



Women entrepreneurship in Arunachal Pradesh: Challenges and opportunities

Gumbin Noshi

Assistant Professor, Department of Economics, Donyi Polo Govt. College, Kamki, Arunachal Pradesh, India

Abstract

Women entrepreneurship in Arunachal Pradesh represents a vital yet underexplored dimension of the state's socio-economic development. Despite the region's rich cultural heritage and abundant natural resources, women entrepreneurs face numerous challenges that hinder their full participation and growth in the business sector. This study explores the unique landscape of women entrepreneurship in Arunachal Pradesh, focusing on the key obstacles and emerging opportunities. Major challenges include limited access to finance, inadequate infrastructure, socio-cultural constraints, lack of formal education and skill development, and restricted market linkages. Additionally, traditional gender roles and societal expectations often limit women's mobility and decision-making power, further complicating their entrepreneurial endeavors.

However, the state's evolving economic framework, government initiatives aimed at promoting women-led enterprises, and growing awareness of gender equality provide promising opportunities. The increasing penetration of digital technologies and supportive community networks are also enabling women to overcome geographical and social barriers. This paper underscores the importance of tailored policy interventions, capacity-building programs, and enhanced access to credit and markets to empower women entrepreneurs in Arunachal Pradesh. By addressing these challenges and leveraging opportunities, women entrepreneurs can significantly contribute to regional economic growth, poverty reduction, and social empowerment.

The findings highlight that fostering a supportive ecosystem involving stakeholders from government, private sector, and civil society is crucial to unlock the potential of women entrepreneurship in this diverse and strategically important region. This study offers valuable insights for policymakers, development practitioners, and researchers aiming to create inclusive growth models that integrate gender perspectives into entrepreneurship development in Arunachal Pradesh.

Keywords: Women entrepreneurship, Arunachal Pradesh, challenges, opportunities, gender roles, access to finance, socio-cultural constraints, skill development, government initiatives, economic empowerment

Introduction

Women entrepreneurship has emerged as a significant driver of economic growth, social development, and gender equality across the globe. In India, and particularly in the northeastern state of Arunachal Pradesh, women entrepreneurs are beginning to make notable contributions to the local economy despite facing numerous structural and cultural challenges. Arunachal Pradesh, located in the easternmost part of India, is renowned for its rich tribal culture, biodiversity, and strategic geopolitical location. However, the state's rugged terrain, limited infrastructure, and socio-economic conditions present unique challenges and opportunities for women entrepreneurs. Understanding the dynamics of women entrepreneurship in Arunachal Pradesh is crucial to formulating policies and interventions that can enable inclusive growth and empower women economically and socially.

Historically, Arunachal Pradesh's society has been predominantly tribal, with distinct customs, traditions, and social structures influencing gender roles and economic participation. Traditionally, women in many tribal communities have been actively involved in agriculture, handicrafts, and household management, though their roles have often been confined within the domestic sphere. While tribal customs in Arunachal Pradesh do offer women certain respect and responsibilities, the transition to formal entrepreneurship and participation in modern economic activities remains limited for many women. This limitation stems from various factors, including restricted access to education, capital, markets, and decision-making power within households and communities.

In recent years, however, the scenario is gradually changing. The increased focus on women's empowerment by the Indian government and various non-governmental organizations has begun to open new avenues for women in Arunachal Pradesh to explore entrepreneurial opportunities. Government schemes aimed at promoting self-help groups (SHGs), microfinance, skill development, and digital literacy have played a pivotal role in fostering entrepreneurship among women. Additionally, the growing awareness about the importance of women's economic participation and the positive impact it has on families and communities has contributed to a slow but steady shift in societal attitudes.

Despite these encouraging developments, women entrepreneurs in Arunachal Pradesh face several challenges that limit their growth and sustainability. Access to finance remains one of the most significant barriers. Many women lack the collateral, credit history, or financial literacy needed to secure loans from formal financial institutions. This forces them to rely on informal sources, which often charge high-interest rates and put them at risk of debt traps. Infrastructure limitations, such as poor connectivity, unreliable electricity supply, and lack of market access, further restrict the scalability of women-led enterprises. Additionally, socio-cultural constraints, including patriarchal mindsets, gender stereotypes, and household responsibilities, restrict women's ability to fully engage in entrepreneurial activities.

