

Motivating Factors for Women Entrepreneurship in Himachal Pradesh: An Empirical Analysis of Pull and Push Forces

Dr Sanjeet Sharma,

Assistant Professor, UCBS, HPU Shimla

Abstract

The present research study investigates the determinants of female entrepreneurs engaging in entrepreneurial undertakings in Himachal Pradesh, India. Primary data has been collected from 400 women entrepreneurs using a standardized survey questionnaire. Data has been analysed using descriptive statistics, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), and one-sample t-test. Eight pull factors, comprising desires for autonomy, familial assistance, governmental programs, tourism prospects, education, and digital mediums has been indentified using EFA and these account for 63.25% of the overall variance. Further, as far as push factors are concerned with the help of EFA seven push factors have been determined. These push factors include limited employment possibilities, financial requirement, insufficient household earnings, flexibility, and job contentment, and account for large amount of the variance. The results of one sample t test indicated that all identified determinants are statistically significant at one percent level of significance. Further, on the basis of comparative analysis of pull and push factors it has been concluded that pull factors are more impactful than push factors. It makes clear that female entrepreneurs in Himachal Pradesh have been mainly driven by opportunities rather than necessities.

Keywords: Women Entrepreneurship; Pull Factors; Push Factors; Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA); Himachal Pradesh; Entrepreneurial Motivation

1. Introduction

The emergence of entrepreneurship as an essential factor of sustainable economic progress has been evident, particularly in the context of developing nations that have long been struggling with the twin issues of unemployment and poverty. In India, one of the leading economies, the importance of entrepreneurship, particularly women entrepreneurship, has gained substantial attention in the policy arena as a way of encouraging both economic development and gender equality simultaneously (Noguera et al., 2013; Raghuvanshi et al., 2017). Women entrepreneurs play not only the economic role but also work as social change agents and community developers. The theoretical foundations of entrepreneurship are attributed to early theorists like Cantillon (1755) who first introduced the idea of the entrepreneurial function and Schumpeter (1934) who built-in innovation into the definition. The drive for achievement is advocated by McClelland (1961) to be a primary motivation factor while maximizing opportunities is a main principle projected by Drucker (1964).

In the field of women entrepreneurship there has been much advancement in India in recent years. It has been observed that women entrepreneurship is influenced by various

motivational factors. These factors can be classified into two broad categories, i.e. pull factors and push factors. The pull factors include various aspects such as desire for independence, self-achievement, government schemes, and skills utilization, while as far as the push factors are concerned these comprise of unemployment, need for money, social constraints, and dissatisfaction with existing employment (Panda, 2018; Kirkwood, 2007).

Recent studies (2023–2026) indicate that digitalization, financial inclusion, entrepreneurial ecosystems, institutional support, and government initiatives have significantly strengthened women entrepreneurship. These studies suggest that opportunity-driven (pull) motivations increasingly outweigh necessity-driven (push) motivations due to improved access to education, technology, finance, and entrepreneurship support.

Himachal Pradesh, is located in the north of India, is characterized by a unique socio-economic. The state has a rich economy, driven by agriculture, horticulture, hydroelectric power generation, and tourism. Even though according to the Udyam portal there are numerous women entrepreneurs registered in Himachal Pradesh (over 56,609 according to the Udyam portal), modest research has been conducted to determine the motivational factors affecting women entrepreneurs in this region. The present study seeks to cover this research gap through an empirical analysis of the pull and push factors accountable for women's entrepreneurship in the

state of Himachal Pradesh. The findings of this study add to the literature on entrepreneurship in the region and offer data-driven submissions for relevant policy-makers and researchers.

2. Review of Literature

There are four different schools of thought concerning women's motivation towards entrepreneurship. These comprises of psychology, institutionalism, sociology, and economics. These provide indicates that there are various reasons why a women entrepreneur start business. The differences between opportunity-motivated entrepreneurship and necessity-motivated entrepreneurship have been explained under the GEM model by Kelley et al. (2017). In opportunity-driven women entrepreneurship the women is motivated by business opportunities to start a business, whereas in case of necessity-driven entrepreneurship the women are forced to start business due to lack of alternative sources of income (Hechevarria et al., 2019). Achievement motivation theory given by McClelland (1961) advocated push factors such as independence and self-actualization motivate person to become entrepreneurs. Opportunity recognition has been pointed out by Leibenstein (1968). Necessity-driven motivations have been advocated by Knight (1921) and Weber (1947). Ahuja (2011) and Noguera et al. (2013) indicated that women engage in entrepreneurship for financial freedom and social prestige. Family support is another important factor which motivates entrepreneurship, as described by the Rani & Kumar (2017) and Raghuvanshi et al. (2017).

