# Role of Social Media Digital Platforms in Empowering and Establishing Digital Enterprises for Women

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**Abstract.** This research investigates how the role of social media digital platforms in enabling female digital entrepreneurship in the context of Pakistan. It explores the cultural and social factors that enable or disable women digital entrepreneurs and how digital platforms can facilitate women digital entrepreneurs by addressing these challenges. A qualitative interpretive approach has been used for this research. Extensive interviews with female digital entrepreneurs from Pakistan have been conducted. This article aims to extend prior knowledge of female digital entrepreneurship and interaction with social networking digital platforms since there is limited research. The findings propose two themes out of the research, the first being digital platforms addressing the challenges of time, location, and process of doing business for women, and the second is digital platforms breaking cultural barriers and empowering women. The findings concluded that digital platforms such as social networking sites are enabling more female entrepreneurs overall. Therefore, this paper contributes to the empirical studies on this subject and caters to a contextual research question that will make it original and resourceful.

**Keywords:** Women digital entrepreneurship · Digital platforms social networking digital platforms · Women entrepreneurship · Social media entrepreneurship · Digital entrepreneurship

## 1 Introduction

Female entrepreneurship was established as a respected field by the end of the 1990s, and a distinct area of academic research [1]. Since then the inclination towards the concept of women entrepreneurship has gone upwards in developing countries as well as compared to previous times, with reasons being first, the general inclination towards the role of entrepreneurship to boost economic development and secondly the increase in the interest of women in starting their businesses is owed to the fast rise in the female-led entrepreneurial ventures across developing countries [2]. The number of female entrepreneurs has exponentially hiked upwards throughout the world, where women are expected to fill a gap in developed nations whereas in developing countries it is observed

that most women become entrepreneurs out of necessity [3]. Popular studies depict the internet as a facilitator of entrepreneurial activity potential as it possesses the feature of accessibility as a digital entrepreneurial platform [1, 2]. Women are one of those groups that are facilitated by low barriers of entry for entrepreneurship [3]. This study will focus on the role of digital platforms in empowering and establishing digital enterprises for women, particularly in developing nations.

Previous studies that have studied the relationship between digital technology and women under the domain of cyberfeminism have determined the important potential of digital platforms for the empowerment and emancipation of women. Although, the effect of social and cultural norms on entrepreneurship stays underexplored yet [6]. Digitalization provides a safe space for women unlike offline concerns for a woman which makes their initiation towards entrepreneurship easier. Previous studies especially in social and cultural contexts have assessed the potential for digital entrepreneurship to provide an impartial and meritocratic platform for women that empowers them [7]. There is a realization that the way women interact on social media is not just because them being women but also because the online audience is mostly women which are intertwined deeply [8]. The stats showing that women have predominance in personal selling through social media depicts the innate trustworthiness and communicating brand advocative nature of women. Social media digital platforms have become an enabler of voice for women who had been previously not recognized and marginalized and they can reach a wider audience that is also concentrated on women [9]. Although, these platforms are also criticized for their negative elements as well, such as online female sexual harassment [10].

Digital transformation giants such as Google, Microsoft, Facebook, and Apple not only entirely transformed the business environment, but also changed the way we interact in daily life with each other. Digital entrepreneurship now leads the world in a revolutionary manner and is one of the most important economic development after the industrial revolution [11]. This article will study digital entrepreneurship and its role in creating women digital entrepreneurs in Pakistan and empowering them.

## 2  Literature Review

### 2.1  Women Entrepreneurship

Female entrepreneurship was established as a respected field by the end of the 1990s, and a distinct area of academic research. By that time female entrepreneurship had become part of a famous argument for the media outlets and was politically debated for labor markets and employment [12]. Consequently, women's entrepreneurship has gone upwards in developing countries as well, with reasons being first, the general inclination towards the role of entrepreneurship to boost economic development and secondly the increase in the interest of women in starting their businesses are owed to the fast rise in the female-led entrepreneurial ventures across developing countries. Women not only then support economic well-being but also lend a hand to supporting their households by investing in better education, nutrition, and health than men. Also, female entrepreneurs comparatively employ more women employees than male-led businesses. This not only empowers women but also improves the living standards of families. Due

to these reasons, women's entrepreneurship is a goal to increase economic activity and alleviate poverty in developing countries [12].

