



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

The sentimental and financial journey of women navigating e-commerce

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Abstract

Electronic commerce is the full form of e-commerce. This is the interface that provides services and products, either free or paid. This is a virtual online mode that provides an environment including business platforms, transactions, and digitalization.

When we talk about the sentimental and financial situation of women who are the users of e-commerce, it is significant to look outside the transactional nature of e-commerce to study how it impacts the experience of women both psychologically and commercially.

This paper explores the sentimental and financial journey of women engaged in e-commerce, focusing on the ways that online platforms are switching their roles in business, society, and personal life. During the past ten years, e-commerce has become a convincing method for women to succeed in financial freedom, create entrepreneurial attempts, and defeat traditional barriers to appear present in the corporate world. However, the economic impact is not the individual benefit. This paper also investigates the emotional revolution experienced by women, such as enhanced self-confidence, inspiration, and a sense of execution that comes with running and topping online businesses and how they manage time management.

This paper uses information from case studies, interviews, and surveys to explore how women manage their e-commerce businesses while balancing financial goals and personal happiness. It looks at the difficulties women face in the mostly male-led online business world, such as gender bias, lack of digital skills, and the challenge of managing both work and family life. At the same time, the paper shows the emotional benefits women gain—like feeling more independent, being able to express themselves, and building connections with others.

By looking at both the money women earn and the emotional satisfaction they feel, this study gives a full picture of how e-commerce can change women's lives. It shows that online businesses can help women become financially independent and grow stronger emotionally. The paper also suggests ways to better support women in the online business world, such as offering special training, mentoring, and policy changes to reduce gender gaps in e-commerce. This research adds to the bigger discussion about women's rights and how digital business can help bring more fairness between men and women in the global economy.

Keywords: E-commerce, Women empowerment, Emotional empowerment, Financial independence, role of government, Entrepreneurship, Gender equality, Digital economy, Women in business.

Introduction

E-commerce stands for electronic commerce or internet commerce. It requires an internet or network platform as an intermediate of operation. It gives a stage for offering

different services, buying different products, and selling products using online platforms and digital tools via internet applications or websites.

E-commerce is also known as a paperless replacement of business communication using Email and electronic fund transfer using applications or websites like Amazon, Myntra, Flipkart, eBay, Meesho, Nykaa, etc. There are many types of e-commerce systems, like B2A, B2B, B2C, C2A, C2B, C2C, D2C, and M-commerce. Consumers and sellers or service providers widely use the online payment process.

The global market has changed a lot in the 21st century. In the past ten years, the rise of e-commerce has greatly affected the economy and how people experience shopping and business. After COVID-19, the move toward digital platforms became even faster and more important.

In recent years, the growth of e-commerce has changed how people shop, communicate, learn, pay, and use different

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services. Women have played an important role in this change, both as customers and business owners. However, their emotional experiences in the world of e-commerce have not been studied much.

The paper referring the perception of the journey of women towards e-commerce centering on both the emotional and financial dimensions.

Women's emotions in e-commerce are shaped by many things, such as how they feel about online shopping, the sense of empowerment or insecurity they experience, and different factors that influence their decisions. Social and cultural barriers, trust in digital platforms, and the safety of online payments also play a big role.

Women's financial journey in e-commerce includes many roles—from being buyers to selling different products and starting their businesses using online platforms. They are using digital tools to grow their businesses, reach customers around the world, and improve their income. However, they still face some challenges, like gender bias, limited knowledge of technology, and financial dependence.

This paper aims to analyze the emotional and financial experiences of women, exploring how e-commerce is restructuring their roles in the marketplace. It includes an evaluation of relevant literature, case studies, and a scrutiny of various document sources. This paper looks at how e-commerce platforms help empower women. It also aims to show the effects of women becoming more involved in online business while pointing out the difficulties they still face as they continue their journey in the digital world.

Literature Review

This paper aims to provide a study of the sentimental and financial journey of women using e-commerce and for this intention, here, we examine different literature, case studies, and several sources of documents.

The hasty progression of e-commerce has changed all the communication of individuals in the marketplace. Women, as an important part of the population, have experienced the journey of digitalization both emotionally and financially.

