



## **EARNING THEIR WAY: THE ROLE OF TAILORING IN WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT**

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### **Abstract:**

Women entrepreneurship plays a crucial role in economic development by creating employment opportunities and fostering financial independence. Among various entrepreneurial ventures, tailoring has emerged as a significant source of income for women, allowing them to utilize their skills and contribute to their families and communities. This study aims to analyse the challenges faced by women tailors and examine how they utilize their income. The research is based on primary data collected through structured questionnaires from 120 women tailors in Pollachi Taluk, selected using a random sampling technique. Various statistical tools, including simple percentage analysis, chi-square test and the Friedman ranking test, have been applied to evaluate the data. The study also highlights the utilization of income earned through tailoring. A Chi-square test found significant association between challenges faced by women tailors and age, marital status, family type, and finance source. The Friedman test ranking indicates that clearing debts is the primary utilization of income, followed by other variables. These findings underscore the significance of tailoring as a sustainable livelihood option for women and emphasize the need for further support and policy measures to enhance their entrepreneurial growth.

**Key Words:** Women Tailors, Entrepreneurship, Livelihood.

### **Introduction:**

Entrepreneurs play a key role in any economy. These are the people who have the skills and necessary initiatives to take some new ideas to market or provide a service and make the right decisions to make their ideas profitable. Women entrepreneurship has been recognized as an important source of economic growth. Women entrepreneurs create new jobs for themselves and others and also provide society with different solutions to management, organization and business problems. Women entrepreneurship can make a particularly strong contribution to the economic well-being of the family and communities, poverty reduction and women empowerment, thus contributing to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Thus, governments across the world as well as various developmental organizations are actively undertaking promotion of women entrepreneurs through various schemes, incentives and promotional measures.

Women entrepreneurs represent a group of women who have broken away from the beaten track and are exploring new avenues of economic participation. Among the reasons for women to run organized enterprises are their skill and knowledge, their talents, abilities and creativity in business and a compelling desire of wanting to do something positive. It is high time that countries should rise to the challenge and create more support systems for encouraging more entrepreneurship amongst women.

### **Women Tailor:**

Women tailors play a vital role in the fashion industry by creating custom-made clothing that fits their clients perfectly. They are skilled artisans who specialize in designing and sewing garments, ranging from elegant dresses to everyday wear. With meticulous attention to detail and creativity, women tailors bring their clients' fashion visions to life. Women often sewed clothing at home for their families, showcasing their sewing skills and creativity. As demand for custom-made garments grew, women started to establish themselves as professional tailors. They set up small workshops or operated from their homes, offering personalized tailoring services to clients.

Women tailors have a plethora of opportunities in today's fashion landscape. With the increasing demand for custom-made clothing and personalized fashion, women tailors can thrive in various roles. They can establish their own tailoring businesses, offering bespoke services to clients who seek unique and perfectly fitted garments. Additionally, women tailors can collaborate with fashion designers, boutiques, or clothing brands to create custom pieces or contribute their expertise to design teams.

### **Review of Literature:**

Susiana et. al. [2018] in their study entitled, "The Perceptions of Women Tailor Owners Regarding Factors that Can Increase Business Success" studied the factors influencing business success among women tailor owners in Payakumbuh, Indonesia. Their research explored the challenges faced by these entrepreneurs and the key motivators driving them. Using a sample of 148 women tailor owners, the study collected primary data through interviews and questionnaires, and secondary data from the Payakumbuh Department of Manpower and Industry. Statistical analysis, including multiple regression, partial tests, and coefficient of determination, revealed that both the personal characteristics of the women and their motivation significantly impacted the success of their tailoring businesses in Payakumbuh

The study by Ritwik Sarawat et al. (2020) "A Study on Women Entrepreneurship in India" examines women entrepreneurship in India, focusing on the challenges faced and their role in the economy. It surveyed over 100 respondents using primary data from questionnaires and online surveys, along with secondary data from blogs and articles. Percentage analysis was used to interpret the findings. The study highlights the need for women to shift their mindset towards entrepreneurship. Key

challenges include competition from counterfeit products, restricted mobility, and an indifferent attitude from fellow entrepreneurs.

