

Examining the Mediating Role of Self-Leadership in Women's Entrepreneurial Engagement in Hospitality Sector: A Comprehensive Analysis

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Abstract *This study investigates the situation of women's entrepreneurship within the rapidly expanding entrepreneurial environment. This study aims to evaluate the influence of Family Influence, Social Support, access to financing, entrepreneurial abilities, and legal restraints on women's entrepreneurial participation in the hospitality and tourism sector of Sikkim. Additionally, it examines the mediating role of self-leadership in this relationship. The study utilizes a quantitative methodology and gathers survey data of 744 women, through the snowball sampling technique. The analysis is conducted using the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) method. The findings demonstrate noteworthy correlations between Family Influence, Social Support, and entrepreneurial abilities with women's engagement in entrepreneurship. However, the influence of access to financing and regulatory restraints did not yield statistically significant results. Furthermore, it has been seen that self-leadership plays a mediating role in the association between Family Influence, Social Support, access to money, and women's engagement in entrepreneurship. However, this mediation is not observed in the context of Entrepreneurial Abilities and legal limitations. The results of this study highlight the significant impact that both official and informal institutions have on the level of women's involvement in entrepreneurship, particularly within the hotel industry. These findings provide valuable knowledge for women entrepreneurs and policymakers seeking to enhance their understanding of this sector.*

Keywords: *Entrepreneurship, Mediating Role, Women Entrepreneur, Self-Leadership, PLS-SEM Model*

INTRODUCTION

For the last few decades, women entrepreneurship has been receiving great attention globally with its increasing importance (Varghese 2021). A woman entrepreneur is a woman who organizes and operates a business using skills and knowledge, business acumen, confidence, tenacity, self-belief, independence and forceful personality, turns ideas into a commercial value and successful business venture. (Gerguri-Rashiti & Rotabi, 2021). Women encounter

barriers to accessing support because of discriminatory practices and a lack of involvement in business organizations. They are excluded from mobilizing resources which are fundamental programme of business startup (Elouazzani, & Sbihi, 2025; Kaluarachchige et al., 2023; Elsawalhy & Elzek, 2023; Gulab et al., 2025).

Women's participation in entrepreneurship, which is pivotal to the development of the nation's economy, including in hospitality and tourism industry, continue to be hampered by socio-cultural and family barriers, making them to be under-

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represented in the industry in India (Okolie et al., 2021). Family dynamics are critical in women's entrepreneurship, where family support provides women with a confidence lift, but societal support of caregiving expectations place a dual load for women and can inhibit business growth (Kurniawan et al., 2025). Despite women possessing the capability and resilience to become entrepreneurs socio-cultural stereotypes and cultural norms, inhibit their confidence, education, training, and capabilities to become entrepreneurs (Elouazzani & Sbihi, 2025). Overcoming these barriers and promote woman entrepreneurship is needed as Indian woman entrepreneur has a huge potential to super-cede the economic growth in India particularly in tourism and hospitality sector.

Women may encounter problems with entrepreneurship because of the following reasons: lack of skills and know-how or information about entering into business, running business and managing (McElwee et al., 2021; Rao et al., 2020). Moreover, research highlights the importance of financial access as a critical success in managing any company (Ayyagari et al., 2021). As Kim and Cho (2020) explained, in India women find it particularly challenging to raise necessary funds from investment banks and other financial institutions because of the dominant kind of business culture that is male-centred. According to Ali et al. (2018), Supportiveness among bankers & financial consultants in mitigating loan application procedures for Women Entrepreneurs in India which is subjected to legal constraints and inadequate laws to back up their entrepreneurial future." According to Afza et al. (2010), a supportive environment was recommended to ensure certain rights of women and overcome any legal obstructions (Ali, 2013).

From the literature, the significance of self-leadership in the implementation of gender-inclusive policies is apparent to counter these challenges (Yenilmez, 2018). 89 Self-leadership, self-motivation, self-regulation, and self-direction mediate the relationship between women's entrepreneurial intentions 90 Self-leadership, self-motivation, self-resistance, and self-purpose mediate the link between women's entrepreneurial intentions. Improving self-leadership capabilities can enable women to have higher self-confidence for becoming an entrepreneur in the hospitality and tourism industry (Linfang et al., 2021).

Self-leadership has a positive impact on women's intentions to establish new businesses whereas self-efficacy increases women's self-confidence and enhances their decision-making process to start a business (Lee & Kim, 2020).

Fitri and Dwita (2023) also found that self-leadership mediates the relationship between motivation and entrepreneurial performance, which emphasizes its relevance in transferring individual energy into

entrepreneurship success. In addition, "It's the ability to be in control of your thoughts, feelings, and behavior to bring about desired outcomes" Matahela agrees (2022). Nurturing these capacities in women entrepreneurs is necessary for their success and the creation of an economy that includes everyone. For example, in a study, Rakib (2023) critically assessed the posit that self-leadership was proposing as advancing entrepreneurial creativity through innovative thinking and problem-solving which is essential for being an entrepreneur.