The literature review studies the significant stages surrounding e-commerce development and women's emotional and commercial experiences and it also includes different government schemes that help women to progress fast in their journey with digitalization and e-commerce.

Sentimental Journey of Women in E-commerce

Many dynamics, such as education, age, income, self-confidence, trust, empowerment, social image, and satisfaction, shape women's emotional engagement with e-commerce. Various studies indicate that the emotional understanding of online shopping for women can be both positive and negative. E-commerce has also enabled skill improvement and provided access to the global marketplace

for women. Additionally, many new job openings arise in the market.

The psychological process includes many activities like selecting and purchasing products from lists of products, also using or getting online services as a consumer, and satisfying the requirements, wants, and desires. (William L. Willkie, 1986)

Women's trust in online platforms is a crucial factor influencing their emotional experience. The fear of fraud, identity theft, and the risk of not receiving the expected product can lead to feelings of vulnerability and frustration. What do others think if the product fails to satisfy expectations in addition, women's emotional responses to customer service, return policies, and the overall online shopping experience significantly influence their loyalty to e-commerce platforms (Gounaris, S., Stathakopoulos, V., & Boutsouki, C. (2010)).

Lack of interest related to technology, unawareness of product details, and less interest in learning new technology updates, security features, ignorance and different payment options are major factors in stopping online shopping. (Adeshara, 2013). Shim *et al.* (2004) identify that past online shopping experiences affect present and future online shopping.

Positive experience nurtures consumers to purchase again and again, but some bad experiences stop consumers from becoming available again and they search for many available alternate and informal solutions.

Moreover, community factors such as the pressure to conform to certain beauty standards or purchasing behaviors often find their expression in the e-commerce landscape. Social comparisons can also affect women, particularly in highly visual online spaces like social media-driven platforms, which can induce feelings of inadequacy or dissatisfaction (Tiggemann & Slater, 2014).

For many women, the convenience and flexibility of online shopping offer a sense of autonomy and control, contributing to feelings of empowerment and satisfaction (Mencarelli & Lombart, 2017).

This empowerment is especially remarkable among women who face traditional societal constraints, as e-commerce grants them space to make decisions and purchases individually without the stress of in-store shopping environments.

However, the emotional journey of women in e-commerce is having its challenges. Studies have highlighted the prevalence of online shopping anxiety, particularly when it comes to security and privacy concerns (Choi & Lee, 2019).

Women's decisions to engage in eCommerce, both as consumers and entrepreneurs, are often influenced by an emotional desire for independence, creativity, and personal fulfillment. The emotional satisfaction of contributing to

a family's income or building a business is often just as important as the financial rewards. (McKinsey 2020).

Moreover, studies have highlighted the major role of social media platforms in shaping both the emotional and financial experiences of women in e-commerce. Social media platforms like Instagram and Pinterest not only influence women's shopping habits but also serve as key marketing tools for women entrepreneurs. These platforms allow women to express their identities and connect with like-minded communities, further enhancing their emotional attachment to the e-commerce experience (Zhao *et al.*, 2020).

Economic Journey of Women in E-commerce

The growth of mobile use and online shopping platforms has given women more power by making shopping easier and more personal. This helps them manage both work and home life more smoothly. With more job opportunities, women can become independent, sell their products to global markets, earn money, and work flexible hours—even from their hometowns.

On the other hand, women have made noticeable progress in their financial journeys—whether as independent earners, employees, or business owners in e-commerce. Over the past ten years, many women have used digital tools to explore new opportunities and build their businesses. Platforms like social media, YouTube, and e-commerce websites have helped them reach wider markets across the world.

Women are still underrepresented in digital entrepreneurship, and many face gender-specific barriers such as limited access to venture capital, gender bias in online marketing, and difficulties in building a customer base (Nambisan, 2017).

As consumers, women tend to engage in a wide range of online shopping activities, from purchasing goods and services to seeking out more personalized and experience-based products (Ramanathan, 2018).

According to a report by McKinsey (2018), Businesses led by women perform well in the digital economy, driven by women's ability to navigate eCommerce tools and strategies with flexibility and creativity. Online businesses offer women chances to work from home, establish their schedules, and reach a wider audience, thus contributing to their financial independence and economic empowerment.

