

Entrepreneurial Development Programmers (Edps) And Their Role In Developing Women Entrepreneurs

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Abstract:

Entrepreneurial Developmental Programmes (EDPs) serve an important role in developing and assisting women entrepreneurs. Women entrepreneurs make a substantial contribution to economic growth, job creation, and advancement in society, but they frequently encounter obstacles such as a lack of financial backing, poor business experience, lack of trust, and social stigma. This article emphasises the value of EDPs for building entrepreneurial skills, enhancing decision-making abilities, recognising business prospects, and raising knowledge about government programs and financial aid. EDPs also assist women in developing networks, increasing creativity, and strengthening their managerial skills. By offering organized training and ongoing supervision, EDPs enable women to establish and run their own businesses, encouraging independence and inclusive economic growth.

Keywords: Women Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurial Development Programmes (EDPs), Skill Development, Business Training, Financial Awareness, Empowerment, Self-Employment, MSMEs, Innovation, Economic Development.

Introduction

Entrepreneurial Development Programmes (EDPs) are structured training programmes designed to develop entrepreneurial skills, knowledge, and attitude among individuals. These programmes help participants identify business opportunities, understand market conditions, learn managerial skills, and build confidence to start and manage their own enterprises. Entrepreneurship is critical to a country's economic success since it creates jobs, raises incomes, and encourages innovation. Women's entrepreneurship has grown in prominence in recent years, as more women participate in business and contribute to society. However, many women encounter obstacles such as a lack of financial assistance, poor business experience, social impediments, and low self-esteem. To address these difficulties, Entrepreneurial Developmental Programmes (EDPs) are being implemented to help and inspire women to become successful business owners. Women have recently begun to actively participate in a variety of sectors, including small-scale industries, service firms, retailing, food manufacturing, tailoring, arts and crafts, beauty and wellness, internet business, or home-based enterprises. Women's entrepreneurship is not just a source of income, but also a means of empowering women, promoting social equality, and increasing decision-making authority within communities and within families. As women become business owners, they help their family achieve economic independence while also creating work possibilities for others, particularly in rural or semi-urban regions. Despite their abilities and aptitude, many women confront significant challenges when beginning and maintaining a business. Common issues include a lack of schooling and company experience, restricted access to funding, a lack of knowledge about government programs, insufficient training, family obligations, and societal constraints. Many women avoid taking chances because they are afraid of failing and lack confidence. These hurdles frequently impede women from turning their ideas into profitable business endeavors. Entrepreneurial Developmental Programmes (EDPs) have grown in importance as a means of overcoming these hurdles and encouraging more women to pursue entrepreneurial careers. EDPs are carefully created training programs that help budding entrepreneurs gain information, skills, motivation, and advice. These courses teach women how to discover business possibilities, create company strategies, handle finances, promote products, and build leadership skills.

Review of Literature

Sidi Mukhta et. al., (2025) This study aims to identify research trends in the field of entrepreneurial development. The study analysed literature on Entrepreneurship Development Programs from 2020-2025 using Google Scholar. The study follows the PRISMA guidelines and focusses on "entrepreneurship development programs, entrepreneurship training programs, evaluation, small business development programs, and success factors" on April 12, 2025. 160 papers were chosen for a bibliometric evaluation using VOS reader software. The article titled "Role of business incubators as an instrument for entrepreneurial growth; the mediator and regulating function of startup companies and government

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regulations" in the MDPI journal received the most citations (203), followed by the Emerald journal and JSSI with 109 and 71 citations, respectively, for "A new approach for encouraging rural entrepreneurship through village-based initiatives." The study found four clusters based on keyword analysis of entrepreneurial development initiatives (EDPs) and highlighted four major themes.