The focus of this study is not on the impact of the factors on family members or reference groups, the literature also postulate of the mediating role of self-leadership in a model including several elements such as: Family Influence, Social Support, access to capital, Legal Restrictions, entrepreneurial skills, Propensity for risk and women entrepreneurial activity. Additionally, the gathering of knowledge from female entrepreneurs in hotel and tourism might contribute to the development of a more supportive and conducive entrepreneurial environment. The study further examines those components on the involvement of women in entrepreneurship in hospitality and tourism in Sikkim.

To the best of our knowledge, entrepreneurial activities were not studied with respect to the role of self-leadership for females. Accordingly, it is necessary to examine the promise of strategies for individuals, of both women and men, to lead themselves in advancing entrepreneurial activity (Bendell et al., 2019; Chand, 2016). An additional challenge relates to women, who face challenges beyond motivation (Manzoor, 2015), resulting in gender inequality. The entrepreneurial context impacts also the level of self-leadership, to the extent that leaders are open to change.

As such, this paper contributes to the understanding of how various factors including family orientation, support network, legal constraints, financial means, and skills influence the involvement of women in entrepreneurship in hospitality and tourism with a focus on self-leadership (Raza et al., 2021). Aside, this research paper is instrumental in that, it is the first study that addresses the determinants of women-entrepreneurial advancement, especially in connecting it with self-leadership to check how the two are associated with constructive engagement amongst women entrepreneurs (Khalid et al., 2021). Therefore, the concept of self-leadership should be thoroughly investigated and explored, especially considering the obstacles that women might face in terms of self-belief and self-motivation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Entrepreneurship drives innovation and economic growth, with women's participation shaped by multiple factors. This

literature explores key elements—such as funding access, entrepreneurial skills, legal barriers, self-leadership, social support, and family influence—and highlights how these factors collectively enable or hinder women's entrepreneurial pursuits, particularly within diverse socio-cultural contexts.

Variable	Description	Author(s)
Finance Availability (FA)	Refers to the ease with which entrepreneurs can access financial resources.	Fatoki (2011)
	Limited access to credit and formal financing institutions hinders women entrepreneurs, especially in developing countries.	Brush et al., 2009; Klapper and Parker, 2011
	Microfinance has shown positive impacts but often insufficient for scaling businesses.	Banerjee et al., 2015
Entrepreneurial Abilities (EA)	Skills, knowledge, and capabilities essential to starting and managing a business.	Mitchelmore and Rowley (2010)
	Skills such as opportunity recognition, innovation, and risk management are critical; women may face confidence gaps despite having the ability.	Wilson et al., 2007; Kelley et al., 2017
	Training programs significantly improve entrepreneurial abilities and intention.	Martin et al., 2013
Legal Restrictions (LR)	Legal, policy, or institutional barriers that hinder entrepreneurial activities.	Aidis, Estrin and Mickiewicz (2008)
	Legal and institutional barriers, such as property rights, registration processes, and discriminatory laws, reduce women's entrepreneurial engagement.	Hallward-Driemeier and Hasan, 2013; World Bank, 2020
Entrepreneurial Participation of Women (EPW)	The degree and manner in which women engage in entrepreneurship.	Brush, de Bruin, and Welter (2009)
	Women tend to be overrepresented in necessity-driven entrepreneurship rather than opportunity-driven ventures.	Minniti and Naudé, 2010
	Despite global increases, women's participation is uneven across regions due to structural and cultural factors.	GEM Report, 2021
Self-Leadership (SL)	The process through which individuals influence and motivate themselves to achieve goals.	Neck and Houghton (2006)
	Self-leadership positively influences entrepreneurial intention and persistence through self-efficacy and goal-setting.	Carmeli et al. (2006)
	Women with higher self-leadership traits are more resilient and adaptable in entrepreneurial settings.	Manz (2015)
Social Support (SS)	Emotional, informational, or material assistance provided by others.	Aldrich and Cliff (2003)
	Support from peers, mentors, and networks significantly impacts women's motivation and business continuity.	Roomi and Harrison, 2010; Noguera et al., 2013
	Emotional and informational support play a stronger role than financial support in early stages.	Greve and Salaff, 2003
Family Influence (FI)	The impact of family background, expectations, and support on entrepreneurial decisions.	Carr and Sequeira (2007)
	Family support, both emotional and financial, is critical, but family obligations may also constrain entrepreneurial activity.	Kirkwood, 2007; Shelton, 2006
	Cultural expectations regarding gender roles often affect the level and type of family support.	Baughn et al., 2006

Entrepreneurial Participation of Women

Women entrepreneurs are a unique group of women that look at organising and running enterprises on their own (Tryphone & Mkenda, 2022). Although women entrepreneurs have been recognised for their contribution to corporate growth their participation in entrepreneurship is still relatively constrained (Aparicio et al., 2022). Therefore, it is important to involve the policymakers, experts, researchers in order to come up with effective

strategies and workable solutions for the development of women entrepreneurship in the developing countries (Ng et al., 2022).

