

Women Entrepreneurship in Rayalaseema Region: A Study of Socio-Economic Constraints and Motivational Factors

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Abstract

Women entrepreneurship plays a significant role in promoting economic growth, employment generation, and inclusive development in India. Despite their substantial potential to contribute to economic activities, women entrepreneurs continue to face various socio-economic, financial, institutional, and operational challenges compared to their male counterparts. However, changing social attitudes, increasing educational opportunities, improved awareness, and the desire for economic independence have encouraged more women to enter entrepreneurial activities. Women entrepreneurs are increasingly emerging as important contributors to household income, employment creation, and regional economic development. Their entrepreneurial motivation is influenced by several factors, including self-employment opportunities, financial independence, utilization of skills and knowledge, personal achievement, family support, and the aspiration to achieve social recognition. Nevertheless, inadequate finance, limited access to markets, lack of technical knowledge, insufficient institutional support, and social constraints continue to affect their entrepreneurial performance and growth. Against this backdrop, the present study examines the socio-economic constraints and motivational factors influencing women entrepreneurs in the Rayalaseema region of Andhra Pradesh, India. The study seeks to understand the challenges encountered by women entrepreneurs and the factors that encourage their participation in entrepreneurial activities. The findings may provide useful insights for policymakers, financial institutions, and development agencies in designing effective strategies to promote women entrepreneurship and strengthen their contribution to sustainable regional economic development.

I. Introduction

Over the years, the role and status of women in society have undergone significant transformation. Women who were traditionally confined to household responsibilities and family care are now actively participating in diverse fields, including education, politics, science, technology, industry, and business. This transformation reflects the growing recognition of women's capabilities, skills, and contributions to socio-economic development. Women entrepreneurship has become an important instrument for promoting economic independence, employment generation, poverty reduction, and inclusive growth. While women entrepreneurship is increasingly accepted in urban areas, it continues to face several social and cultural challenges in rural regions, where traditional values and customs strongly influence economic and occupational choices. In the past, women entering business activities often received limited family and social support. However, changing attitudes, improved educational opportunities,

increased awareness, and the pursuit of financial independence have gradually encouraged women to explore entrepreneurial opportunities beyond their traditional roles.

The evolution of women entrepreneurship represents a transition from conventional household-based activities to diversified and knowledge-driven enterprises. Traditionally, women's economic activities were often associated with the preparation of Powders, Pickles, and Papads (3Ps). Today, women are increasingly entering modern sectors such as Electronics, Engineering, and Energy (3Es), demonstrating their expanding capabilities, entrepreneurial aspirations, and participation in emerging industries. This transition highlights the growing importance of women entrepreneurs in the contemporary economic environment. The Government of India has introduced several initiatives to encourage and support women entrepreneurs. The New Industrial Policy of 1991 emphasized the importance of entrepreneurship development and envisaged special training programmes to promote women's participation in industrial and business activities. Accordingly, Entrepreneurship Development Programmes (EDPs) have been organized by various government institutions and development agencies at both central and state levels to enhance entrepreneurial skills, technical knowledge, managerial capabilities, and business awareness among women.

The Small Industries Development Organization (SIDO), now known as the Office of the Development Commissioner (MSME), has played an important role in supporting small-scale industries and promoting entrepreneurship among women. Through its field offices and development programmes, the organization has provided technical guidance, training, and assistance for establishing small-scale industrial units. In 1991, the Small Scale Industries Board revised the definition of women-owned enterprises by removing the earlier condition relating to the employment of at least 50 per cent women workers, thereby broadening the scope for recognizing and encouraging women-led enterprises.

II. Review of Literature

Previous studies on women entrepreneurship, socio-economic constraints, challenges, and motivational factors. It provides a foundation for understanding the existing research and identifying the research gap for the present study.