Further, it has also been found that government schemes such as PMEGP, MUDRA, and Stand-Up India also motivate the women entrepreneurship (Panda, 2018). Skill-based training programs are also come in the category of motivational factors (Das, 1999). Santhas (2007) found that institutional support has played a crucial role in encouraging the entrepreneurs in Kerala and Tamil Nadu regions. As far as state of Himachal Pradesh is concerned local availability of opportunities due to natural resources are considered as one of the motivating factors, (Kumar & Bharti, 2020). The number studies have advocated that non-availability of employment (Nath et al., 2020), economic need (Panda, 2018; Raghuvarshi et al., 2017), social barriers (Mirghafoori et al., 2010; Ganesan et al., 2002), and flexible work schedule (Singh & Saxena) are considered important push factors. But according to Munshi et al. (2011), women entrepreneurship is not only motivated by necessity because push and pull motives tend to coexist. Though the majority researchers have used the push and pull factors to describe women entrepreneurship, there has been little research conducted in Himachal Pradesh in particular. This study made an attempt to cover this gap by identifying the motives for women entrepreneurship in Himachal Pradesh.

3. Research Methodology

The present study adopted descriptive research design using both quantitative approaches in order to identify the factors behind the motivation of women's engagement in entrepreneurship in

Himachal Pradesh. The prime objectives include determining the pull and push factors of motivation and comparing the statistical significant impact of the pull and push factors.

Research Hypotheses are:

- **H₀₁:** Motivational variables do not form distinct pull and push factors.
- **H₁₁:** Motivational variables form distinct pull and push factors.
- **H₀₂:** The mean score of motivational factors equals the neutral value (3).
- **H₁₂:** The mean score is significantly greater than 3.

Target population in present study has comprised of 56,609 female-owned firms listed in the Udyam portal. Sample size has been calculated by applying Cochran's formula, and a total of 400 respondents have been chosen by using multistage stratified random sampling technique considering ten districts and three types of businesses, including trading, services, and manufacturing. Primary data collection has been collected through structured questionnaires, which included 32 items for pull factors and 28 items for push factors. Data collecting instrument has been validated using expert opinion, pilot study, and reliability testing by applying Cronbach's Alpha. The analysis has been done utilizing descriptive statistics, EFA with PCA and Varimax rotation, and one-sample t-tests.

4. Data Analysis and Findings

Service quality dimensions have been determined through descriptive analysis, exploratory factor analysis (EFA), reliability test, ranking analysis, and one sample t-test. The objective of this study is to determine the main pull and push factors that motivate women into entrepreneurship in Himachal Pradesh

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Pull and Push Factors

Factor Type	No. of Variables	Mean Range	Interpretation
Pull Factors	32	3.80 – 4.38	High to Very High
Push Factors	28	3.17 – 3.83	Moderate

Source: Data collected through Questionnaire

From the above analysis of descriptive statistics, it has been found that the mean score of pull factors is higher than that of push factors. This reveals that the women entrepreneurs in Himachal Pradesh are more affected by pull or opportunity-oriented factors than push or necessity-oriented factors.

Table 2: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Factor Type	KMO Value	Bartlett's Chi-Square	Sig.
Pull Factors	0.602	5316.898	0.000
Push Factors	0.667	4450.356	0.000

Source: Data collected through Questionnaire

KMO values reveal good sampling adequacy, whereas the result obtained from Bartlett's Test has been found to be highly significant at one percent level of significance. Thus, the suitability of the collected data for factor analysis has been established.

Table 3: Total Variance Explained

Factor Type	No. of Extracted Factors	Total Variance Explained
Pull Factors	8	63.255%
Push Factors	7	63.618%
Factor Loading	All > 0.50	

Source: Data collected through Questionnaire

The results of factor analysis indicate that there are 8 pull factors and 7 push factors with Eigenvalues higher than 1. These factors jointly account for more than 63% of total variance, which has been deemed satisfactory in social sciences. To facilitate better interpretation of the extracted factors, the rotated component matrix obtained using Principal Component Analysis (PCA) with Varimax rotation is presented below. All retained items exhibited satisfactory factor loadings (greater than 0.50), confirming that the variables were appropriately grouped under their respective factors and supporting the construct validity of the measurement scale.

Table 4: Identified Pull Service Quality Factors

Rank	Pull Factor	Average Mean
1	Desire for Independence	4.30
2	Family Support	4.30
3	Government Schemes	4.21
4	Tourism & Local Opportunities	4.19
5	Self-Identity & Recognition	4.14
6	Skill Development & Training	4.14
7	Digital Platforms	3.92
8	Education & Awareness	3.92

Source: Primary Data Collected through Questionnaire

Independence and family has been found to be amongst the most compelling pull factors for women entrepreneurs. Further, it is also clear from the table 4 that independence, the element of financial self-sufficiency, involvement of government and local environment has greatly influenced women entrepreneurs.

