

Social Media Influence on Entrepreneurial Decision-Making Among Women-Led Businesses

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Abstract—social media has evolved from a simple networking platform into a powerful enabler for entrepreneurial growth, especially among women-led businesses in emerging digital markets. This research examines the influence of platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and WhatsApp on the strategic decision-making processes of women entrepreneurs in Tirupur District, Tamil Nadu. Descriptive research methodology has been adopted, the study gathered responses from 212 respondents using a structured questionnaire. The analysis highlighted that video content, brand exposure, and high-quality information significantly influence business-related decisions. Additionally, factors such as trust-building through authentic communication and real-time customer interaction were found to enhance business strategy. A comprehensive SWOT analysis covered both internal strengths like cost-efficiency, broad reach, external threats, including algorithm dependency and exposure to digital risks. The study concludes that social media serves as a dynamic enabler, fostering visibility, adaptability, and innovation in women-led businesses. These insights provide actionable recommendations for policymakers, technology developers, marketers, incubators, educators, and financial institutions to enhance digital inclusion through safer platforms, multimedia marketing strategies, AI-driven training, and targeted digital skill programs, collectively supporting strategic decision-making, resilience, and market expansion among women entrepreneurs.

Index Terms—Women Entrepreneurs, Online Branding, Social Innovation, SWOT, Digital Entrepreneurship

I. INTRODUCTION

In an increasingly digital economy, social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook and WhatsApp have evolved into strategic tools for women entrepreneurs, particularly in emerging markets. These

platforms not only enhance brand visibility and customer engagement but also offer accessible pathways to market intelligence, peer networking, and innovation. Despite these opportunities, women entrepreneurs often face distinct digital challenges. Recent global surveys highlight that over 57% of women entrepreneurs in developing countries encounter online harassment, while approximately 41% intentionally restrict their digital participation to avoid exposure limiting both outreach and decision-making potential. Additionally, barriers such as limited smartphone access, poor digital infrastructure and gaps in technical skills continue to hinder their ability to leverage social media's full strategic value.

While existing literature largely focuses on the promotional benefits of social media, there is insufficient research examining how women entrepreneurs utilize these platforms for strategic planning, customer targeting, and innovation. Furthermore, few studies employ structured frameworks such as SWOT analysis to understand the internal and external factors influencing social media integration in business decisions.

The study aims to bridge this gap by evaluating the effectiveness of platform features and conducting a SWOT-based assessment to explore how women-led enterprises in Tirupur District use social media as a decision-enabling tool.

II. OBJECTIVES

- To evaluate the effectiveness of various social media platforms in facilitating business development, market engagement and strategic planning among women entrepreneurs.
- To access the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities

and threats of social media use in strategic business decision-making by women entrepreneurs.

III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Priya and Singh (2021) conducted a mixed-method research study to examine the role of social media in empowering women entrepreneurs. This approach involved collecting data through surveys and in-depth interviews from 150 women entrepreneurs. Findings revealed that social media significantly empowers women entrepreneurs by enhancing their confidence and market outreach. They suggested developing structured digital literacy programs specifically tailored for women entrepreneurs. It's concluded that social media platforms strongly facilitate empowerment and positively impact entrepreneurial performance. Ononiwu et al. (2023) employed a descriptive analysis and quantitative method using structured questionnaires and correlation analysis to assess the impact of influencer marketing and secure CRM integration on women entrepreneurs. The study included over 200 Nigerian women entrepreneurs. Their findings indicated that influencer marketing and secure CRM significantly enhance customer relationship management. They recommended incorporating influencer marketing strategies with secure CRM systems to improve engagement and sales. The study concluded that the effective integration of influencer marketing and CRM systems substantially enhances entrepreneurial outcomes. Menon and Sree Lakshmi (2025) explored the impact of local influencers on women-led businesses using a case study approach in Kerala. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews and analyzed using social media analytics. The findings demonstrated that local influencers substantially boost the visibility and credibility of women-led businesses.