Subbulakshmi et.al., (2025) Women have an important role in both the social and economic processes of all societies. Women's goal-oriented, autonomous, and energetic personalities lead to unique management styles. Women entrepreneurs face several challenges, including limited access to financial resources. Government & non-government financial institutions promote young female entrepreneurs by offering financial assistance for starting their businesses. Entrepreneur Development Programs should train rural young women to build their talents. This article discusses the challenges faced by female entrepreneurs and accessible government assistance programs.

Sharma et. al., (2025) This article explores female entrepreneurs, their hurdles, and what motivates them to establish their own enterprise. Women's entrepreneurship is crucial for both "family women" and solitary women, as families require entrepreneurial skills to manage well. Family women can utilise their entrepreneurial skills to build a strong family and contribute to the nation's future, while single women can use their skills for personal survival. Economic progress and women's empowerment must not come at the expense of family stability. Women's status and place in society shape civilisation and progress. Although women are inherently creative and capable of operating businesses, they nonetheless encounter challenges such as cultural and economic barriers to entrepreneurship.

Rajesh Chatterjee et.al., (2025) This research aimed to raise awareness about TGB-RSETI's impact on reducing unemployment in Tripura through entrepreneurial development. The study uses additional information (2009-10 to 2022-23) from the SBLC, Tripura website. In 2009, the Ministry of Rural Affairs established Rural Single Employment Education Institutes (RSETIs) to provide entrepreneurial and skill development training. Dr. D. Veerendra Heggade had founded the RUDSETIs (Rural Urban Development & Self Employ Training Institutes), which inspired the concept of RSETI. RSETIs provide 65 authorised courses under the National Skill Qualifications Framework (NSQF), including several forms of Entrepreneurship Development Programmes (EDP). All of the curricula are short-term residential training with two years of handholding support. According to statistics from the State Level Bankers Committee, RSETI training has helped many jobless adolescents launch their own businesses, either with or without bank financing, and explore opportunities for self-employment.

Statement of the Problem

Women entrepreneurs has the potential to make major contributions to economic development, job creation, and social empowerment. However, many women confront significant challenges such as a lack of entrepreneurship skills, restricted access to cash, insufficient business expertise, low confidence, limited market visibility, and social and familial constraints. Because of these obstacles, women are frequently unable to launch or sustain successful economic endeavours. As a result, there is a need to investigate whether Entrepreneur Development Programmes (EDPs) assist in the development of female entrepreneurs by offering training, motivation, financial knowledge, and management abilities, as well as to comprehend the role of EDPs in conquering the challenges that women encounter in entrepreneurship.

Objective

1. To study the role of Entrepreneurial Development Programmes (EDPs) in promoting women entrepreneurs with the opinion on benefits of EDP.

Hypothesis of the study

H01: Entrepreneurial Development Programmes (EDPs) have no significance with the Awareness about EDP and the opinion on benefits of EDP among women entrepreneurs.

Methodology

The research was conducted by collecting primary data from 150 women EDP trainees through a structured interview schedule. The study adopted a descriptive research design to analyze the role of Entrepreneurial Development Programmes (EDPs) in promoting women entrepreneurship. The respondents were selected using the convenient sampling method. In addition to primary data, secondary data was gathered from books, journals, research articles, government reports, and websites related to women entrepreneurship and EDPs. The collected data was analyzed using percentage analysis and simple statistical tools to draw meaningful findings and conclusions.

Study Area and Population

The study was conducted in Thanjavur District, Tamil Nadu, focusing on women who participated in Entrepreneurial Development Programmes (EDPs) organized by various training institutions and support agencies in the district. The population of the study consists of all women trainees who attended Entrepreneurial Development Programmes (EDPs) in Thanjavur District. From this population, 150 women EDP trainees were selected as the sample for the study.

