



The Effect of Social Media on Entrepreneurship in Women in Mental Health Setup: India

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ABSTRACT

Mental Health and Women are both well-defined concepts and genres which had the same experience in the past, both have been undermined and stereotyped. For many years, females have faced a lot of stereotypes when it comes to the corporate world, there are a lot of stigmas attached to being a working woman alone, so, building their own business, even thinking of it is admirable and inspirational, especially when it's related to mental health. Like the status of women, mental health has always been taken for granted and mostly ignored. But Now it's improving as this growing world finally accepts and respects women and mental health. The current study focuses on the effect of social media on Entrepreneurship in Women building Mental Health startups. More women across rural and urban India are using technology tools to do business today. Intuitive technology platforms that inform and enable women to learn, use tools, network, connect and access that many women face today. Thematic Analysis was conducted to examine the impact of digital media on the process of female entrepreneurship. It also analysed what aspire women to get into entrepreneurship. Creating Support Networks to share ideas, gain support and potential collaborations were suggested as well as addressing different cultural and social barriers was recommended in the study.

Keywords: Women Entrepreneurs | Mental Health | Mental Health Startups | Social Media

Introduction

Milton Berle once said that "If opportunity doesn't knock, build a door. This is exactly what women's entrepreneurship sounds like in this big patriarchal world.

While searching research papers on women entrepreneurship, it was not really a shock to find only a handful of studies on the topic specifically in India which made the study more interesting. Being a woman in a male-dominated society is agitating as well as thrilling because it provides you with an opportunity to explore their strengths and capabilities. While our world is moving towards being an egalitarian society which can be a result of our media, specifically, social media.

A Plethora of Researches is done on the effects of Social Media on human behaviour and cognitive patterns. These effects can be both positive and negative depending upon the intensity of usage and perception of that usage. During Covid, an amazing surge was observed in small businesses which were operated by women through social media. Many of them flourished quickly due to the admiration of the public. This particular period showed a positive acceleration of female entrepreneurship which was supported by the audience on social media.

Post Covid, One more thing which came to light was mental health. According to a recent study published in the Indian Journal of Psychiatry, India has 0.75 psychiatrists and psychologists per 100,000 people, while the ideal number is three psychiatrists per 100,000 people. This is enough to tell the status of mental health in our nation.

At present, the field of Psychology is majorly dominated by Women which resonates with both the status of female entrepreneurship and mental health.

A study was conducted including 107 secondary school adolescents to analyse their level of mental health and its possible predictors such as Body Mass Index, Perceived Social Support, Internet Addiction, Psychological Well Being, Psychological Resilience, Self Esteem, and Psychological Distress over their mental health. The study concluded that perceived social support acts as a very strong positive predictor. It also showed that among negative predictors, psychological distress acts as a strong negative influence on mental health. (Adam et al., 2018)

Research focuses on the impact of the SARS-CoV-2/COVID-19 Pandemic on domestic violence against women in India. As a result of lockdowns during the pandemic, more women have been exposed to violent spouses and other known risk factors, and humanitarian crises and displacement may make already-existing violence worse. The barriers of the legal and protective systems and delivery of helpful services should be rectified, and India should develop an exclusive plan to tackle such situations. (Kumar,2021)

A study conducted by Gelderen et al., (2000) aimed at examining the personal strategies of owners/founders of small business startups and their relation to performance and to environmental uncertainty. The results found that there was a dynamic process between strategy and performance. Reactive conduct is used by business owners who perform poorly, and poor performance encourages more reactive behaviour. High performance leads to a more top-down (Complete Planning) strategy, with high-performing firm owners beginning by concentrating on the most important concerns (Critical Point Strategy).

Women Entrepreneurship

Women Entrepreneurship can be referred to as an activity undertaken by females to set up and manage their innovative and novel business ideas. Brush, C.G. (1992) explained that "Women entrepreneurship refers to the process of creating and managing a new venture or business by a woman or a group of women, who assume significant ownership and decision-making responsibilities for the enterprise. It involves identifying and exploiting opportunities to create new value in the marketplace, through innovation, creativity, and risk-taking, with the aim of generating profit and growth for the business and its stakeholders."