The authors recommended leveraging localized influencer collaborations to enhance brand authenticity and consumer trust. The conclusion highlighted that strategic use of local influencers significantly strengthens market positioning for women entrepreneurs. Rao and Iyer (2025) conducted a quantitative method using structured questionnaires to understand the role of AI in enhancing social media marketing effectiveness for women-led micro-enterprises. The study involved 180 participants. Findings indicated that AI-driven tools positively

influence marketing efficiency and decision-making based on data insights. The researchers recommended encouraging the adoption of AI-based analytics and marketing automation tools among women entrepreneurs. It's concluded that AI-based social media strategies significantly improve operational effectiveness. Thanaseelan and Ramesh (2024) performed a comparative study involving 120 rural Australian women entrepreneurs. Their research aimed to identify and analyze barriers and trends related to digital platform adoption using behavioral data and thematic analysis for interview. Findings identified key barriers such as limited digital skills, platform complexity, and connectivity issues. The authors suggested targeted digital training programs to address skill gaps and simplify platform usage for rural users. The study emphasized that overcoming skill and accessibility barriers is crucial for the successful adoption of digital platform.

IV. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook and WhatsApp have become essential tools for women entrepreneurs, enabling cost-effective outreach, brand development and customer engagement. However, there is a limited understanding of how effectively these platforms contribute to business development and innovation-driven strategic planning in women-led enterprises, particularly in emerging economies. Despite their growing adoption, women entrepreneurs often face challenges such as limited digital skills, over-dependence on platform algorithms, online gender bias and data privacy concerns. These barriers can affect the strategic use of social media in critical decision-making processes.

V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

- Research Design: Descriptive research design.
- Area of Study: Tirupur District, Tamil Nadu.
- Data Collection: Primary data collected via a structured questionnaire; Secondary data from journals and industry reports.
- Sampling Method: Snowball sampling method was adopted to ensure respondents were active social media users for business purposes.
- Sample Size: 212 women entrepreneurs.
- Tools for Analysis: Weighted Average Score

Analysis, SWOT Analysis.’

VI. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

TABLE I: Effectiveness of Social Media Posts

S.NO	Level of effectiveness	Respondents						Total	Weighted average score	Rank
		Level	VE	E	N	LE	VLE			
		Score	5	4	3	2	1			
1	Videos	Level	119	56	34	3	0	212	4.37	1
		Score	595	224	102	6	0	927		
2	Photos	Level	61	101	41	8	1	212	4.00	2
		Score	305	404	123	16	1	849		
3	Vlogs	Level	80	55	68	9	0	212	3.97	3
		Score	400	220	204	18	0	842		
4	Ratings	Level	71	69	44	28	0	212	3.86	4
		Score	355	276	132	56	0	819		
5	Reviews	Level	76	63	41	13	19	212	3.77	5
		Score	380	252	123	26	19	800		

Table :1 Presents the level of effectiveness of various types of social media posts as perceived by women entrepreneurs. Video content emerged as the most impactful format, receiving the highest weighted average score of 4.37 and securing the first rank. This suggests that videos play a crucial role in delivering business messages with clarity and emotional resonance, thereby enhancing customer engagement. Photo posts followed closely with a score of 4.00, indicating their continued relevance in maintaining visual appeal and brand consistency. Vlogs were

ranked third with a score of 3.97, reflecting their moderate influence in providing detailed storytelling and business updates. Ratings received a weighted score of 3.86, while reviews were the least effective, scoring 3.77 and ranking fifth. These findings collectively highlight a strong preference for visual and interactive formats in digital communication, emphasizing the need for multimedia strategies that capture attention and support entrepreneurial decision-making processes.

