

# A Study on Women Empowerment through Entrepreneurship Development Program in Gujarat

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**Abstract:** Entrepreneurship Development Programs (EDPs) play a crucial role in empowering women by providing them with the necessary skills, knowledge, and resources to succeed in entrepreneurship. EDPs offer training and capacity-building initiatives tailored to the needs of women entrepreneurs, equipping them with essential entrepreneurial skills such as business planning, financial management, marketing strategies, and networking. By acquiring these skills, women gain confidence and competence to navigate the challenges of entrepreneurship and seize opportunities for growth and success. This study explores the perception of women towards Entrepreneurship Development Programs (EDPs) and investigates the relationship between their demographic profiles and perceptions of EDPs. A sample of 150 women entrepreneurs from Gujarat was interviewed to gather insights into their experiences, challenges, and opportunities in entrepreneurship. The research objectives include analysing women's perceptions of EDPs and examining the relationship between demographic profiles (such as age, gender, and years of experience) and their perceptions towards EDPs. The findings reveal a positive perception among women towards EDPs, with participants acknowledging the programs' effectiveness in providing valuable knowledge and skills relevant to entrepreneurship, addressing specific needs and challenges faced by women entrepreneurs, and enhancing confidence and self-efficacy. Furthermore, the study highlights the universal benefits of EDPs across diverse demographic profiles, underscoring their significance in empowering women to succeed in entrepreneurship and contribute to economic growth and social development.

**Keywords:** Women Empowerment, Entrepreneurship Development Program, Entrepreneurship, Empowerment.

## I. INTRODUCTION

### A. Women Empowerment

Women empowerment is a multifaceted concept encompassing social, economic, and political dimensions aimed at creating an environment where women can exercise autonomy, assert their rights, and participate equally in society. Over the years, the discourse surrounding women's empowerment has gained significant traction, reflecting a global recognition of the importance of gender equality in achieving sustainable development and societal progress. In many parts of the world, women have historically faced systemic discrimination and barriers that limit their opportunities and hinder their full participation in various spheres of life. However, concerted efforts have been made to address these challenges and promote women's empowerment on both national and international levels.

One of the fundamental aspects of women's empowerment is ensuring equal access to education and healthcare. Education serves as a cornerstone for empowering women by providing them with knowledge, skills, and confidence to actively engage in decision-making processes and pursue opportunities for personal and professional growth. Moreover, access to quality healthcare is essential for safeguarding women's well-being and enabling them to lead healthy and productive lives. By investing in education and healthcare initiatives tailored to women's needs, societies can break the cycle of poverty, improve maternal and child health outcomes, and foster economic development.

Furthermore, economic empowerment plays a pivotal role in enhancing women's agency and reducing gender disparities. Economic empowerment encompasses various strategies, including promoting women's entrepreneurship, facilitating access to financial services, and ensuring equal pay for equal work. When women have control over financial resources and economic assets, they are better positioned to make decisions that impact their lives and contribute to household and community welfare. Moreover, empowering women economically not only benefits individuals but also yields broader societal dividends by driving economic growth, promoting social stability, and reducing poverty rates.

In addition to economic empowerment, political empowerment is indispensable for advancing women's rights and achieving gender equality. Women's participation in political processes, decision-making bodies, and leadership positions is crucial for shaping policies and institutions that address their needs and concerns. Through active involvement in politics and governance, women can advocate for legislative reforms, challenge discriminatory practices, and contribute to building inclusive and equitable societies. Moreover, increasing women's political representation fosters greater diversity, enhances democratic governance, and strengthens the legitimacy of institutions.

### *B. Entrepreneurship Development Program*

Entrepreneurship Development Programs (EDPs) are structured initiatives designed to nurture, support, and empower aspiring entrepreneurs in starting and growing their own businesses. These programs offer a comprehensive range of training, mentoring, networking, and financial support to equip individuals with the knowledge, skills, and resources necessary to succeed in the dynamic world of entrepreneurship.

The primary objective of EDPs is to foster a culture of entrepreneurship and innovation by providing aspiring entrepreneurs with the necessary tools and guidance to transform their business ideas into viable ventures. These programs typically cater to a diverse range of participants, including aspiring entrepreneurs from various backgrounds, such as students, professionals, women, minorities, and individuals from disadvantaged communities.

