

A Study on Problems and Prospects of Rural Women Entrepreneurs in Bengaluru Rural District

Nagaraju L G (nagarajulg@reva.edu.in), Corresponding Author

Assistant Professor, School of Commerce, REVA University, Bengaluru, India

Priya N, Lecturer of Commerce, Soundarya Ambika PU and Degree College, Nelamangala, India



Copyright: © 2023 by the authors. Licensee [The RCSAS \(ISSN: 2583-1380\)](http://www.thercsas.com). This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial 4.0 International License. (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>). **Crossref/DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.55454/rcsas.3.11.2023.002>

Abstract: *The study on problems and prospects of rural women enterprises in Bengaluru Rural District aims to identify the challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in rural areas and explore the opportunities available to them. The study is based on a survey of 100 rural women entrepreneurs in the district, using a structured questionnaire. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and regression analysis. The study found that lack of access to finance, inadequate infrastructure, and limited market opportunities are the major challenges faced by rural women entrepreneurs. In addition, socio-cultural barriers and lack of education and skills also contribute to the difficulties faced by these entrepreneurs. Despite the challenges, the study also identified various opportunities available for rural women entrepreneurs, such as government schemes and programs, support from non-governmental organizations, and emerging markets for their products and services. The study concludes that the development of rural women entrepreneurs requires a multi-dimensional approach that addresses the various challenges they face. This includes improving access to finance, building infrastructure, providing education and skills training, and creating awareness about government schemes and programs. By addressing these challenges, rural women entrepreneurs can realize their full potential and contribute to the development of their communities.*

Keywords: Economic Growth, Education & Training, Market Opportunities, Rural Women Entrepreneurs

Article History: Received: 14 Nov- 2023; Accepted: 25 Nov- 2023; Published/Available Online: 30 Nov- 2023;

Introduction

Rural women entrepreneurs face a range of challenges and opportunities that differ from those encountered by women entrepreneurs in urban areas. Some of the challenges that rural women entrepreneurs face include limited access to capital, markets, and networks, as well as a lack of relevant skills and training (Dheer, 2021; Kibet & Wambugu, 2020). Additionally, cultural and social norms in rural communities may constrain women's ability to start and grow businesses, as they are often expected to fulfill traditional gender roles and domestic responsibilities (Ganapathi & Ramanujam, 2019). However, there are also potential advantages and opportunities for rural women entrepreneurs, such as access to natural resources and the potential to meet unmet market demands (Osabutey et al., 2021; Sucharipa-Behrmann et al., 2019). Furthermore, women's entrepreneurship has been shown to have positive social and economic impacts, including creating jobs, promoting gender equality, and contributing to community development (Naidoo et al., 2021; World Bank, 2020). To fully understand the problems and prospects of rural women entrepreneurs, it is necessary to conduct in-depth research that takes into account the specific context and challenges faced by these entrepreneurs. This research should employ a variety of research methods, including surveys, interviews, and case studies, to collect rich and diverse data (Javed et al., 2020). By doing so, researchers can gain insights into the unique challenges and opportunities facing rural women entrepreneurs, and develop recommendations and interventions that can help support their growth and success. Entrepreneurship is recognized as an important driver of economic growth, job creation, and poverty reduction. However, women entrepreneurs, especially those in rural areas, often face a range of challenges that limit their ability to start and grow businesses. This literature review provides an overview of the issues and perspectives of rural women entrepreneurs based on a review of the academic and policy literature. Sultana & Haque (2021) highlight that rural women entrepreneurs face challenges that limit their ability to start and grow their businesses. One of the significant challenges is limited access to finance, making it difficult to invest in business development and expansion. Other challenges include limited access to education and training, cultural and social barriers, lack of infrastructure, and limited market access (Gugerty, 2020). Limited access to finance is a significant obstacle for rural women entrepreneurs. In many cases, they lack collateral and credit history, making accessing loans from banks and other financial institutions difficult. Microfinance

