

STUDY ON THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT POLICIES, DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT IN PROMOTING WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND STARTUP GROWTH

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Abstract

Women entrepreneurship has emerged as a significant driver of economic growth, employment generation and social development. Success of women-led startups is strongly influenced by supportive government policies, access to digital technologies & availability of financial assistance. This examines these three factors contribute to encouraging entrepreneurial activities among women and strengthening startup ecosystem. It explores effectiveness of policy initiatives, digital platforms, online business tools and financial support mechanisms in enhancing business creation, operational efficiency, market access and enterprise sustainability. These highlight challenges women entrepreneurs encounter while utilizing these resources and identifies opportunities for improving their entrepreneurial outcomes. Findings are expected to provide valuable insights for policymakers, financial institutions, startup support organizations and aspiring women entrepreneurs to develop an inclusive and innovation-driven entrepreneurial environment that promotes sustainable business growth and economic empowerment.

Keywords: Women Entrepreneurship, Government Policies, Digital Technologies, Financial Support & Startups.

1. Introduction

Women entrepreneurship has emerged as a vital contributor to economic development, employment generation, innovation and social progress. Increasing participation of women in entrepreneurial activities has strengthened national economies by creating new businesses, generating income and promoting inclusive growth. Women-led startups have demonstrated significant potential across various sectors including technology, healthcare, education, agriculture, manufacturing and services. Despite their growing contribution, women entrepreneurs continue to face several challenges as limited access to finance, inadequate technological skills, market constraints, regulatory complexities and socio-cultural barriers that hinder business establishment and expansion.

Government policies play a crucial role in creating a supportive entrepreneurial ecosystem by introducing startup promotion schemes, financial incentives, skill development initiatives, digital infrastructure and business incubation programs. These initiatives encourage women to establish and expand their enterprises while improving their access to markets and institutional support. Digital technologies as e-commerce platforms, digital payment systems, cloud computing, mobile applications and social media have transformed business operations by enhancing productivity, customer engagement and market reach. Financial support through bank credit, microfinance, venture capital, grants and startup funding further strengthens business sustainability and innovation. This examines government policies, digital technologies and financial support collectively influence the growth of women entrepreneurship and startup development while identifying opportunities and challenges for

building a more inclusive and sustainable entrepreneurial ecosystem.

2. Literature reviews

De Vita, Mari and Poggesi (2014) reviewed existing literature on women entrepreneurs in developing countries to identify major research trends, challenges and opportunities. Women entrepreneurs contribute significantly to economic development despite facing barriers. Authors emphasized importance of gender-sensitive policies, improved financial inclusion, entrepreneurship education and supportive business ecosystems. They also highlighted need for further empirical research to better understand women's entrepreneurial experiences in developing economies.

Agarwal and Lenka (2015) reviewed status of women entrepreneurship in India by examining existing research & identifying key challenges affecting entrepreneurial growth. The study reported that women entrepreneurs face obstacles as limited financial access, inadequate training, socio-cultural constraints and restricted networking opportunities. Authors emphasized the need for supportive government policies, entrepreneurship education, institutional assistance, and skill development programmes. They also suggested expanding future research to explore innovation, digital adoption and policy effectiveness in promoting sustainable women entrepreneurship.

Brush et al. (2018) examined gender disparities in venture capital financing and their impact on women-led entrepreneurial ventures. Women entrepreneurs receive significantly lower venture capital investment than their male counterparts despite demonstrating strong business potential. Authors recommended gender-inclusive investment strategies, increased female investor participation and policy interventions to improve funding accessibility and strengthen women-led startup ecosystems.

Yang, Huang and Gao (2022) investigated the influence of digital financial inclusion on female entrepreneurship using empirical evidence. Findings demonstrated that digital financial services significantly improve women's access to credit, financial resources and entrepreneurial opportunities. They highlighted that digital finance reduces financing constraints, enhances business efficiency and encourages innovation among women-owned enterprises. Authors concluded that expanding digital financial infrastructure and strengthening financial literacy can substantially promote women's entrepreneurial participation and contribute to inclusive economic development.

