

# Role of Digital Technology on Work-Life Balance of Women Agripreneur in Rural India

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## Abstract

A more entrepreneurial spirit among the many players is being fostered by agribusiness companies that are now transforming the Indian agriculture industry. Work-life balance is the condition in which a person's personal and professional lives are in balance. This article examines the many studies on the impact of digital technology on work-life balance. Agripreneurs in rural India are women. This research carefully looked at the complex interaction between female agripreneurship dynamics and digitalisation. Because of their affordability, adaptability, and low technical requirements, social media platforms are the primary digital tool used by women agripreneurs, according to the study's results. Due to a lack of digital skills and access, women often find it difficult to reach their full potential, even if digital technologies provide prospects for job progress. When using digital technologies, women who have studied science and technology academically are at a clear advantage. For women agripreneurs in particular, juggling family obligations and business is still quite difficult. Furthermore, excessive duties, problems with dependent care, and schooling have a detrimental impact on WLB, whereas age, social and familial support, health, and time management have a good impact. job-family conflicts are caused by a number of factors, including family size, job hours, and a lack of social support. These conflicts often result in psychological and physical stress.

**Keyword:** Women Agripreneur (agripreneurship), Rural India, Digital Technology (Digitalization), Work life balance (WLB), Women entrepreneurs

## INTRODUCTION

Technology advancements, economic volatility, and demographic changes have all contributed to India's agriculture's dramatic development, bringing with them both new potential and difficulties. Since more than half of the country's population works in agriculture, shrinking farms and low per capita production make the situation much worse, especially given the country's projected population growth and rising food demand in the near future [1]. India's current agricultural policy strategy aims to address these issues by encouraging innovation and entrepreneurship in order to provide the agricultural sector with stable revenue and sustained development. Agriculture workers now have a more entrepreneurial attitude because to the rise of agribusiness companies, which have completely changed the Indian agricultural industry [2]. Big corporations, well-known IT companies, investors, and young inventors have all taken notice of India's agriculture sector. This increase in interest has caused the sector's ecosystem of digital solutions and technology to grow quickly. Not only has the rise of agri-entrepreneurship, also known as "agripreneurship," enabled some farmers to become more business-savvy, but it has also drawn in a new generation of entrepreneurs with creative ideas and inventive solutions, creating a dynamic and progressive agricultural landscape better suited to face the challenges of the twenty-first century [3].

Furthermore, the emergence of the digital age has given Indian women unparalleled chances to lead and engage in agricultural businesses by assisting them in overcoming long-standing obstacles that previously prevented them from doing so, such as restricted access to markets, resources, and information [4]. However, it's vital to remember that, in addition to IT prowess and the availability of supplementary resources, gender dynamics are also shown to be a significant role in how businesses implement digital technologies. The digital skill gap is another obstacle that women entrepreneurs must overcome in addition to outdated gender norms and societal expectations, according to experts [5]. Women entrepreneurs need to continuously learn new skills to take advantage of the limitless possibilities presented by social media platforms in order to remain competitive and grow their enterprises. Research argues that women face obstacles while pursuing entrepreneurship, particularly in the quickly evolving digital landscape. It also discusses the need for policies that support the behaviours that enable women to pursue careers as digital entrepreneurs [6].

#### ***Status of Women Entrepreneurs in India***

Increasing urbanisation and industrialisation, as well as groundbreaking advancements in the "information technology (IT)" industry, have significantly altered the professional responsibilities and career paths of women in India. The need of providing women with specialised entrepreneurship training programs so they may launch their own businesses has also been highlighted by the government [7]. "The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI)", the Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDI), the Department of Science and Technology's Technology Development Board (TDB), and the Federation of Ladies Organisation (FLO) are some of the organisations working on this project. Leading financial institutions have also set up dedicated cells to support female entrepreneurs in an effort to promote women's entrepreneurship nationwide [8].

As paradigms have changed, Indian society has also seen some extremely successful female entrepreneurs, like Kiran Mazumdar, a prominent Indian businesswoman and the founder of the biotechnology company Biocon; Ekta Kapoor, a celebrated Indian film and television producer; and Shehnaz Hussain, a world-renowned Indian herbal beautician who owns a chain of beauty salons. But most female entrepreneurs still struggle to combine their family and business needs in order to achieve a healthy work-life

balance, particularly those in the middle and lower middle classes and in rural regions [9].