institutions and government-sponsored lending programs have been established to address this challenge, but their impact is limited due to limited reach and high-interest rates. Khalid & Fatima (2020) identify cultural and social norms that can also limit rural ability to establish and grow businesses. In many societies, women are expected to prioritize family responsibilities over economic activities and are discouraged from embarking on business ventures. Additionally, they may face discrimination and harassment in male-dominated work environments Haq, (2020). A lack of basic infrastructure such as electricity, water and transportation can also limit the growth of women-owned rural businesses. Without access to these basic amenities, it will be difficult for entrepreneurs to operate and grow their businesses Sultana & Haque, (2021). Rural women entrepreneurs also face challenges in accessing markets for their products and services. In many cases, they lack the networks and resources to connect with potential buyers and customers. This limits their ability to expand their business and generate higher income Faheem, Raza, and Lodhi, (2021). Despite the challenges, there are still many prospects for rural women entrepreneurs. An important outlook is the growing demand for locally produced goods and services, driven by growing attention to sustainability and social responsibility. Furthermore, technological advancements have created new opportunities for rural women entrepreneurs to access markets and reach customers Gupta & Misra, (2021). Identified, the growing demand for locally produced goods and services provides opportunities for rural women entrepreneurs to showcase their products and services. With a focus on sustainability and social responsibility, consumers are increasingly interested in buying products that are produced locally and have a lower environmental impact. This presents an opportunity for rural women entrepreneurs who can leverage their local knowledge and resources to produce high-quality products and services. Kumar and Ravi (2017), it was found that most rural women entrepreneurs in Bengaluru Rural District had low levels of education and came from families with low socio-economic status. The study also revealed that lack of access to finance and limited market opportunities were major challenges faced by these women entrepreneurs. Venkatesh and Rangaswamy (2018) found that most rural women entrepreneurs in Bengaluru Rural District were engaged in agriculture-related activities, such as dairy farming and vegetable cultivation. The study also found that lack of marketing skills and limited access to information and technology are major challenges faced by these women entrepreneurs. Siddiqui and Nair (2019) found that most rural women entrepreneurs in Bengaluru rural district had little or no prior business experience. The study also found that limited access to credit, lack of business skills and cultural and social barriers are major challenges faced by these women entrepreneurs. Srivastava and Singh (2020), it was found that most of the rural women entrepreneurs in Bengaluru rural district were involved in small business activities such as sewing, handicrafts and food processing. The study also revealed that lack of training and capacity building opportunities, limited market access and poor infrastructure are major challenges these women entrepreneurs face. Dissanayake and Mahesh (2018), access to finance is said to be one of the major problems rural women entrepreneurs face in Sri Lanka. Research shows that female entrepreneurs have difficulty obtaining loans from banks and other financial institutions due to a lack of collateral and limited financial knowledge. Khatri and Singh (2019) found that lack of training and skills development opportunities are major challenges rural women entrepreneurs face in India. Research shows that many female entrepreneurs lack basic business skills such as marketing, accounting and inventory management. Abirami and Aruna (2020) found that limited market opportunities are a significant challenge rural women entrepreneurs face in India. Research shows that many women entrepreneurs have limited market access due to a lack of infrastructure, inadequate transportation, and poor market linkages. Bhatta et al. (2021) found that cultural and social barriers also pose challenges for rural women entrepreneurs in Nepal. Research shows that many women entrepreneurs face discrimination, prejudice and gender-based violence, which hinder their ability to start and run successful businesses

Materials and Methods

Although the number of rural women entrepreneurs in Bangalore rural district is increasing, they face a number of challenges in starting and running their businesses, including limited access to finance, lack of training and skills development opportunities, limited access to finance, and market opportunities. To support the growth and success of women-led rural businesses, it is essential to understand their socioeconomic context and the specific challenges they face.

Scope of the Study

The scope of the study is to study the challenges and opportunities faced by rural women entrepreneurs in Bengaluru rural district. The research aims to identify specific barriers that hinder women's ability to establish and grow businesses in this sector, as well as potential solutions or strategies that could help overcome these challenges. Research should also consider existing resources and support systems that can contribute to the economic advancement of rural women in the region. Overall, the research aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the issues faced by rural women entrepreneurs and provide information that can inform policies and programs aimed at promoting entrepreneurship-women in the Bengaluru rural district.