Maharana et. al. (2025) examined digital technologies supported women entrepreneurs during and after COVID-19 pandemic using a case-based approach. Digital platforms, e-commerce, social media, online payment systems and virtual communication tools enabled women-owned businesses to maintain operations, reach wider markets and improve customer engagement despite pandemic-related disruptions. Authors concluded that digital transformation strengthened business resilience, enhanced innovation and accelerated enterprise recovery. They recommended continued investment in digital infrastructure, digital skill development and policy support to improve the long-term sustainability and competitiveness of women-led enterprises.

Priyadarshni and Divya (2026) explored the contribution of digital microfinance and financial inclusion to the growth of women entrepreneurship. They revealed that digital financial services improve access to affordable credit, facilitate business expansion and strengthen

financial independence among women entrepreneurs. Findings further indicated that digital platforms simplify financial transactions, encourage innovation and enhance enterprise sustainability. Authors recommended expanding digital microfinance programmes, promoting financial literacy and strengthening institutional support to foster inclusive entrepreneurship and sustainable economic growth.

3. Methodology

These adopted a descriptive & analytical design to examine role of government policies, digital technologies & financial support in promoting women entrepreneurship and startup development. Descriptive approach was used to understand the current status of women entrepreneurs while the analytical approach evaluated the relationship between variables. This design enabled systematic collection, analysis and interpretation of quantitative data. It also facilitated identification of factors influencing entrepreneurial success and startup growth. This design was appropriate for generating reliable findings & providing practical recommendations for strengthening women entrepreneurship.

Study Area

Study was conducted among women entrepreneurs operating startups and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in selected urban and semi-urban regions. Respondents represented diverse sectors as manufacturing, retail, agriculture, education, healthcare, information technology and services. These areas were selected because of increasing entrepreneurial activities and access to government support, digital infrastructure and financial institutions. Diversity of study area enabled to capture varied entrepreneurial experiences and challenges thereby providing a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing women entrepreneurship and startup development.

Population of Study

Target population consisted of women entrepreneurs who own or manage startups and MSMEs. Respondents were engaged in various business sectors and had experience in utilizing government policies, digital technologies and financial support for business development. Women entrepreneurs from different age groups, educational qualifications and business experience levels were included to obtain diverse perspectives. Selecting this population allowed the study to assess how institutional support, technological adoption and financial accessibility influence entrepreneurial performance, innovation, business growth and long-term sustainability in women-owned enterprises.

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

These included 300 women entrepreneurs selected through convenience sampling technique. This method enabled to collect data from respondents who were readily available and willing to participate. Sample included entrepreneurs from different industries and business sizes to ensure diversity in responses. Although convenience sampling has limitations in terms of generalization, it is widely accepted for descriptive studies where accessibility and practical considerations are important. Selected sample was considered adequate for conducting statistical analyses and examining relationships among the study variables.

Data Collection Instrument

A structured questionnaire was used as primary tool for data collection. It consisted of demographic questions and statements related to government policies, digital technologies,

financial support and women entrepreneurship. Responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5). Questionnaire was prepared after reviewing relevant literature to ensure content validity. Its structured format enabled uniform data collection, easy coding and efficient statistical analysis while ensuring clarity and consistency in respondents' answers.

Variables of Study

Study examined three independent variables—government policies, digital technologies & financial support and one dependent variable, women entrepreneurship and startup development. Government policies included support schemes, training and regulatory assistance. Digital technologies covered digital marketing, e-commerce, online payment systems and communication technologies. Financial support referred to loans, grants, subsidies, venture capital and microfinance. Dependent variable measured entrepreneurial performance through business growth, innovation, sustainability, market expansion and startup success. These variables formed the basis for testing hypotheses.

Data Analysis Techniques

Collected data were coded and analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics including frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation were used to summarize the respondents' characteristics and responses. Inferential statistical techniques were applied to examine relationships among variables and test research hypotheses. Analyzed results were presented in tabular form and interpreted to determine the influence of government policies, digital technologies and financial support on women entrepreneurship.