E-commerce has had a wide economic impact on women, both as buyers and as business owners. Women now play a big role in the online market, with research showing that 48% of online shoppers are women (Figure 1). However, many women—especially in developing countries—still face problems like limited access to technology and the internet. This digital gap makes it harder for them to fully benefit from the opportunities in e-commerce (UNCTAD, 2021).

Intersection of Sentimental and Financial Experiences

The connection between women's emotional and financial experiences in e-commerce is now getting more attention in research. Women's choices as buyers and business owners are not only about making money. Their decisions are also shaped by emotions like how they see themselves, their role in society, and the feeling of being empowered.

OBJECTIVES / AIMS

The main goal of this paper is to understand the emotional and financial experiences of women involved in e-commerce. It looks at how online platforms support different areas, such as shopping, starting a business, making decisions, and gaining financial independence. Specifically, this study aims to:

The Role of Emotions in Women's E-commerce Journey

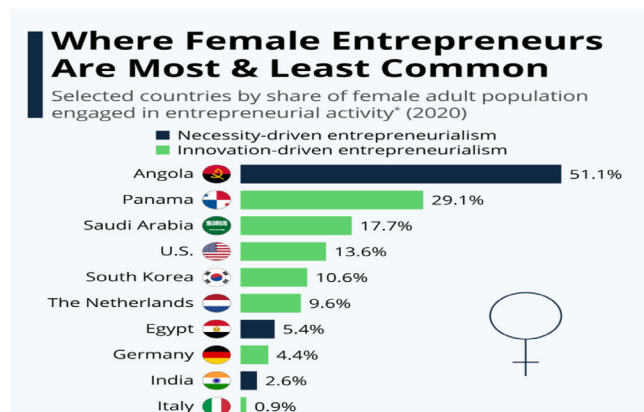
Analysis of emotional aspects like Trust, Security, Social Impact, Culture, User Satisfaction, Easiness of usage of the platform, Smooth processing, feeling, empowerment, and many others are the psychological factors that drive the behavior and convenience of women engaging themselves with E-commerce.

Exploring Women's Role as Consumers in the Digital Marketplace

Women are often seen as important drivers of change in both online and offline markets. In the global e-commerce space, they play a key role as consumers. Their shopping habits, preferences, and the factors that influence their choices—such as mobile shopping, personalized experiences, and ease of use—are important to understand. Once women are satisfied with a product or service, they often become loyal, regular customers and have a strong impact on market trends.

Empowering Women Entrepreneurs Through E-commerce

This section looks at the challenges and opportunities women face in their journey as entrepreneurs. It also



Source: <https://www.instamojo.com/blog/women-in-business-india-statistics>

Figure 1: Female Adult Population Engaged in Entrepreneurial Activity by Country (2020)

explores how digital platforms help them start and grow their businesses. Key factors that impact their success include access to technology, funding, and market visibility. In addition, various government programs and schemes aim to support and encourage women-led startups, helping them succeed in the digital economy.

The Dual Impact: Emotional Satisfaction and Economic Empowerment

E-commerce has created a powerful dual impact for women, offering both emotional satisfaction and economic empowerment. On one hand, women feel a sense of achievement, independence, and self-worth when they successfully manage online businesses or make confident buying decisions. It allows them to express themselves, build their identity, and connect with others through digital platforms. On the other hand, e-commerce opens doors to financial freedom, flexible work opportunities, and access to broader markets. This combination of emotional fulfillment and financial growth makes e-commerce a valuable tool in supporting women's overall empowerment in today's digital world.

References for E-commerce Platforms

To support women more effectively in the e-commerce space, platforms should take several key actions. They can start by offering basic and advanced digital training, helping women improve their online business skills—especially those from rural or underserved areas. Creating a secure and easy-to-use platform is also important, including safe payment options and privacy protection. E-commerce websites can also highlight women-led businesses through special labels, features, or promotions to increase their visibility. Additionally, working with government programs, NGOs, or financial institutions can help women get access to funding and business advice. These steps can help create a more supportive and equal environment for women in the digital market.

The goal of this paper is to better understand the role of women in the growing digital economy. It aims to share insights that can help shape business strategies, guide policy-making, and support future research around e-commerce.