Table 5: Identified Push Service Quality Factors

Rank	Push Factor	Average Mean
1	Lack of Job Opportunities	3.74
2	Financial Necessity	3.68
3	Need for Flexible Work	3.65
4	Low Family Income	3.63
5	Family Financial Instability	3.54
6	Social Constraints	3.40
7	Job Dissatisfaction	3.21

Source: Primary Data Collected through Questionnaire

Moderate effect has been observed with push factors in table 5. Unemployment and need for money are the significant necessity-based motives. However, push factors have less impact compared to pull factors. It suggests that women pursue entrepreneurship willingly instead of being forced into it.

Table 6: Reliability Analysis

Factor Type	Sub-Factor	Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Interpretation
Pull Factors	Overall Scale	PF1–PF32	0.629	Moderate Reliability
Pull Factors	Desire for Independence	PF1–PF4	0.705	Good Reliability
Pull Factors	Family Support	PF5–PF8	0.776	Good Reliability
Pull Factors	Government Schemes	PF9–PF12	0.784	Good Reliability
Pull Factors	Tourism & Local Opportunities	PF13–PF16	0.775	Good Reliability
Pull Factors	Self-Identity & Recognition	PF17–PF20	0.705	Good Reliability
Pull Factors	Skill Development & Training	PF21–PF24	0.824	Very Good Reliability
Pull Factors	Digital Platforms	PF25–PF28	0.788	Good Reliability
Pull Factors	Education & Awareness	PF29–PF32	0.826	Very Good Reliability
Push Factors	Overall Scale	PS1–PS28	0.705	Acceptable Reliability
Push Factors	Lack of Job Opportunities	PS1–PS4	0.797	Good Reliability
Push Factors	Financial Necessity	PS5–PS8	0.812	Very Good Reliability
Push Factors	Low Family Income	PS9–PS12	0.730	Good Reliability
Push Factors	Need for Flexible Work	PS13–PS16	0.849	Very Good Reliability
Push Factors	Family Financial Instability	PS17–PS20	0.689	Moderate Reliability
Push Factors	Social Constraints	PS21–PS24	0.809	Very Good Reliability
Push Factors	Job Dissatisfaction	PS25–PS28	0.763	Good Reliability

Source: Primary Data Collected through Questionnaire

The reliability results shows in the table 6 that the reliability levels of both pull and push factor scales are fairly acceptable. Pull factors Cronbach's alpha value is 0.629, which reveals fair reliability. On the other hand, push factors have better reliability level compared to pull factors, with Cronbach's alpha value of 0.705, indicating satisfactory level of reliability. However, when evaluating reliability level factor wise, much higher reliability is achieved by all pull and push factors. For example, maximum factor reliability level amongst pull factors has been found for "Skill Development & Training" (0.824) and "Education & Awareness" (0.826). In the same way, maximum push factor reliability is observed for "Need for flexible work" (0.849), and "Financial necessity" (0.812). Thus, it can be concluded that while collective scale reliability is only modest, reliability level for all factors individually is quite high.

Table 7: Comparative Analysis of Pull and Push Factors

Variable Group	Mean Range	t-value Range	Significance
Pull Factors	3.80 – 4.38	18.152 – 40.311	0.000
Push Factors	3.17 – 3.83	4.446 – 18.523	0.000

Source: Primary Data Collected through Questionnaire

The results of the comparison analysis of pull and push factors have been in table 7, it is clear that pull factors are more influential compared to push factors in motivating women entrepreneurs. As all p-values are significant, it reveals that both factors play an crucial role, though opportunity-based factors have more power than necessity-based factors.

4.4 Hypothesis Testing Results

In present study Null Hypothesis 1 (H_{01}) has been rejected since the factor analysis has classified the motivators into eight pull and seven push factors. Further, it has been found all variables have rejected null hypothesis 2 (H_{02}) ie. all motivators are not equal to the neutral score of 3.