In other words, It is a concept which talks about any business originated and nurtured by women.

In 2018, Aquilas and Dzanku described women's entrepreneurship as a "process of designing, launching and running a new business venture by women or a team of women who initiate, organize, and manage a business undertaking, assuming significant accountability for the risks and the outcome. Women entrepreneurs demonstrate the capacity to create, innovate, recognize opportunities, and contribute to economic growth and development".

The current study focused on two agendas, first reviewing the twelve established entrepreneurship journals to examine the existence of women entrepreneurship and second was to assess the growth of the field. The study suggested that it is a need to be inclusive of diverse voices and consider constructionist approaches to explore traditional as well as non-traditional questions. (Yadav and Unni,2016)

A study by Siddiqui (2012) examines the issues and difficulties that Indian women business owners encounter. Women's family responsibilities, gender inequity, money issues, a low-risk tolerance, and male vs. female competitiveness are a few of the primary issues mentioned. The study comes to the conclusion that women entrepreneurs' issues can be solved with the right training, incentives, motivation, and encouragement, as well as social acceptance of their entrepreneurial skills and moral support from their families.

Social Media

Social Media is a platform used by people to interact and share their opinions or just everyday stuff.

Kaplan, A. M., &Haenlein, M. (2010) described it as a web-based platform that enables individuals to connect, communicate and share information, content and opinions with each other, often in real-time, using multimedia tools and interactive features. Social media networks allow users to create, share and exchange user-generated content, such as text, photos, videos, and audio recordings.

In 2007, Ellison referred to Social media as a set of technologies and applications that enable users to create, share, and exchange information, ideas, and content in virtual communities and networks. Social media platforms allow users to collaborate, connect, and communicate with others, building and sustaining social relationships and networks.

In other words, it can be understood as a social networking site used as a tool to express oneself, one's thoughts and opinions about the world and everything in general.

The literature review mentioned examines how women entrepreneurs and managers are using social media and to what extent the existing literature has addressed this topic. The review found that the literature on women in business and social media is a developing area with a focus on emerging economies, such as Kenya, Indonesia, Nigeria, Egypt, and South Africa. The study suggests that social media can provide new opportunities for female entrepreneurs in these countries. The major implication of this study is to advance knowledge and practice in the area of gender in management and the use of social media, which can lead to a better understanding of the debate on gender and management themes and a reconsideration of networking activities with social media. (Cesaroni et al.,2017)

Mental Health

Mental Health is an aspect of well-being that focuses on cognitive as well as behaviour patterns.

Corey (2017) described Mental health as a state of well-being characterized by the ability to experience positive emotions, maintain satisfying relationships, and cope with life's challenges. It involves the ability to adapt to change, thinks clearly, and make sound decisions, as well as the capacity for self-reflection and personal growth.

Keyes (2002) said that "Mental health is a state of optimal psychological functioning that enables individuals to achieve their full potential in work, play, and personal relationships. It involves the ability to form positive relationships, experience positive emotions, and engage in meaningful activities, as well as the capacity for self-awareness and personal growth."

The study aimed to describe the concepts of mental health and beliefs about the determinants of mental health and illness among these women, using qualitative in-depth interviews with 32 participants. The findings suggest that mental health and illness were understood by the women to be influenced by cultural and socio-economic factors. Mental health was commonly conceptualized as an absence of stress, and the most common stressors identified by the participants were conflicts with husbands and mothers-in-law, domestic violence, and poverty. This suggests that the social context and gender dynamics in the community play an important role in shaping women's understanding of mental health and illness. (Kermode et al., 2007)

The article aims to highlight the interconnectedness between mental illness and other health conditions and to argue that mental health should be integrated into all aspects of health and social policy, health-system planning, and delivery of primary and secondary general health care. The article also calls for the development and evaluation of psychosocial interventions that can be integrated into the management of communicable and non-communicable diseases, as well as the improvement of the quality of care for both mental and physical health conditions for people with mental disorders. (Prince et al., 2007)

