



## A CASE STUDY OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN LAMKA (CHURACHANDPUR) DISTRICT, MANIPUR.

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### ABSTRACT

Women play a vital role in society and the nation, serving as the cornerstone of the family unit. Historically, in traditional Indian communities, women were primarily confined to domestic duties, bearing the burden of maintaining households and nurturing future generations. However, with changing societal norms, technological advancements, and greater access to education, women's roles have significantly evolved. In modern times, they are actively engaged in various activities, including education, politics, and especially entrepreneurship. Today, women are empowered and dynamic, making significant contributions to economic growth and societal development.

Female entrepreneurs excel in efficiently managing their businesses, often demonstrating higher levels of organizational skill and multitasking ability than their male counterparts. They not only generate business ideas but also establish organizations, oversee production processes, tackle challenges, and take on the risks associated with business ownership. The socio-economic advancement of any nation depends on the collaborative efforts of both men and women, leveraging their unique perspectives, creativity, and innovative thinking. This article delves into the demographic profile and socio-economic status of women entrepreneurs in Lamka (Churachandpur) District, Manipur, and how their entrepreneurial efforts are transforming their community.

**Keywords :** Women entrepreneurs, demographic profile, socio-economic condition, women empowerment.

### INTRODUCTION.

The presence of female entrepreneurs in any community is influenced by a combination of factors including the economy, societal norms, religion, culture, and individual psychology. Over the past decade, economic stability and rising educational levels have driven more young women to seek employment and entrepreneurial opportunities. The advent of urbanization and increased access to education have opened doors for women to actively participate in business. However, these shifts have been gradual, often occurring alongside the slow pace of economic growth in rural and semi-urban areas.

While the development of women entrepreneurs is still in its early stages, it is critical to recognize the longstanding economic contributions women have made, particularly in rural households. They have always played an integral part in sustaining their families and communities through agricultural work, handicrafts, and cottage industries. The formalization of these skills into business ventures is a step toward empowering women and recognizing their potential as economic drivers.

Entrepreneurship, in its simplest form, is the act of founding new companies by individuals or small groups, taking on financial risks to make a profit. It is a phenomenon that has gained global importance, especially in developing countries like India. In such countries, entrepreneurship plays a vital role in creating jobs, thereby addressing key issues such as unemployment and poverty. In this context, women entrepreneurs in areas like Lamka (Churachandpur) are not only contributing to economic growth but also bringing innovation and fostering social development.

<sup>1</sup>.Editor: Dr. P. Jyothi, Published in Edited Volume – Book – Entrepreneurship: Issues and Challenges, Allied Publications Pvt. Ltd., India, ISBN: 81-8424-202-6, 2007.

<sup>2</sup>.Arya S, Panda C S and Kaur G (2017) Women Entrepreneurship. International Journal of Research in all subjects in Multi Languages, 5(10), 44-57.

<sup>3</sup>. Parveen Kumar, A STUDY ON WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN INDIA, Lecturer, Delhi College of Advanced Studies, Delhi, International Journal of Applied Science & Technology Research Excellence Vol. 5 Issue 5, Nov.- Dec. 2015, ISSN NO. 2250-2718(Print), 2250-2726(Online), (Doubled Blind Peer Reviewed & Refereed Journal with Impact Factor 2.47).

<sup>4</sup>. Vasanthagopal R. and Santha S. Women Entrepreneurship In India, New Century Publications.(2008).

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## The Role of Women Entrepreneurs

The global economy has witnessed a significant rise in female entrepreneurs over recent decades, as societies increasingly recognize the untapped potential of women in business. Several factors contribute to this trend, including improved education, enhanced access to skills and knowledge, and the desire for greater independence. Women are no longer confined to traditional roles; instead, they are taking charge of their futures by investing in businesses, managing operations, taking calculated risks, and reaping financial rewards. This not only improves their own socio-economic status but also benefits the community at large. Women's involvement in entrepreneurship goes beyond economic gain; it promotes gender equality, enhances women's empowerment, and contributes to societal balance. The entrepreneurial activities of women help break down traditional gender barriers and create opportunities for future generations of women to thrive in the business world. In Lamka, this movement is gaining traction as more women participate in diverse business activities, from small-scale industries to medium-sized enterprises

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### Women Entrepreneurs in the Small Sector

In the small sector, women entrepreneurs face unique challenges. Although they may lack the resources of their larger counterparts, they possess immense potential. Many women in small businesses start with little capital, relying on local resources and personal networks. These entrepreneurs are involved in industries like weaving, handicrafts, food production, and small retail sectors that impact the local economy.