A study by Ashwini N and Timmapur (2018) “Problems Faced by Women Entrepreneurs in Rural Areas of Northern Karnataka” examined the challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in rural Northern Karnataka. Driven by household responsibilities, limited mobility, and a need for low-investment options, many women are turning to micro-entrepreneurship. The study aimed to identify the types of businesses women in rural and urban areas pursue and analyze the problems they encounter. Data was collected from 360 randomly selected respondents in Northern Karnataka using structured interviews. The study concluded that women entrepreneurs experience various challenges across five key areas: socio-personal (primarily the burden of dual duties), marketing, government assistance, financial assistance, and production.

Ameena Begum et. al [2023], “Challenges and Prospects of Women Entrepreneurs India” explored the challenges and prospects of women entrepreneurs in India. The study aimed to identify the obstacles faced by women running small businesses and suggest solutions. Data was collected from 301 women entrepreneurs across India using questionnaires and interviews, supplemented by secondary data from various sources. The study found that many women-owned businesses are small and concentrated in the service sector. Key challenges identified include funding, marketing and sales, education, and safety.

**Statement of the Research Problem:**

In many parts of the world, women face challenges when starting and running their own businesses. These challenges can include limited access to financial resources, gender-based discrimination, cultural biases, lack of mentorship and balancing family responsibilities with business pursuits. Moreover, the scarcity of supportive networks and mentorship opportunities exacerbates these hurdles, as women may lack access to vital guidance and resources essential for business growth. Consequently, many women entrepreneurs struggle to establish and sustain successful ventures, impacting their economic empowerment and societal contributions. Addressing these multifaceted challenges is essential to fostering an inclusive entrepreneurial environment that empowers women to thrive and contribute to economic development.

**Objectives:**

- To analyze the challenges faced by women tailors.
- To identify the utilization of income earned through tailoring.

**Research Methodology:**

The present study is mainly based on primary data. It is collected by distributing the questionnaire and the questionnaire containing questions relating to women entrepreneur. Necessary guidance was given to the respondents for filling up the questionnaire. The data are required for the study have been collected by using structured questionnaire in order to know women tailor. To undertake this study, a sample of 120 respondents from Pollachi Taluk have been chosen by applying random sampling technique. The statistical tools applied analysis the primary data are simple percentage, Friedman test ranking.

**Limitations of the Study:**

The data collected is primary data, which is based on questionnaire; hence the result would bear all the limitations of primary data. The study is restricted to women’s in Pollachi Taluk alone, random sampling is used because it is not providing sample for an infinite population.

**Data Analysis and Interpretation:**

Analysis was organized by using SPSS. The findings were assessed on each aspect of livability of street vendors to analysis the hypotheses of the study.

**Socio Economic Profile of the Respondents:**

Table 1: 61(50.8%) of the respondents are in the age group of 21-35 years. Majority 48(40.0%) of the respondents are studied UG Degree. 57(47.5%) of the respondent monthly income from business is Rs.11,000-Rs.30,000. Mostly 41(34.2%) of the respondents are working as a Tailor more than 2-5 years.74(61.7%) of the respondents daily working hours are 6 hours to 8 hours. The majority, 69 (57.5%) of the respondents, have employees in their shop.

Table 1: Socio Economic Profile of the Respondents

Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage	
Age	Below 20	10	8.3
	21-35	61	50.8
	36-50	31	25.8
	Above50	18	15
Educational Qualification	No formal education	16	13.3
	HSC	29	24.2
	UG	48	40
	PG	27	22.5
Monthly Income from Business	Up to Rs.10,000	37	30.8
	Rs.11,000-Rs.30,000	57	47.5
	Rs.31,000-Rs.50,000	21	17.5
	More than 50,000	5	4.2
Years of Working as a Tailor	Less than 2 years	35	29.2
	2-5 years	41	34.2
	5-8 years	17	14.2
	More than 8 years	27	22.5
Number of Working Hours Per Day	Up to 5 hrs	39	32.5
	6 hrs-8hrs	74	61.7

	Above 8hrs	7	5.8
Any Employees in Your Tailor Shop	Yes	69	57.5
	No	51	42.5

**Challenges Faced by Women Tailors:**

Chi-square test has been used to identify the challenges faced by women tailors. Table 2 explain that there is no significant association between challenges faced by women tailors. In Pollachi town on the basis of age, education qualification, marital status, types of family member, family monthly income, source of finance, monthly income from business. Thus it can be concluded that there is an association between challenges faced by women tailors and age, marital status, types of family and source of finance.

