



## Paradigm Shift from Entertainers to Entrepreneurs: Situating Urban Women in Contemporary India

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**Abstract:** The paradigm shift from entertainers to entrepreneurs in the context of Indian women reflects a transformative approach in sociological perspective. Traditionally, welfare programs aimed at providing support and assistance to marginalized groups, including women. However, the shift towards empowerment signifies a move beyond mere assistance towards fostering self-reliance, agency, and socio-economic independence. This theoretical shift aligns with feminist theories that emphasize dismantling systemic barriers and promoting equality. Empowerment theory, within the realm of sociology, posits that individuals and communities should be equipped with the tools and resources necessary to control and improve their own lives. In the context of women entrepreneurs, this entails creating an environment that goes beyond addressing immediate needs to fostering conditions for sustained autonomy and influence.

**Keywords:** Entertainers, Entrepreneurs, Indian women, Empowerment

**Received :** 12 October 2025

**Revised :** 14 November 2025

**Accepted :** 01 December 2025

**Published :** 30 December 2025

### **TO CITE THIS ARTICLE:**

Saroj Kumar Dhal & Deepshikha (2025). Paradigm Shift from Entertainers to Entrepreneurs: Situating Urban Women in Contemporary India, *Society and Culture Development in India*, 5: 2, pp. 375-382. <https://doi.org/10.47509/SCDI.2025.v05i02.11>

### **Introduction**

As we know mythologically as well as historically, the position of women, how they have been situated. Much before the feminists emerged in our men stream/main stream the concept of devi was relevant in Indian Sub continent. Devi used to be confined in the four walls of temples and their spirit was limited within the spirituality. But real devi, the women didn't have any business except household business. Their body was meant to enjoy and exploit and further placed in the market to consume in the era of consumption. People couldn't think about their body and beauty beyond entertainment. It took many decades to change the patriarchal trade and business profession. Yet the story has not unfolded as it was supposed to be. Yes little bit change could threat patriarchal dominance in business and entrepreneurship. Dhiru Bhai, Ratan Tata, Birla,

Mahindra, Azim Premji, Shiv Nadar, Nrayan Murthy.....many names but not a single women to fit into such list. Its high time to think empowerment not through only entertainment but also through entrepreneur.

Rana Zehra Masood (2011) in his study on “Emergence of women owned businesses in India-an insight” revealed that, India is a male dominated society and women are assumed to be economically as well as socially dependent on male members. The absolute dependence seems to be diluted among the high hand middle class women as they are becoming more aware of personal needs and demanding greater equality. It's 2024 and there's no better time to be inspired and influenced! Women are slaying it in every single field: from sports to businesses, name it and we are the queens. Let's know and understand about the incredible success stories of amazing women who are true trailblazers and inspirations for anyone who dreams of being an entrepreneur. These powerful female entrepreneurs in India have shattered glass ceilings, defied societal norms, and achieved remarkable success through their grit, determination, and brilliant business ideas. From tech and finance to sustainability and education, these inspiring women entrepreneurs of India have truly disrupted the status quo across sectors. D.S. Khari, (2009). Nowadays women have shifted form kitchen, handicrafts and traditional industries into non – traditional higher level of activities. Even government has laid special emphasis on need for conducting special entrepreneurial training programmes for women and enable them to start their own enterprise with the support of financial institutions and banks. Jameela (2003) in her study to examine the effectiveness of various policies and programmes implemented by the government in empowering women points out that micro-credit approach was successful not only for alleviating poverty but also for empowering women. It further enhances their self-esteem and confidence which in turn helpful in building the capacity of the poor women in managing self-employment opportunities.

Their journeys show that with passion, perseverance and a pioneering mindset, any dream can be transformed into a thriving reality. If they can shatter glass ceilings, so can you! So draw inspiration from India's most successful female entrepreneurs and start working towards turning your unique idea into an incredible entrepreneurial adventure. Huntley (1985) used a case study approach to explore the life events and experiences that had influenced women to choose entrepreneurship as a career alternative. Dinesh Awasthi and Manoj Mishra (2007) examined women's entrepreneurship development from no. of different perspectives. The economic empowerment of women through women entrepreneurship development needs to give substantial emphasis to the

development of women's bargaining power at all levels. It should ensure the breaking down of limiting gender stereotypes and recognize the importance of women agency. The future is blazing bright for business women from metro cities to small cities of India. Since last two decades there is a huge growth in the number of women in business. Such business range from micro enterprises to multi million dollars Industries. Therefore, we cannot dare to underestimate the power of Indian Women. They have been acting as inspiration to many both men and women in India. The traditional or conventional gender roles have been nullified to a great extent. While significant work must be done to bring and encourage more women to the workforce forefront, it is indeed inspiring and encouraging to see successful businesswomen break free from traditional stigmatized gender roles and pursue their entrepreneurial aspirations. Madhu Mauthy K (2003) in her study on "Entrepreneurs, Evaluation of the Concept and Characteristics", revealed that the dominant characteristics of women entrepreneurs are self-confidence, perseverance, determination, energy, diligence, resourcefulness, ability to take risks, need to achieve creativity, initiative, flexibility, positive response to challenges, independence, foresight, dynamism, leadership, versatility, knowledge of product and technology, responsiveness, profit-orientation, perception and optimism.