Sahira and Surangi (2022) indicated that 252 million women are entrepreneurs in the world and are comparatively less than men. However, both male and female contributors are prevalent in all locations from the United States and Australia to Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, and Europe (Dávila & Lluch 2022). Asian emerging nations are promoting women entrepreneurship and empowerment,

yet women's participation in Indian stands at 1 percent as against 21 percent of male, thus raising the need to understand challenges faced by them (Khan, 2020).

Factors for Women Entrepreneurs

SOBALIE (2022) posited that, female entrepreneurs encounter several barriers such as the absence of social support, wok/family conflicts, absence of entrepreneurial education, insufficient financial resources, lack of motivation and fear of failure. Additionally, limited access to capital, gender discrimination and lack of training have been recognized as major constraints for women entrepreneurs. In India, slouching social change and repressive norms only compound challenges such as patriarchal practices and unequal opportunities (Khan, 2020). Family and women: Ali (2016) argues that family support is essential for women entrepreneurship and if it is lacking or there is any problem in marriage, women might not be able to work and manage family responsibility which is difficult by nature (Raza et al., 2020). This problem stems from Societal expectations and traditional values that has been imposed by society, in particular, women's low participation in entrepreneurship, particularly in the hospitality and tourism industry (Auth & Peukert 2022). Furthermore, the lack of entrepreneurial skills strongly restricts female entrepreneurs since they are unable to efficiently manage business operations (Rosca et al., 2020).

However, access to financial resources is one of the main challenges confronted by women led firms (Ali, 2016). Moreover, male-dominated industries and a lack of legal acumen can pose challenges to women entrepreneurs. Salahuddin et al. (2021), women have low levels of legal awareness and may need to turn to men as proxies for accessing legal services. Conversely, we have very little empirical research on women's job performance and leadership, indicating that we need research on the effect of gender discrimination on their confidence and managerial competence (Visser & van Scheers 2018). One key leadership style, self-leadership, which has a positive relation with the well-being and business performance of entrepreneurs, is defined by the ability to lead oneself, and potentially others (Ho & Nesbit, 2018). With the foregoing point in mind, the main purpose of this study is to examine some factors which restrict participation of women in entrepreneurship.

Therefore, the study presents the following hypotheses:

H: Entrepreneurial Participation of Women is significantly influenced by Family Influence (H1), Social Support (H2), Entrepreneurial Abilities (H3), Finance Availability (H4), Legal Restrictions (H5) and Self-leadership (H6).

Relationship Between Challenges for Women Entrepreneurs and Self-Leadership

The identification of strategic domains for self-leadership implementation is crucial for driving entrepreneurial growth in today's corporate environment (Ziyae & Heydari, 2016). Self-leadership encompasses the procedural aspect of establishing objectives and harnessing the inherent capacities of human resources (Shatzer et al., 2014). Self-leadership involves strategies individuals use to motivate themselves for higher performance and growth, focusing on behavioral tactics, natural rewards, and positive thinking (Neck & Manz, 2010). This study aims to explore how individual characteristics affect the use of self-leadership tactics, as evolving workplace dynamics demand more responsibility and high performance from employees. In a study conducted by Fry (2003), it was underscored that Self-leadership is key to enhancing the anticipation and reliability needed to achieve organizational goals. However, it is crucial to emphasise that self-leadership is a necessary characteristic for attaining success. According to Cristofaro and Giardino (2020), Personality traits shaped by social, educational, and home environments play a key role in developing self-leadership based on values. Thus, the present study formulates the subsequent hypothesis:

H: Self-Leadership is significantly influenced FI (H7), SS (H8), EA (H9), FA (H10) and LR (H11).

Mediating Role of Self-Leadership

SOBALIE (2022) posited that, female entrepreneurs encounter several barriers such as the absence of social support, wok/family conflicts, absence of entrepreneurial education, insufficient financial resources, lack of motivation and fear of failure. Additionally, limited access to capital, gender discrimination and lack of training have been recognized as major constraints for women entrepreneurs. In India, slouching social change and repressive norms only compound challenges such as patriarchal practices and unequal opportunities (Khan, 2020). Family and women: Ali (2016) argues that family support is essential for women entrepreneurship and if it is lacking or there is any problem in marriage, women might not be able to work and manage family responsibility which is difficult by nature (Raza et al., 2020). This problem stems from Societal expectations and traditional values that has been imposed by society, in particular, women's low participation in entrepreneurship, particularly in the hospitality and tourism industry (Auth & Peukert, 2022). Furthermore, the lack of entrepreneurial

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This research, which investigates the mediating role of self-leadership within the setting of India, proposes the following:

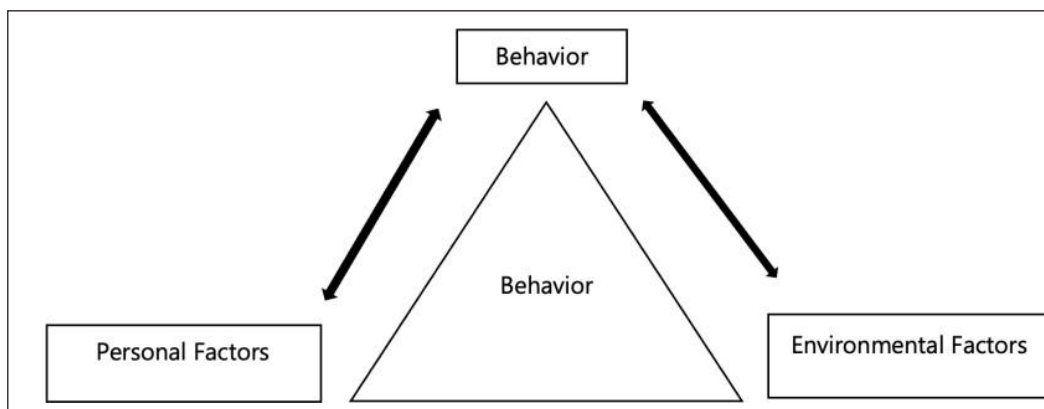
H12: Self-leadership significantly mediates the relationship between Family Influence (H12), Social Support (H13), Entrepreneurial Abilities (H14), Finance Availability (H15), Legal Restrictions (H16) and Entrepreneurial Participation of Women.

THE SOCIAL LEARNING THEORY

The present study is based on Bandura's (1977) social learning theory, which emphasises the importance of

witnessing, modelling, attitudes, and emotional responses exhibited by individuals. Bandura proposed that the process of learning might become intricate and precarious when individuals depend only on their own actions to determine their course of action. In contrast, a significant portion of human behaviour is acquired through the process of observational learning. This cognitive process involves individuals studying others and subsequently forming mental representations of newly seen behaviours. These encoded observations then serve as guides for future actions (Bandura, 1977).

The social learning hypothesis posits that human behaviour is shaped by the continuous interplay of psychological, social, and environmental factors. The observational learning process comprises several essential elements. Firstly, attention is a crucial component, as it necessitates the allocation of significant focus towards the observed behaviours and the attributes of the individuals performing them. Secondly, retention plays a vital role, as it involves the encoding and storage of mental representations of the observed behaviours. Thirdly, motor reproduction is a key aspect, as it entails the translation of these mental representations into actual behaviours through the utilisation of fundamental skills and self-perceived capabilities. Lastly, motivation encompasses various factors, including external influences, intrinsic drives, and self-reinforcement, which collectively serve as driving forces behind behaviour. The social learning theory has made substantial contributions to the area of psychology and our comprehension of behaviour by integrating cognitive processes such as thinking and memory.



Source: Bandura, 1977.

Fig. 1: Social Learning Theory

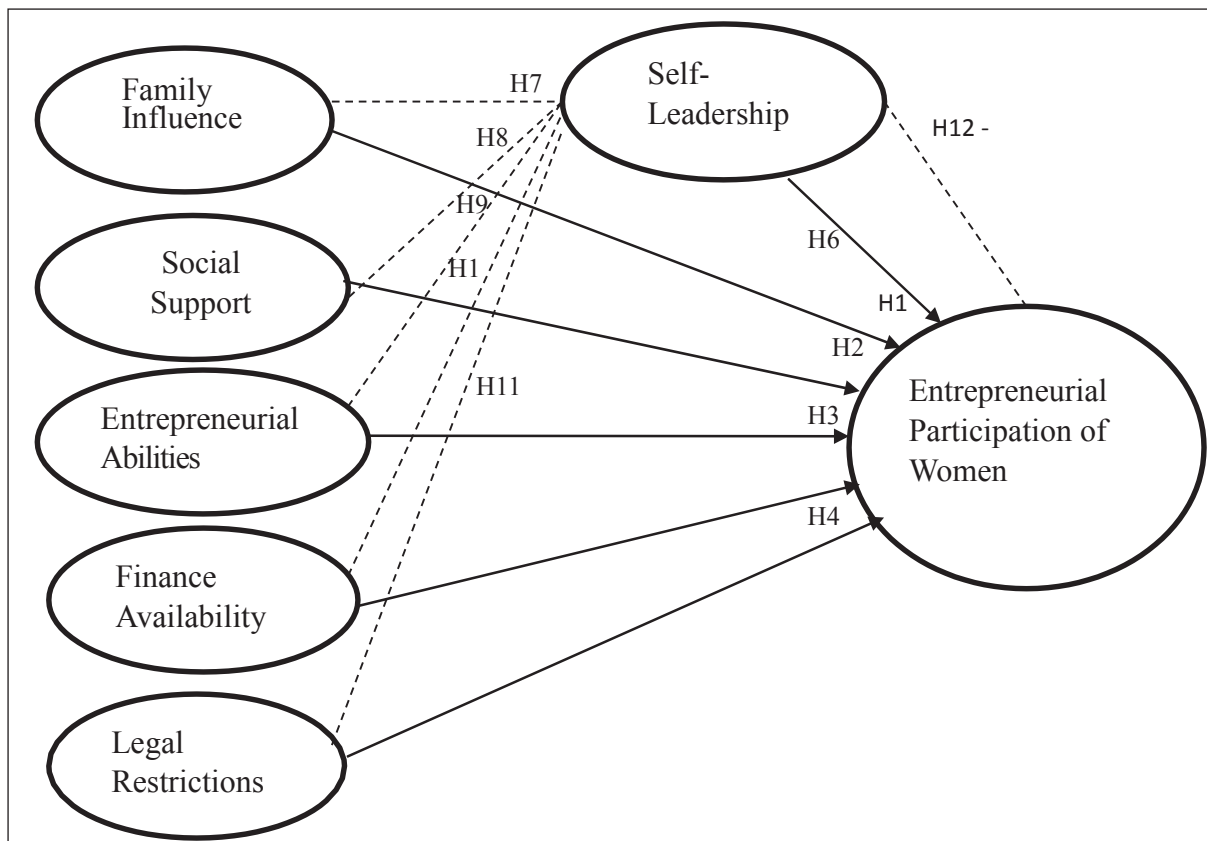
This study utilises the social learning theory to examine the behavioural patterns exhibited by women entrepreneurs. This theoretical framework offers a comprehensive approach to

