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Original Article

Impact of Low-Quality and Theoretical Education on Financial Independence in Women Entrepreneurship: Evidence from Secondary Data in Bidar District, Karnataka

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Abstract

The study examined the impact of low-quality and predominantly theoretical education on the financial independence of women entrepreneurs in Bidar district, Karnataka. It analyzed how limited emphasis on practical skills, financial literacy, and entrepreneurial training affects women's ability to initiate, manage, and expand their business activities. Although educational attainment among women has improved over time, the study found that the existing education system remains largely theoretical and disconnected from real-world economic requirements. As a result, many women entrepreneurs are confined to traditional, low-investment, and low-income business sectors, which restricts their capacity to achieve sustainable financial independence. The study further analyzed secondary data collected from government reports, academic literature, and institutional sources to understand the relationship between education quality and entrepreneurial outcomes. The findings indicate that inadequate skill-based education reduces confidence, limits decision-making ability, and restricts access to modern and high-value economic opportunities. Additionally, the lack of financial literacy hampers effective financial management, credit utilization, and long-term planning. The study concludes that education in its current theoretical form is insufficient to ensure financial independence among women entrepreneurs. It emphasizes the need for a shift toward practical, skill-oriented, and entrepreneurship-focused education to enhance women's economic empowerment and improve their participation in sustainable income-generating activities.

Keywords: *Women Entrepreneurship, Financial Independence, Education Quality, Human Capital, Skill Development, Bidar District.*

Introduction

Education is widely recognized as a fundamental instrument for promoting economic development, social transformation, and individual empowerment. In the context of women entrepreneurship, education plays a critical role in enhancing knowledge, skills, and the ability to participate effectively in income-generating activities. However, the effectiveness of education in achieving financial independence depends not only on access but also on its quality, relevance, and practical applicability. In many regions, including Bidar district of Karnataka, the education system continues to emphasize theoretical knowledge and examination-oriented learning, with limited focus on skill development and real-world application. The study examined the growing concern that despite increased access to education, many women remain financially dependent or are engaged in low-income entrepreneurial activities. It analysed how low-quality and theoretical education fails to equip women with essential entrepreneurial competencies such as business planning, financial management, marketing, and digital literacy. This gap between education and practical skills creates significant barriers for women in establishing and sustaining successful enterprises. Women entrepreneurship is often considered a pathway to financial independence and empowerment, as it enables women to generate income, improve their standard of living, and gain decision-making power within households and society. However, when education lacks practical orientation, women entrepreneurs tend to concentrate in traditional sectors such as tailoring, food processing, and small retail businesses, which offer limited growth and income potential.

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This restricts their ability to achieve true financial independence. The study further analyzed that financial independence is not merely about earning income but also involves control over financial resources, the ability to make independent decisions, and access to economic opportunities. Low-quality education limits these aspects by reducing confidence, restricting awareness of financial systems, and hindering the adoption of modern business practices.

In this context, the study focuses on Bidar district, a region characterized by a mix of rural and semi-urban populations where educational and economic challenges persist. By examining the impact of low-quality and theoretical education on women entrepreneurship, the study aims to highlight the need for a shift toward skill-based, practical, and entrepreneurship-oriented education systems. Such a transformation is essential for enabling women to achieve sustainable financial independence and contribute effectively to economic development.

2. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical foundation of the study is based on the understanding that education acts as a critical driver of economic capability and empowerment. However, the effectiveness of education in achieving financial independence among women entrepreneurs depends on its quality, applicability, and relevance to real-life economic activities. In this context, the study is grounded in Human Capital Theory and Empowerment Theory to explain the relationship between education and financial independence.

2.1 Human Capital Theory

Human Capital Theory suggests that education enhances individuals' productivity, knowledge, skills, and earning potential, thereby contributing to economic growth and individual prosperity. The study examined that although women in Bidar district have increasingly gained access to formal education, the quality and nature of this education often fail to develop relevant human capital required for entrepreneurship. The prevailing education system largely emphasizes theoretical knowledge, rote learning, and academic achievement, while neglecting practical skill development, technical training, and entrepreneurial competencies.

As a result, women entrepreneurs often lack essential capabilities such as business planning, financial management, marketing strategies, and the use of digital technologies. The study analyzed that this gap between education and practical skill acquisition limits their ability to establish competitive and sustainable enterprises. Consequently, theoretical education without practical application does not significantly contribute to improved entrepreneurial performance, productivity, or higher income levels, thereby weakening the link between education and financial independence.

2.2 Empowerment Theory

Empowerment Theory focuses on enhancing individuals' ability to access resources, exercise agency, make independent decisions, and improve their socio-economic status. In the context of women entrepreneurship, education is expected to act as a catalyst for empowerment by increasing awareness, confidence, and decision-making capacity. The study analyzed that education should ideally enable women to gain control over financial resources, participate in economic activities, and assert their autonomy within households and society.