In recent times, the digital space is widely used media and is a platform that is a new space for entrepreneurial activity. In digital entrepreneurship, barriers to entry are rather less as the digital businesses do not require any physical office or expensive equipment and the flexible nature of operations allows to easily access the expertise of technology which is readily available without an enormous amount of effort [7]. Due to convention related to digital entrepreneurship that it is impartial and has a merit-based approach suggests that regardless of the extensive set of assets, some with just a secure internet connection, a laptop/PC, something to offer, and creativity can establish their business [5]. Digitalization provides a safe space for women unlike offline concerns for a woman which makes their initiation towards entrepreneurship easier. Earlier studies especially in social and cultural contexts have assessed the potential for digital entrepreneurship to provide an impartial and meritocratic platform for women that empowers them [7]. There are studies like Dy [13] that add to the literature by examining inequalities resulting from digital entrepreneurship that cater to, especially the marginalized people who are less represented in entrepreneurship, and one of them is women.

The abundant availability of information communication technologies (ICTs) is one of the main underlying pragmatic reasons behind women's entrepreneurship, especially digital entrepreneurship which is prevalent at times when laptops, mobile phones, and emerging digital platforms are readily available to every person [14]. ICTs have eliminated the liabilities attached to being a small business by linking them with large companies where they can combine their flexibility and independence with vastness and access to bigger companies. Mobile technology and other new technologies have provided the opportunity for single-person businesses and small ventures to coordinate, collaborate and cooperate with individuals working independently and foreign companies that are far away [12, 13].

In a study conducted by Fairlie [14], there was more likelihood of starting a business discovered when correlated with the ownership of a personal computer. This was especially in the case of women, who had the liberty to experiment with the presence of their computers to make business plans, study legal terms, research tax codes, and apparent competition in the field. This helped women is getting prepared to be an entrepreneur by learning about specific industries and lowering the costs of operations and marketing. It was additionally concluded by Fairlie [14] that age, education level, and marital status generally increased female entrepreneurship whereas the decreasing factor resulted in the number of children for women.

Females, migrants, and people of color stay marginalized in the domain of entrepreneurship, despite the surge in their entrepreneurial ventures. This phenomenon of an easy means of generating income is beneficial for the rather sidelined members of the society who bear greater hurdles in getting employed and for entrepreneurial aims they consider it to be superior and out of reach [7]. Thus, the literature suggests that women who meet challenges in a conventional type of entrepreneurship can easily find major challenges diminished while going for digital entrepreneurship. Women feel more comfortable in digital space and are regarded more than the cultural and social restraints attached to them for centuries. This concept is also engraved in the term cyberfeminism,

in this it is mostly argued in the literature that the offline environment is mirrored in the online environment for women [3]. There is a realization that the way women interact on social media is not just because them being women but also because the online audience is mostly women which are intertwined deeply [8].

In developing countries, like Pakistan is the context of this study, the major reason there is the limited economic development of women is the various patriarchal conceptions in the society where women hold an inferior status and have been ascribed roles with inferior status such as just housewives [17]. These patriarchal notions in society impede the evolution of women's entrepreneurship at least in three means. Firstly, the economic need for survival is one of the main motivations for social media digital platforms [15, 16]. Moreover, in the case of women, balancing their family life is also of great motivation [19]. Whereas the concepts that patriarchy brings let perceive women to be less deserving of economic prosperity and have low self-efficacy which reduces their potential to have entrepreneurial motivations and recognize the business opportunities [20]. Nevertheless, there has been evidence gathered in recent studies about the motivations for women's entrepreneurship in developing nations which include an increased desire for independence, autonomy, and achievement [18–20]. Secondly, the lack of economic capital to initiate a venture is balanced by social capital for subsistence entrepreneurs. The resources gathered by these entrepreneurs are mostly from their internal connections [22]. There is gender restraint faced by women which pose difficulty when finance acquisition is required in the appropriate amount as compared to the male members of the society [5, 21].

### 2.2   Digital Platforms Female Entrepreneurship

It was argued by McAdam that digital networking platforms such as social media play a powerful role in establishing female entrepreneurship. Digital entrepreneurship has been deemed as a means of overcoming the limitations that are present in the institutional environment, which also include the cultural practices which are unsupportive and have lower barriers to entry which enables the democratization of entrepreneurship [23]. This was established due to three benefits derived from social media tools which are; self-expression, connection with business partners, and customer interaction [3]. Media outlets have become a business platform where you engage with consumers and other stakeholders as well. Customers are contacted either through direct communication or with the help of influencers on social media who are regarded as credible and affordable. Women in Saudi Arabia accepted that this platform has empowered them and reduced their segregation walls. One of the very significant features of social media networking sites is sharing a connection online by finding a person online [24], and users of these sites focused routinely on the cultivation and maintaining personal relations through Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram [24].

