
AN ANALYSIS OF IMPACT OF ECOMMERCE ON INDIAN WOMEN

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Abstract: E-Commerce is a revolution. Though in strict terms it would mean buying and selling of goods and services online, it is much more than that. E-commerce has provided Indian businesswomen an effective and efficient platform to overcome traditional male-dominated industries and explore business prospects beyond conventional channels. At the same time, Ecommerce has made possible for Women to buy vast variety of goods and services for reasonable costs, at the luxury of their home. In India, a vast majority of Online Consumers are Women. Thus, Ecommerce is an important tool for women empowerment and has a major role in the lives of new generation Indian Women, which makes it important to study the challenges it faces and the possible legal solution available. This Article discusses the influence of E-Commerce on Indian Women and analyses the legal and other hurdles they face.

Keywords: Ecommerce, Women entrepreneurs, Impact and Challenges faced in E-Commerce.

“Women are the routers and amplifiers of the social web. They are the rocket fuel of ecommerce”

- Aileen Lee, Partner at Kleiner Perkins Caufield & Byers

Introduction: Ecommerce is buying and selling of goods and services online. The Ecommerce market has grown by 34% in the last 7 years, it was about USD 600 million in 2011 and is expected to touch USD 9 Billion by 2016 and USD 70 million by 2020. It has become a very convenient mode of business. The very fact that one can buy and sell products at the convenience of their homes has made it popular. It is pertinent to note that women have been benefitted to a large extent with the emergence of e-commerce. At the same time, majority of online purchases are by women and most of the online purchases are said to be dominated by women. Thus there lies a strong connection between E-Commerce and Women.

Impact of Ecommerce on Indian Women: Women, especially in India often offered a medley between two opposing forces, a successful career, and the conservative society expecting them to take care of home and hearth. Dual the role is no doubt a challenge, and yet she performs it with aplomb. The role of women in economic development is magnanimous and day by day expanding by leaps and bounds. Women have already proven their mettle that they can not only excel in each and every segment but they can also do it emphatically and effectively. The world of entrepreneurship is not an exception to this fact. Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) found 126 million women starting or running businesses, and 98 million operating established (over three and a half years) businesses. That's 224 million women impacting the global economy and this survey counts only 67 of the 188 countries recognized by the World Bank. Indian women like Swati Bhargava (Chief Executive Officer and the co-founder of CashKaro, Neeru Sharma- is the Co-Founder and the Director of Corporate

Development at Infibeam (an Indian online shopping portal), Suchi Mukherjee (Founder and CEO of Limeroad.com), Richa Kar Founder of Zivame.com), Anisha Singh (Founder Of: Mydala.com) and Sabina Chopra (Co-Founder of Yatra.com) are the Women entrepreneurs who have been very successful at their online ventures. E-Commerce has boosted Women Empowerment by giving them financial independence and a convenient platform for them to prove their capabilities. Apart from giving a tough competition to the male counterparts as E-Commerce entrepreneurs, even as a Consumer women contribute to the growth of Ecommerce. E-Commerce has made it convenient to buy goods and services at a better bargain. They get a vast variety of products to choose and compare from and all at the comfort of their homes. Also, as women balance their roles at home and office, they are in a position to dominate most of the purchases.

The Comscore's Women on the Web report says while men and women make up approximately half of internet users, women account for 58 percent of all online purchases, and decide 83-87 percent of consumer purchases. In e-commerce, according to *Gilt Groupe*, women are 70% of the customer base and they drive 74% of revenue. 77% of *Groupon's* customers are female according to their site. Sheryl Sandberg, COO of Facebook, says that women are not only the majority of its users, but drive 62% of activity in terms of messages, updates and comments, and 71% of the daily fan activity. Even in gaming, *Zynga* says that 60% of players are female. Hence, women consumers are no doubt the top priority of an online business company. Hence, women and E-commerce have been benefitting each other to a large extent. Analytics on Alibaba.com which is a the online B2B e-commerce portal, showed that the membership base of females on the site grew at 71% (Jun30, 2011). This shows that e-commerce has the potential to provide Indian

businesswomen an effective and efficient platform to overcome traditional male-dominated industries and explore business prospects beyond conventional channels.

Challenges Faced By Indian Women Entrepreneurs:

There are number of challenges which the women encounter, some of the most common challenges can be listed as follows'

1. **Balancing responsibilities:** When Indira Nooyi said, "I don't think we can have it all. I just don't think so. We pretend we can have it all" at the Aspen Ideas Festival, she spoke of the spoke of the support system career women have to build. It is a well known fact that women are expected to be devoted homemakers irrespective of their contributions in career. They have to perfectly balance both the worlds.
2. **The Male Dominated Society-** The market has been traditionally dominated by men and it is strongly imbibed in the psyche of the society that women are born to do the household chores and nurture the children. Women have to go an extra mile to gain social confidence.
3. **Raising funds:** To start a business it requires a lot of efforts. It requires pooling of funds and lot of promotion, which is a challenge for many Indian women.
4. **Logistics:** any E-Commerce venture needs a strong logistic support and due to various factors logistics in India is very weak. Further, many Indian Women who intend to sell their homemade products are not doing it at a very

large scale and hence have to depend on the available options which might not be very reliable.

5. **Legal hassles:** due to lack of effective legislations, many a times the new challenges that E-Commerce brings creates lot of problems. Also, any consumer dispute or other similar problems may end up in legal complications. Many Indian women many get seriously discouraged due to the taboos attached to it. Further, there are many women who do not have sufficient legal education and end up in complexities.

These are just few of the many problems which women face as E-Commerce entrepreneurs, but if they get proper support and

Conclusion: Indian Women are multi-talented, artistic, hardworking and creative. There are many women home makers who make time for their creative self during leisure. E-Commerce gives them a wonderful opportunity to make best of their talents and become financially independent. Many women use various E-Commerce portals to sell their products like artistic works, cakes and other baked foods, paintings, designer apparels etc are getting a chance to exhibit their talents and also earn. But as they lack business skills, it is required that they are trained by experts.

There are lots of challenges that women face and yet we have numerous examples of successful women who have fought all odds and emerged successful. Thus it may be concluded that, E-Commerce has positively influenced the Indian Women and has helped in empowering and inspiring many women.

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