Results/Findings

The rise of internet usage and AI is a game-changing factor in the 21st century. With AI, women can now check how glasses or clothes fit on their bodies and how they look. Additionally, many websites provide comparison charts and product categories, allowing customers to easily compare and select products. Prices benefit due to comparison, attractive deals, easy product comparing and finding, avoiding long queues, support from the government, and on-time delivery have completely transformed the buying experience for women. This shift has significant social, mental, and financial impacts on women.

Various examples from the findings emphasize how e-commerce platforms support women in becoming entrepreneurs. Furthermore, governments and many NGOs help women become independent. One example is www.Pabiben.com, founded by Pabiben Rabari, an illiterate village woman whose childhood struggles motivated her to work hard and gain recognition in her younger years. She ventured to start one of the first Women's Artisan Enterprises, Pabiben.com, thanks to Kaarigar Clinic. It is a rural business project that focuses on allowing artisans to become entrepreneurs.

Here is a list of government schemes that are very useful for women's encouragement and empowerment like Startup India, Mahila Samridhi Yojana, Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP), Support to Training and Employment Program for Women, Mudra Yojana for Women/ Mahila Udhyaami Yojana, Nai Roshni – A scheme for Leadership Development of Minority Women, Mahila Shakti Kendra, Nari Shakti Puraskars, Skill Upgradation and Mahila Coir Yojana, Stand-Up India, and many other initiatives performs by the government to educate and encourage the active participation of women.

Government schemes support women

Mahila E-haat

This scheme is run by the government of the Ministry of Women and Child Development, which provides an online marketing platform from which women can market their products on online platform. They can show product details and photographs online.

Niryat Bandhu

This scheme is run under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry; it is for building the capacity of women to export their services to e-commerce platforms.

E-commerce Facilitation Melas

This type of camp is organized by some state government agencies. It connects self-help groups (SHGs) women with e-commerce platforms, provides opportunities and, a marketplace to women, and engages them with digital platforms.

Institutional Support

Amazon Saheli

This program was started by Amazon India. Some NGOs and groups are also a part of this program. They empower women entrepreneurs and women artisans by providing training, finance, and marketing.

Ubuntu Consortium

This platform is used for sharing different ideas, and promoting networks and seminars to educate and encourage women entrepreneurs. It brings together

women's entrepreneur associations from different states, offers them different skill programs and training for digital marketing, and tries to upscale their business.

Digital2Equal Initiative

This program was launched by the International Finance Corporation and the European Commission. Different technology companies provide a marketplace and try to boost different opportunities for women. Under knowledge session programs, they focus on how the digital economy increases women's access to more jobs and businesses.

Panjikaran Se Pragati

It is an integrated campaign run by the Ministry of MSME and WEP. It is a program to encourage women to register themselves or businesses for Udyam registration to unlock many business opportunities and get support.

WEP Unnati_Udyamita se Pragati Tak

This is a joint program of the Ministry of MSME and the Women's Entrepreneurship Platform. It provides a mentorship platform for women entrepreneurs from start to success in the business.

WEP

This initiative was launched by NITI Ayog during the 8th Global Entrepreneurship Summit in 2017. It connects women across India and supports their business desires and entrepreneurship.

Ichha Shakti

This is a motivational and aspiring program for women to start their businesses and reach the goals.

Gyaan Shakti

This is a program for providing knowledge and ecosystem support to boost entrepreneurship among women.

Karma Shakti

This Offers hands-on support to women entrepreneurs for setup and scaleup their businesses.

The Reliance Foundation supports women in India through several important programs. These include Digital Skills Programs, the Women in the Digital Economy Fund (WiDEF), the WomenConnect Challenge India, the WomenLead India Fellowship, and Project ASMAN (Alliance for Saving Mothers and Newborns). Each of these initiatives is designed to improve digital access, leadership opportunities, and healthcare support for women across the country.

Discussion / Analysis

Over time, e-commerce has continued to grow, supported by the widespread use of social media. Today, using the internet has become a normal part of daily life, and it plays a big role in the success of e-commerce. It helps people understand the market better and opens up more

opportunities for both buyers and sellers.

Based on NASSCOM's insights, the e-commerce market of India is projected to grow \$100 billion by 2028 and reach almost double to \$200 billion by 2030, driven by increasing internet penetration and digital adoption across the country. The following table illustrates the Indian E-commerce market size across the top four industries from 2023 & 2028 (forecasted) (Table 1).