However, women in this sector often encounter gender-specific barriers such as limited access to financial resources, cultural restrictions, and societal expectations of balancing household duties. Overcoming these barriers requires support from the government, NGOs, and community initiatives that provide mentorship, training, and credit access. Government initiatives like the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) offer financial support to small businesses. NGOs also assist by providing business skills training, financial literacy, and leadership development. With the right support, women entrepreneurs in Lamka can grow their businesses, create jobs, and improve their socio-economic standing.

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### Aims and Objectives of the Study

1. To analyze the demographic profile of women entrepreneurs in Lamka (Churachandpur) District – Examining age, education, marital status, and business types to understand their socio-economic status.

To identify challenges faced by women entrepreneurs – Investigating financial, social, and cultural obstacles like limited capital and gender biases.

3. To evaluate the role of education and skill-building programs – Assessing how education and training impact entrepreneurial success.

4. To explore female entrepreneurship's economic impact – Examining contributions to job creation and economic development.

5. To assess government schemes and support programs – Analyzing the effectiveness of policies and initiatives for women entrepreneurs.

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### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This research focuses on the socioeconomic environment of women entrepreneurs in Lamka town, Churachandpur District, Manipur. It aims to explore the backgrounds, challenges, and entrepreneurial journeys of these women. The study seeks to uncover the barriers that hinder their business development, including socio-cultural norms, economic limitations, and gender-specific challenges. By examining these issues, the study attempts to understand how women entrepreneurs in Lamka overcome these obstacles and what support mechanisms are available to them.

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### LITERATURE REVIEW

Several studies have emphasized the crucial role of women entrepreneurs in fostering economic growth, both in rural and urban areas. Shah (2012) noted the transformative impact women entrepreneurs can have on families and society, urging for their greater involvement in driving economic development. He argued that women's financial independence leads to broader social benefits.

**Vijay Kumbhar** (2013) analyzed women entrepreneurship in rural India, highlighting challenges such as the lack of a clear life agenda, difficulty balancing work and family, limited financial freedom, and poor access to property. He suggested large-scale awareness programs to motivate and support women in overcoming these barriers.<sup>5</sup>

**Shah** (2013) also explored the rise of urban women entrepreneurs while stressing the need to empower rural women. He pointed out that rural female entrepreneurs are better equipped to understand and address local challenges, making their success crucial for economic development.<sup>6</sup>

**Dr. Ajay Sharma and Ms. Sapna Dua** (2012) examined the challenges faced by rural women entrepreneurs, particularly through Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and micro-entrepreneurship.<sup>7</sup> They concluded that technical skills, family support, and government assistance were key to empowering women and promoting national development.

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<sup>5</sup>.Shah, H. 2012. ICECD: Achieving Convergence for Empowerment of Women. Paper presented at the Western Regional Conference of the National Mission for Empowerment of Women, April.

<sup>6</sup>. Kumbhar V (2013) Some Critical Issues of Women Entrepreneurship in Rural India. European Academic Research, 1(2), 192-200.

<sup>7</sup>.Sharma, A., Dua, S., & Hatwal, V. (2012). Micro enterprise development and rural women entrepreneurship: way for economic empowerment. Arth Prabhand: A Journal of Economics and Management, 1 (6), 114-127.

**Sharma Y.** highlighted the persistence of traditional social norms that hinder women entrepreneurs, while.<sup>8</sup> While Tiwari S. & Tiwari A. (2013) emphasized the opportunities and challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in Meerut, Uttar Pradesh.<sup>9</sup>

**Rajani and Sarada** investigated the influence of family support on women's entrepreneurial success through case studies in Kadapa District. Their findings underscored the importance of family dynamics in shaping business outcomes.<sup>10</sup>

Ms. Chanchal (2021) reviewed the current status of women entrepreneurship, focusing on success stories and government initiatives aimed at empowering women. Her research demonstrated that women entrepreneurship is a key driver of economic growth.<sup>11</sup>