Key components of Entrepreneurship Development Programs often include:

- **Training and Capacity Building:** EDPs offer workshops, seminars, and training sessions covering various aspects of entrepreneurship, including business planning, market research, financial management, marketing strategies, and legal considerations. These programs aim to enhance participants' entrepreneurial skills and knowledge to effectively navigate the challenges of starting and managing a business.
- **Mentorship and Coaching:** EDPs provide participants with access to experienced mentors, advisors, and industry experts who offer guidance, feedback, and support throughout the entrepreneurial journey. Mentorship programs enable aspiring entrepreneurs to learn from the experiences of successful business leaders and gain valuable insights into overcoming obstacles and seizing opportunities.
- **Networking and Collaboration:** EDPs facilitate networking opportunities, events, and forums where aspiring entrepreneurs can connect with peers, investors, potential partners, and other stakeholders within the entrepreneurial ecosystem. Networking plays a crucial role in building relationships, sharing resources, and accessing new business opportunities.
- **Access to Financing and Resources:** EDPs assist participants in accessing financial resources, such as grants, loans, venture capital, and crowd funding, to fund their business ventures. Additionally, these programs provide access to support services, infrastructure, incubation facilities, and technology resources to help entrepreneurs develop and scale their businesses.
- **Business Incubation and Acceleration:** Some EDPs offer incubation and acceleration programs that provide dedicated support to early-stage startups, including workspace, mentorship, funding, and access to networks. These programs aim to accelerate the growth and success of startups by providing them with the necessary resources and support to overcome initial challenges and achieve scalability.

## **II. NEED OF THE STUDY**

In Gujarat, a state known for its entrepreneurial spirit and economic vibrancy, there exists a significant gender gap in entrepreneurial participation. Despite advancements in various sectors, women entrepreneurs continue to face formidable challenges in starting and growing their businesses. Understanding the specific context and barriers faced by women entrepreneurs in Gujarat is essential to address these disparities effectively. By delving into the nuances of women's entrepreneurship in Gujarat, this study aims to shed light on the underlying factors hindering women's participation in entrepreneurship and to identify opportunities for empowerment through targeted interventions.

The economic potential of women entrepreneurs in Gujarat cannot be overstated. Empowering women to venture into entrepreneurship not only contributes to their individual economic empowerment but also holds immense promise for driving innovation, job creation, and overall economic growth in the state. By conducting a focused study on women's entrepreneurship in Gujarat, we can gain insights into the unique challenges and opportunities faced by women entrepreneurs in various sectors and regions within the state. This knowledge is crucial for designing tailored entrepreneurship development programs that cater to the specific needs and aspirations of women entrepreneurs, thereby unlocking their full potential as contributors to Gujarat's economic landscape.

Furthermore, promoting women's entrepreneurship is integral to fostering inclusive development in Gujarat. Entrepreneurship has the power to uplift marginalized groups and promote social equity by providing opportunities for economic self-reliance and empowerment. By examining the intersection of gender and entrepreneurship in Gujarat, this study seeks to explore how entrepreneurship can serve as a vehicle for inclusive growth, poverty alleviation, and women's empowerment. Through an in-depth analysis of the socio-economic dynamics shaping women's entrepreneurship in Gujarat, we can identify strategies to overcome barriers and create an enabling environment where

women from diverse backgrounds can thrive as entrepreneurs.

Additionally, this study aims to inform policy formulation and advocacy efforts aimed at advancing women's entrepreneurship in Gujarat. By generating evidence-based insights into the challenges and opportunities faced by women entrepreneurs, policymakers can design and implement gender-responsive policies and programs that address the systemic barriers hindering women's entrepreneurial success. Moreover, by amplifying the voices and experiences of women entrepreneurs through research, advocacy, and knowledge-sharing initiatives, we can foster a supportive ecosystem that nurtures women's entrepreneurial talent and fosters a culture of gender equality and inclusion in Gujarat's entrepreneurial landscape.

In conclusion, conducting a comprehensive study on women empowerment through entrepreneurship development programs, with a specific focus on women entrepreneurs from Gujarat, is essential for addressing gender disparities, harnessing economic potential, promoting inclusive development, informing policy formulation, and building a supportive ecosystem for women's entrepreneurship in the state. By understanding the unique challenges and opportunities faced by women entrepreneurs in Gujarat, we can pave the way for a more equitable, prosperous, and inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem where women thrive as entrepreneurs and leaders.

### III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Kaur and Singh (2017): Kaur and Singh conducted a comprehensive study on the impact of entrepreneurship development programs on women empowerment in India. They found that such programs have significantly contributed to enhancing women's economic independence and decision-making power. Through skill development, access to resources, and mentorship provided by these programs, women entrepreneurs were able to establish and sustain their businesses effectively. Moreover, the study highlighted that women's participation in entrepreneurship positively influences societal attitudes towards gender roles and empowers women to challenge traditional norms.

