

A Study on The Role of E – Commerce in Women Empowerment in Tirunelveli District

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Abstract

This study examines the impact of E-Commerce on women empowerment in Tirunelveli District, focusing on how online business platforms create opportunities for women entrepreneurs to showcase their skills and products. It delves into the ways E-Commerce breaks traditional barriers like limited mobility and access to resources. The research explores how E-Commerce enhances financial independence and social status of women in the district. It also looks at the challenges women face in adopting E-Commerce, including digital payment issues and online marketing. Key challenges include digital literacy gaps, limited access to technology, and hurdles in navigating online marketing strategies. The study identifies these gaps to suggest effective interventions like skill training and digital support for women entrepreneurs. The findings suggest strategies to boost women's participation in online businesses like creating awareness, providing digital tools, and building networks – promoting empowerment in Tirunelveli District. The study concludes that E-Commerce has significant potential for women's economic growth. Policy support and digital infrastructure can further enhance women's engagement in online businesses. Overall, E-Commerce is a key driver for women empowerment in Tirunelveli. This study recommends collaborations between government agencies, NGOs and E-Commerce platforms to create a supportive ecosystem for women entrepreneurs. This can drive inclusive growth in Tirunelveli District. E-Commerce's potential in promoting products and handicrafts of Tirunelveli on a global scale can further contribute to women's empowerment.

Keywords: E-Commerce, Women Empowerment, Tirunelveli District, Women Entrepreneurs, Digital Literacy, Online Business, Financial Independence

Introduction

Women empowerment is a crucial aspect of social and economic development, particularly in districts like Tirunelveli. Empowering women leads to overall progress and prosperity. In today's digital age, E-Commerce has emerged as a significant factor in shaping women's economic participation. Tirunelveli District, with its mix of urban and rural areas, presents a unique context for studying women empowerment through E-Commerce. Online business platforms offer women entrepreneurs flexibility, market access, and opportunities to overcome traditional barriers. E-Commerce has the potential to bridge gaps in financial inclusion and provide women with a platform to showcase their skills. However, challenges like digital literacy and access to technology can impact women's participation. Support systems and training can play a key role in addressing these issues. This study focuses on understanding the role of E-Commerce in empowering women in Tirunelveli District, looking at opportunities, challenges, and the way forward. Insights from this study can help shape strategies for greater women participation in E-Commerce. The study highlights the need for digital support and skill enhancement for women in E-Commerce. Addressing these gaps can boost women's economic participation. The findings aim to guide policymakers and stakeholders in promoting E-Commerce for women empowerment in Tirunelveli. Overall, E-Commerce has the potential to transform women's economic roles in Tirunelveli, fostering growth and empowerment in the district. The impact of successful E-Commerce adoption could extend beyond economics, enhancing social status and decision-making power for women in Tirunelveli.

Objectives of the Study

- To assess the impact of E-Commerce on women entrepreneurs in Tirunelveli District.
- To identify challenges faced by women in adopting E-Commerce in the district.
- To explore opportunities for enhancing women's participation in E-Commerce.
- To suggest strategies for promoting E-Commerce among women entrepreneurs in Tirunelveli.
- To evaluate the role of support systems in facilitating women's engagement with E-Commerce.

Review of Literature

- The studies by Anupam Pande (2022) highlight the growth of E-Commerce in India.
- Prof. Kavitha Ramaswamy (2020) emphasizes the role of digital platforms in women entrepreneurship.
- David LaGrau (2018) explores E-Commerce as a tool for women empowerment.

Scope of the Study

The scope of this study is limited to understanding the role of E-Commerce in women empowerment in Tirunelveli District. It focuses on women entrepreneurs using E-Commerce platforms and examines the impact on their financial independence, social status, and business growth. The study identifies challenges faced by women in adopting E-Commerce and explores opportunities for enhancing their participation in online businesses. It also suggests strategies for promoting E-Commerce among women entrepreneurs in the district. The study covers women-led businesses in Tirunelveli District across various sectors like handicrafts, textiles, food products, and digital services. It looks at how E-Commerce platforms help women reach broader markets and manage businesses flexibility. The research focuses on the current E-Commerce landscape and women's engagement with online platforms in Tirunelveli. It doesn't cover broader tech or policy aspects beyond the district's context. The study's insights can guide local stakeholders, policymakers, and E-Commerce platforms in promoting women entrepreneurship.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the growth of E-Commerce in India, women entrepreneurs in Tirunelveli District face challenges in leveraging online platforms for business growth, impacting their financial independence and empowerment. Limited digital literacy, access to technology, and online marketing hurdles restrict women's participation in E-Commerce. These challenges lead to underutilization of E-Commerce's potential in promoting local products and handicrafts of Tirunelveli, affecting women's economic opportunities. Addressing these gaps is crucial for enhancing women's role in the district's economic development. The lack of targeted support and digital infrastructure for women entrepreneurs in Tirunelveli District exacerbates the issue.