H. Subrahmanyam (2011) defines the term empower means, to give lawful power or authority to act and it is process of acquiring some activities of women. He compares women education in India at present and past situation and highlighted that there is good progress in overall enrolment of girl students in India. If you've ever wondered how to become an entrepreneur, these top women entrepreneurs are perfect inspiration. These inspiring female entrepreneurs have paved their own paths and gained recognition through their hard work and perseverance. They are the perfect role model for women all around India and great motivation for them to begin their journey in financial planning. Famous women entrepreneurs in India play a crucial role in advancing gender equality and empowerment. Historically, women in India have faced numerous socio-cultural barriers that limit their access to education, economic opportunities, and decision-making roles. By encouraging and supporting women in business, these barriers can be gradually dismantled, allowing women to participate more actively in the economy and society. N.Manimekala and A.Mohammed Abdullah (2008) undergone a study to identify the nature, size and scale of operation of women entrepreneurial activities. It reveals that women entrepreneurs are more in small and micro level business and tend to choose products which are mostly used by women rather than engaging in production or service oriented activities. Finally it was found

that, women running enterprises had contributed to their empowerment by leading them to be independent, improving education of their children and sending girls outside for education and work. In 18th century, person with capital was differentiated from one who needed capital. The entrepreneur was distinguished from capital provider and innovations during this period are according to changing world. Duflo.E (2011) argues that the inter relationships of empowerment and development are probably too weak to be self sustaining and that continuous policy commitment to being equality between men and women.

Duflo. E (2011) argues that the inter relationships of empowerment and development are probably too weak to be self sustaining and that continuous policy commitment to being equality between men and women. According to the Economist, if India rebalanced its workforce so that all capable women could work, the nation could be 27% richer. Women entrepreneurs contribute significantly to economic growth and job creation. India's entrepreneurial ecosystem benefits from the diversity of ideas, perspectives, and skills that women bring to the table and India can tap into the full potential of its female workforce, driving economic progress and reducing gender disparities. Moreover, female entrepreneurs are highly crucial for promoting gender equality, driving economic growth, addressing societal challenges, and inspiring future generations of women to dream big but also to save money early and manage finances. By empowering women to become successful entrepreneurs, India can unlock their full potential and create a more inclusive and prosperous society. John Sommer (2001) in a study relating to the empowerment of the oppressed suggests that the corner stones of improving the livelihood of women are organizing them, building the assets of the poor and building capacity that enables them to control their own affairs and ensuring 'social security' defined in the Indian context. Anita Chaudhary (2012) Women are very important segment in development at local to global levels. Their role in work productivity, employment generation and income oriented activities are hindered by many socio-economic constraints. Babita Agrawal, et al. (2007). mobilizing the potential productivity of rural people and particularly of women is indispensable to achieve the resilient economic growth that will pull people above the poverty line.

### **Successful Women Entrepreneurs in India**

India is home to a remarkable set of female entrepreneurs who have shattered glass ceilings and achieved financial independence and extraordinary success in various fields. From biotechnology and e-commerce to fashion and education, these top

women entrepreneurs in India have made a significant impact in their respective industries, demonstrating resilience, innovation, and an unwavering commitment to their visions. In recent decades, the landscape of societal progress has witnessed a profound transformation, marked by a paradigm shift from traditional welfare-oriented approaches to a dynamic focus on empowerment. This metamorphosis is particularly evident in the context of women entrepreneurs, where recent studies have become pivotal in unravelling the intricate interplay of social structures, gender dynamics, and economic empowerment. Rathindra Nath, et al. (2006). supporting women to earn income through self-employment or entrepreneurship is an important tool of empowerment.

This exploration delves into the multifaceted dimensions of this paradigm shift, aiming to dissect the evolving roles and challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in the contemporary socio-economic milieu. As we embark on this sociological journey, it is imperative to navigate the historical contours that have shaped the conventional perceptions of women's roles in entrepreneurship. Traditionally confined to predefined societal roles, women entrepreneurs have emerged as catalysts of change, challenging preconceived notions and redefining their place in the entrepreneurial landscape. This shift transcends mere economic participation; it encapsulates a broader narrative of empowerment that resonates with societal, cultural, and individual facets. The study unfolds against the backdrop of a global economy where the empowerment of women entrepreneurs is increasingly recognized as not only a matter of social justice but also a strategic imperative for sustainable development. Investigating the intricate web of social structures, cultural norms, and institutional frameworks, the research endeavours to decipher the underlying mechanisms that either facilitate or impede the empowerment of women entrepreneurs. It is within this sociological lens that we scrutinize the transformative potential embedded in the nexus of gender, entrepreneurship, and empowerment. Tinku Paul Bhatnagar (2011) initially presence of women was more in agriculture, forestry, fishing, plantation and allied activities. But now there is a shift in work as the seasonality of work becomes more vulnerable, women's are started working in predominant industries like garment textiles, food and electronics. It was observed that with growing awareness and spread of education over years, women started getting engaged in new activities from traditional business to manufacturing business. M. Bhavani Sankara Rao (2011) highlighted that women member in SHG discuss among themselves about health related problems and aware of various Government provisions specially meant for them. N. Manimekala and A. Mohammed Abdullah (2008) undergone