Table 2: Challenges Faced by Women Tailors

Particulars		No. of Respondents	Percentage	df	X <sup>2</sup>	Significant/ Not Significant
Age	Below20	10	8.30%	6	12.637	Significant
	21 - 35	61	50.80%			
	36 - 50	31	25.80%			
	Above50	18	15.00%			
Educational Qualification	HSC	29	24.20%	6	4.243	Not Significant
	UG	48	40.00%			
	PG	27	22.50%			
	No Formal Education	16	13.30%			
Marital Status	Married	68	56.70%	2	8.546	Significant
	Unmarried	16	43.30%			
Type of Family	Joint Family	29	24.20%	2	7.369	Significant
	Nuclear	91	75.80%			
Number of Family Members	2	3	2.50%	6	9.763	Not Significant
	3	40	33.30%			
	4	51	42.50%			
	More Than 4	26	21.70%			
Family Monthly Income	Up toRs.20,000	16	13.30%	6	12.214	Not Significant
	Rs.21,000-Rs.40,000	63	52.50%			
	Rs.41,000-Rs.60,000	30	25.00%			
	Above Rs.61,000	11	9.20%			
Source of Finance	Personal Savings / Family Support	78	65.00%	6	13.235	Significant
	Bank Loan	30	25.00%			
	Government Schemes	5	4.20%			
	Private Lenders	7	5.80%			
Monthly Income from Business	Up toRs.10,000	37	30.80%	6	5.468	Not Significant
	Rs.11,000- Rs.30,000	57	47.50%			
	Rs.31,000- Rs.50,000	21	17.50%			
	Above Rs.50,000	5	4.20%			

**Utilization of Income from Tailoring:**

In order to find out the utilization of income by Tailoring women fried rank test has been applied. For clearing debts rank first as the utilization of income by tailoring women. Promotion of enterprise is the second utilization of their income. For children education is the third utilization of their income. The remaining factors for utilization of their income is as follows Purchase household materials is the fourth utilization of their income. Savings is the fifth utilization of their income. To fulfill family requirement is the sixth utilization of their income.

Table 3: Utilization of Income from Tailoring - Friedman Test Ranking

Factors	1	2	3	4	5	6	Mean Score	Rank
To Full Filling Family Requirement	7	15	18	19	30	31	4.2	6
Purchase Household Materials	3	19	28	35	18	17	3.81	4
For Children Education	36	17	15	17	22	13	3.09	3
Promotion of Enterprises	38	28	9	10	13	22	2.98	2
Savings	7	13	20	27	27	26	4.1	5
For Clearing Debt	29	28	31	11	10	11	2082	1

**Suggestions:**

- Investigate the key success factors contributing to the growth and sustainability of women-owned tailoring businesses. This could include factors such as creativity, customer service, marketing strategies, and networking.
- Examine the challenges and barriers faced by women tailor entrepreneurs, including access to finance, gender bias, cultural norms, and balancing work-life responsibilities.
- Analyse the role of innovation and technology adoption in women-owned tailoring businesses. Explore how technological advancements such as digital pattern making, automated sewing machines, and online platforms have transformed their operations and market reach.

**Conclusion:**

This research project has shed light on the significant contributions of women tailor entrepreneurs in the fashion industry. Through examining their roles, challenges, and successes, we've uncovered the resilience and innovation these women demonstrate in their effort. As vital economic agents, their stories underscore the importance of gender inclusivity. Moving forward, it is imperative to continue supporting and advocating for the advancement of women tailor entrepreneurs, ensuring equitable opportunities and recognition within the entrepreneurial landscape. It's about stitching a future where women stand tall, proud, and independent. As we witness this transformation, we're reminded that entrepreneurship is a collective journey, and every thread counts.

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