4. Result & Discussion

Demographic Profile of Respondents

These involved 300 women entrepreneurs from startups & MSMEs across various sectors. Most respondents were aged 26–35 years, possessed graduate or postgraduate qualifications, and had 1–5 years of business experience. Diverse demographic profile ensured comprehensive representation and strengthened reliability of findings related to women entrepreneurship & startup development.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Age	18–25 years	48	16.0
	26–35 years	129	43.0
	36–45 years	81	27.0
	Above 45 years	42	14.0
Education	Undergraduate	72	24.0
	Graduate	123	41.0

	Postgraduate	87	29.0
	Others	18	6.0
Business Experience	Less than 1 year	45	15.0
	1–5 years	141	47.0
	6–10 years	72	24.0
	Above 10 years	42	14.0

Demographic analysis of 300 respondents indicates that women aged 26–35 years constituted largest group (43.0%) reflecting strong participation of young adults in entrepreneurial activities. Graduates accounted for highest educational category (41.0%), followed by postgraduates (29.0%) suggesting a well-qualified entrepreneurial population. Regarding business experience nearly half of the respondents (47.0%) had 1–5 years of experience indicating presence of emerging enterprises with growth potential. Demographic characteristics demonstrate a balanced and diverse sample providing a reliable basis for examining influence of government policies, digital technologies and financial support on women entrepreneurship and startup development.

Government Policies & Women Entrepreneurship

Findings indicated that government policies positively influenced women entrepreneurship through startup schemes, skill development programs, financial incentives and business support services. Although respondents appreciated these initiatives, many reported limited awareness and procedural delays. Strengthening policy implementation and improving access to information can further enhance entrepreneurial participation.

Table 2: Government Policies and Women Entrepreneurship

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation (SD)
Government schemes encourage business startups	4.18	0.71
Training programmes improve entrepreneurial skills	4.11	0.76
Startup policies support business growth	4.05	0.79
Registration procedures are entrepreneur-friendly	3.82	0.88
Overall Mean	4.04	0.79

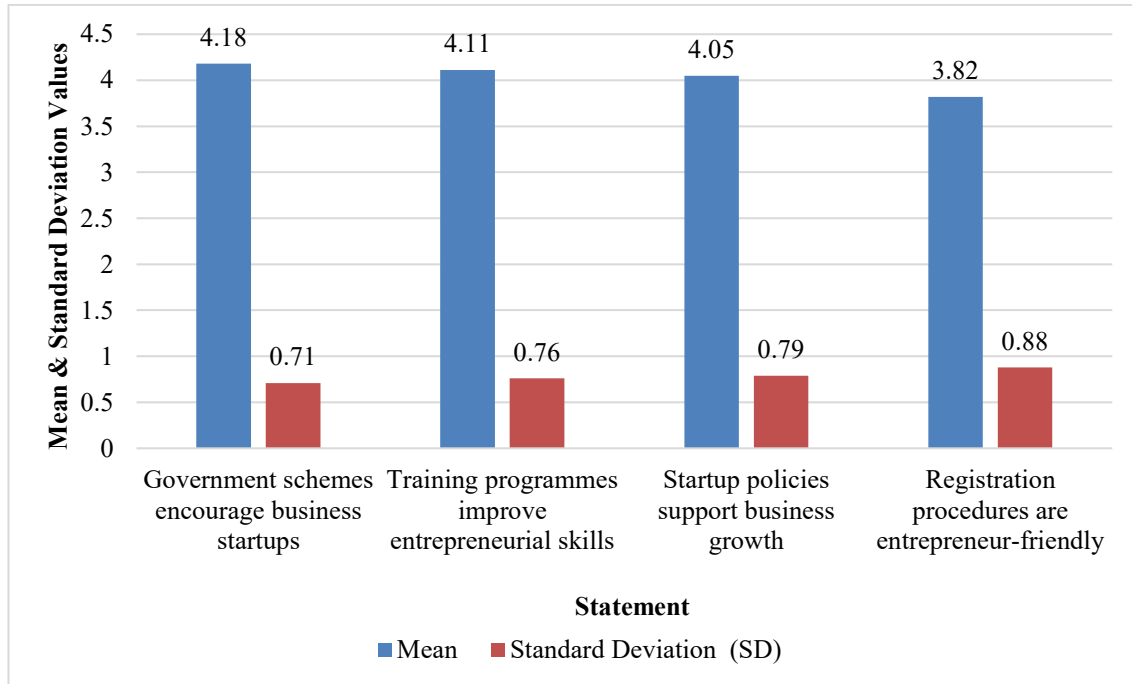


Figure 1: Government Policies and Women Entrepreneurship

Findings indicate that government policies have a positive influence on women entrepreneurship, with an overall mean score of 4.04 (SD = 0.79) reflecting a high level of agreement among respondents. Government schemes encouraging business startups received highest mean score (4.18), followed by training programmes (4.11) and startup policy support (4.05). Registration procedures recorded lowest mean (3.82) suggesting scope for simplifying administrative processes. Results demonstrate that policy initiatives significantly encourage entrepreneurial participation, enhance business capabilities and contribute to the growth and sustainability of women-led startups.