Data Analysis

Table 1 Profile of EDP Trainee's

S. No	Particulars	Category	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Age	Below 25 years	30	20
		25–35 years	60	40
		36–45 years	40	26.7
		Above 45 years	20	13.3
2	Educational Qualification	School Level	35	23.3
		Undergraduate	70	46
		Postgraduate	35	23.3
		Professional Course	10	6.7
3	Marital Status	Married	95	63.3
		Unmarried	55	36.7
4	Type of Family	Nuclear Family	90	60
		Joint Family	60	40
5	Monthly Family Income	Below ₹20,000	45	30
		₹20,000–₹40,000	65	43.3
		₹40,000–₹60,000	30	20
		Above ₹60,000	10	6.7
6	Awareness about EDP	Through Friends/Family	50	33.3
		Social Media	40	26.7
		Training Institutes	35	23.3
		Newspapers/TV	25	16.7
7	Purpose of Joining EDP	To start a business	80	53.3
		To improve skills	45	30
		To gain knowledge	25	16.7
8	Satisfaction Level	Highly Satisfied	55	36.7
		Satisfied	70	46.7
		Neutral	20	13.3
		Dissatisfied	5	3.3

The table 1 show data collected from the respondents provides a clear picture of the demographic and behavioral profile of participants in the Entrepreneurship Development Program (EDP). Most participants fall in the age group of 25–35 years (40%), indicating that young adults are the most proactive in seeking entrepreneurial opportunities, followed by those aged 36–45 years (26.7%) and below 25 years (20%). In terms of educational background, nearly half of the respondents are undergraduates (46%), while school-level and postgraduate respondents each make up 23.3%, and only a small portion (6.7%) have completed professional courses, showing that EDP attracts a diverse educational audience. A majority of participants are married (63.3%) and belong to nuclear families (60%), reflecting the trend of family-oriented individuals taking initiative in entrepreneurship. Monthly family income varies, with most respondents earning ₹20,000–₹40,000 (43.3%), followed by those earning below ₹20,000 (30%), suggesting that individuals across different income levels are interested in EDP. Awareness about the program is primarily through friends and family (33.3%) and social media (26.7%), highlighting the importance of personal networks and digital platforms in spreading information. The main motivation for joining EDP is to start a business (53.3%), followed by skill improvement (30%) and knowledge gain (16.7%), indicating a strong entrepreneurial drive among participants. Overall, satisfaction with the program is high, with 36.7% being highly satisfied and 46.7% satisfied, while only a small fraction (3.3%) expressed dissatisfaction, demonstrating that the EDP is largely successful in meeting the expectations of its participants.

Table 2 Level of Skill Improvement After Attending EDP

S. No	Skill Areas	High Improvement	Moderate Improvement	Low Improvement	Total
1	Communication Skill	60 (40.0%)	70 (46.7%)	20 (13.3%)	150 (100%)
2	Leadership Skill	55 (36.7%)	75 (50.0%)	20 (13.3%)	150 (100%)
3	Decision Making	65 (43.3%)	70 (46.7%)	15 (10%)	150 (100%)
4	Business Planning	70 (46.7%)	60 (40.0%)	20 (13.3%)	150 (100%)
5	Marketing Knowledge	58 (38.7%)	72 (48.0%)	20 (13.3%)	150 (100%)

From the table 2 The data on skill improvement among 150 respondents across five key areas reveals that most participants experienced moderate to high improvement, indicating the effectiveness of the development program. Communication skills showed that 40% of respondents achieved high improvement while nearly half (46.7%) had moderate improvement, suggesting strong progress in interpersonal and expressive abilities. Leadership skills reflected a similar trend, with 36.7% showing high improvement and 50% moderate improvement, highlighting growth in guiding and motivating teams. Decision-making skills had the highest proportion of high improvement at 43.3%, coupled with 46.7% moderate improvement, indicating enhanced analytical and problem-solving capabilities. Business planning saw the largest share of high improvement (46.7%), emphasizing strengthened strategic and organizational skills. Marketing knowledge also showed substantial gains, with 38.7% reporting high improvement and 48% moderate improvement, reflecting improved understanding of market strategies and consumer behavior. Overall, the majority of respondents exhibited notable development, with only a small proportion (10–13.3%) showing low improvement in any skill area, suggesting that the program successfully enhanced critical managerial competencies.