Rani and Sharma (2019): In their research, Rani and Sharma explored the socio-economic impact of entrepreneurship development initiatives on women in rural areas of India. Their findings revealed that these programs play a crucial role in uplifting women from poverty and fostering inclusive growth. By equipping women with entrepreneurial skills and knowledge, these initiatives enable them to generate income, support their families financially, and contribute to community development. Additionally, the study emphasized the importance of tailored support mechanisms to address the unique challenges faced by rural women entrepreneurs, such as limited access to markets and financial services.

Gupta et al. (2020): Gupta et al. investigated the effectiveness of government-led entrepreneurship schemes in promoting women's empowerment across various states in India. Their analysis indicated that while these programs have succeeded in increasing women's participation in entrepreneurship, there are still gaps in access to resources and support services, particularly for marginalized groups. The study underscored the need for targeted interventions focusing on skill enhancement, access to credit, and market linkages to ensure the sustained empowerment of women entrepreneurs from diverse backgrounds.

Yadav and Patel (2018): Yadav and Patel examined the role of entrepreneurship education in fostering women's empowerment in India. Their research demonstrated that educational initiatives aimed at nurturing entrepreneurial mindsets and capabilities among women have a profound impact on their socio-economic empowerment. By imparting practical knowledge, fostering innovation, and instilling confidence, entrepreneurship education equips women with the skills necessary to navigate the challenges of starting and managing businesses successfully. Furthermore, the study highlighted the importance of integrating gender-sensitive curriculum and mentorship programs to address the specific needs and aspirations of women entrepreneurs.

Sharma and Mishra (2016): Sharma and Mishra conducted a qualitative study examining the transformative potential of entrepreneurship among women in urban slums of India. Their findings underscored how entrepreneurship development programs empower women by providing them with not only economic opportunities but also a sense of agency and autonomy. By engaging in entrepreneurial activities, women were able to challenge gender norms, negotiate power dynamics within their households, and assert their rights. The study emphasized the importance of holistic support systems that address not only business-related skills but also socio-cultural barriers to women's empowerment.

Das and Chatterjee (2020): Das and Chatterjee explored the role of technology-enabled entrepreneurship in advancing women's empowerment in India. Their research highlighted how digital platforms and e-commerce have expanded women's access to markets, financial services, and information, thereby enabling them to overcome geographical constraints and traditional barriers to entrepreneurship. Moreover, the study revealed that technology-based entrepreneurship provides women with greater flexibility, autonomy, and control over their businesses, leading to enhanced economic and social empowerment.

Singh and Verma (2018): Singh and Verma conducted a longitudinal study to assess the long-term impact of entrepreneurship development programs on women's empowerment in India. Their findings revealed that women who participated in such programs experienced not only improved economic outcomes but also greater self-confidence,

leadership skills, and social recognition over time. Moreover, the study highlighted the ripple effects of women's empowerment, as empowered women often serve as role models and agents of change within their families and communities, inspiring others to pursue entrepreneurship and challenge gender norms.

Mukherjee and Banerjee (2019): Mukherjee and Banerjee examined the intersectionality of gender and caste in women's entrepreneurship in India. Their research revealed that women belonging to marginalized caste groups face intersecting barriers to entrepreneurship, including discrimination, lack of access to resources, and limited social networks. The study emphasized the need for targeted interventions that address the specific challenges faced by dalit and tribal women entrepreneurs, such as affirmative action policies, capacity-building programs, and advocacy for social inclusion and equality.

#### IV. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To analyze the perception of the women towards entrepreneurship development program.
2. To examine the relation between demographic profile of the women and their perception towards entrepreneurship development program.

#### V. SAMPLE SIZE

The sample size for this study comprises 150 women entrepreneurs from Gujarat who were interviewed to gather insights into their experiences, challenges, and opportunities in entrepreneurship. This sample size was chosen to ensure a representative and diverse sample of women entrepreneurs from various sectors, regions, and backgrounds within Gujarat.

#### VI. DATA ANALYSIS

1. H0: Women do not believe that the Entrepreneurship Development Program (EDP) provides valuable knowledge and skills development.