Literature has shown that most of the incentives related to female entrepreneurship have a goal to encourage self-employment and creating small ventures, actively making use of social media networks to advertise services and goods, and using the technology of mobile phones that are proved to be beneficial for women entrepreneurship development [25]. There are computer-mediated tools provided by social media platforms that help share, and create exchange information, ideas, career interests, and videos and pictures

in the virtual networks and communities networks [26]. The main obstacle observed for women entrepreneurs is the struggle to balance their private and professional life, and gain financial resources [27], and social media is considered to be an aiding factor in enhancing female entrepreneurship. Social media can encourage establishing new businesses by women because of its flexible nature, nil or low investment, and operating costs for social media usage. There is the ease of collaborating, communicating with new people, gathering relevant information, and keeping in contact with others at a very low cost [28]. It is easy to find supplier and customer contacts through networking, social media also locates where the funding is, promotes innovation, and is a great platform to cultivate strategic partnerships [29]. Social media platforms are deemed to change the course of communication dynamics among businesses and individuals by expanding their networking circle [30]. And due to this very reason, many businesses have resorted to social media platforms for using it as a reliable and worthwhile communication tool [28]. Social media has a significant role in retailing, as it influences the buying decisions of the customers [31], depending highly on the customer reviews and promotions done through social media platforms. There are very few authors exploring the social media influence on the female entrepreneurs [25, 27, 31], even though there has been rising evidence on social media platforms giving rise to female entrepreneurship, in augmentation of the current businesses and providing services and interaction with customers [32]. Moreover, there is no academically proven evidence on social media accelerating the retailing entrepreneurship for women.

Some studies have explored the ultimate facilitating role of ICT in being a potential source for increasing economic activities for women, which applies to both developed and developing countries [33]. The gender gap has reduced when it comes to technology usage [34], women now use ICT to assist their entrepreneurial activities [35]. Previous research has concluded a gender difference when it comes to user behavior (e.g., mostly women use social media for socializing and maintaining relationships [35, 36]. Moreover, most works cited excluded the inclusivity of elder women and women from lower-class for which further research can be conducted to add to the literature.

People regard social media presence as a prerequisite for success as the most customer base is generated through social media and it is an efficient way of gathering feedback [9]. Both positive and negative feedback is regarded as beneficial. Digital social media platforms have transformed the communication possibilities for humans all over the world. There is an abundant number of options for digital social media presence, such as networking platforms (Facebook, Instagram), weblogs, wikis, and e-commerce sites which facilitate entrepreneurs to carry out their business in several ways. Social media platforms are considered not only marketing tools but also regarded as a mode of connection for women's communities. This also took into account the economic benefits and implications of women's online community building [9]. In the socially networked digital age, women are regarded as good transmitters of word-of-mouth, multi-level marketers, and brand advocates given the common assumption about women that they are naturally more expressive and social [37].

There are not only the social benefits women can derive from using social media platforms but also, they can use them to their advantage for starting their businesses and meanwhile balancing their personal everyday lives. Social commerce is understood

as an entrepreneurial activity that uses social media to its advantage [38]. To derive favorable results from social commerce it is necessary to understand the use of platform features for women. Therefore, as put forward earlier it is important to recognize the progressing interaction with the social media platforms [39]. In the era of social networking digital platforms, various forms of self-enterprise have come up that facilitate women to financially support themselves. Women can earn through their creative skills such as mommy blogging, blogging about lifestyle, and skill micro-economies [9]. This research also supported the notion that for middle-class women who are at the stage of childbearing, this micro enterprising such as Etsy is a life-modifying solution that extends an arrangement between financially sustaining work and non-paid home chores.

Where social media offers freedom of expression and speech, it is also prevalent that online sexual harassment takes place here [40]. There are different types of harassment including, blackmailing by using a person's private pictures, sending messages that are sexually explicit without consent, being condescending to people due to their gender, publicly attacking someone with explicit language, etc. [41]. Even though sexual harassment takes place with both genders but it is observed through research that women become the main target in online presence, also this kind of sexual harassment is one of the most common types of online harassment against women [3, 4].