Role of Digital Technologies

Digital technologies significantly improved business operations by enhancing communication, marketing, digital payments and online sales. Respondents acknowledged that technology increased efficiency, productivity and market reach. Digital literacy gaps and infrastructure limitations remained important challenges highlighting need for continuous training and improved technological support.

Table 3: Role of Digital Technologies

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation (SD)
Digital technologies improve business efficiency	4.29	0.65
Social media increases customer reach	4.34	0.61
Digital payment systems improve transactions	4.26	0.69
E-commerce enhances business growth	4.20	0.73
Overall Mean	4.27	0.67

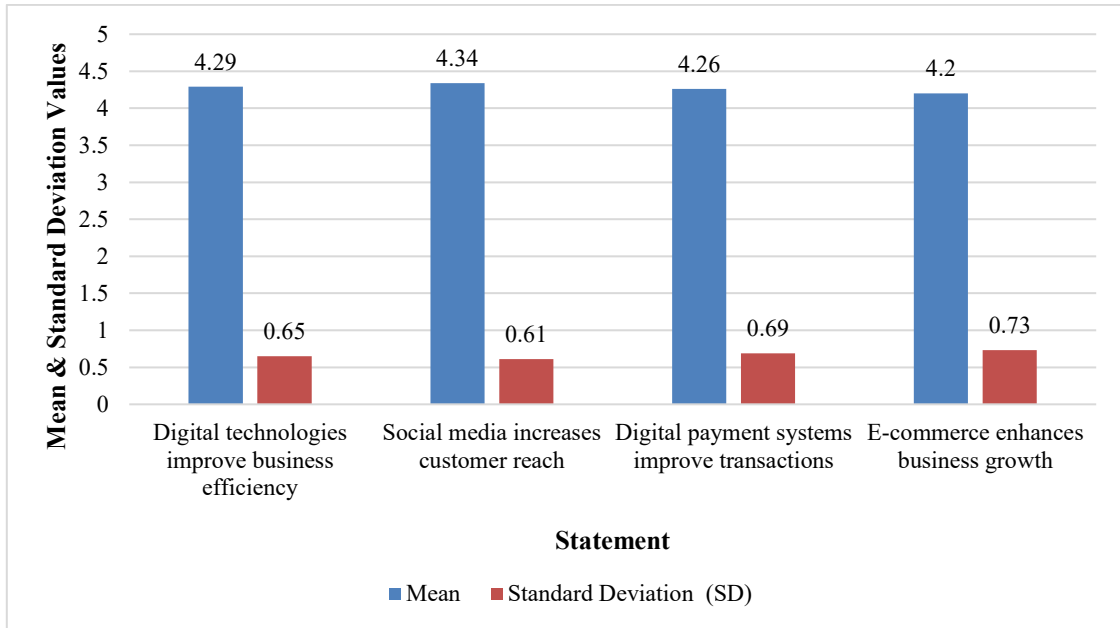


Figure 2: Role of Digital Technologies

Analysis demonstrates that digital technologies play a crucial role in enhancing women entrepreneurship with an overall mean score of 4.27 (SD = 0.67), indicating a very high level of agreement. Social media for expanding customer reach recorded the highest mean (4.34) followed by improved business efficiency through digital technologies (4.29), digital payment systems (4.26) & e-commerce for business growth (4.20). These findings suggest that adoption of digital technologies strengthens operational efficiency, customer engagement and business competitiveness thereby supporting sustainable growth of women-led startups.

Financial Support & Startup Growth

Access to financial support through bank loans, grants, microfinance and startup funding contributed to business establishment and expansion. Respondents identified financial assistance as essential for innovation & sustainability. Limited funding awareness and complex loan procedures continued to restrict entrepreneurial growth for many women.