analysing the diverse obstacles present in the entrepreneurial ecosystem that impact female entrepreneurs (Neumeyer et al., 2019). The problems encountered by women entrepreneurs

in their environment cover a range of factors, including legislative, social, financial, economic, and behavioural aspects. This study utilises a theoretical framework to examine the influence of personal variables, particularly self-leadership, on the entrepreneurial behaviour of women. This idea plays a crucial role in comprehending the manner in which environmental influences, in combination with self-

leadership, influence the behaviour of female entrepreneurs (Olsson & Bernhard, 2020). Several scholars have employed this theoretical framework to get a deeper understanding of the influence of environmental and personal variables on the entrepreneurial behaviour of women (Agarwal & Lenka, 2016; Wannamakok & Chang, 2020).

Conceptual Framework



Source: CFA, AMOS 23.

Fig. 2: Proposed Conceptual Model of Entrepreneurial Participation of Women

METHODOLOGY

The present quantitative study focused on female entrepreneurs in Sikkim's hotel and tourism sectors, using snowball sampling to collect data from participants in Gangtok, Pakyong, and Namchi. The study used a questionnaire survey with a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Agree to 5 = Strongly Disagree) to collect data, aiming to reduce respondent dissatisfaction.

A total of 960 were distributed questionnaires out of which 744 were analyzed, yielding a 77.5% response rate. The

study examined how factors like Family Influence, Social Support, entrepreneurial abilities, Financial access, legal restraints, and self-leadership affect women's entrepreneurial engagement. Furthermore, this study also explored self-leadership as a mediator between various factors—like work-family conflict, social support, entrepreneurial skills, financial access, and legal constraints—and women's entrepreneurial engagement, using established measurement scales, including Zeidan and Bahrami's scale for Family Influence (2011). The assessment of Entrepreneurial Abilities was conducted using a scale developed by Kavuli (2014), which consisted of five items. The measurement of Finance

Availability was conducted using a scale consisting of five questions that were adapted from the work of Zeidan and Bahrami (2011). The measurement of self-leadership was conducted using a scale consisting of five items that were modified from Crossen’s (2015) work. The measurement of Social Support was conducted by employing a set of five items that were adapted from the work of Alhabidi (2013). The assessment of legal limitations was conducted with a measurement scale developed by Sadi and Al-Ghazali (2010), which comprised of a set of five items. The measurement of women’s entrepreneurial activity was conducted by employing a scale consisting of five items that were derived from Farah’s (2014) research.

DATA ANALYSIS

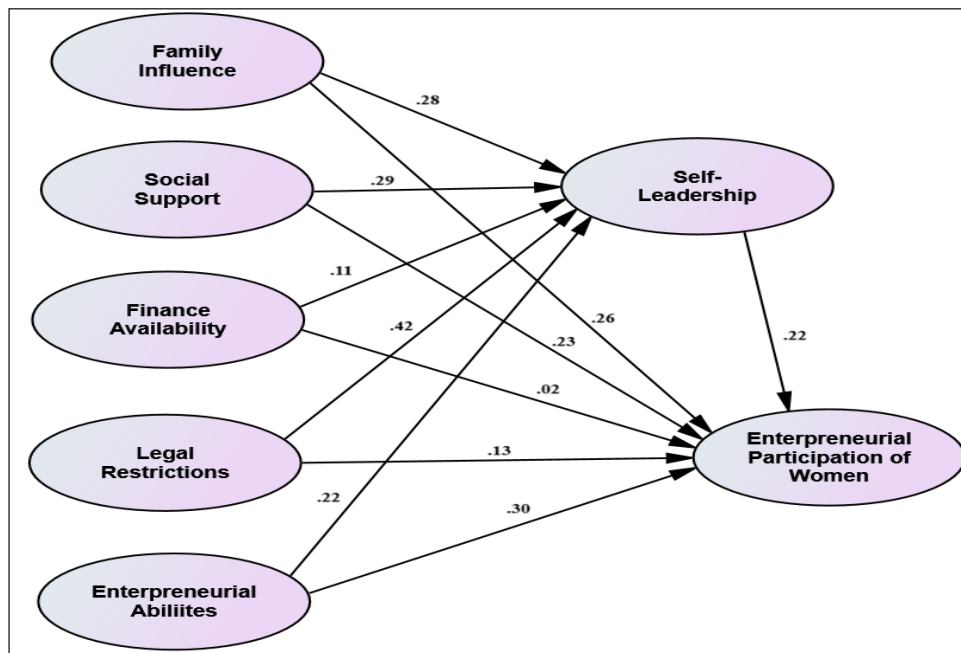
The study used SEM, a highly regarded method for evaluating structural models, often seen as a “silver bullet” in this field (Hair et al., 2020). The study assessed the measurement model for convergent and discriminant validity and tested the structural model’s hypotheses using a 95% confidence level.