1. **Chunera (2020)** identified social, personal, financial, and environmental constraints affecting Indian women entrepreneurs, emphasizing gender inequality, inadequate finance, limited training, and insufficient institutional support.
2. **Sehgal and Khandelwal (2020)** examined work–family relationships among urban Indian women entrepreneurs, highlighting the importance of social support, family involvement, and role integration in reducing conflict and enhancing entrepreneurial experiences.
3. **Shastri et al. (2021)** found that creativity, autonomy, growth aspirations, and gender identity motivated women entrepreneurs in Rajasthan, while gender stereotypes, weak social networks, and work–life conflicts remained significant challenges.
4. **Baral et al. (2023)** systematically reviewed Indian women entrepreneurship research and identified challenges, success factors, motivations, and performance as major themes, emphasizing the need for context-specific studies and stronger theoretical foundations.
5. **Ranguwal and Kaur (2022)** studied women entrepreneurship in Punjab and India, reporting financial and marketing difficulties alongside the importance of institutional finance, entrepreneurial awareness, skill development, and family support.

6. **Kaur and Kaur (2024)** reviewed Indian research and identified financial constraints, socio-cultural barriers, inadequate education, limited training, and insufficient government support as recurring problems, while economic independence motivated women to pursue entrepreneurship.
7. **Mukhopadhyay (2026)** explored middle-class women entrepreneurs in Kolkata and found that self-actualization motivated entrepreneurial initiatives, whereas institutional inadequacies and underlying gender stereotypes continued to constrain business development.
8. **Dua and Agrawal (2026)** examined the relationship between entrepreneurial constraints and motivation in India, showing how family responsibilities, financial difficulties, and institutional barriers interact with achievement, independence, and market opportunities.
9. **Dale et al. (2026)** investigated digital platform ecosystems among women entrepreneurs in Indian Tier-II cities, highlighting how social commerce, individual agency, and digital platforms support entrepreneurial intentions within resource-constrained environments.

III. Research Gap

The reviewed literature indicates that women entrepreneurs in India face persistent financial, socio-cultural, institutional, and work–family constraints. At the same time, motivations such as economic independence, achievement, creativity, self-confidence, and family support encourage entrepreneurial participation. However, there is a need for more region-specific empirical research on women entrepreneurs in Rayalaseema, particularly examining how socio-economic constraints and motivational factors influence their entrepreneurial participation and development. The present study attempts to address this research gap by focusing on women entrepreneurs in the Rayalaseema region of Andhra Pradesh.

IV. Need for the Study

Women entrepreneurship contributes to economic development, employment generation, and women's empowerment. However, women entrepreneurs in the Rayalaseema region face socio-economic, financial, institutional, and cultural constraints, while factors such as economic independence, family support, self-employment, and personal achievement motivate participation. Hence, this study examines these constraints and motivational factors to suggest appropriate measures for promoting sustainable women entrepreneurship.

V. Objectives

The study is undertaken with the following objectives:

- To study the socio-economic problems faced by women entrepreneurs in the Rayalaseema region of Andhra Pradesh.
- To identify the key motivational factors influencing women to initiate and sustain entrepreneurial activities.
- To suggest suitable measures for strengthening and promoting women entrepreneurship in the study area.

VI. Limitations

The study covers selected women entrepreneurs from 40 Mandals of Rayalaseema, **based** on primary data from 120 respondents. Findings may be limited by the sample size, due to time constraints and

limited cooperation, and the reliance on self-reported information, which may influence the accuracy and generalizability of the results.

VII. Sample Design

The study covers 120 women entrepreneurs have been selected on the basis of simple random sampling.

Number of Mandals selected from the districts in the study area

Sl.No.	Name of the District	Number of Mandals	Selected Mandals	Entrepreneurs
1	Anantapur	31	6	30
2	Annamayya	30	6	30
3	Chittoor	31	6	30
4	Tirupati	36	6	30
	Total	128	120	120

Source: www.census2011.co.in

VIII. Methodology

The study is based on both primary and secondary data. multi-stage sampling method was adopted for the selection of the respondents. For the study, four districts of the Rayalaseema region of Andhra Pradesh, namely Anantapur, Annamayya, Chittoor, and Tirupati, were selected. These four districts together consist of 128 Mandals. From each district, 6 Mandals were selected for the study total of 24 Selected Mandals. From each selected Mandal, 5 women entrepreneurs were selected as respondents. Thus, the study covers 120 Women Entrepreneurs (24 Mandals × 5 entrepreneurs).

IX. Sources of Data

The study is based on both primary and secondary data, Primary Data: Primary data are collected directly from the selected respondents through a structured schedule designed specifically for the study; Secondary data were collected from various sources, including previous research studies, journals, research articles, government reports, publications, books, and other relevant sources.