However, when education lacks practical orientation and financial dimensions, it fails to achieve these outcomes effectively. The study examined that women with predominantly theoretical education often struggle to translate knowledge into action, which limits their confidence and independence in managing business activities. They tend to rely on family members for financial decisions, business management, and access to external resources.

Furthermore, the absence of financial literacy and entrepreneurial training restricts women's ability to utilize institutional support systems, such as credit facilities and government schemes. As a result, education in its current form does not fully empower women but instead reinforces existing dependencies. Therefore, the study highlights that empowerment through education requires not only access but also the integration of practical skills, financial knowledge, and real-world exposure to enable women to achieve true financial independence.

3. Review of Literature

The study analysed existing literature on women entrepreneurship, education quality, and financial independence to understand the relationship between educational outcomes and entrepreneurial success.

Minniti, M. (2010) examined that women entrepreneurship plays a significant role in economic development and enhances income-generating capacity. The study analyzed that entrepreneurial activities improve women's financial independence; however, the level of success depends largely on access to skills, resources, and education quality.

Roomi, M. A. and Parrott, G. (2008) examined the barriers faced by women entrepreneurs and found that lack of education, training, and institutional support limits business growth. The study analyzed that even educated women struggle due to insufficient practical exposure and market-oriented skills.

Kabeer, N. (1999) analyzed the concept of empowerment and highlighted that access to resources, agency, and achievements are essential components of women's development. The study examined that education must enhance decision-making ability and control over resources; otherwise, it cannot lead to true empowerment.

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Becker, G. S. (1993) examined that education is a form of human capital that increases productivity and earning potential. However, the study analyzed that when education lacks practical relevance, its impact on income generation and entrepreneurship remains limited.

Field, E., Jayachandran, S., and Pande, R. (2010) examined the constraints faced by women in entrepreneurial activities and found that social norms, combined with lack of skills and financial knowledge, restrict women's participation in higher-income ventures.

Cole, S., Samson, T., and Zia, B. (2011) analyzed the importance of financial literacy and found that lack of financial knowledge significantly reduces individuals' ability to make informed economic decisions. The study examined that financial literacy is essential for managing income, accessing credit, and achieving financial independence.

4. Research Gap

The study examined that although a substantial body of literature exists on women entrepreneurship, education, and financial independence, several critical gaps remain unaddressed, particularly in the context of education quality and its practical relevance. Most existing studies have focused on the role of education in enhancing women's empowerment, but they largely emphasize access to education and literacy levels rather than the quality, applicability, and skill orientation of education.

The study analyzed that limited research has specifically explored how low-quality and predominantly theoretical education affects entrepreneurial performance and financial independence among women. While prior studies acknowledge the importance of skills and financial literacy, they often treat education as a uniform factor without examining its internal deficiencies, such as outdated curricula, lack of practical training, and absence of entrepreneurial exposure.

Therefore, the present study attempts to fill these gaps by focusing on the qualitative dimensions of education, specifically its theoretical nature and lack of practical orientation, and analyzing its impact on the financial independence of women entrepreneurs in Bidar district. This localized and focused approach contributes to a deeper understanding of the structural limitations within the education system and their implications for women's economic empowerment.

5. Objectives of the Study

1.To examine the nature and quality of education received by women in Bidar district, with particular focus on its theoretical and practical dimensions.

2.To analyze the impact of low-quality and theoretical education on the development of entrepreneurial skills such as business planning, financial management, and marketing abilities.

3.To evaluate the relationship between education quality and the level of financial independence achieved by women entrepreneurs.

4.To analyse the extent to which lack of skill-based education restricts women's participation in high-income and modern entrepreneurial activities.

5.To suggest policy measures and educational reforms required to improve women's financial independence through entrepreneurship.

6. Research Methodology

The study adopted a systematic and analytical approach to examine the impact of low-quality and theoretical education on the financial independence of women entrepreneurs in Bidar district, Karnataka. It analyzed the relationship between education quality, skill development, and entrepreneurial outcomes using secondary data sources.

6.1 Research Design

The study followed a descriptive and analytical research design. The descriptive aspect helped in understanding the existing educational conditions and entrepreneurial patterns among women, while the analytical approach was used to examine the relationship between education quality and financial independence.

6.2 Nature and Source of Data

The study was based entirely on secondary data. Data were collected from various reliable sources, including:

1. Government reports and publications
2. District Statistical Handbook of Bidar
3. Reports of the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO)
4. Research articles from journals and academic publications
5. Policy documents related to education and women entrepreneurship

The study examined these sources to identify patterns related to education levels, skill development, and income generation among women.

6.3 Area of the Study

The geographical focus of the study is Bidar district of Karnataka, which represents a semi-urban and rural setting with distinct socio-economic and educational challenges. The study analyzed this region to understand how local conditions influence women's entrepreneurship and financial independence.