Objectives of the Study

- To identify the socio-economic background of rural women entrepreneurs in Bengaluru Rural District.
- To assess the problems faced by rural women entrepreneurs in setting up and running their businesses, such as access to finance, lack of training and skill development, and limited market opportunities.



Research Methodology

The present study is based on primary and secondary data. The primary data was collected from 100 women entrepreneurs from 4 taluks of Bengaluru rural district Karnataka namely, Doddaballapur, Devanahalli, Hosakote and Nelamangala, using a random sampling method. The primary data were collected from the respondents.

Sample Size: Women entrepreneurs who are the main source of primary data are collected from the women entrepreneurs through a well-structured questionnaire. As the area of the study is limited to the Bengaluru rural district of Karnataka and the total women population is numerable, the researcher has proposed random sampling techniques for the selection of respondents. To identify the right respondents, which is also essential for the collection of primary data the following process has been adopted scientifically. Finally, 100 respondents were selected and included in the study from the various taluks of Bengaluru rural district who have engaged to start an enterprise and running successfully. The predetermined distribution strategy was used to methodically choose the respondents from various taluks. Taluk-wise, with equal representation from each region, the responses were assigned. The following is a thorough breakdown:

- Doddaballapur: 25 responders, or 25% of the sample as a whole.
- Devanahalli: 25 responders, or 25% of the sample as a whole.
- Hosakote: 25 responders, or 25% of the sample as a whole.
- Nelamangala: 25 responders, or 25% of the sample as a whole.

This strategy made sure that a representative and equitable sample of respondents was chosen from each taluk, which added to the overall diversity and thoroughness of the study. There were a total of 100 responders in all taluks, which means that 100% of the study sample was represented.

Results

The data thus collected were analyzed using statistical tools like classification, tabulation correlation coefficient and percentage to examine the challenges faced by women entrepreneurs.

Table 1: Age of the respondents in the survey

Age Group	% Analysis	Interpretation
15-25	6	The survey reflects a diverse age distribution, with the majority (33%) falling between the ages of 26 and 35, suggesting a strong involvement of people in their late 20s to mid-30s. A notable percentage is in the 36-55 age group (26%-27%). Survey participation rates were relatively low for those aged 15 to 25 (6%) and those aged 60 and over (8%).
26-35	33	
36-45	26	
46-55	27	
More than 60	8	

Source: Primary Data

Table 2: Educational of the respondents

Qualification	% Analysis	Interpretation
Below Matriculation	12	The respondents' educational profiles show a varied engagement; graduates make up the largest percentage (39%) followed by PUC (36%). 13% of the population is postgraduate, while 12% are below matriculation. The lack of responses in the "Other" category points to a distinct educational divide, indicating that the participant pool is predominately educated.
PUC	36	
Graduates	39	
Post Graduates	13	
Other	0	

Source: Primary Data

Table 3: Experience in their field of Expertise

Years	% Analysis	Interpretation
0-5 years	45	A significant portion of respondents—45%—have 0–5 years of professional experience, which indicates that they are either recent graduates or members of a younger workforce. The group with over 15 years (29%) is considered experienced, but the groups with 11–15 years (18%) and 6–10 years (8%), respectively, represent mid-career professionals in a balanced manner.
6-10 years	8	
11-15 years	18	
More than 15 years	29	

Source: Primary Data

Table 4: The family structure of the respondents

Family	% Analysis	Interpretation
Joint	64	Extended family systems are common, as evidenced by the majority of respondents (64%) who are part of joint family arrangements. 36% of the families are made up of nuclear families. This distribution shows the respondents' varied backgrounds and the coexistence of more contemporary nuclear family structures and more conventional joint family setups.
Nuclear	36	
Total	100	

Source: Primary Data

Table 5: Occupation of the respondents

Family	% Analysis	Interpretation
Full-time Entrepreneur	63	According to a survey conducted in the Bengaluru Rural District, 63% of rural women entrepreneurs work as full-time business owners, indicating a sizable independent workforce. The remaining 37% encourage entrepreneurs, highlighting the cooperation or additional roles played by women in entrepreneurship, which reflects the demographic's dual dynamics of autonomy and cooperation.
Supporting Entrepreneur	37	
Total	100	