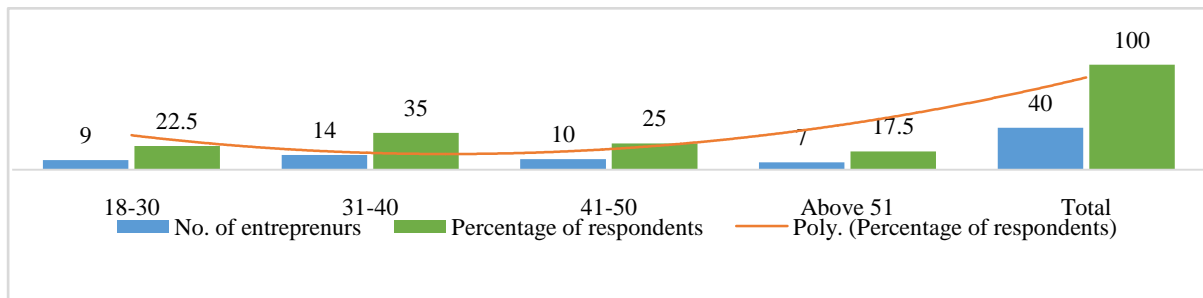
## V. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This research examines the entrepreneurial abilities of women managing various businesses such as green vegetable shops, tailoring shops, grocery stores, book and stationery stores, hardware and electrical shops, restaurants, salons, and handicrafts stores in Lamka (Churachandpur) District. The study provides a comprehensive analysis of the socio-economic conditions of female entrepreneurs in Lamka, exploring the support systems available to them, including government initiatives, community-based programs, and family support, offering a holistic view of the entrepreneurial landscape for women in the region.

## VI. METHODOLOGY

The study employed both primary and secondary data collection methods. Primary data was gathered from 40 women entrepreneurs in Lamka town, Churachandpur District, using a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire captured detailed information about their socio-economic status, challenges, motivations, and business operations, focusing on key factors such as financial support, access to resources, and family influences. Secondary data was collected from books, academic journals, websites, and government reports to provide context and supplement the primary data. This helped in understanding national and regional trends in women entrepreneurship and comparing the experiences of women in Lamka with those in other parts of India. Quantitative data was statistically analyzed to identify common trends, while qualitative data was interpreted to provide deeper insights into the lived experiences of the women entrepreneurs. Special attention was given to socio-cultural factors, such as family support and community expectations, which influenced entrepreneurial decisions and outcomes. The economic aspects of entrepreneurship were also examined, particularly the role of financial support from personal savings, Self-Help Groups (SHGs), microfinance institutions, and government schemes. The study explored how access to these resources affected the success of women entrepreneurs. Finally, the research sought to determine how women's entrepreneurial activities contribute to the local economy, focusing on job creation, innovation, and improved living standards. By analyzing the socioeconomic environment of Lamka, the study aimed to offer recommendations for improving support structures for women entrepreneurs, addressing the barriers they face, and fostering a more inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Table.1.1 Personal profile of women entrepreneurs



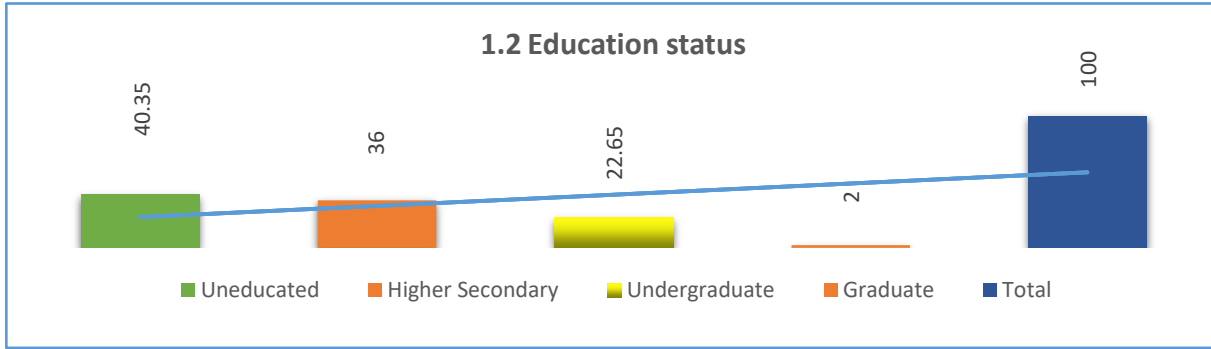
Source: Field data collection.