5. Conclusions and Suggestions

It has been found out that female entrepreneurs in Himachal Pradesh are more driven towards pull factors instead of push factors. These include the need for independence, family support,

government initiatives, skill development, etc., which contribute much more than the need for financial gains, unemployment, or dissatisfactions at workplaces. It is clear from the results that women's entrepreneurship in Himachal Pradesh is opportunistic in nature and not necessity-driven. Factor analysis helped identify eight pull factors and seven push factors, all having high reliability statistically. The study has pointed out that there is a positive movement from being necessity-driven to being opportunity-driven in entrepreneurship among women entrepreneurs. But the fact that even moderate effects from the digital channels and awareness have been observed shows that digital entrepreneurship is a budding concept. The findings suggest that government agencies should strengthen entrepreneurship awareness programmes, improve access to finance, expand skill development initiatives, and promote digital

entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship support organizations should provide mentoring, incubation, and market linkage support for women entrepreneurs. According to the research, awareness regarding government programs such as PMEGP, MUDRA, and Stand-up India should be increased, along with offering entrepreneurship training courses in schools and colleges, setting up skill development centers in localities, building strong family and community support systems, and facilitating tourism-related entrepreneur groups. Future studies may compare women entrepreneurs across different states and sectors and use longitudinal or Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) approaches to validate the findings.

References

- Abou-Moghli, A. A., & Al-Abdallah, G. M. (2019). A systematic review of women entrepreneurs opportunities and challenges in Saudi Arabia. *Journal of Entrepreneurship Education*, 22(6).
- Ahuja, A. (2011). Women in business: Opportunities and challenges. *International Journal of Research in Commerce and Management*, 2(4), 45–49.
- Cantillon, R. (1755). *Essai sur la nature du commerce en général*. [Essay on the nature of trade in general].
- Das, M. (1999). Women entrepreneurs from India: Problems, motivations and success factors. *Journal of Small Business & Entrepreneurship*, 15(4), 67–81.
- Drucker, P. F. (1964). *Managing for Results*. Harper & Row.
- Ganesan, R., Kaur, D., & Maheshwari, R. C. (2002). Women entrepreneurship in India. *Indian Journal of Labour Economics*, 45(3), 567–580.
- Hechavarria, D. M., Terjesen, S. A., Ingram, A. E., Renko, M., Justo, R., & Elam, A. (2019). Taking care of business: The impact of culture and gender on women entrepreneurs. *Small Business Economics*, 52(2), 317–342.
- Kelley, D. J., Baumer, B. S., Brush, C., Green, P. G., Mahdavi, M., Majbouri, M., et al. (2017). *Global Entrepreneurship Monitor 2018/2017 Report on Women's Entrepreneurship*. Babson College.
- Kirkwood, J. (2007). Igniting the entrepreneurial spirit: Is the role parents play gendered? *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research*, 13(1), 39–59.
- Knight, F. H. (1921). *Risk, Uncertainty and Profit*. Houghton Mifflin.
- Kumar, A., & Bharti, S. (2020). Factors influencing women entrepreneurs in India: A review. *Journal of Entrepreneurship in Emerging Economies*.
- Leibenstein, H. (1968). Entrepreneurship and development. *American Economic Review*, 58(2), 72–83.
- McClelland, D. C. (1961). *The Achieving Society*. Van Nostrand.

- Mirghafoori, H., Tooranloo, H., & Taheridemneh, M. (2010). Investigating the barriers of women's entrepreneurship in Iran society. *Journal of Management Transformation*, 2, 47–64.
- Munshi, S., Munshi, A., & Singh, V. P. (2011). A study on trends visible in women entrepreneurs in India and globally. *Asia Pacific Business Review*, 7(3), 155–166.
- Nath, P., Kumar, A., & Bharti, S. (2020). Women entrepreneurship in India: Issues and challenges. *Journal of Critical Reviews*, 7(6), 102–108.
- Noguera, M., Alvarez, C., & Urbano, D. (2013). Socio-cultural factors and female entrepreneurship. *International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal*, 9(2), 183–197.
- Panda, S. (2018). Constraints faced by women entrepreneurs in developing countries: review and ranking. *Gender in Management*, 33(4).
- Raghuvanshi, J., Agrawal, R., & Ghosh, P. (2017). Analysis of barriers to women entrepreneurship. *Journal of Entrepreneurship in Emerging Economies*, 9(1), 26–46.
- Rani, L. U., & Kumar, M. A. (2017). A study on impact of support system for the growth of women entrepreneurs in India. *International Journal of Applied Business and Economic Research*, 15(6), 255–265.
- Santhas (2007). A comparative study of women entrepreneurship in Kerala with Tamil Nadu. Ph.D. Thesis, Mahatma Gandhi University, Kerala.
- Schumpeter, J. A. (1934). *The Theory of Economic Development*. Harvard University Press.
- Singh, S., & Saxena, S. C. (2000). Problems of women entrepreneurs. *Indian Journal of Economics*, 80(320), 425–438.
- Weber, M. (1947). *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*. Free Press.