Source: Primary Data

Table 6: Income of the respondents

Income	% Analysis	Interpretation
50000-1 Lakh	50	The income distribution of rural women entrepreneurs in Bengaluru Rural District reveals a predominately mid-range income group, with a substantial chunk (50%) falling within the 50,000 to 1 Lakh income range. The survey shows a heterogeneous financial environment, with respondents facing a range of opportunities and difficulties.
1 Lakh-2 Lakh	19	
2 Lakh-3 Lakh	15	
3Lakh-4 Lakh	10	
More than 5 Lakh	6	

Source: Primary Data

Table 7: Difficult to Access to Finance

	% Analysis	Interpretation
Strongly agree	64	According to a survey on rural women entrepreneurs in Bengaluru Rural District, 64% of respondents strongly believe that obtaining financing is a major difficulty. The low percentages in the disagree and strongly disagree categories (8% and 4%, respectively) highlight the common challenge these women encounter when trying to secure funding for their business endeavors.
Agree	12	
Neither agree nor disagree	6	
Disagree	8	
Strongly disagree	4	

Source: Primary Data

Table 8: Lack of Training and Skill Development

	% Analysis	Interpretation
Strongly agree	47	With 47% highly agreeing, the study on rural women entrepreneurs in Bengaluru Rural District brings to light a noteworthy worry regarding training and skill development. Although 25% of respondents agree, different opinions are indicated by the numbers in the disagree and strongly disagree categories (12% and 7%, respectively). This emphasizes how important it is to focus on providing these entrepreneurs with training and skill-building opportunities.
Agree	25	
Neither agree nor disagree	9	
Disagree	12	
Strongly disagree	7	

Source: Primary Data

Table 9: Limited Market Opportunities

	% Analysis	Interpretation
Strongly agree	56	There is agreement on the restricted market opportunities, with 56% of respondents to research on rural women entrepreneurs in Bengaluru Rural District strongly agreeing. Even while 17% agree, the mix of 18% disagree and 12% strongly disagree suggesting that there are major obstacles to identifying and seizing market opportunities. It is essential to address these obstacles in order to promote sustained entrepreneurial growth.
Agree	17	
Neither agree nor disagree	5	
Disagree	18	
Strongly disagree	12	

Source: Primary Data

Table 10: Lack of Government Support

	% Analysis	Interpretation
Strongly agree	54	With 54% strongly agreeing, the survey on rural women entrepreneurs in Bengaluru Rural District highlights a common opinion about a lack of government support. Even though 23% of respondents agree, there is a perceived lack of supportive measures, as evidenced by the lower percentages in the disagree and agree categories (7% and 4%, respectively), suggesting that government actions to help rural women entrepreneurs need to be strengthened.
Agree	23	
Neither agree nor disagree	12	
Disagree	7	
Strongly disagree	4	

Source: Primary Data

Table 11: Lack of Access to Information

	% Analysis	Interpretation
Strongly agree	69	69% of respondents to a research on rural women entrepreneurs in Bengaluru Rural District strongly agreed that information access is a major challenge. Although 12% of respondents agree, the percentages in the disagree and agree categories (6% and 9%, respectively) highlight how urgently better information conduits are needed in order to empower and improve these entrepreneurs' prospects.
Agree	12	
Neither agree nor disagree	4	
Disagree	6	
Strongly disagree	9	

Source: Primary Data

Table 12: Social Barriers and Cultural Constraints

	% Analysis	Interpretation
Strongly agree	58	Significant recognition of social and cultural hurdles is found in the study on rural women entrepreneurs in Bengaluru Rural District, with 58% strongly agreeing. Even though 18% agree, the mix of 10% disagree and 8% strongly disagree points to a more complex picture. In order to develop an atmosphere that encourages inclusive entrepreneurship among women in rural areas, it is imperative that these issues be addressed.
Agree	18	
Neither agree nor disagree	6	
Disagree	10	
Strongly disagree	8	

Source: Primary Data

Table 13: Gender Discrimination

	% Analysis	Interpretation
Strongly agree	70	70% of respondents to a survey on rural women entrepreneurs in Bengaluru Rural District strongly agreed that gender discrimination is a problem. Although 12% of respondents agree, the numbers in the disagree and agree categories (8% and 6%, respectively) show enduring difficulties. In order to empower women entrepreneurs in rural areas and create a supportive atmosphere, gender bias must be addressed.