Demographics

The demographic analysis conducted in this study encompasses various variables, namely age, marital status, education, and occupation. Among the entire sample population, it was found that 162 individuals, representing 22% of the respondents, reported being single. Additionally,

312 respondents, accounting for 42% of the total, indicated that they were married. Furthermore, 158 individuals, constituting 21% of the sample, reported being divorced. Lastly, 112 respondents, representing 15% of the total, stated that they were widowed. Regarding the distribution of age, it was observed that out of the total number of respondents, 186 individuals fell within the age range of 18-25 years, constituting 25% of the sample. Additionally, 146 respondents were in the age range of 26-35 years, accounting for 20% of the sample. Furthermore, 118 respondents were between the ages of 36-45 years, representing 16% of the sample. Moreover, 182 respondents were in the age range of 46-55 years, making up 24% of the sample. Lastly, 112 respondents were above the age of 55 years, comprising 15% of the sample. In relation to educational attainment, it is observed that 16% of the sample possessed a high school degree, 23% held a diploma, 25% had obtained a bachelor’s degree, and 36% possessed qualifications beyond the undergraduate level. Among the distributed questionnaires, a total of 744 were administered. Of these, 422 respondents, constituting 56% of the sample, were affiliated with the hospitality business. The remaining 322 respondents, representing 43% of the total, were associated with the tourism industry.

Fig. 3 depicts the seven variables that have been employed within the context of this investigation. This study examines the relationship between Family Influence, Social Support, entrepreneurial abilities, access to financing, and legal restraints as independent variables, with self-leadership acting as a mediating factor, and women’s entrepreneurial activity as the dependent variable.



Source: CFA, AMOS 23.

Fig. 3: Measurement Model

Table 1: Reliability of Constructs

	Cronbach's Alpha	Rho A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Finance Availability	0.899	0.908	0.929	0.667
Entrepreneurial Abilities	0.934	1.169	0.948	0.722
Legal Restrictions	0.895	0.939	0.911	0.623
Entrepreneurial Participation of Women	0.879	0.881	0.916	0.632
Self-Leadership	0.813	0.812	0.88	0.556
Social Support	0.941	0.963	0.958	0.756
Family Influence	0.941	0.946	0.958	0.757

Source: Primary Data, SPSS 23.0 Version.

Table 1 presents the reliability and the convergent validity of the constructs that we use to assess the measurement model. This reliability of the constructs was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability and rho_A, as suggested by Hair et al. (2020). According to a rule of thumb, it is recommended to exceed 0.70 with values for Cronbach's alpha, rho_A, and the composite reliability

to indicate sufficient reliability. In addition, to achieve an acceptable convergent validity, AVE should be > 0.50 . In this study, the results show that all the values for Cronbach's alpha, rho_A, composite reliability, and AVE were over the recommended threshold levels. This indicates that the factors in the measuring model are reliable and have an acceptable convergent validity.

Table 2: Profiling of Factors Influencing Women Entrepreneurship

Factor Name	Number of Items	Factor Loading	Eigen Value	Cronbach Alpha
Financial Availability	5	.790 to .850	5.231	0.888
Social Support	5	.853 to .909	4.012	0.912
Entrepreneurial Abilities	5	.814 to .920	2.951	0.911
Legal Restrictions	4	.737 to .917	2.113	0.929
Entrepreneurial Participation of Women	5	.719 to .840	1.982	0.876
Self-Leadership	4	.659 to .787	1.168	0.812

Source: Primary Data, SPSS 23.0 Version.

The constructs' outer loading values are presented in Table 2. It is recommended, based on the findings of Hair et al. (2017), that these values should not be below 0.700 in order to guarantee the validity and reliability of the results. Within the scope of this investigation, certain items had outer

loading values that fell below the prescribed level. However, these items were included in the analysis due to the absence of any noteworthy concerns regarding their validity and reliability. This suggests that these items continue to have a positive impact on the entire measurement model, without compromising its validity and reliability.