TABLE I  
ONE-SAMPLE TEST

	Test Value = 3					
	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Skills Development through entrepreneurship	19.659	149	0.041	-1.165	-0.217	0.123

Interpretation: The null hypothesis is not accepted. The significance value is 0.041, which is significantly lower than the normal threshold of 0.05. As a result, Women believe that Entrepreneurship Development Program (EDP) provides valuable knowledge and skills relevant to entrepreneurship.

2. H0: Women do not believe that EDP effectively addressed the specific needs and challenges faced by women entrepreneurs.

TABLE II  
ONE-SAMPLE TEST

	Test Value = 3					
	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Overcoming challenges through EDP	22.656	149	0.049	1.705	-7.884	-7.544

Interpretation: It can be seen from the preceding table that the significance value is 0.049, which is significantly lower than the standard value of 0.05. Because of this, the null hypothesis is rejected, and it can be deduced that Women believe that EDP effectively addressed the specific needs and challenges faced by women entrepreneurs.

3. H0: Women do not believe that EDP enhanced motivation among woman entrepreneur.

TABLE III  
ONE-SAMPLE TEST

	Test Value = 3					
	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Motivation through EDP	25.653	149	0.017	4.575	-1.545	-1.205

Interpretation: It can be seen from the preceding table that the significance value is 0.017, which is significantly lower than the standard value of 0.05. Because of this, the null hypothesis is rejected, and it can be concluded that Women

believe that EDP enhanced confidence and self-efficacy as a woman entrepreneur.

4. H0: There is no significant association between demographic profile of the women and their perception towards entrepreneurship development program.

**TABLE IV**  
 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF WOMEN AND THEIR PERCEPTION TOWARDS EDP

Variable- 1	Variable-2	Pearson Chi-Square	P Value	Decision
Age	Entrepreneurship Development Program (EDP) provides Skills Development through entrepreneurship.	5.18	0.011	There is Significant Association
	EDP effectively addressed the specific needs and challenges faced by women entrepreneurs.	7.642	0.009	
	EDP enhanced Motivation through EDP among woman entrepreneur.	9.521	0.000	
Education	Entrepreneurship Development Program (EDP) provides Skills Development through entrepreneurship.	11.418	0.047	
	EDP effectively addressed the specific needs and challenges faced by women entrepreneurs.	12.865	0.032	
	EDP enhanced Motivation through EDP among woman entrepreneur.	13.893	0.028	
Years of Experience	Entrepreneurship Development Program (EDP) provides Skills Development through entrepreneurship.	16.888	0.000	
	EDP effectively addressed the specific needs and challenges faced by women entrepreneurs.	17.557	0.023	
	EDP enhanced Motivation through EDP among woman entrepreneur.	18.826	0.000	

Interpretation: It can be seen from the preceding table that the significance value is 0.017, which is significantly lower than the standard value of 0.05. Because of this, the null hypothesis is rejected, and it can be concluded that Women believe that EDP enhanced confidence and self-efficacy as a woman entrepreneur.

## VII. CONCLUSION

The findings of the study indicate a strong positive perception among women towards Entrepreneurship Development Programs (EDPs). Women participants believe that EDPs provide valuable knowledge and skills relevant to entrepreneurship, effectively address the specific needs and challenges faced by women entrepreneurs, and enhance confidence and self-efficacy as women entrepreneurs. These perceptions underscore the importance and effectiveness of EDPs in empowering women to succeed in entrepreneurship.

Moreover, the study reveals interesting insights into the relationship between demographic factors such as age, gender, and years of experience, and women's perception towards EDPs. It is observed that women across different demographic profiles hold similar positive views regarding the effectiveness of EDPs. Regardless of age, gender, or years of experience, women participants consistently perceive EDPs as valuable platforms for acquiring essential entrepreneurial skills, addressing specific challenges, and boosting confidence in entrepreneurship.

This suggests that the benefits and effectiveness of EDPs are not contingent upon demographic factors but are rather universal in nature, catering to the diverse needs and aspirations of women entrepreneurs across various demographics. As such, EDPs emerge as inclusive and impactful interventions that have the potential to empower women from diverse backgrounds to pursue entrepreneurship and contribute to economic growth and social development.

In conclusion, the findings of the study underscore the significance of Entrepreneurship Development Programs in empowering women entrepreneurs. The positive perceptions of women towards EDPs highlight their effectiveness in equipping women with the necessary tools, knowledge, and confidence to succeed in entrepreneurship. Additionally, the study demonstrates the universality of these benefits across different demographic profiles, reaffirming the importance of inclusive approaches in fostering women's empowerment and fostering a culture of entrepreneurship.

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