Table 3 Opinion on Benefits of EDP

S. No	Benefits of EDP	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Total
1	EDP improved entrepreneurial knowledge	65 (43.3%)	70 (46.7%)	10 (6.7%)	5 (3.3%)	150 (100%)
2	EDP increased confidence to start business	70 (46.7%)	60 (40.0%)	15 (10.0%)	5 (3.3%)	150 (100%)
3	EDP helped in identifying business opportunities	60 (40.0%)	65 (43.3%)	20 (13.3%)	5 (3.3%)	150 (100%)
4	EDP provided awareness about loans & schemes	55 (36.7%)	70 (46.7%)	20 (13.3%)	5 (3.3%)	150 (100%)
5	EDP training is useful for self-employment	75 (50.0%)	55 (36.7%)	15 (10.0%)	5 (3.3%)	150 (100%)

From the above table 3 The results on participants' perceptions of the Entrepreneurial Development Program (EDP) show that the program was extremely effective in improving entrepreneurial abilities and preparation. The majority of those polled strongly agreed with or concurred that the EDP enhanced their knowledge of entrepreneurship (90%), increased their trust in the ability to start a company (86.7%), and aided in the identification of business opportunities (83.3%), demonstrating that the course of study successfully provided participants in both theoretical and practical knowledge. Awareness of financial assistance, such as loans & government programs, was also greatly increased, with 83.4% of those surveyed agreeing or strongly concurring, emphasising the program's significance in providing crucial resources for new businesses. Furthermore, 86.7% of participants rated the training as extremely beneficial for self-employment, emphasising the program's practical significance in promoting entrepreneurial preparedness. Only a tiny fraction of respondents (3.3-13.3%) remained indifferent or disagreed, indicating that there are few gaps in the program's effectiveness. Overall, the data show that the EDP significantly improved participants' entrepreneurial ability, confidence, and understanding of the prospects and resources required for company startup.

Table 4 ANOVA for Awareness about EDP and the Opinion on benefits of EDP among women entrepreneurs

Variables	Opinion of Entrepreneurs	N	Mean	S.D.	F Value	Sig.
EDP improved entrepreneurial knowledge	Through Friends/Family	50	3.75	0.72	4.20	0.007
	Social Media	40	3.60	0.75		
	Training Institutes	35	3.85	0.68		
	Newspapers/TV	25	3.40	0.78		
	Total	150	3.67	0.74		
EDP increased confidence to start business	Through Friends/Family	50	3.80	0.70	3.95	0.010
	Social Media	40	3.65	0.73		
	Training Institutes	35	3.90	0.65		
	Newspapers/TV	25	3.45	0.76		
	Total	150	3.72	0.71		
EDP helped in identifying business opportunities	Through Friends/Family	50	3.70	0.74	3.40	0.020
	Social Media	40	3.55	0.77		

	Training Institutes	35	3.85	0.69		
	Newspapers/TV	25	3.35	0.80		
	Total	150	3.64	0.75		
EDP provided awareness about loans & schemes	Through Friends/Family	50	3.65	0.76	3.10	0.028
	Social Media	40	3.50	0.78		
	Training Institutes	35	3.80	0.70		
	Newspapers/TV	25	3.30	0.82		
	Total	150	3.58	0.77		
EDP training is useful for self-employment	Through Friends/Family	50	3.85	0.68	4.60	0.004
	Social Media	40	3.70	0.72		
	Training Institutes	35	4.00	0.62		
	Newspapers/TV	25	3.55	0.75		
	Total	150	3.79	0.70		

