidance to navigate the complexities of business management.

Another significant challenge is digital illiteracy and limited access to digital media tools. In an era where online marketing, e-commerce, and digital payments are crucial for business expansion, many women lack the necessary training to leverage these technologies effectively. This limits their market reach and competitiveness in a rapidly evolving digital economy. Furthermore, societal norms and traditional gender roles place additional burdens on women entrepreneurs, making it difficult for them to balance business responsibilities with household and caregiving duties.

Despite these challenges, women entrepreneurs in Mangalore continue to demonstrate resilience and adaptability, contributing significantly to the city's economic development. By addressing financial constraints, enhancing digital literacy, and fostering a supportive ecosystem through policy reforms and mentorship programs, Mangalore can unlock the full potential of women-led businesses. This paper explores the role of women entrepreneurs in the city's economic growth, analyzes the key barriers they face, and proposes strategic solutions to promote gender -inclusive entrepreneurship.

OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

Objectives

The primary objectives of this study are:

1. To analyze the role of women entrepreneurs in Mangalore's economic growth – Examining their contributions to job creation, business development, and economic diversification.
2. To identify key challenges faced by women entrepreneurs – Investigating financial constraints, lack of mentorship, digital illiteracy, and societal barriers.
3. To assess the impact of digital media on business growth – Understanding how digital tools, e-commerce, and online marketing influence women-led businesses.
4. To explore strategies for empowering women entrepreneurs – Recommending policy measures, training programs, and financial support systems to enhance entrepreneurship.
5. To highlight successful case studies – Showcasing inspiring stories of women entrepreneurs in Mangalore who have overcome challenges and achieved business success.

Methods

This research adopts a qualitative and quantitative approach to provide a comprehensive analysis of women entrepreneurs in Mangalore.

1. Primary Data Collection

Surveys and Questionnaires – Conducted with women entrepreneurs to understand their experiences, challenges, and business growth strategies.

Interviews – One-on-one interviews with business owners, policymakers, and industry experts to gain insights into entrepreneurship trends.

2. Secondary Data Collection

Review of Existing Literature – Analyzing academic papers, government reports, and business studies on women entrepreneurship in Mangalore and India.

Case Studies – Examining real-life success stories of women entrepreneurs in different industries.

3. Data Analysis

Descriptive Analysis – Evaluating survey responses to identify common trends and challenges.

Comparative Study – Comparing Mangalore's women entrepreneurs with those in other cities to identify best practices.

4. Recommendations and Policy Suggestions

Based on findings, this research proposes practical solutions to support women entrepreneurs, including financial assistance programs, digital literacy initiatives, and mentorship networks.

By integrating these methods, the study aims to provide valuable insights into the role of women entrepreneurs in Mangalore's economy and

offer actionable recommendations for their empowerment.

READINGS

To support the study on women entrepreneurs in Mangalore and their role in economic growth, the following readings and references will be valuable:

Academic and Research Papers

1. "Women Entrepreneurship in India: Challenges and Opportunities" – A study analyzing the barriers women entrepreneurs face and potential solutions.
2. "Impact of Digital Literacy on Women-Led Businesses in India" – Research on how digital tools influence women entrepreneurs' success.
3. "Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and Women Entrepreneurs: A Case Study of Karnataka" – Discusses policies, financial access, and success stories of women in business.
4. "The Role of Women Entrepreneurs in Regional Economic Development" – Examines the economic impact of women-owned businesses in urban and semi-urban areas.

Government and Policy Reports

5. National Policy for Women Empowerment (Government of India) – Highlights government initiatives supporting women entrepreneurs.
6. MSME Annual Report (Ministry of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises, India) – Provides statistical insights on women-led businesses in India.
7. Karnataka State Women Development Corporation Reports – Focuses on state-level schemes and funding options available for women entrepreneurs.