Table-1: Production Related Problems Faced by Women Entrepreneurs

	Anantapur		Annamayya		Chittoor		Tirupati	
Problems	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Raw material	5	16.67	7	23.33	6	20.00	5	16.67
Labour	11	36.67	8	26.67	10	33.33	12	40.00
Power	0.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Finance	14	46.66	15	50.00	14	46.67	13	43.33
Total	30	100.00	30	100.00	30	100.00	30	100.00

Source: Field Survey Data

Table-1 shows that finance was the major production-related problem faced by women entrepreneurs in all four districts, reported by 43.33% to 50.00% of respondents. Labour-related problems were the

second most prominent, ranging from 26.67% in Annamayya to 40.00% in Tirupati. Raw-material problems were comparatively lower, while none of the respondents reported power-related problems.

Table-2: Marketing Problems Faced by Women Entrepreneurs

	Anantapur		Annamayya		Chittoor		Tirupati	
Problems	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Man power	13	43.33	11	36.67	9	30.00	10	33.34
Transport Prices	8	26.66	6	20.00	11	36.67	8	26.66
Ads cost	9	30.00	10	33.34	10	33.34	9	30.00
Others	0	0.00	3	10.00	0	0.00	3	10.00
Total	30	100.00	30	100.00	30	100.00	30	100.00

Source: Field Survey Data

Table-2 reveals that manpower was the major marketing problem in Anantapur (43.33%), while transport costs were relatively higher in Chittoor (36.67%). Advertising costs were reported by around 30–33 of women entrepreneurs across the four districts, whereas other marketing problems were comparatively less significant.

Table-3: Labour Problems faced by Women Entrepreneurs

	Anantapur		Annamayya		Chittoor		Tirupati	
Problems	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Man power	15	50.00	16	53.33	17	56.67	14	46.67
Transport Prices	9	30.00	8	26.67	4	13.33	8	26.67
Ads cost	2	6.67	3	10.00	1	3.33	3	10.00
Others	4	13.33	3	10.00	8	26.67	5	16.66
Total	30	100.00	30	100.00	30	100.00	30	100.00

Source: Field Survey Data

Table-3 indicates that manpower was the major labour-related problem faced by women entrepreneurs across all four districts, ranging from 46.67% in Tirupati to 56.67% in Chittoor. Transport-related problems were the next significant concern, while advertising costs were comparatively less significant.

Table-4: Raw Material Problems faced by Women Entrepreneurs

	Anantapur		Annamayya		Chittoor		Tirupati	
Problems	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Price	5	16.67	10	33.33	12	40.00	9	30.00
Transport	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Timings	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Others	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
No	25	83.33	20	66.67	18	60.00	21	70.00

Problems								
Total	30	100.00	30	100.00	30	100.00	30	100.00

Source: Field Survey Data

Table-4 shows that price was the only raw-material-related problem reported by women entrepreneurs, with the highest proportion in Chittoor (40.00%), followed by Annamayya (33.33%), Tirupati (30.00%) and Anantapur (16.67%). No respondents reported transport, timing or other raw-material problems, while the majority faced no raw-material-related problems.

Table-5: Problems from Banks/Financial Institutions faced by Women Entrepreneurs

	Anantapur		Annamayya		Chittoor		Tirupati	
Problems	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Yes	10	33.33	12	40.00	11	36.67	11	36.67
No	20	66.67	18	60.00	19	63.33	19	63.33
Total	30	100.00	30	100.00	30	100.00	30	100.00

Source: Field Survey Data

Table-5 indicates that 33.33% to 40.00% of women entrepreneurs reported facing problems from banks and financial institutions across the four districts. The proportion was highest in Annamayya (40.00%), while the majority of respondents in all districts (60.00%–66.67%) reported that they did not face such problems.

Table-6: Yes Problems from Banks/Financial Institutions faced by Women Entrepreneurs

	Anantapur		Annamayya		Chittoor		Tirupati	
Problems	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Late processing	5	16.67	4	13.33	3	10.00	2	6.67
Commissions	4	13.33	3	10.00	3	10.00	1	3.33
Surity	3	10.00	11	36.67	5	16.67	15	50.00
No problems	18	60.00	12	40.00	19	63.33	12	40.00
Total	30	100.00	30	100.00	30	100.00	30	100.00

Source: Field Survey Data

Table-6 indicates that surety requirements were the major problem faced by women entrepreneurs, particularly in Tirupati (50.00%) and Annamayya (36.67%). Late processing was the next significant issue, while commission-related problems were comparatively less reported across all four districts.