<sup>8</sup>. Sharma, Y. (2013). Women entrepreneur in India. IOSR Journal of Business and Management , 15 (3), 9-14

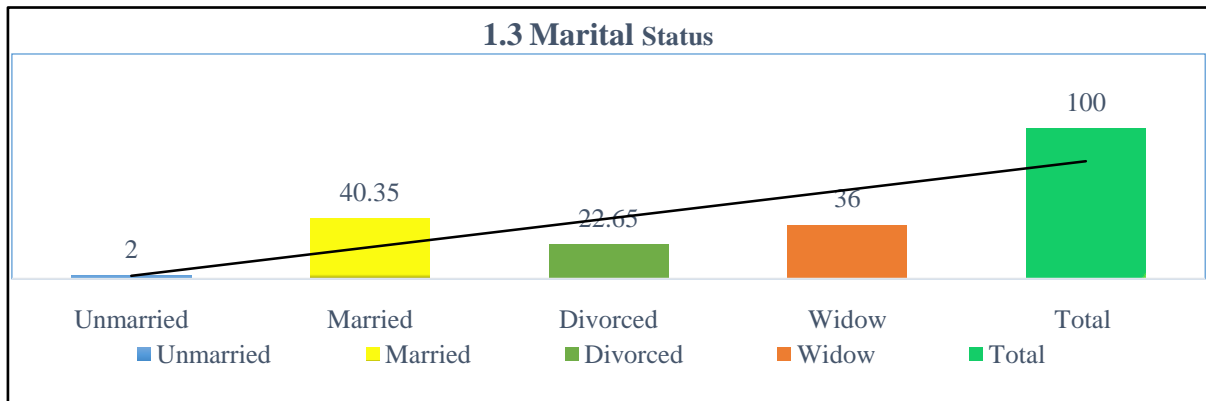
<sup>9</sup>.Tiwari, S., & Tiwari, A. (2007). Women entrepreneurship and economic Development . Sarup & Sons.

<sup>10</sup>.Rajani, N., & Sarada, D. (2008). Women entrepreneurship and support systems. Studies on Home and Community Science , 2 (2), 107-112.

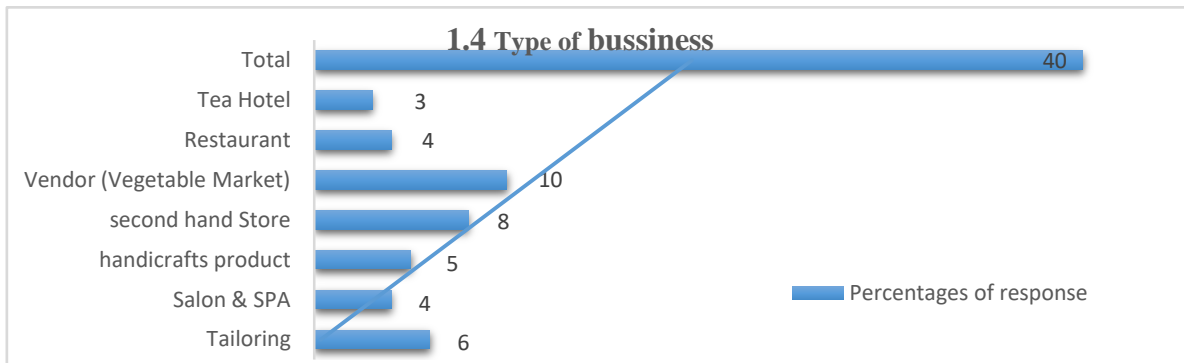
<sup>11</sup>.Chanchal (2021) A Study on Women Entrepreneurship in India: opportunities and Challenges. A Journal of Composition Theory. XIV(VI), 57-77.



Source: Primary data.