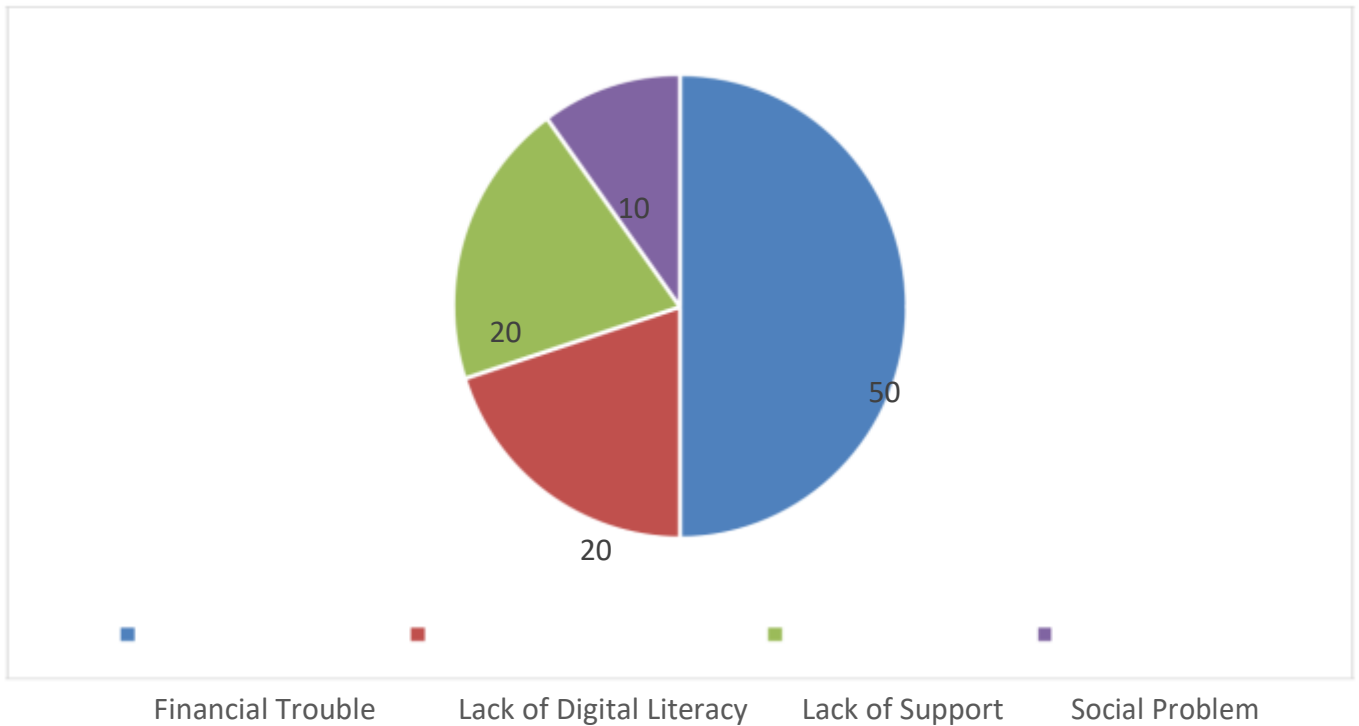
Books and Industry Insights

8. "She Means Business" by Carrie Green – A guide on overcoming challenges and growing a business as a female entrepreneur.
9. "Lean In: Women, Work, and the Will to Lead" by Sheryl Sandberg – Discusses gender biases and leadership challenges for women in business.
10. "Women Entrepreneurs and Economic Development" by Namita Kumari – Explores the impact of women entrepreneurship on regional economies.