Table 4: Financial Support and Startup Growth

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation (SD)
Access to finance supports startup growth	4.22	0.70
Government funding improves business expansion	4.10	0.75
Bank loans facilitate enterprise development	4.05	0.80
Financial support encourages innovation	4.18	0.72
Overall Mean	4.14	0.74

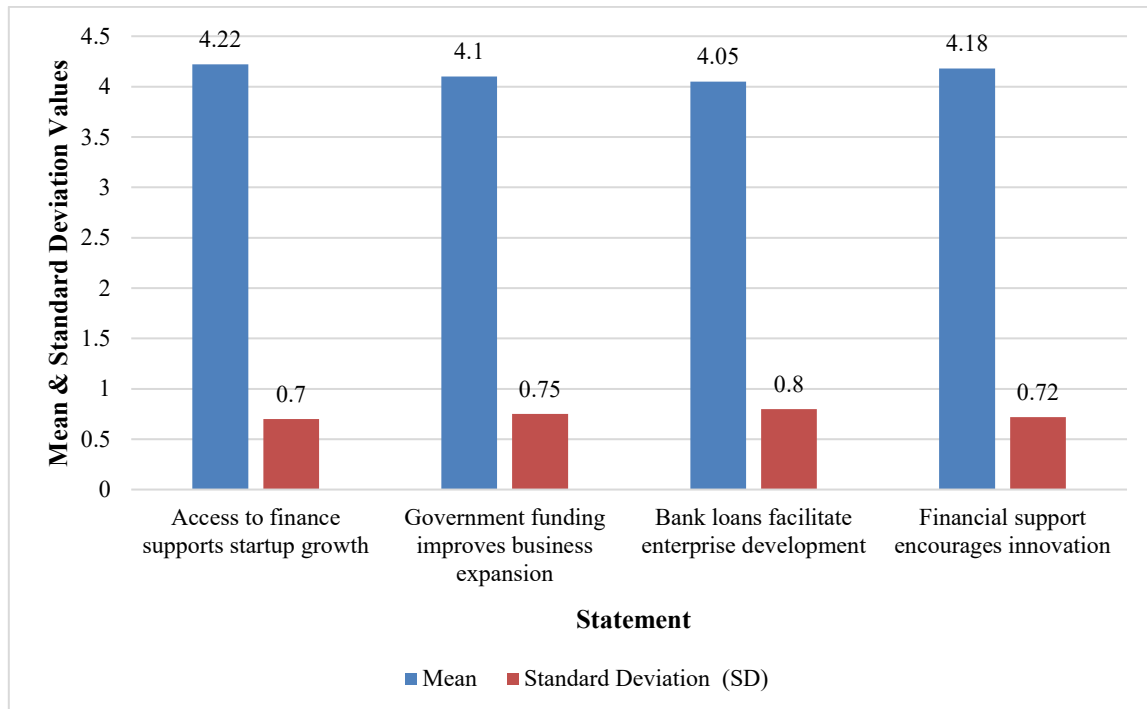


Figure 3: Financial Support and Startup Growth

Results indicate that financial support is a key determinant of startup growth among women entrepreneurs with an overall mean score of 4.14 (SD = 0.74) reflecting a high level of agreement. Access to finance received the highest mean (4.22) emphasizing its importance in establishing and expanding businesses. Financial support for innovation (4.18), government funding for business expansion (4.10) and bank loans for enterprise development (4.05) also received favorable responses. These findings suggest that adequate financial assistance enhances business sustainability, promotes innovation and strengthens growth potential of women-led startups although improving access to funding remains essential.

Combined Influence of Government Policies, Digital Technologies and Financial Support

These found that government policies, digital technologies and financial support collectively strengthened women entrepreneurship and startup development. Their combined influence improved business performance, innovation, competitiveness and sustainability. An integrated support system involving policymakers, financial institutions and technology providers is essential for promoting successful women-led enterprises.