a study to identify the nature, size and scale of operation of women entrepreneurial activities. It reveals that women entrepreneurs are more in small and micro level business and tend to choose products which are mostly used by women rather than engaging in production or service oriented activities. Finally it was found that, women running enterprises had contributed to their empowerment by leading them to be independent, improving education of their children and sending girls outside for education and work. In 18th century, person with capital was differentiated from one who needed capital. The entrepreneur was distinguished from capital provider and innovations during this period are according to changing world. Sumangala Naik (2003) in her study on “The Need for developing Women Entrepreneurs” revealed that earlier women concentrated much on traditional activities, due to the spread of education, favourable Government policies towards development of women entrepreneurship, women have changed their attitudes and diverted towards non-traditional activities too. Grishma M. Khobragade (2013) argues, women empowerment through entrepreneurship is an important tool for socio-economic development. This can be achieved when the society recognizes women as one among the social partner, provides them equal right, facilitates them with equal education, health and allows them to participate equally and effectively.

Furthermore, the study engages with the lived experiences of women entrepreneurs, seeking to amplify their voices within the academic discourse. Through qualitative research methodologies, it endeavours to unravel the nuanced narratives of resilience, innovation, and negotiation that characterize the journey of women entrepreneurs. By placing their stories at the forefront, this sociological exploration aims to bridge the gap between theory and practice, offering insights that extend beyond statistical analysis to capture the essence of empowerment in the lived reality of women entrepreneurs. In essence, this sociological study serves as a compass, navigating the uncharted territories of a paradigm shift from welfare to empowerment in the realm of women entrepreneurs. By scrutinizing the social fabric that weaves together gender dynamics and entrepreneurial pursuits, the research seeks to contribute not only to academic discourse but also to the formulation of policies that foster an inclusive and empowering environment for women in the entrepreneurial landscape. Angayarkanni (2010) in her study on “Problems of Women entrepreneurs in India”, revealed that equally in education is the key to meeting other requirements for a culture of peace. Women continue to face barriers to economic empowerment and entrepreneurship. These obstacles include discrimination in education, training, hiring, access to credit, the right to own and inherit property, lower levels of pay, promotion for equal work and greater

domestic responsibilities for women. Farr – Wharton and Brunetto (2009) defines that the women entrepreneurs are those who use their knowledge and resources to develop or create new business opportunities, who actively involved in managing their business and own at least 50% of business and have been in operation for longer year. (G.S.Batra, 2004, G.S. Sudha 2007, B.L.Gupta, Anil Kumar 2009) Increasing participation of women in productive activities is essential for growth of nation. The position and status of women in any society is index of its civilization and it is considered as the process of development. Entrepreneur contributes in multiple ways to increase income, use of money resources, brings about balanced development, encourages innovation, resource utilization, motivates individual to starts enterprise, copes with change, community development, etc to promote change in gradual and peaceful manner.

Dinesh Awasthi and Manoj Mishra (2007) examined women's entrepreneurship development from no. of different perspectives. The economic empowerment of women through women entrepreneurship development needs to give substantial emphasis to the development of women's bargaining power at all levels. It should ensure the breaking down of limiting gender stereotypes and recognize the importance of women agency. Pandey Nisha(2019) Empowerment of women essentially mean improving the social, political and economic status of women, especially the traditional underprivileged one. It means creating an environment where women are free from any kind of physical, mental abuse, exploitation, and prejudice that they are the most vulnerable section in the society. Recognising the importance of women in the economic growth of the nation, the Government of India along with State Governments has been taking several efforts since post-independence period to uplift women from their conditions in general. Attempts were made by the Government to address the issues through employment, empowerment, labour force participation, education, gender equality and entrepreneurship. The focus of Government is progressively shifting towards promoting women entrepreneurship to motivate women to participate in the economic activities. The study examines the perspective of women who are getting benefitted through various government schemes implemented in assistance with nongovernmental organizations. The impact observed is in terms of such as - financial assistance, training facilities, infrastructure and its awareness, motivation, confidence, increase in the rate of women opting for entrepreneurship.

Miles to go, its just beginning. Let the world know and acknowledge the power and strength of women. We should not feel proud to say in today's digital world *beti bachao beti padhao* rather it will accuse us by saying history is about his story not her story. Let

that story change and transform the life and experiences of modern women. The change is not about from patriarchy to matriarchy rather understanding the hidden skills of women which need to be disclosed and decoded. No more metaphors of symbolic power associated with Devi rather their entrepreneur skill would empower many more cutting across gender, caste, class or any ascribed status.

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