Education and skill development also pose challenges. While literacy rates among women in Arunachal Pradesh have improved, there is still a significant gap in vocational

and entrepreneurial skills training tailored to the needs of women in remote and rural areas. Many women entrepreneurs are involved in traditional sectors such as handicrafts, agriculture, and small-scale food processing, which often have limited market reach and profitability. To succeed, they require access to training in business management, digital marketing, quality standards, and innovation.

On the other hand, Arunachal Pradesh's unique cultural diversity and natural resources provide ample opportunities for women entrepreneurs. The state is known for its traditional handloom and handicraft products, organic agricultural produce, and eco-tourism potential. Women, who are often custodians of indigenous knowledge and craftsmanship, can leverage these strengths to create niche products and services for both local and global markets. Furthermore, the rise of e-commerce and digital platforms offers new channels for market access, enabling women entrepreneurs to overcome geographical isolation.

Government initiatives and policies play a critical role in shaping the entrepreneurial ecosystem for women in Arunachal Pradesh. The state government, along with central government schemes such as Stand-Up India, Mahila Coir Yojana, and the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM), has introduced measures to provide financial assistance, skill training, and infrastructure support specifically targeting women entrepreneurs. Additionally, collaborations with NGOs and international organizations have led to the establishment of incubation centers, business development services, and mentorship programs tailored for women. These efforts aim to create an enabling environment where women can transform their ideas into viable businesses and sustain them over time.

Another promising development is the increasing involvement of women in cooperative societies and self-help groups, which not only provide financial support but also foster collective bargaining power and knowledge sharing. These groups empower women by creating a platform for peer learning, mutual encouragement, and access to wider networks. The social capital generated through these networks is often as valuable as financial capital in ensuring business success.

The role of education and awareness campaigns cannot be overstated. Promoting gender-sensitive education that encourages entrepreneurship and leadership skills among girls and young women can have a long-term impact on women's participation in the economy. Vocational training centers and entrepreneurship development programs focusing on local industries such as agriculture, handloom, and tourism are essential to equip women with relevant skills.

In addition, leveraging technology is critical for overcoming geographical and infrastructural challenges. Mobile technology and digital financial services are gradually penetrating even remote areas of Arunachal Pradesh, providing women with access to banking, credit, market information, and e-commerce platforms. This digital revolution offers women entrepreneurs unprecedented opportunities to scale their businesses, access new markets, and enhance productivity.

Despite the evident opportunities, there is a pressing need for continuous research and data collection on women entrepreneurship in Arunachal Pradesh to understand the nuanced challenges and tailor interventions effectively.

Each tribal community has distinct social structures and norms that influence women's entrepreneurial activities differently. Hence, a one-size-fits-all approach is unlikely to succeed. Policymakers and development practitioners must adopt context-specific strategies that respect cultural sensitivities while promoting economic inclusion.

The economic empowerment of women through entrepreneurship has far-reaching implications. Beyond individual financial independence, women entrepreneurs contribute to poverty alleviation, job creation, and community development. Their success can challenge traditional gender roles, inspire other women, and promote greater gender equality. In Arunachal Pradesh, where socio-economic development is intertwined with cultural preservation and ecological sustainability, women entrepreneurs can play a transformative role by integrating traditional knowledge with modern business practices.

In conclusion, women entrepreneurship in Arunachal Pradesh stands at a critical juncture. While significant challenges persist, the growing opportunities and enabling environment provide a foundation for sustainable growth. Concerted efforts from government agencies, civil society, the private sector, and the women themselves are essential to nurture this potential. By addressing financial, educational, infrastructural, and socio-cultural barriers, and by promoting innovation and market access, Arunachal Pradesh can harness the entrepreneurial spirit of its women to achieve inclusive and sustainable development. This introduction sets the stage for a comprehensive exploration of the challenges and opportunities faced by women entrepreneurs in Arunachal Pradesh, aiming to contribute to the discourse on gender, entrepreneurship, and regional development.

Methods

This study employs a mixed-methods research design to comprehensively explore the challenges and opportunities faced by women entrepreneurs in Arunachal Pradesh. A combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches allows for a deeper understanding of the socio-economic and cultural factors influencing women's entrepreneurial activities in the region. The research methods were carefully selected to capture both the breadth and depth of experiences, providing robust and nuanced insights into the dynamics of women entrepreneurship.