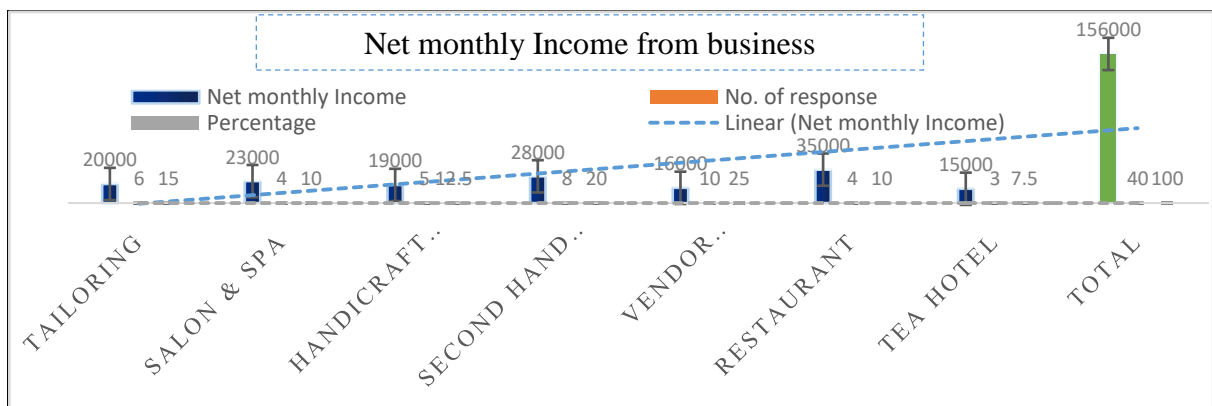


Source: Primary data.



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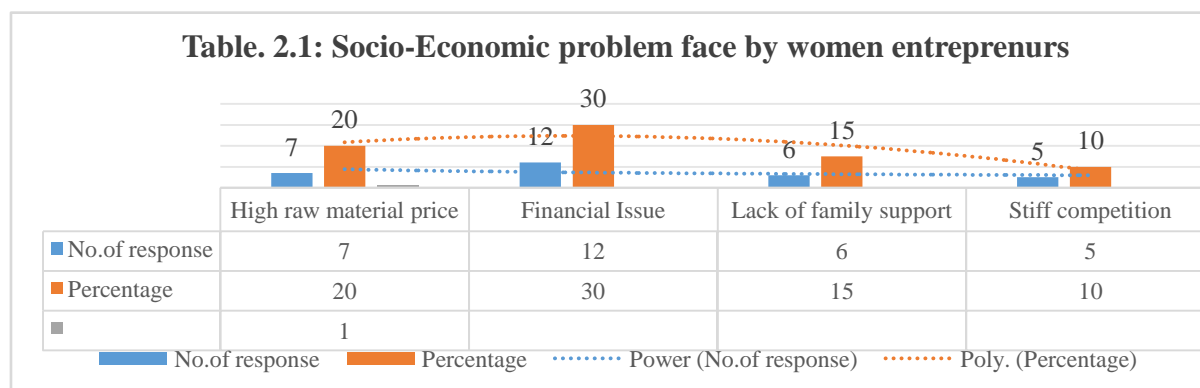
Table.1.5: Socioeconomic problem face by women entrepreneurs



Source: Primary data.

The data presented in the various tables offers important insights into the demographic profile, educational status, marital situation, business types, and net monthly income of women entrepreneurs in Lamka, Churachandpur District. Age Distribution (Table 1.1): The findings indicate that women entrepreneurs are largely within the 31 to 40-year age group, representing 35% of the total, followed by those aged 41 to 50 (25%). Women in the 18 to 30-year group constitute 22.5%, showing that entrepreneurial activities span a wide range of ages. The dominance of the 31-40-year group suggests that these women have accumulated significant life experience, driving their entrepreneurial ambitions. Educational Status (Table 1.2): Interestingly, 40.35% of women entrepreneurs are uneducated, while only 2% have graduate degrees. This challenges the conventional belief that higher education is a prerequisite for entrepreneurship, indicating that even women with little or no formal education have the confidence to start and run businesses successfully. The data underscores the importance of informal knowledge, experience, and determination in entrepreneurial success. Marital Status (Table 1.3): Married women make up 40.35% of the entrepreneurs, while a significant 36% are widows. Divorced women account for 22.65%, and unmarried women represent only 2%. The high percentage of widowed women suggests that entrepreneurship may offer a viable means of financial independence for women facing challenging personal circumstances. Business Types (Table 1.4): Women in the study area are engaged in diverse sectors, with 25% working as vendors in open markets, 20% running second-hand stores, and 15% involved in tailoring businesses. Handicrafts, salons, restaurants, and tea hotels also feature prominently. This variety indicates that women are tapping into different opportunities based on local market demands and available resources. Net Monthly Income (Table 1.5): The restaurant industry stands out as the most profitable for women entrepreneurs in the area, offering higher income levels compared to other sectors like handicrafts or tailoring. This suggests that industries with more direct customer engagement and higher demand may provide better financial returns for women, indicating areas where more women could be encouraged to invest. Overall, the data highlights the resilience and adaptability of women entrepreneurs in Lamka, as they navigate various personal and socio-economic challenges to build and sustain businesses. These findings provide a foundation for developing targeted support programs aimed at enhancing the profitability and sustainability of women's businesses, while addressing the specific barriers they face.