Table 5: Combined Impact on Women Entrepreneurship

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation (SD)
Government Policies	4.04	0.79
Digital Technologies	4.27	0.67
Financial Support	4.14	0.74

Women Entrepreneurship & Startup Development	4.21	0.70
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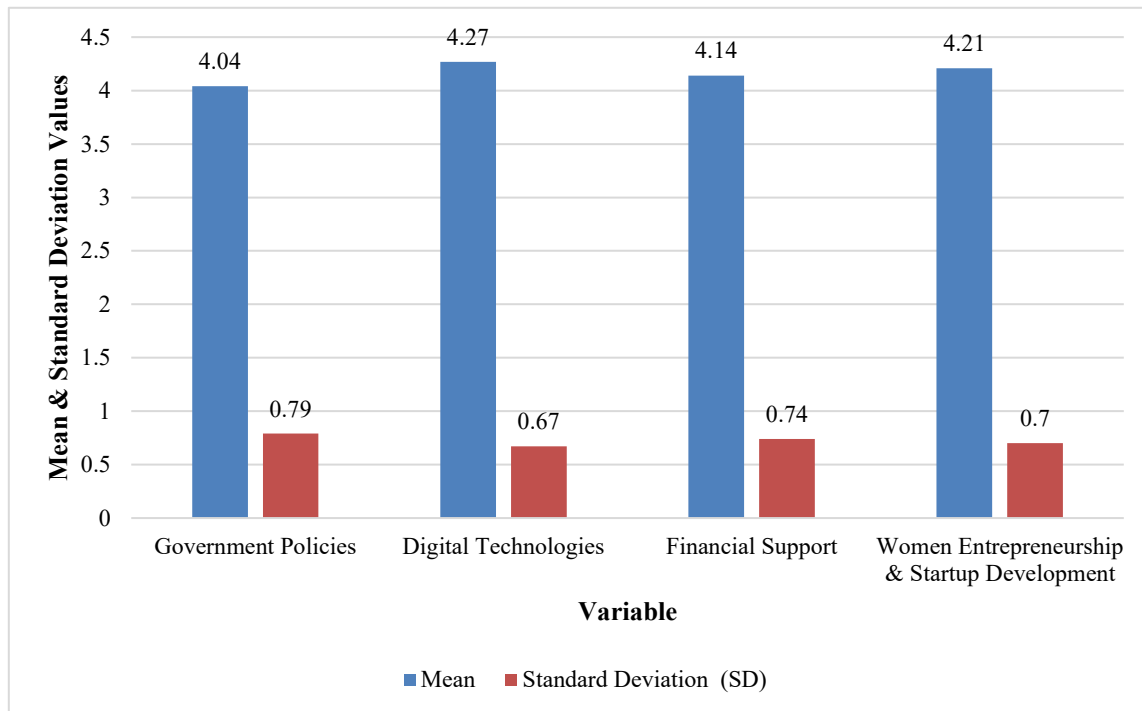


Figure 4: Combined Impact on Women Entrepreneurship

Combined analysis indicates that government policies, digital technologies and financial support collectively play a significant role in promoting women entrepreneurship and startup development. Among three factors, digital technologies recorded highest mean score (4.27, SD = 0.67), followed by financial support (4.14, SD = 0.74) & government policies (4.04, SD = 0.79). Overall mean score for women entrepreneurship and startup development was 4.21 (SD = 0.70) reflecting a high level of agreement among respondents. These findings suggest that an integrated ecosystem comprising supportive government initiatives, digital transformation and accessible financial resources strengthens entrepreneurial capabilities, enhances innovation, improves business performance and contributes to the long-term sustainability of women-led startups.

5. Conclusion

Government policies, digital technologies and financial support are fundamental drivers of women entrepreneurship and startup development. Demographic findings revealed that most respondents were young, well-educated women with moderate entrepreneurial experience, reflecting increasing participation of women in business ventures. Analysis demonstrated that government initiatives including startup schemes and entrepreneurship training programmes, positively encourage business establishment and growth. Digital technologies emerged as most influential factor, enabling entrepreneurs to improve operational efficiency, expand market reach, strengthen customer engagement & enhance business competitiveness. Financial support through loans, grants & funding schemes was also found to be essential for enterprise expansion, innovation and long-term sustainability. Combined findings indicate that integration of supportive public policies, technological advancement & accessible financial resources creates a favorable entrepreneurial ecosystem for women-led startups.

Therefore, strengthening policy implementation, expanding digital literacy, improving financial inclusion & simplifying access to institutional support can further enhance entrepreneurial success. These measures will not only empower women economically but also contribute to employment generation, innovation, inclusive economic growth & sustainable national development.

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