Purpose

The goal of the current research is to investigate the role of social media in women entrepreneurship focusing on women building mental health startups and examining the reinforcers of those startups

Research Questions

1. Why Women aspire to build a 'mental health startup' specifically?
2. What role social media plays in their journey of entrepreneurship

Method

Sample

In this study, a semi-structured survey method involving an online semi-structured survey was conducted to collect data employing a qualitative research design. The study included 7 women entrepreneurs specifically building mental health startups. For ethical reasons, participants were at least 18 years of age. All identified themselves as female entrepreneurs, whether they were pursuing entrepreneurship on a full-time or part-time basis. The researcher distributed the survey to personal and professional networks online via email as well as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

Measures

Thematic Analysis was conducted on the data collected for better interpretation leading to a clear and concise conclusion. It is one of the research methods employed on qualitative data to examine the emerging pattern or specific themes in the study. Braun and Clarke (2006) referred to Thematic analysis as a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data.

The research technique was created to concentrate on what drives women to seek female entrepreneurship and investigate the particular social media platforms they regularly use to launch and grow their firms. It included a semi-structured questionnaire consisting of 3 Parts containing both open-ended and closed-ended questions.

The first Section included the Demographic information, including their name and age. The second Section involved Multiple Choice Questions for information like the type of industry, ownership of the business, and use of social media. The Last Section included open-ended short answer questions which contained questions like ' Why do they aspire to be an entrepreneur?' 'How do they believe social media contributes?'. Upon completion of the data-gathering phase, the researcher performed statistical calculations as well as content analyses of the participant responses.

Procedure

The goal of the study was explained to the participants, and the questionnaires were completed using Google Forms. Each participant was acknowledged for their participation. A thematic analysis was run on the data collected. The procedure can be understood in 5 phases:

1. Familiarization with the data: The responses collected were re-read and reviewed several times to highlight the important keywords, emotions and interpretations which helped us with recognising important and core features of the data.
2. Generating initial codes: Few Labels or tags are taken into account the meaning of the data concisely and descriptively. For example, positive motivation, and disappointment in employment level.
3. Searching for themes: Significant phrases were highlighted for the generated codes, for example, phrases like spreading awareness and fighting the stigma highlighted the revolutionary spirit in the entrepreneurs.
4. Reviewing and refining themes: The themes that emerged were then analysed according to the current research questions, and they were refined to give concrete explanations and interpretations of the data.

5. Defining and naming themes: Quotes that were representative of the final analysis by examples of meaning units were chosen during this phase.

Results

Reasons to build a Mental Health Start-up

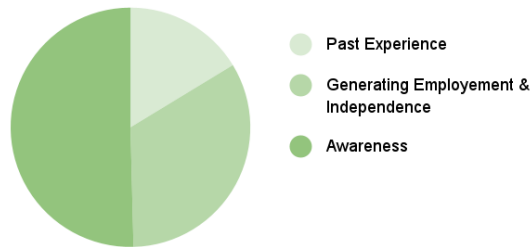


Diagram 1

Role Of Social Media

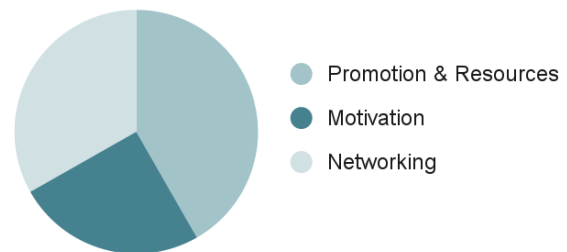


Diagram 2

Diagram 1 represents the reasons for building mental health start-ups. Three major reasons observed here are spreading mental health awareness (50.4%), personal suffering (33.3%), generating employment and becoming independent (16.3%)

Diagram 2 represents the role social media plays in women's journey of their entrepreneurship. Three major contributions made by social media are Networking (33.2%), promotion and resources (41.7%), and motivation (25.1%).