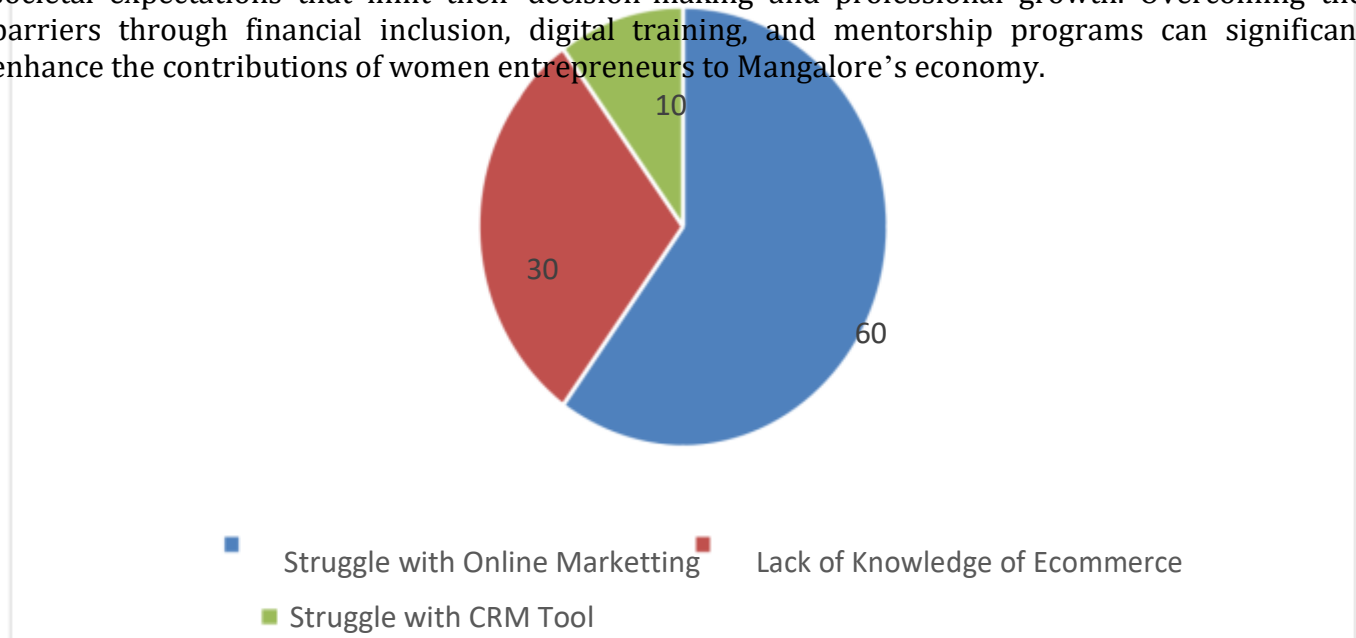
Case Studies and Articles

11. Success Stories of Women Entrepreneurs in Karnataka (FICCI FLO Report) – Features inspiring case studies of businesswomen in the region.
12. "Digital Marketing for Women Entrepreneurs: A Game Changer" (Harvard Business Review) – Discusses the importance of digital skills in modern business.
13. Reports from NITI Aayog's Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP) – Highlights government-backed initiatives and success stories.

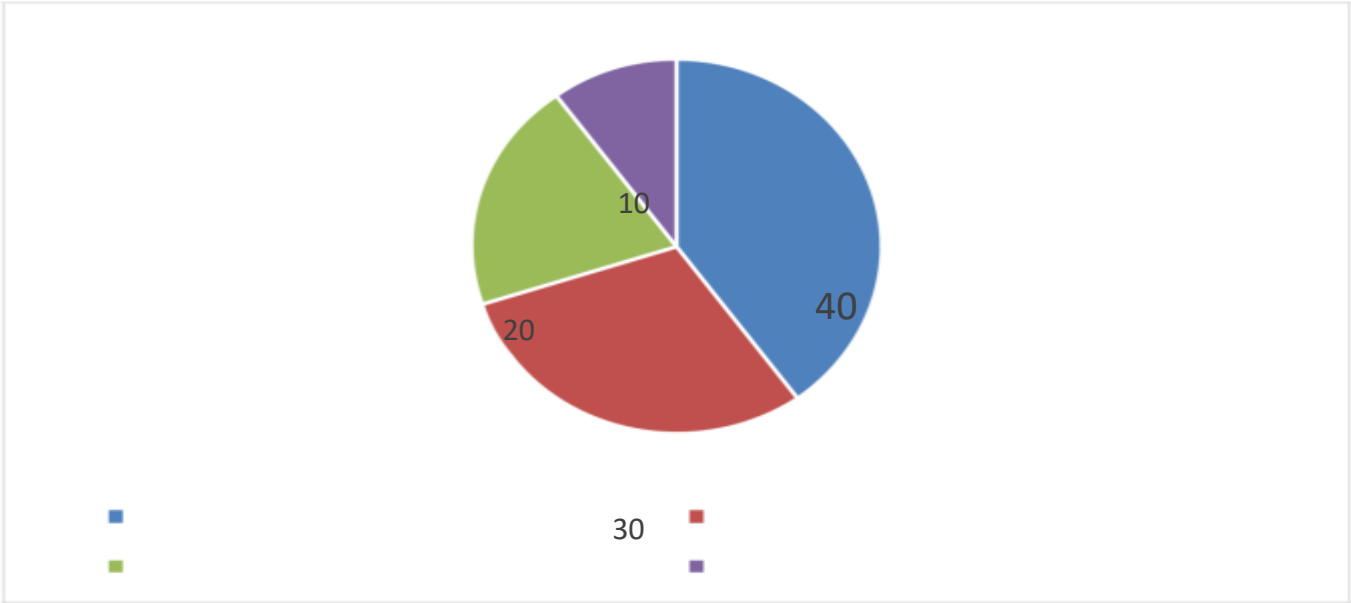
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION



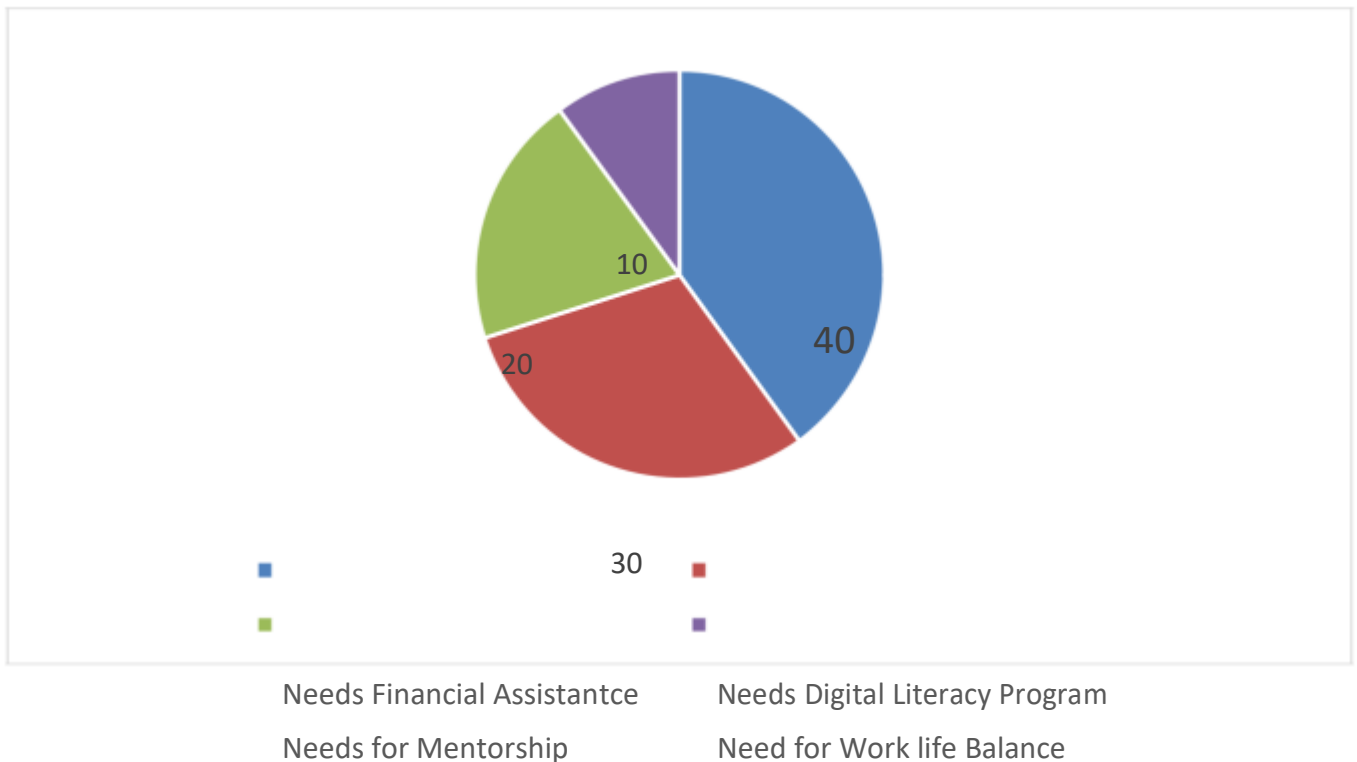
Women entrepreneurs in Mangalore face multiple challenges that hinder their business growth. Financial troubles are the most significant barrier, affecting 50% of women entrepreneurs, as many struggle to secure funding due to lack of collateral, limited access to loans, and insufficient financial literacy. Lack of digital literacy impacts 20% of entrepreneurs, restricting their ability to leverage online marketing, e-commerce, and digital payment systems, which are essential for modern business success. Another 20% face a lack of support, including mentorship, business networking, and guidance, leaving them without the necessary resources to scale their ventures. Lastly, 10% of women entrepreneurs encounter social problems, such as work-life balance pressures, gender biases, and societal expectations that limit their decision-making and professional growth. Overcoming these barriers through financial inclusion, digital training, and mentorship programs can significantly enhance the contributions of women entrepreneurs to Mangalore's economy.