Discriminant Validity

Table 3: Inter Item Construct Based on Fornell-Larcker Criterion

	FA	EC	LR	EPW	SL	SC	FI
Financial Availability	0.847						
Social Support	0.249	0.880					
Entrepreneurial Abilities	0.327	0.777	0.820				
Legal Restrictions	0.051	0.057	-0.087	0.826			
Entrepreneurial Participation of Women	0.439	0.151	0.157	0.307	0.778		
Self-Leadership	0.301	0.687	0.856	-0.161	0.047	0.899	
Financial Availability	0.003	-0.132	-0.147	0.348	0.286	-0.175	0.900

Source: Primary Data, AMOS 23.0 Version.

The assessment of discriminant validity in this study was conducted according to the Fornell and Larcker criteria. These criteria stipulate that the square root of the AVE for

each latent variable should exceed the correlations between that particular latent variable and other latent variables. The present results successfully met the criteria, so confirming the establishment of discriminant validity (Hair et al., 2020).

Table 4: Quality Criteria

	R-Square	R-Square Adjusted
Entrepreneurial Participation of Women	0.309	0.296
Self-Leadership	0.383	0.373

Source: Primary Data, AMOS 23.0 Version, Authors’ calculations 2022.

Table 4 displays the correlation between the input and output variables, elucidating the extent to which fluctuations in the output variables may be accounted for by the input variables. The present study demonstrates that Women’s Entrepreneurial Involvement (WEI) exhibits an R-square value of 0.309 and an adjusted R-square value of 0.296. In

contrast, the statistical analysis reveals that Self-Leadership (SL) exhibits an R-square value of 0.383 and an adjusted R-square value of 0.373. The aforementioned values pertain to the extent to which the input variables in the model can account for the variance seen in the output and mediator variables.

Table 5: Direct Effect

Constructs	Original Sample (O)	T-Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
FA->EPW Involvement	0.088	1.363	0.160
FA-> SL	0.434	6.217	0.000
EA->EPW	0.339	3.271	0.001
EA-> SL	0.124	1.132	0.247
LR->EPW	-0.057	0.739	0.453
LR-> SL	0.236	2.326	0.001
SL ->EPW	0.232	3.381	0.000
SS ->EPW	-0.270	3.529	0.001
SS -> SL	-0.269	3.450	0.000
FI ->EPW	0.329	5.634	0.000
FI -> SL	0.289	4.898	0.000

Source: Primary Data, AMOS 23.0 Version.

Table 6: Indirect Effects

Constructs	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics	P Values
FA-> SL -> EPW	0.107	3.383	0.001
EA-> SL ->EPW	0.041	0.982	0.316
FI -> SL ->EPW	0.076	2.504	0.010
SS -> SL ->EPW	-0.042	2.340	0.020
LR-> SL ->EPW	0.065	1.857	0.078

Source: SPSS 21.0 Version, Authors’ calculations 2022.

Table 5 shows the direct effects of the constructs that are investigated in this study; however, the indirect effects between the constructs are represented in Table 7. The beta (β) coefficients used to indicate the strength and direction of the relationships between the subcomponents, while the t-values to denote the statistical significance of the relationships. A t-value greater than 1.96, with p value less than 0.05, is

considered statistically significant. The results of the study and, for each hypothesis, an assessment of their being accepted or rejected are then reported in the next section. The coefficient of (WFI) was positive and significantly related to women entrepreneurial participation with statistical support ($\beta=0.329, t=5.634, p=0.000$). Accordingly, it can be inferred that Hypothesis 1 (H1) is supported as there is a significant

relationship between Family Influence and women CEOs' involvement in entrepreneurial activities.

Hypothesis 2(H2) proposed is supported, as there exists a significant negative relationship between Social Support (SCS) and WEA (β -0.270, at t -3.529 and a p -0.000). Moreover, EA(ES) was positively linked to female involvement in entrepreneurial activity (β =-0.339, t =3.271, p =0.001). Thus, in light of the results, H3 (EA is positively related to women's involvement in entrepreneurship) is supported by the study. We do not find any significant relationship between Finance Availability (AF) and women entrepreneurial activity (β =0.088, t =1.363, p =0.160). H4 was thus rejected, which would indicate that having access to money has no overwhelming influence on the involvement of women in entrepreneurship. This result indicates that (LC) have no significant influence on women's entrepreneurial engagement (β =-0.057, t =0.739, p =0.453) and therefore hypothesis 5 (H5) could not be supported.

H6 is supported by this research, and this indicates a positive and meaningful link between SL and women's participation in entrepreneurship. The results of this study indicate that work-family relationship, social support, entrepreneurial skills, and self-leadership are significant towards the entrepreneurial engagement of women, whereas access to money and legal restriction have lesser effects. This study has shown that there is a significant positive relation for Family Influence (WFI) in women's entrepreneurship participation because of the work-family balance that might lead to a woman getting involve in entrepreneurship. Similarly, SCS has been found to have negative effect on the self-leadership, this may suggest that social systems and cultural have negative consequences on the self-leadership development among the female entrepreneurs found that and this is consistent with the study the results of this study. Entrepreneurial Skills (ES) also did not have a significant influence on self-leadership. However, it was observed that Financial Availability (AF) and Legal constraints (LC) significantly affect positively self-leadership, pointing out the relevance of financial and legal aspects in influencing women's entrepreneurship. SL acts as a mediator between WFI and WEI of women, which assists them in dealing with the work-life balance issues. It furthermore moderates the effects of social support (SCS), which implies that it may facilitate or impede entrepreneurial engagement, depending on cultural and social conditions. However, the study revealed that SL does not mediate the relationship between EA(ES) and women's entrepreneurial engagement, which implies another factors. However, self-leadership strongly mediates the relationship between Finance Availability (FA) and engagement in entrepreneurial activities, highlighting the factor of leverage of financial resources. The study also found the direct influence of legal constraints (LC) on women entrepreneurship without the mediating effect of