Source: Primary Data

Discussion

The results of the Bengaluru Rural District survey on rural women entrepreneurs paint a complex picture of the region's demographics. The age range of 26–35 accounts for a sizable share of respondents (33%), emphasizing the active participation of those in their late 20s to mid-30s. Diversity can be seen in the educational profiles, with graduates making up the largest group (39%), followed by PUC (36%). With 45% having 0–5 years, 29% having over 15 years, and 18% having 11–15 years, the poll highlights a balanced representation of professional experience and suggests a dynamic mix of career stages. Family structures demonstrate that nuclear families (36%) and joint families (64%) are more common, demonstrating the coexistence of traditional and modern configurations.

Regarding entrepreneurship, 63% are full-time business owners, emphasizing a substantial independent workforce, while 37% play supportive roles, showcasing collaborative dynamics. The income distribution points to a predominantly mid-range group (50% earning 50,000 to 1 Lakh), reflecting a varied financial environment. Challenges include significant difficulty in obtaining financing (64%) and concerns about training and skill development (47%). Restricted market opportunities are acknowledged by 56%, necessitating strategies for sustained growth. A prevalent sentiment of a lack of government support (54%) underscores the need for strengthened interventions. Access to information is a major hurdle, with 69% strongly agreeing. Social and cultural barriers were recognized by 58%, indicating the complexity of the environment. 70% recognize sexism, indicating a continuing challenge. Recommendations include targeted skills development, increasing government support, increasing financial literacy, and removing social and cultural barriers. Strengthening information channels and combating gender bias are essential to empowering rural women entrepreneurs. In conclusion, the study underscores the multifaceted nature of challenges faced by rural women entrepreneurs and emphasizes the need for holistic and inclusive interventions to foster sustainable growth in Bengaluru Rural District.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study of the problems and prospects of rural women entrepreneurs in Bangalore rural district provides a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced by this dynamic group. The results show a diverse demographic, with a significant presence of young, educated women actively involved in entrepreneurship. Despite this promising trend, the study identifies significant challenges, including limited access to finance, inadequate infrastructure, and limited market opportunities. In addition, socio-cultural barriers and lack of education and skills also contribute to the difficulties rural women entrepreneurs face. However, amid these challenges, research has uncovered many opportunities, such as government programs, support from NGOs, and emerging markets for products and their services. The results highlight the importance of a multifaceted approach to addressing these entrepreneurs' multifaceted challenges. This approach includes improving access to finance, building infrastructure, providing education and vocational training, and raising awareness about government projects and programs. The demographic analysis highlights a balanced representation of career experience, family structure, and career stage mix among rural women entrepreneurs. The study highlights the collaborative dynamic in entrepreneurship, with many full-time business owners and those in support roles. The income distribution reflects a diverse financial environment, with a significant share of median income. Key challenges identified include raising capital, concerns about training and skills development, and limited market opportunities. The study highlights the need for targeted interventions, such as skills development programs, increased government support, improved financial literacy and removal of cultural barriers. Socialization. Strengthening information channels and combating gender bias were essential elements to empower rural women entrepreneurs fully. In conclusion, the study calls for comprehensive and comprehensive interventions to promote sustainable growth in Bengaluru rural district. By addressing the identified challenges and taking advantage of available opportunities, rural women entrepreneurs can realize their full potential, contribute to community development and play an important role in the general economic context of the region.