Table-7: Problems relating to Labour faced by Women Entrepreneurs

	Anantapur		Annamayya		Chittoor		Tirupati	
Problems	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Salary	12	40.00	11	36.67	12	40.00	11	36.67
Transport	10	33.33	8	26.66	10	33.33	10	33.33
Timings	2	6.66	3	10.00	3	10.00	4	13.33

No Problems	3	10.00	2	6.66	4	13.33	3	10.00
Others	3	10.00	6	20.00	1	3.33	2	6.66
Total	30	100.00	30	100.00	30	100.00	30	100.00

Source: Field Survey Data

Table-7 reveals that salary-related issues were the major labour problem faced by women entrepreneurs, accounting for 36.67%–40.00% across the four districts. Transport-related problems were the next major concern, while timing-related problems were comparatively less.

Table-8: Problems relating to Raw Material faced by Women Entrepreneurs

	Anantapur		Annamayya		Chittoor		Tirupati	
Problems	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Price	5	16.67	10	33.33	12	40.00	8	26.67
Transport	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Timings	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Others	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No problems	25	83.33	20	66.67	18	60.00	22	73.33
Total	30	100.00	30	100.00	30	100.00	30	100.00

Source: Field Survey Data

Table-8 shows that price was the only raw-material-related problem reported by women entrepreneurs, with the highest proportion in Chittoor (40.00%), followed by Annamayya (33.33%), Tirupati (26.67%) and Anantapur (16.67%). Majority of the respondents reported transport, timings.

Table-9: Any Problems from Banks / Financial Institutions

	Anantapur		Annamayya		Chittoor		Tirupati	
Problems	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Yes	20	66.67	18	60.00	11	36.67	19	63.33
No	10	33.33	12	40.00	19	63.33	11	36.67
Total	30	100.00	30	100.00	30	100.00	30	100.00

Source: Field Survey Data

Table-9 problems from banks and financial institutions were reported by a majority of women entrepreneurs in Anantapur (66.67%), Annamayya (60.00%) and Tirupati (63.33%). In contrast, 63.33% of respondents in Chittoor reported no such problems, indicating district-wise variation.

Table-10: If Yes

	Anantapur		Annamayya		Chittoor		Tirupati	
Problems	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent

Late processing	4	13.33	6	20.00	5	16.67	2	6.66
Commissions	2	6.67	1	3.33	3	10.00	1	3.33
Surity	3	10.00	6	20.00	8	26.67	5	16.67
No problems	18	60.00	15	50.00	13	43.33	20	66.67
Late processing	3	10.00	2	6.67	1	3.33	2	6.67
Total	30	100.00	30	100.00	30	100.00	30	100.00

Source: Field Survey Data

Table-10 depicts that late processing and surity requirements were the major problems faced by women entrepreneurs in obtaining financial assistance, with surety being highest in Chittoor (26.67%). Commission-related problems were comparatively less while a considerable proportion of respondents reported no problems with banks and financial institutions.

Table-11: Conflict Area

	Anantapur		Annamayya		Chittoor		Tirupati	
Problems	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Domestic Work	5	16.67	6	20.00	5	16.67	10	33.33
Inability to Spend time with family	7	23.33	10	33.33	15	50.00	5	16.67
Inconvenience to family	8	26.67	10	33.33	6	20.00	6	20.00
Unable to Expand the Business	10	33.33	4	13.33	4	13.33	9	30.00
Total	30	100.00	30	100.00	30	100.00	30	100.00

Source: Field Survey Data

Table-11 shows that inability to spend time with family was the major problem in Chittoor (50.00%) and Annamayya (33.33%), while inability to expand the business was relatively high in Anantapur (33.33%) and Tirupati (30.00%). Domestic work and inconvenience to family were also reported as important challenges across the districts.