self-leadership (SL). Collectively, the findings highlight the significance of self-leadership in addressing the challenges and opportunities associated with women's entrepreneurship. The research does suggest how individual and context factors influence women entrepreneurs, and that's useful but it's also useful to make some recommendations.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

It also offers important perspectives on emergent and evolving challenges women entrepreneurs in India's hospitality and tourism industry, with the special reference to Sikkim. The results confirm the significant and positive contribution of Family Influence to women's entrepreneurial involvement. In the Indian hotel business, where long hours and grueling levels of customer service are a norm, family support is needed more than ever. The support of the family not only reinforces the feelings of self-esteem, it also helps the women to combine household work and business; to nurture and develop their entrepreneurship in a more sustainable environment.

Tellingly, research also finds that social support may detrimentally affect self-leadership in patriarchal India by upholding traditional gender roles, which restricts the independence of women who are particularly prevalent in the hospitality industry, in which leadership and innovation are central. It suggests the importance of self-leadership as the critical psychological mechanism of entrepreneur engagement, working as a mediator among family, social, and financial influences. The results have implications for training programs in India's hospitality industry, which should focus not only on technical skills but also on building self-leadership and resilience. Notably, EA alone were not found to be significantly associated with self-leadership. This suggests that having business skills is not enough – women also have to trust themselves and have the self-motivation to act on those skills. For India's burgeoning hospitality industry, this means entrepreneurship education that includes emotional intelligence, leadership development and self-confidence in addition to business skills. And even access to finance does not directly engender entrepreneurship, highlighting the need for self-leadership in making the best use of whatever resources are available. Legal boundaries have also indirectly impact on entrepreneurship through having effects on self-leadership. So, the way forward in India to address these challenges is to imbue women with legal education and self-leadership skills.

In the Indian hospitality industry The advancement of India's female hoteliers can provide a competitive differentiator for the booming Indian landscape since these entrepreneurs provide service which is more community-led, culturally enhanced and helps the industry align with

their growing need for experiential and personalized guest experiences. In the final analysis, this study highlights the importance of public and private collaboration in conjunction with education institutions and civil society to develop policies that promote women's skills and self-leadership. India's hotel sector has much to gain from these developments, by adoption of an inclusive and innovative approach that allows women entrepreneurs to lead and make a difference. The results also stress the importance of further research and action that is required to unleash women's full potential and self-leadership is a major contributor of sustainable entrepreneurial growth.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this study serve as a guide line for policy makers, government, NGOs and other relevant bodies to formulate and implement specific policies that drive and support women entrepreneurs in the hotel industry. To promote inclusive entrepreneurship-led growth which is sustainable in the long-term, these policies can address critical factors such as skill building, regulatory environment, financing avenues, and women taking the helm.

In order to improve women's capability and confidence, training programs in the hospitality sector could be designed that are gender-sensitive and discusses self-leadership, entrepreneurial skills, legal literacy, and financial planning.

To enhance women in the management of hospitality business, associations for hospitality and training institutions must include a self-leadership module in the training course to in the areas of goal setting, self-motivation, and decision-making skills development.

MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

Hospitality businesses too can implement HR policies that are inclusive, such as flexible work schedules, providing maternity benefits and childcare support, which will let women double duty at their workplaces and their homes as well.

Create peer-support systems and structured mentoring in the hotel industry to help women entrepreneurs develop resiliency and self-leadership.

Encourage cooperation among various government departments, travel agencies, financial institutions and NGOS in order to develop mutually supporting networks that support female entrepreneurs in tourism and hospitality.

At the state and national level, pressure can be exerted for introduction and monitoring of unfriendly gender entrepreneurship policy, with special focus on hospitality industry of the North-eastern states specially of Sikkim.

Recommendations and Future Direction

The research presents call for partnership and cooperation among policymakers, Civil society and concerned stake holders to help women entrepreneurs in hotel industry in India by removing legal barriers and financial obstacles. Advancing gender equality in all sectors and beating stereotypes, promoting family support, and using social media to expose female role models are critical factors to encourage women's entrepreneurship. Flexible banking systems and the promotion of public / private partnership will increase the support for women entrepreneurs. The exploration of feminist attitudes, the impact of education and socioeconomic status, and cross-cultural behavior will provide opportunities to better understand female entrepreneurship in the future. For women in Indian hospitality to be in a position of power, the active participation of society and inclusive policies is essential not only for gender equality, but also to unleash their accompanying economic potential.

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