Limitation of the Study

The study focuses on Tirunelveli district, so findings may not be generalizable to other regions. Additionally, the study relies on self-reported data from women entrepreneurs, which may be subject to bias. The rapidly evolving E-Commerce landscape may also limit the study's long-term relevance.

Research Methodology

Research Design

The study on “Role of E-Commerce in Women Empowerment in Tirunelveli District” employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data. It's a descriptive and analytical study using surveys and interviews with women entrepreneurs in Tirunelveli using E-Commerce platforms.

Area of the Study

The area of the study is Tirunelveli District, Tamil Nadu, India, focusing on women entrepreneurs using E-Commerce platforms.

Sources of Data

- **Primary data:** Surveys (via questionnaires), interviews, focus groups with women entrepreneurs and in Tirunelveli District engaged with E-Commerce platforms.
- **Secondary data:** It includes government publications, reports, articles, and E-Commerce platform data.

Sampling Design

- **Sampling method:** It employs Stratified Random Sampling or Purposive Sampling to target women entrepreneurs and workers using e-commerce platforms in Tirunelveli District.
- **Sampling Size:** Depends on the population of women using online platforms, recommended 50-100 respondents for a manageable qualitative study.
- **Sampling Frame:** Women entrepreneurs/workers in Tirunelveli District using E-Commerce platforms.

Tools for Analysis

- Percentage Analysis
- Likert Scale Analysis

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Percentage Analysis

Table – 1: E-Commerce platforms used by women Entrepreneurs

Platforms	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Facebook	45	45%
WhatsApp	30	30%
Instagram	15	15%
Others	10	10%
Total	100	100%

Source: Primary data

Interpretation: Facebook leads with 45%, indicating it's the go-to E-Commerce platform for women entrepreneurs.

Table – 2: Challenges Faced by Women Entrepreneurs in Online Businesses

Challenge	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Lack of Digital Skills	40	40%
Limited Internet Access	25	25%
Marketing Issues	20	20%
Payment Problems	15	15%
Total	100	100%

Source: Primary data

Interpretation: Lack of digital skills is the main challenge (40%), highlighting a need for training.

Likert Scale Analysis

Table – 3: Level of satisfaction regarding the Impact of E – Commerce

Particulars	Total Score	Mean Score	Remarks
Increased Savings	430	4.30	Highly Satisfied
Digital Literacy	410	4.10	Satisfied
Business Freedom	395	3.95	Satisfied

Source: Primary data

Interpretation: The table shows that Increased Savings (4.30) has the highest level of Satisfaction, followed by Digital Literacy (4.10) and Business Freedom (3.95). Overall, the high mean scores confirm that E-Commerce effectively empowers women.

Findings of the Study

- Facebook is the most used E-Commerce platform.
- Lack of digital skills is a major challenge faced by women entrepreneurs.
- Women entrepreneurs are highly satisfied with increased savings from E-Commerce.
- They're satisfied with digital literacy and business freedom aspects, indicating positive impact.
- The overall satisfaction level indicates E-Commerce has potential for growth among women entrepreneurs in Tirunelveli district.

Suggestions

- Conduct regular digital literacy workshops for women entrepreneurs.
- Improve internet access and infrastructure in rural areas
- Provide E-Commerce training and mentorship Programs.
- Encourage women – led E-Commerce success stories and networking.
- Collaborate with local organizations to promote digital entrepreneurship among women.

Conclusion

E-Commerce has opened doors for women entrepreneurs in Tirunelveli District, bringing benefits like increased savings and business freedom. They're leveraging platforms like Facebook to reach customers. However, to take their businesses to the next level, they need support in areas like digital skills training and better internet access. Addressing these gaps can help them tap into E-Commerce's full potential and expand their online presence. This could create job opportunities for local youth and boost women's participation in the digital economy. With Government and private sector support, these women entrepreneurs can shine.

References

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