Discussion

Motivations for Pursuing Entrepreneurship

"In order to increase awareness of mental health issues and situational awareness in Indian society, I am dedicated to improving public education.

"Despite my six years of full-time employment, I struggled to find career opportunities that would align with my interests and passions."

"Raising awareness of mental health concerns in Indian society is an important goal of mine."

"My unsatisfactory past experiences with mental health services have fueled my desire to create a revolution."

The most frequently used words and phrases by participants in the study's qualitative, open-ended question section produced several themes like "mental health revolution in India" as said by one of the participants. The two major factors observed were personal mental sufferings in the past and the zeal to break the stigma and spread awareness about mental health.

The first factor is personal mental suffering in the past. Many participants in the study had experienced mental health issues themselves or had friends and family members who had gone through such experiences. This personal connection to mental health struggles made them more passionate about spreading awareness and reducing the stigma associated with mental health.

Secondly, Participants expressed a strong desire to change the cultural attitudes towards mental health in India, where there is often a lack of understanding and support for those who struggle with mental health issues. By breaking the stigma, they hope to create a more supportive and inclusive environment for those who need help.

Overall, the findings suggest that there is a growing movement towards a more positive and supportive approach to mental health in India. This is driven by personal experiences of mental health struggles and a desire to break down cultural barriers and reduce stigma.

Digital Media's Impact on Female Entrepreneurship

"Social media has played a significant role in helping me connect with other therapists seeking supervision and in promoting my work to a wider audience."

"Observing numerous successful women entrepreneurs has motivated me to pursue my own business ventures."

Social media has given me a platform to reach a larger audience and share my message with others."

As one of our participants said, "It has given us a platform to become what we are". The findings concluded that social media has played a significantly positive and motivating role in their journey by giving their business a good reach, and by inspiring them to become successful, independent and confident in their journey.

So, social media has also served as a source of inspiration and motivation for these individuals. By seeing the success stories of other entrepreneurs and businesses on social media, they have been encouraged to push themselves and work towards achieving their own goals. This has helped them to become more confident, independent, and successful in their journey.

The result highlights the positive impact that social media can have on the lives and businesses of individuals.

Conclusion & Suggestions

The current study aimed at the effect of social media on entrepreneurship in women focusing on mental health start-ups. Thematic Analysis was used as a measure to study and interpret the qualitative study. To conclude, research was successfully able to find the primary motivators of women's entrepreneurship in the mental health field which were spreading mental health awareness, generating employment and independence, and connecting with people. The study also found a positive and encouraging role that social media plays in that journey. The authors, also Observed the synchrony between the status of women in India and the status of mental health in our nation.

Limitations of the Study

1. Rapport was not formed as questionnaires were circulated for the survey
2. There are not a lot of women entrepreneurs specifically with mental health startups and those who did have are either not working on it anymore or are no longer based in India.
3. Another thing was limited research done on women's entrepreneurship in India.

Here are some suggestions for how social media can help promote women's entrepreneurship:

1. Provide access to resources: Social media platforms can provide women entrepreneurs with access to resources such as funding opportunities, mentorship programs, and training courses. This can help them to develop their skills and grow their businesses.
2. Highlight success stories: Social media platforms can showcase success stories of women entrepreneurs to inspire and motivate others. By sharing stories of women who have overcome challenges and achieved success, social media can help to create a supportive community for women entrepreneurs.
3. Facilitate networking: Social media platforms can facilitate networking among women entrepreneurs by providing online groups and forums where they can connect with one another, share information and resources, and collaborate on projects.
4. Encourage collaboration: Social media platforms can encourage collaboration among women entrepreneurs by providing opportunities for them to work together on projects or initiatives. This can help to build a stronger community and promote innovation.
5. Raise awareness: Social media platforms can raise awareness of the challenges faced by women entrepreneurs and the importance of supporting their efforts. By highlighting the issues and sharing information about the benefits of women's entrepreneurship, social media can help to create a more supportive and inclusive environment for women in business.

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