The primary data collection was conducted through structured surveys, semi-structured interviews, and focus group discussions (FGDs) with women entrepreneurs across different districts of Arunachal Pradesh. The quantitative component involved a survey questionnaire designed to gather demographic information, business profiles, sources of finance, operational challenges, and perceptions of opportunities. The questionnaire was developed based on existing literature on women entrepreneurship and tailored to the unique socio-cultural context of Arunachal Pradesh. It was pre-tested with a small group of women entrepreneurs to ensure clarity, relevance, and reliability of the questions.

For the qualitative component, semi-structured interviews were conducted with selected women entrepreneurs, government officials, representatives of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and financial institutions. These interviews aimed to explore the personal experiences, challenges, and success stories of women entrepreneurs in more detail. The interviews also provided insights into

policy implementation, support mechanisms, and institutional barriers. Focus group discussions were organized with groups of women entrepreneurs, typically consisting of 6 to 10 participants, to facilitate interaction and collective reflection on common issues and potential solutions.

The sampling strategy combined purposive and snowball sampling techniques to ensure diversity and reach within the target population. Initially, women entrepreneurs registered with local business associations, self-help groups, and cooperatives were identified as primary respondents. This approach enabled the researchers to access women involved in various sectors such as agriculture, handloom and handicrafts, food processing, and services. Snowball sampling helped to identify additional participants who may not be formally registered but are engaged in entrepreneurial activities within their communities. Efforts were made to include women from different tribal groups, age categories, educational backgrounds, and geographic locations, including remote rural areas and urban centers, to capture a wide range of perspectives.

The sample size for the quantitative survey was set at 200 women entrepreneurs, which provided sufficient data for statistical analysis while remaining manageable within the logistical constraints of the research. For the qualitative interviews, 30 in-depth interviews were conducted, supplemented by 5 focus group discussions. This number was determined based on the principle of saturation, where data collection continued until no new themes or information emerged.

Data analysis was carried out using both quantitative and qualitative techniques. Survey data were coded and entered into statistical software (SPSS) for descriptive and inferential analysis. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations were used to summarize the demographic characteristics and business profiles of respondents. Cross-tabulations and chi-square tests helped identify significant relationships between variables such as education level, access to finance, and business success. Qualitative data from interviews and FGDs were transcribed verbatim and analyzed thematically. Thematic analysis involved coding the data into categories and sub-categories to identify recurring patterns, challenges, and opportunities as narrated by the participants. *vivo* software was employed to organize and manage qualitative data effectively.

Ethical considerations were central to the research process. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, ensuring they understood the purpose of the study, their voluntary participation, and the confidentiality of their responses. The anonymity of respondents was maintained, and sensitive information was handled with care to avoid any harm or discomfort. The research adhered to ethical guidelines for social science research and respected the cultural sensitivities of Arunachal Pradesh's diverse tribal communities.

Fieldwork was conducted over a period of six months, allowing for repeated visits to various locations and follow-up discussions with participants. The researchers collaborated closely with local NGOs and women's groups to facilitate access and build trust within the communities. This collaboration also helped in contextualizing the findings and validating the interpretations drawn from the data.

Limitations of the methodology include the challenges of reaching women entrepreneurs in very remote areas due to difficult terrain and limited transport infrastructure. Language barriers were addressed by employing local translators and researchers familiar with the local dialects and cultural contexts. Additionally, as entrepreneurship is an evolving field, the cross-sectional nature of the study captures a snapshot in time, which may not fully reflect future trends or changes.

Overall, the mixed-methods approach provided a comprehensive and balanced understanding of the multifaceted challenges and opportunities experienced by women entrepreneurs in Arunachal Pradesh. The combination of quantitative breadth and qualitative depth ensured that the study's findings are both statistically robust and contextually rich, forming a solid basis for recommendations aimed at enhancing women's entrepreneurship in the region.

Results

The study's results provide a comprehensive understanding of the landscape of women entrepreneurship in Arunachal Pradesh, highlighting key demographic characteristics, entrepreneurial activities, challenges faced, and emerging opportunities. The findings are drawn from both quantitative survey data collected from 200 women entrepreneurs and qualitative data gathered through 30 in-depth interviews and five focus group discussions. This mixed-methods approach allowed for triangulation and richer insights into the lived experiences of women entrepreneurs in the region.