References

- Abirami, K., & Aruna, G. (2020). A study on problems faced by rural women entrepreneurs in India. *International Journal of Innovative Technology and Exploring Engineering*, 9(2S), 12-16.
- Bhatta, S. B., Rijal, S., & Kafle, T. (2021). Challenges faced by rural women entrepreneurs in Nepal: A qualitative study. *Journal of Business and Management Research*, 4(1), 1-10.
- Dheer, R. (2021). Women entrepreneurship in rural India: Problems and prospects. *International Journal of Recent Technology and Engineering*, 10(3), 7563-7568.
- Dissanayake, D. M. R., & Mahesh, T. N. (2018). Problems and prospects of rural women entrepreneurs in Sri Lanka. *International Journal of Social Science and Economic Research*, 3(1), 42-49.
- Faheem, M., Raza, S. A., & Lodhi, R. N. (2021). Women Entrepreneurship and its Challenges: A Review of Literature. *Business Review*, 16(2), 138-147. doi: 10.37074/br.v16i2.250
- Ganapathi, L., & Ramanujam, M. (2019). Rural women entrepreneurship in India: Opportunities and challenges. *International Journal of Management, Technology and Social Sciences*, 4(2), 72-82.
- Gugerty, M. K. (2020). Microfinance and entrepreneurship. In *The Routledge Handbook of Entrepreneurship in Developing Economies* (pp. 237-256). Routledge.
- Gupta, A., & Misra, S. K. (2021). Women entrepreneurship in India: Opportunities and challenges. *Indian Journal of Industrial Relations*, 56(1), 142-156.
- Haq, R. (2020). The role of technology in promoting women's entrepreneurship in rural areas of developing countries. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 75, 64-73. doi: 10.1016/j.jrurstud.2020.01.003
- Javed, M., et al. (2020). Challenges and prospects of rural women entrepreneurs: Evidence from Pakistan. *Journal of Small Business Management*, 58(4), 837-853.
- Khalid, S., & Fatima, Z. (2020). Women entrepreneurship in developing countries: Issues and challenges. In *Handbook of Research on Women's Issues and Rights in the Developing World* (pp. 308-329). IGI Global.
- Khatri, S., & Singh, S. (2019). Problems and challenges faced by rural women entrepreneurs in India. *Journal of Management and Science*, 9(1), 40-45.
- Kibet, L. K., & Wambugu, A. N. (2020). Challenges facing women entrepreneurship in Kenya's rural areas. *Journal of Entrepreneurship, Business and Economics*, 8(2), 20-36.
- Kumar, S., & Ravi, K. (2017). A study on socio-economic profile and problems of rural women entrepreneurs in Bengaluru Rural District. *International Journal of Scientific Research and Management*, 5(6), 5784-5791.
- Naidoo, V., et al. (2021). Women's entrepreneurship in the developing world: Challenges and opportunities. *Journal of Business Research*, 123, 521-529.
- Osabutey, E. L., et al. (2021). Women's entrepreneurship in rural Africa: Opportunities, challenges, and implications for development. *Journal of Small Business Management*, 59(3), 530-542.
- Siddiqui, S., & Nair, S. (2019). Socio-economic profile and challenges faced by rural women entrepreneurs in Bengaluru Rural District. *International Journal of Research and Analytical Reviews*, 6(2), 1279-1287.
- Srivastava, M., & Singh, R. (2020). Challenges faced by rural women entrepreneurs in Bengaluru Rural District. *International Journal of Scientific Research and Management*, 8(5), 609-615.
- Sucharipa-Behrmann, L., et al. (2019). Women's entrepreneurship in rural areas: A review of the literature. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 71, 46-55.
- Sultana, R., & Haque, M. A. (2021). Challenges and Opportunities of Women Entrepreneurship Development in Rural Bangladesh. *Journal of Women's Entrepreneurship and Education*, 1-16. doi: 10.30525/978-9934-588-04-1-01
- Venkatesh, K., & Rangaswamy, P. (2018). An analysis of socio-economic status of rural women entrepreneurs in Bengaluru Rural District. *International Journal of Research in Commerce, IT & Management*, 8(8), 1-6.
- World Bank. (2020). *Women, Business, and the Law 2020: Women, Business, and the Law*. Retrieved from <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/33244>.