Table-12: Kind of Motivation getting from Government, Friends & Family Members

	Anantapur		Annamayya		Chittoor		Tirupati	
Problems	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Moral support	11	36.67	18	60.00	15	50.00	19	63.33
Financial support	16	53.34	8	26.67	10	33.33	4	13.33
Others	3	10.00	4	13.33	5	16.67	7	23.34
Total	30	100.00	30	100.00	30	100.00	30	100.00

Source: Field Survey Data

Table- reveals that moral support was the major source of motivation in Annamayya (60.00%), Chittoor (50.00%) and Tirupati (63.33%). In contrast, financial support was the major source of motivation in Anantapur (53.34%), while other forms of motivation were comparatively less in four districts.

Table-13: Main Motivation of the Women Entrepreneurs

	Anantapur		Annamayya		Chittoor		Tirupati	
Problems	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Confidence	6	20.00	9	30.00	16	53.33	12	40.00
Creativity	6	20.00	6	20.00	4	13.33	2	6.67
Family	8	26.67	8	26.67	3	10.00	3	10.00
Government support	10	33.33	7	23.33	7	23.33	13	43.33
Total	30	100.00	30	100.00	30	100.00	30	100.00

Source: Field Survey Data

Table-13 shows that government support was the main motivation for women entrepreneurs in Anantapur (33.33%) and Tirupati (43.33%), while confidence was the major motivating factor in Chittoor (53.33%) and Tirupati (40.00%). Family support was moderately important, whereas creativity was comparatively less in the districts.

Table-14: Reasons for success of the Women Entrepreneurs

	Anantapur		Annamayya		Chittoor		Tirupati	
Problems	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Hard work	14	46.67	12	40.00	8	26.67	11	36.67
Quality of the product	6	20.00	5	16.67	12	40.00	10	33.33
Marketing skills	8	26.66	9	30.00	7	23.33	6	20.00
Family support	2	6.67	4	13.33	3	10.00	3	10.00

Total	30	100.00	30	100.00	30	100.00	30	100.00
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Source: Field Survey Data

Table-14 presents that hard work was the major reason for the success of women entrepreneurs in Anantapur (46.67%) and Annamayya (40.00%). In Chittoor, quality of the product was the leading factor (40.00%), while marketing skills also contributed significantly to entrepreneurial success across the districts.

X. SUGGESTIONS:

In the light of the empirical study the following suggestions are made based on the findings of the present study for the betterment and development of women entrepreneurs in the Rayalaseema region of Andhra Pradesh:

1. **Financial institutions and banks** should provide adequate financial assistance to women entrepreneurs to start and expand their businesses.
2. **Government and non-government financial institutions** should provide easy access to loans and other financial support to help women overcome financial difficulties.
3. **Family members should provide support and encouragement** to women entrepreneurs, as family support plays an important role in their success.
4. **Special training and development programmes** should be organized to improve the entrepreneurial, managerial, technical, and other skills of women entrepreneurs.
5. **Parents and husbands should develop a positive attitude** towards women's education and economic participation. Education and skills can help women contribute effectively to economic development.
6. **Women entrepreneurs should regularly update their knowledge and skills** to make better and independent business decisions.
7. **The Government should properly monitor and implement welfare schemes** to ensure that the benefits reach eligible women entrepreneurs.
8. **Rural women should be encouraged to develop entrepreneurship in agriculture and allied activities** and explore opportunities for value addition and income generation.
9. **Greater family support and encouragement should be provided** to women entrepreneurs to help them overcome challenges and achieve success.

XI. Conclusion

Women are increasingly showing interest in entrepreneurship and actively participating in various economic activities. The promotion of women entrepreneurship contributes to economic independence, improvement in family income, greater respect within the family and enhancement of self-confidence and self-esteem among women. Entrepreneurship is not an easy journey for women. Women participate in various economic activities to supplement their family income, while at the same time continuing to fulfil their family responsibilities. Their participation in economic activities does not diminish their responsibilities towards their families; rather, it adds to the range of responsibilities they have to manage. The entrepreneurial role of women has therefore become increasingly demanding and multifaceted. With adequate financial support, education, training, family encouragement and a favourable social environment, women can overcome the challenges they face and participate more effectively in entrepreneurial activities. The promotion and development of women entrepreneurs can

consequently contribute to the economic empowerment of women and the overall economic development of the region and the nation.

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