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6.4 Method of Analysis

The study employed thematic and conceptual analysis of secondary data. Information collected from various sources was systematically reviewed, classified, and interpreted to identify key themes such as:

1. Education quality and skill gaps
2. Financial literacy levels
3. Types of entrepreneurial activities
4. Income patterns and financial independence

The study analyzed these themes to establish a logical relationship between theoretical education and entrepreneurial outcomes.

6.5 Analytical Approach

The study followed a qualitative analytical approach, focusing on interpretation and synthesis of existing data rather than statistical testing. It examined trends and relationships between variables such as education, skills, and income levels to draw meaningful conclusions.

6.6 Limitations of the Study

The study is subject to certain limitations:

1. It is based solely on secondary data, which may not capture recent or ground-level changes.
2. Lack of primary data restricts direct interaction with women entrepreneurs.
3. Findings are specific to Bidar district and may not be generalized to other regions without caution.

7. Statistical Analysis and Interpretation

The study examined secondary data to understand the relationship between education quality, type of entrepreneurial activity, and financial independence among women in Bidar district. It analyzed patterns in educational attainment and income distribution to assess how theoretical education influences entrepreneurial outcomes.

7.1 Educational Attainment of Women Entrepreneurs

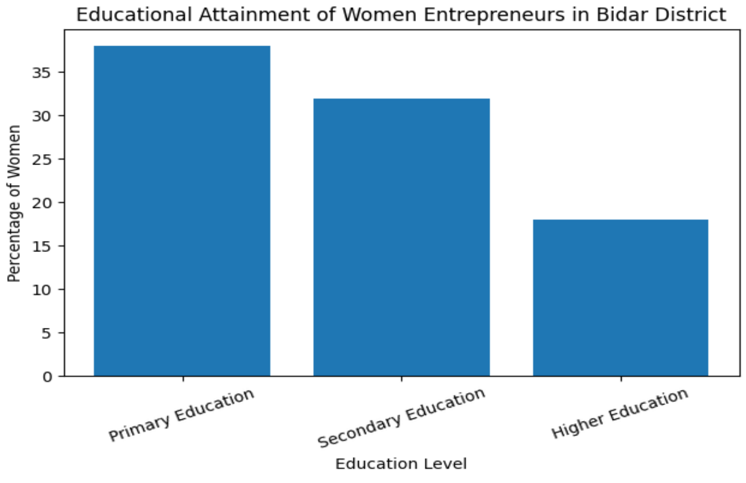
The study analyzed that a significant proportion of women entrepreneurs in Bidar district possess only primary and secondary levels of education, while a relatively smaller percentage have attained higher education.

Education Level	Percentage of Women (%)
Primary Education	38%
Secondary Education	32%
Higher Education	18%

Interpretation:

The study examined that the majority of women entrepreneurs are concentrated in lower levels of education, which limits their exposure to advanced knowledge and technical skills. Even among those with higher education, the study analyzed that the learning process remains largely theoretical, with minimal emphasis on practical application. This results in a gap between educational qualifications and entrepreneurial capability.

The lack of skill-based education reduces women's ability to adopt modern business practices, utilize digital platforms, and compete effectively in the market. Consequently, education does not significantly translate into improved financial outcomes.



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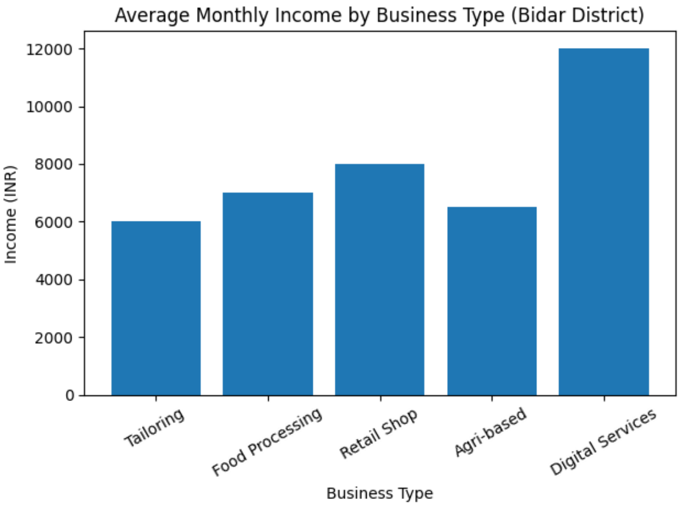
7.2 Distribution of Women Entrepreneurs by Business Type and Income

Business Type	Average Monthly Income (INR)
Tailoring	6,000
Food Processing	7,000
Retail Shop	8,000
Agri-based	6,500
Digital Services	12,000

Interpretation:

The study examined that most women entrepreneurs are engaged in traditional sectors such as tailoring, food processing, and small retail businesses. These activities require low investment but also generate limited income, thereby restricting financial independence.