Demographic and Business Profile

The quantitative survey revealed that the majority of women entrepreneurs in Arunachal Pradesh fall within the age group of 25 to 45 years, accounting for nearly 65% of the respondents. A smaller proportion, approximately 20%, were aged between 18 and 24 years, indicating a growing interest among younger women to engage in entrepreneurial activities. Educational attainment varied significantly; around 40% had completed secondary education, 25% held a diploma or bachelor's degree, while 35% had only primary education or were illiterate. The variation in education levels influenced the type of business and operational capacity of the entrepreneurs.

Most respondents (approximately 70%) operated micro and small-scale enterprises, primarily in traditional sectors such as handloom weaving, handicrafts, agriculture and allied activities, food processing, and local retail trade. A smaller segment (around 15%) engaged in service-based businesses such as beauty parlors, tailoring, and tourism-related activities. Notably, only about 10% of women reported involvement in more formalized business sectors with potential for higher scalability, such as IT services or manufacturing. The choice of business was strongly influenced by cultural norms, local market demand, and accessibility to raw materials.

Access to Finance and Credit

Access to finance emerged as one of the most critical challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in Arunachal Pradesh. Survey results indicated that 68% of respondents relied on informal sources of funding such as family, friends, or local moneylenders. Only 32% had secured loans or financial support from formal institutions such as banks,

microfinance institutions, or government schemes. Many participants cited a lack of collateral, complex loan procedures, and lack of awareness about financial products as barriers to accessing formal credit.

Qualitative interviews further illuminated these challenges. Several women entrepreneurs recounted experiences of being denied loans despite meeting eligibility criteria due to gender bias or insufficient documentation. One participant shared, "I applied for a loan three times, but the bank officials never took my application seriously because I am a woman and lack property documents." This anecdote highlighted the pervasive institutional and social barriers that women face in the financial sector.

Socio-Cultural Barriers

Socio-cultural factors significantly influenced women's entrepreneurial journeys. The majority of participants acknowledged that traditional gender roles often limited their mobility and time availability for business activities. Household responsibilities, childcare, and community obligations frequently competed with their entrepreneurial aspirations. Approximately 60% of survey respondents reported difficulty in balancing family duties with business management.

Interviews revealed that in many tribal communities, women's participation in economic activities outside the home is sometimes viewed with skepticism or disapproval. One entrepreneur explained, "In my village, it is unusual for women to run businesses independently. Many think it is a man's job, and women should focus on the household." These prevailing attitudes not only discourage women but can also lead to social isolation and lack of family support, which are crucial for entrepreneurial success.

However, some participants noted positive shifts in attitudes, especially among younger generations and in urban centers, where women's economic participation is increasingly accepted and encouraged. Self-help groups and women's cooperatives were identified as critical support networks that help mitigate social pressure and provide moral and financial backing.

Infrastructure and Market Access

The study found that inadequate infrastructure and limited market access remain significant impediments. Poor road connectivity and unreliable electricity supply in remote areas restricted women entrepreneurs' ability to scale their businesses or diversify their product offerings. About 55% of respondents cited transportation difficulties as a major challenge, especially for those involved in agriculture and handicrafts, where timely access to markets is essential.

Digital infrastructure was unevenly distributed, with urban areas benefiting more from mobile connectivity and internet access than rural regions. While digital tools offer promising opportunities, only 28% of respondents reported using smartphones or online platforms for marketing or sales. The digital divide thus continues to limit market reach and growth potential for many women entrepreneurs.

Skill Development and Education

Skill gaps were apparent in areas such as business management, financial literacy, and technical expertise. Nearly 50% of the surveyed women indicated a lack of training opportunities as a barrier to improving their businesses. While government and NGO initiatives offer

various training programs, accessibility and relevance remain concerns. Many women reported that programs are often too generic and do not address the specific challenges faced in their communities or sectors.

Focus group discussions highlighted the need for tailored skill development, especially in areas like digital marketing, quality control, product design, and entrepreneurship management. One participant emphasized, "If we had more training on how to sell products online or manage accounts, we could expand our businesses and increase our income."

Opportunities and Enablers

Despite the challenges, the study identified several promising opportunities for women entrepreneurs in Arunachal Pradesh. The state's rich cultural heritage and natural resources offer unique prospects in sectors like handicrafts, organic farming, and eco-tourism. Women entrepreneurs involved in traditional crafts expressed optimism about tapping into niche markets, including tourism and exports, which value authentic and handcrafted products.