According to the WEP program by NITI Aayog, out of 58.5 million entrepreneurs in India, only 8.05 million are women, which is about 13.76% of the total. The World Bank's *Women, Business, and the Law 2022* report also states that just 20% of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in India are owned by women. These numbers clearly show that there is still a big gap between men and women when it comes to entrepreneurship in India.

Compared to global numbers, countries like the United States have a higher share of women entrepreneurs, around 36%, according to the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM). Although the number of women entrepreneurs in India is increasing, it is still much lower. This shows the need for more focused efforts and support to help women grow in the business world, as mentioned in the report.

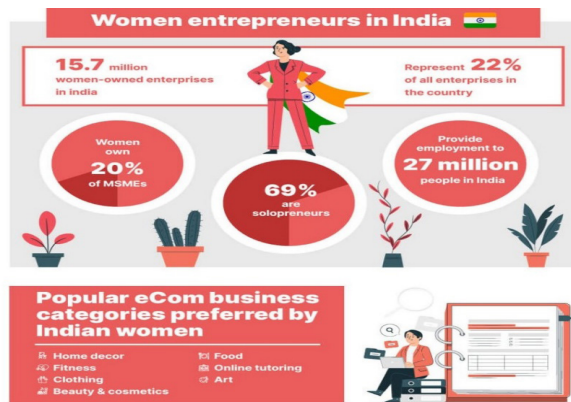
A report by Bain & Company (2019) shows that women make up about 35 to 40% of all e-commerce customers in India, and their online spending is expected to grow quickly. In addition, women entrepreneurs in India are estimated to provide jobs for around 22 to 27 million people. According to government data, the number of businesses owned by women has also grown from 14 to 20% over the last ten years.

The share of women entrepreneurs in India has grown in recent years, but it remains far from equal when compared to men. According to the *Global Entrepreneurship Monitor Report 2023*, about 14% of women in India are engaged in entrepreneurial activities (Figure 2). While this number is gradually improving, it is still low compared to many other

Table 1: Forecasted Market Size of Key E-commerce Industries in India (2023 vs 2028)

<i>India's E-commerce market is booming, reaching \$100B by 2028 Market size across top four industries in 2023 & 2028 (forecasted)</i>		
<i>Industry</i>	<i>2023</i>	<i>2028</i>
Food & Beverage (F&B)	\$20B	\$34B
Fashion	\$11B	\$25B
Electronics	\$7B	\$18B
Media	\$1B	\$5B
Others		\$19B
		\$101B

(Source - <https://metyis.com/impact/our-insights/understanding-india-eCommerce-landscape>)



Source: <https://www.instamojo.com/blog/women-in-business-india-statistics>

Figure 2: Overview of Women Entrepreneurs in India

countries, showing that more support and resources are needed to boost women's participation in business.

As per data from the *National Statistical Office (NSO)*, as of March 2023, women hold 36.4% of all bank accounts in India. However, they account for less than 21% of the total money deposited. This gap highlights financial inequality and suggests that even though more women are becoming part of the formal financial system, their overall financial power and control over savings remain limited.

Conclusion

E-commerce has played a significant role in empowering women by giving them more control over their shopping choices and business opportunities. However, challenges remain such as trust issues, privacy concerns, and gender-based barriers—that limit full participation. The emotional and financial journeys of women in the e-commerce space are complex and layered, and understanding these experiences is key to building more inclusive and effective digital platforms.

As women continue to influence the digital economy, it's important to recognize how emotional and economic factors shape their engagement. Platforms that create positive emotional experiences, such as a sense of empowerment, security, and enjoyment, can encourage stronger customer loyalty and participation. On the other hand, negative emotions like stress or regret from poor shopping experiences can discourage future use. Addressing these emotional responses is critical for improving overall satisfaction and involvement.

Economic factors also play a major role in how women use e-commerce. Income levels, spending habits, and financial responsibilities all influence decision-making and participation. When platforms consider both emotional and financial dimensions, they can better serve the diverse needs of women. Doing so not only boosts user engagement but

also helps move closer to gender equality in the growing digital marketplace. Future research should dive deeper into these areas, especially in emerging markets and with evolving digital technologies.

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