## 3  Methodology

A qualitative interpretive approach was adopted to assess the enabling forces by social media platforms for women digital entrepreneurs through their lived experiences. [3, 5]. The data was collected through semi-structured interviews with female digital entrepreneurs. The interviews were conducted through online means except for one interview that was conducted face to face. The interviews were taken in English and Urdu. Urdu interviews were first translated into English and then transcribed for analysis. The sample consisted of women in the age bracket of 23–40. Most of them are students in universities or housewives. The interviews lasted from 20 to 50 min. The interviews were translated and then transcribed to identify themes and a thematic analysis was conducted. This approach focuses on the participants' understanding of their practical experiences and the way this affected their choice to pursue digital entrepreneurship [3]. A sample of 18 women dealing in their digital ventures was taken. Most of the interviewees were part-time entrepreneurs. They had their entrepreneurial ventures started from 1 year to a 5-year range. These respondents were approached through contacts. A purposive sampling strategy was applied to find women entrepreneurs on digital platforms [6].

Like every other study, the limitations of this study are acknowledged. Despite empirical contribution and significant implications, this research can be further improved for future researchers to study. Firstly, the sample size for this research was small and can be increased to gather more substantial insights for research. This research mainly targeted women having product selling business, but further research can incorporate bloggers, content creators, influencers, and service providers to cover all categories of women digital entrepreneurs. Also, this research mainly takes sample size from urban cities of the country, further research can include the excluded women from rural areas as well. Another limitation of this study is that almost all interviewees had rather successful

businesses, few failures can also be incorporated into the next studies for a balanced study. Furthermore, the sample size was mainly from Instagram and Facebook users, this can also be widened to incorporate other social media platforms.

The profiles of the interviewed women are mentioned in the below table, to maintain privacy the names of businesses and places are not revealed, women belong to urban cities of Pakistan (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Participant identifier

| Interview profile data | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Participant's identifier | Age | Type of business | Business age | Social media platform |
| Mischele | 40 | Bedding | 4 | Instagram, Facebook |
| Iqra | 22 | Design clothing | 2 | Instagram |
| Humna | 25 | Baking | 1.5 | Instagram |
| Zara | 23 | Design clothing | 2 | Instagram, Facebook |
| Maria | 25 | Graphic design | 1.5 | Instagram |
| Zenab | 28 | Retail | 1 | Facebook |
| Ubaida | 24 | Hand painted clothing | 2.5 | Instagram |
| Adila | 38 | Hand painted clothing | 5 | Instagram, Facebook, Twitter |
| Shanza | 29 | Clothing retail | 3 | Instagram |
| Zahra | 24 | Clothing | 1 | Instagam |
| Sana | 26 | Makeup retail | 1 | Facebook |
| Rida | 26 | Statonary | 1.5 | Instagram, Facebook |
| Sidra | 24 | Cooking | 1.5 | Instagram, Facebook |
| Maham | 27 | Cooking | 2 | Instagram |
| Rahma | 25 | Accessories | 2 | Instagram, Facebook |
| Saba | 26 | Doctor accessories | 3 | Instagram, Facebook |
| Khair-Un-Nisa | 32 | Paintings | 1.5 | Instagram |
| Nishat | 23 | Statonary | 1 | Instagram |

## 4   Findings

The following section summarizes the findings of research on two themes identifying the role of digital platforms in aiding and empowering women entrepreneurs.

## 4.1   Digital Platforms Address Challenges of Place, Time, and Ease of Doing Business

Female entrepreneurs face difficulty when going out for business, as mostly the industries or markets are male-dominated. It is yet not completely normal for women to roam around freely in male-dominated markets. This creates the challenge of place, as women going out and owning their shop would be highly challenging due to several reasons. Digital platforms have eliminated these concerns for women who become digital entrepreneurs, by the convenience of their homes they can conduct their business. Almost all the respondents of this research agreed to this challenge was solved by digital platforms. When asked why they chose the digital space to start their entrepreneurial venture, one of the interviewees responded as follows:

*"It is easier to start as you just have to create an account and there it goes. I had seen a couple of people who inspired me as there is no cost involved the way you have to establish a proper setup to do it physically. There is no need for that here (in digital space), you just have to gain more views and your customers keep coming. These days youngsters are mostly on these platforms. My father is extremely satisfied as if I have to pursue a job in my field, I will have to get ready in the morning and go as we have 9 to 5 jobs these days. But this is according to my convenience. I get up and sleep the way I want to; it is safe and very flexible."* (Hamna)

As mentioned above, it solves the concerns of parents and guardians who are worried about women's safety knowing the conditions outside. Another respondent mentioned:

*"What makes digital entrepreneurship acceptable in the culture is you don't need to go outside for doing a job. You can earn by sitting at home, especially for women. This makes women's life easier who want to contribute to the house budget and at the same time, their family doesn't allow them to work outside."* (Maria)

Digital platforms such as social media networks that are mostly used for business are Instagram and Facebook. Women found it quite easier to start a business on these platforms. As these platforms require not much assistance or any starting costs are involved. Therefore, most women prefer a business with an online presence rather than a physical store for their business.