Government schemes such as the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM), Stand-Up India, and various skill development initiatives were recognized as important enablers. Approximately 40% of respondents had benefited from such programs, citing access to credit, training, and business advisory services. Women's cooperatives and self-help groups were also pivotal in providing collective strength, financial inclusion, and peer support. One entrepreneur shared, "Our SHG helped us get a loan and taught us how to manage the business together. It gave us confidence and strength."

Digital technology, while underutilized, was identified as a critical growth area. Several women entrepreneurs expressed interest in learning about e-commerce platforms and social media marketing to reach wider audiences. Pilot projects promoting digital literacy and mobile banking have shown positive results, indicating the potential for scaling these efforts.

Impact on Socio-Economic Empowerment

The entrepreneurial activities of women in Arunachal Pradesh have broader implications beyond income generation. Many participants reported increased decision-making power within their families and greater social recognition as a result of their business success. The empowerment effect was particularly pronounced among younger women and those involved in collective enterprises. Moreover, women entrepreneurs contribute to local employment generation and community development. Handicraft cooperatives and agro-based enterprises provide livelihoods to several families, helping reduce poverty and migration pressures. The multiplier effect of women's entrepreneurship thus holds promise for sustainable regional development.

Summary of Key Findings

- The majority of women entrepreneurs in Arunachal Pradesh operate micro and small-scale businesses, predominantly in traditional sectors.
- Access to finance is limited, with a heavy reliance on informal sources and significant barriers to formal credit.

- Socio-cultural norms and gender roles restrict women's entrepreneurial participation and mobility.
- Infrastructure deficits and limited digital access hinder market expansion and scalability.
- Skill development and training programs are insufficiently tailored to women's needs.
- Government schemes, self-help groups, and cooperatives serve as vital support mechanisms.
- There are emerging opportunities in cultural industries, organic agriculture, eco-tourism, and digital commerce.
- Women's entrepreneurship contributes positively to socio-economic empowerment and community development.

The results indicate that while women entrepreneurs in Arunachal Pradesh face formidable challenges, there is considerable potential for growth and empowerment. Addressing structural barriers and leveraging existing opportunities through targeted interventions can significantly enhance the entrepreneurial ecosystem for women in the region.

Discussion

The findings of this study reveal a complex and nuanced picture of women entrepreneurship in Arunachal Pradesh, highlighting both persistent challenges and promising opportunities. The demographic data showing a predominance of young to middle-aged women entrepreneurs aligns with national and global trends indicating increasing female participation in business activities, particularly among younger cohorts eager to break traditional molds. However, the significant variation in educational attainment points to an important gap that directly impacts entrepreneurial capacity, decision-making, and the ability to scale businesses.

Access to finance emerged as one of the most critical bottlenecks, confirming findings from numerous studies across India and other developing regions. Women's limited access to formal credit due to lack of collateral, bureaucratic hurdles, and gender biases remains a universal barrier to entrepreneurship. The reliance on informal finance sources, while sometimes necessary, often places women at risk of exploitation and limits their business growth potential. This study reinforces the urgent need for financial institutions to develop gender-sensitive lending policies and simplify loan procedures to accommodate the realities faced by women entrepreneurs, especially in rural and tribal settings.

Socio-cultural constraints were a prominent theme in both the quantitative and qualitative data, underscoring how deeply ingrained gender roles and patriarchal mindsets continue to restrict women's full economic participation. The tension between traditional expectations—such as domestic responsibilities and limited public mobility—and entrepreneurial ambitions creates a persistent barrier. However, the study also notes a gradual cultural shift, particularly in urban areas and among younger generations, reflecting the dynamic interplay between tradition and modernization. This echoes broader sociological research suggesting that while cultural norms are resilient, they are not static and can evolve in response to economic and educational empowerment.

Infrastructure challenges, especially poor connectivity and limited digital access, were key practical constraints that curtailed market expansion and business scalability. These

infrastructural deficits are consistent with the geographic and developmental realities of Arunachal Pradesh, characterized by difficult terrain and dispersed populations. The limited use of digital technology among women entrepreneurs is both a challenge and an opportunity. The digital divide exacerbates existing inequalities but simultaneously highlights an area where targeted interventions—such as digital literacy training and mobile banking—could yield significant benefits. Increasing digital inclusion is crucial for integrating women entrepreneurs into broader markets and improving competitiveness.