#### ***Work-Life Balance (WLB) Issues of Women Entrepreneurs***

After conquering numerous inherent drawbacks associated with the deeply ingrained traditional mindset and strict etiquette, Indian women are now involved in a variety of traditional (such as clothing manufacturing, beauty care, and fashion design) and non-traditional (such as starting financial institutions, educational institutions, and entertainment companies) entrepreneurial endeavours [10]. A lot of these women have to fulfil many duties in their homes in addition to their demanding business activities. Managing everyday domestic tasks, serving the community and society, and being a husband, carer, and parent are some examples of these responsibilities. Women also have personal responsibilities, such as taking care of their health, but they are often overlooked due to time constraints and role overload. WLB is absent in all of these circumstances, and several WLB problems are shown [11].

#### ***Opportunities and Barriers for Women Agripreneurs in the Digital Era***

Several academics have started to show how digital technology might help small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs), especially those managed by women, who face challenges including poorer networks and financing access. According to female entrepreneurs, digital technologies are tremendously useful, and pursuing business without social media platforms and digital media tools would be "very pricey" and very difficult [12]. In addition to stressing the benefits of front-end digital infrastructures, such websites and online order and payment management systems, research has shown that SMEs may benefit by using the internet purposefully to locate new customers and suppliers. According to studies conducted in the global south, where access to and proficiency in basic technology are severely restricted, individuals mostly utilise technology for online social interaction rather than "professional" tasks. Understanding the advantages that digital technologies may provide in developing their business is thus much more crucial for entrepreneurs [13].

#### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

(Upadhaya et al., 2024) [6] Over the last ten years, the Indian government has started a number of programs to promote and assist entrepreneurship. However, a number of socioeconomic, demographic, and other variables provide challenges, particularly for rural women in the Himalayan

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area. Thus, this research aims to explore the many obstacles that rural women entrepreneurs in India's Himachal Pradesh confront. It also emphasises the outstanding steps made by Himachal Pradesh's rural Indian women entrepreneurs to turn obstacles into possibilities. It would also demonstrate how their economic endeavours have enhanced their reputation in the community and given them more influence.

(Katiyar & Srivastava, 2024) [7] examines how women entrepreneurs are changing in the digital age, highlighting the obstacles they encounter and the possibilities they take advantage of. highlights the significance of enabling frameworks and legislative efforts for empowering female entrepreneurs in the digital era. The success of women-led digital companies is highlighted as being facilitated by government interventions, industry partnerships, and educational initiatives. In conclusion, this illustrates the digital era's revolutionary potential for female entrepreneurs, highlighting both the advancements and ongoing challenges. By comprehending these dynamics, interested parties may endeavour to establish a welcoming and enabling atmosphere that optimises the contributions of female entrepreneurs to the digital economy.

(Kushwaha et al., 2024) [14] Particularly in areas like Chhattisgarh, India, where traditional gender conventions are prevalent, women entrepreneurs have particular challenges in juggling their personal and professional life. The research aims to explore how work-life balance is affected by entrepreneurial traits among female entrepreneurs in Chhattisgarh. The research analyses a number of entrepreneurial traits, such as the industry and cultural background, social traits, work-life balance, personal traits, and creative techniques, and investigates how these traits influence the work-life balance of female entrepreneurs. The results show that women entrepreneurs often have difficulties juggling their home and business life due to cultural and social expectations. Policymakers and business support organisations may better understand the unique challenges encountered by women entrepreneurs in Chhattisgarh by addressing the special entrepreneurial qualities found in this research.

(Saranya & Chandrasekar, 2023) [15] explores how women are becoming more entrepreneurial in India and demonstrates how technologies that concentrate on the creation of new kinds of entrepreneurial action—like networks, ecosystems, and communities—can hasten the development of new enterprises related to women's

entrepreneurial growth. In particular, the importance of technology and its effects on female entrepreneurship will be examined. To understand some of the issues related to the women entrepreneurship process, it would be beneficial to do a conceptual analysis of how technical potential could be crucial. This would emphasise the main lines of inquiry that come up for further study on the topic.