TABLE II: Effectiveness of Content Features

S.NO	Level of effectiveness	Respondents						Total	Weighted average score	Rank
		Level	VE	E	N	LE	VLE			
		Score	5	4	3	2	1			
1	Quality	Level	114	58	32	3	5	212	4.16	1
		Score	570	232	96	6	5	909		
2	Engagement	Level	46	99	57	9	1	212	3.84	4
		Score	230	396	171	18	1	816		
3	Information	Level	72	68	64	6	2	212	3.95	3
		Score	360	272	192	12	2	838		
4	Inspiring	Level	56	83	56	16	1	212	3.83	5
		Score	280	332	168	32	1	813		
5	Authenticity	Level	92	59	46	3	12	212	4.01	2
		Score	460	236	138	6	12	852		

Table 2 reveals the perceived effectiveness of different content attributes on social media among women entrepreneurs. Content quality stood out as the most significant factor, receiving the highest weighted average score of 4.16 and ranking first. This indicates that well-structured, relevant, and visually appealing content is essential in capturing and retaining entrepreneurial audiences. Authenticity was ranked second with a score of 4.01, suggesting that genuine and transparent messaging strongly resonates with business users. Information-rich content followed in

third place with a score of 3.95, highlighting its value in aiding informed decision-making. Engagement scored 3.84, placing it fourth, while inspiring content ranked last with a score of 3.83, indicating that while emotional appeal has some influence, it is less critical compared to credibility and informativeness. Overall, the data suggests that women entrepreneurs prioritize content that delivers value, builds trust, and supports strategic business planning over content designed purely for emotional or motivational impact

TABLE III: Effectiveness of Strategic Outcomes

S.NO	Level of effectiveness	Respondents						Total	Weighted average score	Rank
		Level	VE	E	N	LE	VLE			
		Score	5	4	3	2	1			
1	Brand visibility	Level	108	68	33	3	0	212	4.32	1
		Score	540	272	99	6	0	917		
2	Customer Engagement	Level	72	96	40	3	1	212	4.1	2
		Score	360	384	120	6	0	871		
3	Product Conceptualization	Level	60	85	60	5	2	212	3.9	4
		Score	300	340	180	10	2	832		
4	Strategic Insights	Level	68	83	44	16	1	212	3.1	5
		Score	340	166	132	32	1	671		
5	Trend Awareness	Level	90	59	48	7	8	212	4.01	3
		Score	450	236	144	14	8	852		

Table 3 illustrates the perceived effectiveness of various strategic outcomes resulting from social media use among women entrepreneurs. Brand visibility emerged as the most impactful outcome, achieving the highest weighted average score of 4.32 and securing the top rank. This underscores the importance of digital platforms in strengthening the public presence and market identity of women-led enterprises. Customer engagement followed closely with a score of 4.10, indicating its value in building ongoing relationships and fostering customer loyalty. Trend awareness was ranked third with a score of 4.01,

highlighting the role of social media in helping entrepreneurs stay updated on market shifts and consumer behavior. Product conceptualization received a moderate score of 3.90, suggesting some influence on idea development and innovation. Strategic insights ranked lowest at 3.10, reflecting that while social media supports outreach and responsiveness, its contribution to deeper strategic planning is still perceived as limited. Overall, the findings emphasize social media's strength in visibility and engagement, with opportunities to improve its strategic utility.

A. SWOT Matrix
TABLE IV: SWOT Analysis

STRENGTH			WEAKNESS		
Factors	Weighted average score	Rank	Factors	Weighted average score	Rank
Increased brand visibility	4.08	1	Over-reliance on platform algorithms	3.96	1
Direct customer engagement	3.88	2	Inconsistent engagement rates	3.76	2
Cost-effective marketing	3.81	3	Lack of technical skills	3.76	2
Real-time feedback for decisions	3.52	4	Limited strategic depth via platforms	3.38	4
Easy access to market trends	3.46	5	Time-intensive content management	3.26	5
OPPORTUNITIES			THREATS		
Factors	Weighted average score	Rank	Factors	Weighted average score	Rank
Local and global market expansion	4.18	1	Platform policy and algorithm changes	4.08	1
Influencer collaborations	3.82	2	Data privacy risks	3.75	2
AI and data-driven decision tools	3.65	3	Negative reviews/public backlash	3.66	3
Building online communities	3.45	4	Digital gender bias and harassment	3.62	4
Personalized customer experience	3.41	5	Increased market competition	3.56	5

VII. SWOT ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS

Among the strengths, increased brand visibility (4.08) emerged as the most significant advantage, emphasizing the role of social media in enhancing public awareness and online presence for women-led enterprises. This was followed by direct customer engagement (3.88), which highlights the value of interactive communication in fostering relationships and trust with audiences. The results confirm that social platforms serve as low-cost yet effective tools for marketing (3.81), while also offering real-time feedback mechanisms (3.52) and access to evolving market trends (3.46). These insights reinforce the view that digital platforms are critical enablers of visibility, responsiveness, and reach for emerging women entrepreneurs.