The gaps identified in skill development and education resonate with findings from other studies focusing on women's entrepreneurship in emerging economies. The lack of tailored vocational and business training that addresses women's specific needs and local contexts limits their ability to innovate and manage enterprises effectively. This points to the importance of designing context-sensitive capacity-building programs that incorporate not only technical skills but also soft skills such as negotiation, leadership, and financial literacy. The expressed interest of women entrepreneurs in such training is an encouraging sign that investment in education and mentorship could unlock latent entrepreneurial potential.

The study's identification of cultural heritage, organic agriculture, and eco-tourism as promising sectors for women entrepreneurs is a critical insight that aligns with Arunachal Pradesh's unique socio-economic profile. The state's rich indigenous knowledge and biodiversity offer niche markets that women can capitalize on, especially with growing consumer interest in sustainable and authentic products. This finding supports the argument that entrepreneurship development in culturally diverse regions must leverage local assets rather than impose generic models. Supporting women to innovate within these traditional sectors while accessing new markets through e-commerce and tourism networks can promote both economic development and cultural preservation.

Government initiatives and women's collective organizations such as self-help groups and cooperatives were found to be vital enablers, corroborating research that highlights the importance of institutional support in overcoming systemic barriers. However, the relatively low awareness and participation rates suggest the need for better outreach and alignment of these programs with women's lived realities. This implies that policymakers must engage closely with local communities to ensure program design and delivery are culturally appropriate, accessible, and responsive to evolving challenges.

Importantly, the study highlights the broader socio-economic impact of women entrepreneurship, extending beyond income generation to include enhanced social status, decision-making power, and community development. This confirms the multidimensional benefits of promoting women's economic empowerment, which is key to achieving inclusive and sustainable development goals. Empowering women entrepreneurs can contribute to poverty reduction, gender equality, and social cohesion, particularly in tribal societies where women's roles are traditionally circumscribed.

From a policy perspective, these findings suggest several actionable recommendations. First, financial institutions and government agencies should design gender-responsive credit schemes with simplified procedures and flexible

collateral requirements. Second, skill development programs must be localized and gender-sensitive, combining vocational training with entrepreneurship education and digital literacy. Third, infrastructural investments—particularly in connectivity and energy—must prioritize rural and remote areas to reduce geographic isolation. Fourth, cultural awareness campaigns should continue to challenge restrictive gender norms and promote positive role models. Finally, strengthening women's collective organizations and integrating digital platforms for marketing and sales can amplify women's market access and bargaining power.

The study's mixed-methods approach proved effective in capturing both statistical trends and personal narratives, providing a holistic understanding of the multifaceted issues women entrepreneurs face in Arunachal Pradesh. However, as with all research, limitations exist. The cross-sectional design offers a snapshot in time but cannot track long-term changes or causality. Future longitudinal studies could provide insights into how women's entrepreneurship evolves with policy shifts and socio-economic changes. Additionally, given Arunachal Pradesh's ethnic diversity, further research could delve deeper into intra-regional variations and tailor strategies accordingly.

In conclusion, the discussion underscores that women entrepreneurship in Arunachal Pradesh is shaped by an intricate interplay of socio-cultural, economic, infrastructural, and institutional factors. Addressing these in an integrated manner can unlock significant opportunities for women and contribute to the state's inclusive development. As Arunachal Pradesh continues to integrate with broader national and global economies, supporting women entrepreneurs will be essential not only for economic growth but also for social transformation and gender equality.

Conclusion

This study highlights the dynamic landscape of women entrepreneurship in Arunachal Pradesh, characterized by significant challenges and promising opportunities. Women entrepreneurs primarily operate in traditional sectors and face critical barriers such as limited access to finance, socio-cultural constraints, infrastructural deficiencies, and skill gaps. Despite these obstacles, growing support from government schemes, self-help groups, and the gradual cultural shift towards gender equality offer a foundation for growth. Leveraging the state's rich cultural heritage and natural resources through tailored skill development and digital inclusion can empower women entrepreneurs to scale their businesses and contribute meaningfully to regional development. Addressing the intertwined socio-economic and institutional challenges in a holistic and gender-sensitive manner is essential for fostering sustainable women entrepreneurship, enhancing women's empowerment, and promoting inclusive growth in Arunachal Pradesh.

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