Limited digital literacy poses a significant challenge for women entrepreneurs in Mangalore, affecting their ability to expand and sustain their businesses. Around 60% struggle with online marketing, making it difficult to promote their products and services effectively in the digital space. Without proper knowledge of digital advertising, social media strategies, and SEO, they often rely on word-of-mouth and traditional marketing methods, limiting their reach. Nearly 30% lack knowledge of e-commerce platforms, preventing them from leveraging online marketplaces to sell their products and access a broader customer base. This restricts their ability to compete with businesses that have an established digital presence. Additionally, 10% face difficulties using Customer Relationship Management (CRM) tools, which are essential for managing customer interactions, tracking sales, and improving business operations. The absence of digital skills keeps many women entrepreneurs reliant on outdated business practices, reducing their growth potential in an increasingly tech-driven economy. Addressing these digital gaps through training programs, workshops, and mentorship initiatives can empower women entrepreneurs to harness the full potential of digital tools for business success.



Women entrepreneurs in Mangalore play a crucial role in the city's economic development, contributing significantly to job creation, industry growth, and business innovation. Nearly 40% of women-led businesses operate in the retail and service sectors, providing essential goods and services that cater to local and regional markets. Around 30% contribute to employment generation, hiring workers across various industries, from small-scale manufacturing to hospitality and education. Approximately 20% of women entrepreneurs engage in innovative business models, incorporating eco-friendly practices, handmade products, and sustainable business strategies that add value to the economy. Additionally, 10% focus on social entrepreneurship, addressing community needs through businesses in healthcare, education, and women's empowerment. Despite their contributions, many women entrepreneurs face financial and digital challenges, limiting their growth potential. Providing better access to funding, digital literacy programs, and government support can further enhance their role in driving Mangalore's economic progress.



Empowering women entrepreneurs in Mangalore requires targeted policy measures and support systems to address key challenges and enhance their participation in the economy. Nearly 40% of women entrepreneurs need better financial assistance, as they struggle with access to loans, investment opportunities, and business grants. Around 30% require digital literacy programs, including training in online marketing, e-commerce, and digital payment systems to modernize their businesses. Approximately 20% seek mentorship and networking opportunities, highlighting the need for structured business guidance, leadership training, and industry connections. Additionally, 10% emphasize the need for government policies that support work-life balance, such as flexible business regulations, childcare support, and women-focused entrepreneurship schemes. By implementing financial inclusion programs, digital training initiatives, and mentorship networks, policymakers and industry leaders can create a more inclusive and thriving business environment for women entrepreneurs in Mangalore.

● CONCLUSION

Women entrepreneurs in Mangalore play a crucial role in driving economic growth, fostering innovation, and creating employment opportunities. However, they continue to face significant challenges that hinder their full potential. Financial struggles remain the most pressing issue, with nearly 50% of women entrepreneurs struggling to secure funding due to lack of collateral and limited access to financial aid programs. Lack of mentorship and support affects 20% of women, preventing them from accessing valuable business guidance and networking opportunities. Digital literacy remains a critical barrier, with 60% of women entrepreneurs struggling with online marketing, 30% lacking e-commerce knowledge, and 10% facing difficulties with CRM tools. These digital gaps limit their ability to expand beyond traditional business models and compete in a rapidly evolving economy.

Despite these challenges, women entrepreneurs continue to make significant contributions to Mangalore's economic landscape. Around 40% operate in the retail and service sectors, 30% contribute to job creation, 20% drive innovation, and 10% focus on social entrepreneurship. Their businesses not only strengthen local industries but also promote sustainable and community-driven growth. However, to fully harness their potential, targeted policy measures and

support systems are essential. 40% of women entrepreneurs require better financial assistance, 30% seek digital literacy programs, 20% need mentorship and networking, while 10% call for policies that support work - life balance.

To ensure long-term success, Mangalore must prioritize initiatives that provide financial inclusion, digital skill development, and structured mentorship programs. By addressing these barriers, the city can create a thriving ecosystem where women entrepreneurs can grow, innovate, and contribute more effectively to economic development. Empowering women-led businesses will not only strengthen Mangalore's economy but also pave the way for a more inclusive and progressive entrepreneurial landscape.

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