WEAKNESSES

The primary weakness identified was over-reliance on platform algorithms (3.96), suggesting that changes in digital algorithms may significantly disrupt visibility and engagement. Equally weighted were inconsistent engagement rates and a lack of technical skills (both at 3.76), pointing to challenges in maintaining sustained audience interaction and in leveraging platform features optimally. Respondents also noted the limitations of social media in providing strategic planning depth (3.38) and expressed concern over the time-intensive nature of content creation and management (3.26). Collectively, these findings underscore the operational and skill-based constraints women entrepreneurs face when using social media as a core business tool.

OPPORTUNITIES

The highest-rated opportunity was the potential for local and global market expansion (4.18), reflecting optimism about social media's ability to transcend geographical barriers and open new customer segments. Influencer collaborations (3.82) and AI-based decision tools (3.65) were also seen as valuable avenues for strategic growth, enhancing credibility and data-informed planning. Furthermore, the ability to build online communities (3.45) and offer personalized customer experiences (3.41) suggests that social media can support long-term relationship building and brand loyalty, especially when content is tailored to audience preferences.

THREATS

Among threats, platform policy and algorithm changes (4.08) were identified as the most critical concern, underlining the vulnerability of social media strategies to external platform-level decisions. Data privacy risks (3.75) and public backlash from negative reviews (3.66) were also prominent, emphasizing reputational and legal risks. The presence of digital gender bias and harassment (3.62) reflects broader sociocultural challenges that disproportionately affect women entrepreneurs in the digital space. Finally, intensifying market competition (3.56) indicates a saturated digital environment where differentiation is increasingly difficult.

VIII. SUGGESTIONS

A. For Women Entrepreneurs

- Leveraging Instagram/Facebook for visibility and engagement.
- Focusing on video and high-quality content.
- Learning digital tools and analytics.
- Using influencer collaborations and AI tools.

B. For Policymakers, Incubators Training Institutions

- Launching skill development programs in rural/urban Tamil Nadu.
- Addressing safety concerns (online harassment, data privacy).
- Encouraging public-private partnerships for affordable digital tools.
- Establishing incubators offering mentorship on social media strategy.

C. For Technology Developers Platform Providers

- Simplifying analytics dashboards for small

businesses.

- Enhancing moderation tools to prevent gender harassment.
- Supporting discovery tools for local women-led businesses.
- Creating micro-influencer marketplaces within platforms.

IX. CONCLUSION

The study critically examined the strategic role of social media in influencing entrepreneurial decision-making among women-led enterprises. The empirical findings underscore those social media platforms, particularly through high-impact formats such as video content, significantly enhance brand visibility, customer engagement and market reach. Content quality and authenticity emerged as central factors driving audience trust and strategic outcomes. Moreover, the research highlighted how women entrepreneurs increasingly utilize digital platforms not only for promotion but also for informed decision-making in areas such as product conceptualization, audience targeting and brand positioning. At the same time, the study identified structural challenges, including platform dependency, inconsistent engagement and technical skill limitations, which may hinder sustained digital growth. The SWOT analysis further revealed strategic opportunities in influencer partnerships and AI adoption, as well as threats related to algorithmic volatility and data privacy concerns. Overall, the research affirms that social media functions as a multidimensional enabler—supporting visibility, innovation and adaptive strategy in women-led ventures. The findings hold practical relevance for policymakers, incubators and digital service providers aiming to strengthen the digital capabilities of women entrepreneurs through inclusive and targeted interventions.

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