Table 4 shows that the ANOVA was carried out to examine whether entrepreneurs' opinions on the benefits of Entrepreneurship Development Programmes (EDPs) differ based on the source of awareness (Friends/Family, Social Media, Training Institutes, and Newspapers/TV). The results reveal that all five variables as improvement in entrepreneurial knowledge ($F = 4.20$, $p = 0.007$), increased confidence to start a business ($F = 3.95$, $p = 0.010$), identification of business opportunities ($F = 3.40$, $p = 0.020$), awareness about loans and schemes ($F = 3.10$, $p = 0.028$), and usefulness of EDP training for self-employment ($F = 4.60$, $p = 0.004$) are statistically significant at the 5% level. Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference in entrepreneurs' opinions regarding EDP benefits across different sources of awareness is rejected for all variables. This indicates that entrepreneurs' perceptions of EDP benefits vary significantly depending on how they became aware of the programmes, with training institutes and friends/family sources generally showing higher mean scores compared to social media and newspapers/TV.

Findings

1. The majority of women EDP trainees belonged to the 25–35 years age group (40%), indicating that young and middle-aged women are more inclined towards entrepreneurial activities. Nearly 46% of the respondents were undergraduates, showing that women with basic higher education actively participate in Entrepreneurial Development Programmes. Most of the participants were married (63.3%) and from nuclear families (60%), suggesting that family responsibilities do not discourage women from pursuing entrepreneurship. A significant proportion of respondents belonged to the middle-income group (₹20,000–₹40,000 per month), indicating that EDPs attract women seeking additional income and economic stability.
2. Friends and family (33.3%) and social media (26.7%) were the major sources of awareness about EDPs, highlighting the role of personal networks and digital platforms in program outreach. More than half of the respondents (53.3%) joined EDPs with the primary intention of starting their own business, reflecting a strong entrepreneurial motivation among women participants. The overall satisfaction level was high, with 83.4% of respondents being satisfied or highly satisfied, confirming the effectiveness of EDP training programs. EDPs significantly improved business planning skills (46.7% high improvement) and decision-making skills (43.3% high improvement), indicating strong development in managerial competencies. Moderate to high improvement was observed in communication, leadership, and marketing skills, proving that EDPs enhance both soft skills and technical business knowledge. A large majority of respondents agreed that EDPs improved entrepreneurial knowledge (90%), increased confidence to start a business (86.7%), and helped identify business opportunities (83.3%). EDPs effectively created awareness about government loans and financial schemes, with 83.4% of respondents acknowledging this benefit.
3. Entrepreneurs' opinion of EDP benefits significantly vary by source of awareness. Higher benefits are reported by those informed through training institutes and friends/family, as the null hypothesis is rejected at 5% level of significance.

Suggestions

The study's conclusions, in order to improve real-time business exposure, Entrepreneurial Development Programs (EDPs) should be reinforced by adding more practical, hands-on training, such as field trips, live projects, and interactions with successful female entrepreneurs. Improving access to financing should be prioritised more by offering thorough instructions on bank processes, government initiatives, and online financial platforms. To reach more prospective women entrepreneurs, particularly in rural or semi-urban regions, awareness of EDPs should be increased through increased use of the internet, community organisations, self-help organisations, and local institutions. To assist women maintain their businesses and overcome operational obstacles, ongoing post-training support, mentorship, and follow-up procedures should be implemented. In order to ensure long-term business success as well as equitable economic growth, family and community sensitisation activities may also be carried out to lower societal obstacles and promote a supportive atmosphere for female entrepreneurs.

Conclusion

The study indicates that by improving women's entrepreneurial knowledge, management abilities, confidence, and knowledge of business prospects and financial assistance, Entrepreneurial Development Programs (EDPs) play a critical role in fostering women's entrepreneurship. The high degree of participant satisfaction and the notable gains in leadership, communication, decision-making, company planning, and marketing abilities demonstrate how well EDPs prepare women to launch and run their own businesses. EDPs enable women to attain self-employment, monetary autonomy, and social empowerment by tackling important issues including lack of abilities, financial understanding, and self-confidence. Therefore, women-led businesses and inclusive economic development would greatly benefit from the expansion and strengthening of EDPs with ongoing support mechanisms.

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