(Chandwani & Verma, 2020) [16] looks at women's entrepreneurship in India and emphasises how digital technologies are helping to create new kinds of entrepreneurial activities, such as networks, ecosystems, and communities, which are speeding the development of new businesses linked to the rise of women entrepreneurs. In particular, an analysis of digital technologies' effect and contribution to women entrepreneurs will be conducted. It would be easier to comprehend some of the obstacles associated with the women entrepreneurship process if there was a conceptual explanation of how digital technology prospects may be crucial. This would also draw attention to the primary lines of inquiry that surface for further study of the subject.

(Dutta & Radha, 2022) [17] The harmony between a person's personal and professional lives is known as work-life balance. Examine the degree of difficulties women have in maintaining a healthy work-life balance and learn about the challenges they confront. Fifty female entrepreneurs from Assam, India, who run various types of businesses, participated in the research. Results showed that over half of female entrepreneurs struggle to maintain a healthy work-life balance. Also, it was discovered that the chosen female entrepreneurs had a number of health, familial, social, and psychological concerns that significantly impacted their life.

(Saranya & Chandrasekar, 2021) [18] Women's entrepreneurial endeavours support socioeconomic development since making the most of all available resources is crucial for sustained progress and calls for both the will to innovate and digital skills. Because of inventions and technical advancements, digital technology utilises all forms of learning to meet the demands of the modern world. The Indian government wants to develop digital technologies to better empower society. The goal of digital skills would be very difficult to accomplish without awareness among rural residents. In this study, the knowledge of digital technologies among Indian rural women entrepreneurs is examined. This study advances knowledge of digital technology awareness among rural

women entrepreneurs and its ramifications for society at large. Digital technology gives female entrepreneurs the chance to overcome obstacles and build a more advantageous network structure.

(Udisha & Ambily Philomina, 2024) [19] This study examines how mobile technology may empower women farmers in rural areas and advance inclusive agricultural development. This research also examines how demographic characteristics affect rural women farmers' adoption of mobile technologies. According to the findings, mobile technology significantly improves market participation, social connectedness, and access to agricultural information, which grants rural women farmers more influence. Nevertheless, significant barriers continue to exist, including low levels of digital literacy and limited access to mobile infrastructure. In addition to highlighting the obstacles rural women encounter when using mobile technology, the results show how mobile phones have the revolutionary potential to close information gaps, empower women farmers in rural regions, and promote equitable agricultural growth.

(Bhattacharya, 2017) [10] Women's entrepreneurship may boost family and community economic well-being, reduce poverty, and empower women. This qualitative research examines current policies and strategies to help women become successful entrepreneurs and achieve work-life balance. Due to her many responsibilities, a woman entrepreneur struggles to balance work and family. Different scholarly publications and data reports show government and civil society attempts to boost women's entrepreneurship. Work-Life Balance considerations were also mentioned. Several problems and corrective processes are also highlighted. Survey reports, journals, newspapers, and websites provide secondary data for this study.

## CONCLUSION

This study highlights the intricate relationship between digitalization and the work-life balance (WLB) of female agripreneurs in rural India. While digital technologies offer career advancement opportunities, women often struggle to fully utilize their potential due to limited digital skills and access. Women with academic backgrounds in science and technology have a distinct advantage in navigating digital tools. Presently, social media platforms remain the primary digital tool due to their cost-effectiveness and ease of use. Balancing entrepreneurship and family responsibilities remains a significant challenge, particularly for women agripreneurs. Effective time management emerged as a

crucial factor in maintaining equilibrium between professional and personal commitments. The study found that WLB is negatively affected by excessive obligations, dependent care issues, and educational responsibilities but positively influenced by age, family and social support, health, and time management. Factors such as family size, work hours, and lack of social support contribute to work-family conflicts, often leading to health and psychological stress. However, individual traits like self-motivation, training, and mentoring did not significantly impact WLB. This suggests that external socio-economic and structural factors play a more critical role. To ensure long-term empowerment, policies must be gender-sensitive, addressing the unique challenges of rural women entrepreneurs. Collaboration with local educational institutions to enhance digital literacy and integrate mobile technology into agricultural practices is essential. Achieving WLB requires adaptability and innovative solutions, as imbalance can severely impact women's well-being and professional growth.

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