In contrast, women involved in digital and skill-intensive services earn comparatively higher incomes. The study analyzed that this difference is primarily due to the presence of technical knowledge, digital literacy, and practical skills, which are generally absent in theoretical education systems.



7.3 Relationship between Education Quality and Income Levels

The study analyzed that there is a direct relationship between the quality of education and income levels. Women with access to skill-based and practical education tend to:

1. Enter diverse and high-income sectors
2. Manage businesses more efficiently
3. Utilize financial resources effectively

On the other hand, women with predominantly theoretical education are more likely to:

1. Engage in low-income activities
2. Face challenges in business expansion
3. Depend on informal sources of finance

7.4 Financial Literacy and Decision-Making

The study further analyzed that women entrepreneurs with limited financial literacy face difficulties in:

1. Budgeting and financial planning
2. Accessing institutional credit
3. Managing profits and reinvestment

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Interpretation:
The study examined that financial literacy, which is often not included in theoretical education, is essential for achieving financial independence. Without this knowledge, women remain economically vulnerable despite being engaged in entrepreneurial activities.

8. Discussion and Detailed Analysis

The study examined that low-quality and theoretical education significantly limits the financial independence of women entrepreneurs in Bidar district. It analyzed that the absence of practical and skill-based learning restricts women's ability to develop essential entrepreneurial competencies such as business planning, financial management, and use of digital tools.

The study found that due to inadequate financial literacy, women face challenges in managing resources, accessing formal credit, and making informed financial decisions. As a result, their businesses remain small and generate limited income. The study further analyzed that theoretical education does not encourage innovation or risk-taking, leading women to engage mainly in traditional, low-income sectors.

Additionally, the study examined that lack of practical exposure reduces confidence and decision-making ability, increasing dependence on family members. Socio-cultural barriers further intensify these challenges, limiting women's participation in higher-value economic activities.

Overall, the study analyzed that without skill-oriented and application-based education, women entrepreneurs are unable to achieve sustainable financial independence, highlighting the need for educational reforms focused on practical training and financial literacy.

9. Findings

The study examined the impact of low-quality and theoretical education on the financial independence of women entrepreneurs in Bidar district and identified several significant findings based on the analysis of secondary data. The study found that although access to education among women has improved, the quality and nature of education remain largely theoretical and examination-oriented. This limits the development of practical skills required for entrepreneurship, such as business planning, financial management, marketing, and use of digital technologies. As a result, education does not effectively translate into entrepreneurial competence or improved income levels.

The study analyzed that a majority of women entrepreneurs are engaged in traditional and low-income business activities such as tailoring, food processing, and small retail shops. These sectors require minimal skills and investment but offer limited opportunities for growth and financial advancement. The concentration of women in such activities reflects the lack of skill-based and technical education.

It was also found that financial literacy among women entrepreneurs is inadequate. Many women lack knowledge about savings, investment, credit facilities, and financial planning. This restricts their ability to manage business finances efficiently, access institutional support, and make informed economic decisions, thereby limiting their financial independence.

Overall, the study found that education in its current theoretical form is insufficient to ensure financial independence among women entrepreneurs. The absence of practical orientation, financial literacy, and entrepreneurial training significantly limits the potential of women to achieve economic empowerment through entrepreneurship.

10. Policy Implications

The study examined that improving women's financial independence in Bidar district requires a shift from theoretical to skill-based education. It analyzed that integrating vocational training, entrepreneurship development, and practical learning into the education system is essential for building relevant competencies. The study suggests that financial literacy programs should be strengthened to help women manage resources, access credit, and make informed decisions. It further examined the need to promote digital literacy and technological skills to enable women to enter higher-income and modern business sectors. Additionally, the study analyzed that government support should focus on providing easier access to finance, training programs, and awareness of entrepreneurship schemes. Addressing regional disparities and socio-cultural barriers is also important to create a supportive environment for women entrepreneurs.

Overall, the study emphasizes that practical, inclusive, and skill-oriented policy interventions are necessary to enhance women's entrepreneurial success and financial independence.

11. Conclusion

The study examined that low-quality and theoretical education limits the financial independence of women entrepreneurs in Bidar district. It analyzed that despite increased access to education, the lack of practical skills, financial literacy, and entrepreneurial training restricts women's ability to achieve sustainable income and business growth. The study found that women remain concentrated in low-income activities due to inadequate skill-based education and limited exposure to modern opportunities. It further examined that financial independence is constrained by low confidence, weak decision-making ability, and dependence on external support.

Overall, the study concludes that a shift toward practical, skill-oriented, and entrepreneurship-focused education is essential for enhancing women's financial independence and ensuring meaningful economic empowerment.

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