**Table. 2.1: Socio-Economic problem face by women entrepreneurs**



Source: Primary data.

The data from Table 2.1 highlights the primary challenges faced by female entrepreneurs in Lamka, Churachandpur District. Financial difficulties rank as the most significant obstacle, with 30% of women entrepreneurs citing this issue. This underscores the critical need for access to capital and financial resources to sustain and grow their businesses.

The high cost of raw materials follows as the second most prevalent challenge at 20%, affecting their profitability and competitiveness. The third issue is a lack of entrepreneurial skills, accounting for 17.5%. This points to the need for better training and skill development programs tailored to women in the area. A lack of family support, at 15%, further complicates their entrepreneurial journeys, highlighting the socio-cultural pressures women face. Stiff competition (10%) is another significant barrier, as the saturated market reduces demand for their products or services. Finally, the absence of government support schemes is identified as a considerable barrier, indicating a gap in policy implementation that could otherwise provide crucial assistance to female entrepreneurs. Addressing these challenges would require a multifaceted approach involving financial aid, training programs, family support systems, and government intervention.

## CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

While women entrepreneurs in Lamka are making strides in the business world, they continue to face numerous challenges. One major obstacle is the persistence of patriarchal attitudes that limit women's participation in certain sectors of the economy. Furthermore, there is a lack of infrastructure, particularly in rural areas, which hinders the growth of businesses. Issues such as poor transportation, inadequate access to markets, and limited technology adoption are common challenges that women entrepreneurs must navigate. However, these challenges also present opportunities. Women entrepreneurs in the district have begun to form cooperative groups, pooling their resources and knowledge to overcome these barriers. Technology, especially mobile banking and e-commerce platforms, offers new ways for women to expand their businesses beyond local markets. Additionally, with increased government support and community initiatives, there is hope that more women will enter the entrepreneurial space and drive positive change in the region.

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## Research Finding

The study revealed that female entrepreneurs in Lamka town (Churachandpur District) face distinct challenges, including limited access to capital, lack of business networks, and societal expectations. These barriers underscore the need for targeted support and resources tailored to their unique circumstances. Additionally, the research emphasized the positive impact of mentorship programs and networking opportunities, highlighting that building a strong, supportive community can significantly boost their business growth and development. Education and skill-building programs also play a crucial role in empowering female entrepreneurs. The study found that women with higher education levels and specialized training were more likely to achieve financial stability and success, indicating a need to expand access to education and vocational training in the region. Furthermore, the research addressed gender biases and stereotypes in the business environment. Many women reported facing discrimination from customers and industry peers, which hindered their growth. Creating a more inclusive business environment that values women's contributions is essential. These findings call for comprehensive strategies to eliminate gender biases and build a more equitable entrepreneurial ecosystem for women in Lamka.

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## Conclusion:

In conclusion, the study highlights the resilience and determination of female entrepreneurs in Lamka (Churachandpur) District, emphasizing the need for comprehensive support and resources to empower them further. It stresses the importance of creating a conducive business environment that enables these women to thrive. The study also revealed the significant economic potential of empowering female entrepreneurs, as their businesses not only contribute to the local economy but also create employment opportunities for other women in the community. By promoting gender equality and supporting female entrepreneurship, the socio-economic development of Lamka can be transformed, leading to a more inclusive and prosperous society.

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