*"I am a huge advocate when it comes to social media's benefits. I do understand the negative side of it as well because I have been in this business from the very beginning since my graduation, but I am a huge advocate of it. Because it gives you a lot of chances to experiment to reach out to a much larger audience, especially for small businesses and people with less money and less investment. They can have the comfort of their home as well without having to rely on other people. There are a lot of benefits when it comes to e-commerce businesses. You don't have to pay the rent; you don't have to cater for the maintenance, and you get a lot of chances to experiment. Physical businesses have limited audiences and a lot of hassle. E-commerce business is a lot easier and that is why I chose e-commerce business rather than physical space."* (Rida)

Since online shopping and social media presence is rising at phenomenal levels, digital platforms are considered to reach the maximum audience. As most of the respondents replied for choosing Instagram or Facebook was their obvious choice as they believe and according to their knowledge, these platforms would reach more audiences than any physical store. Also, they think that everyone uses these platforms for starting their ventures as it is easy to reach and increase their audience. Similar responses shared by the respondents are as follows:

*"It was because most of the startups are initiated there. One gets a chance to increase one's followers too."* (Maham)

*"It is extremely easy on Instagram as people just tag me on the picture of a cake made by me in their story or they share my post on their profile and their followers automatically are driven towards me and follow me. Initially, I used my account, so my reach was increased through my friends and family circle through a snowball effect."* (Hamna)

*"I use Instagram more than Facebook or any other social app. I have more friends and followers on Instagram. This helps me in spreading my business more rapidly. My friends and followers started to like my work and share it in their stories. Social media helped me a lot in this whole process."* (by Maria)

The ease of doing business from the convenience of home through digital platforms provides women with a lot of opportunities. Women who are housewives and have the responsibility of children and chores that they can not go out looking for work, use the flexibility offered through digital platforms and not only contribute financially but can feel accomplished as well.

*"I think social media platforms are perfect for women, they can be doing a job and well as manage housework also. She can sell what she is doing for a house by sharing cooking recipes, selling homemade food, etc. Social media platform creates many opportunities for especially household women."* (Maria)

*"Women are not just restricted to selling things online. There are plenty of other platforms to earn, like freelancing, digital marketing, and others. Digital platforms are like the rods provided to fishermen. They are tools to catch fish in the sea. They connect women with the world and let them compete on an equal level, making them feel confident."* (Sidra)

## 4.2    Digital Platforms Breaking Cultural Barriers and Empowering Women

Women meet with several hurdles when they decide to do something on their own, owing to the patriarchal nature of society and culture that is more prevalent in the developing nations. Women in countries like Pakistan have to comply with cultural and religious factors when taking any major decision in their life. Interaction in male-dominated markets is the main concern, as not only does this make women uncomfortable, but it is also not allowed in many households. So digital platforms have provided women a tool to see and experience the outside world, break cultural barriers by having their earning medium despite cultural restrictions, and making them feel empowered. Not all

interviewees were facing any problems due to the culture but knew at least someone who did, and also what most women around could face. They had the idea of what more opportunities these platforms hold for the women, thus empowering them.

*"I have not faced any issue but there are girls who cannot directly interact openly in a different society. Even from a religious point of view, many girls here do a veil (do not show their face to the public) so they can carry out digital entrepreneurship easily without showing their face and interacting with people, and they can freely develop their personality and job. Many families are unsupportive, and one finds it difficult to go outside in many areas. So, these things become easy digitally."* (Hamna)

Rida who runs her stationery business online, explains that she met with a lot of backlashes and that her parents were not supported due to culture, as women are expected to pursue careers such as being a doctor or a teacher as they are regarded as respectful career choices in Pakistan.

*"Let me start with my family. I have seen many people who look back and say that their families were very supportive but that has not been the case with me. When you live in a patriarchal society, having an over-ambitious daughter is not a good thing and that is a challenge even for parents. That is the thing that scares my parents because I am very career-oriented, and like to work. I am very passionate about working. They wanted me to take a teaching job where I get free at 2 in the noon and get back home early. But I am not that kind of person. Throughout my working career, my parents have opposed my job. Even now, I did not tell anyone in my family that I was going to start this business. I didn't even tell my closest friends. The reason was that I wanted to test it first and then launch it into the market. Even if my family would not have supported me then my friends would have. So, I wanted to test whether people buy things from me even with a small following. I had twenty planners in the initial batch, and it was sold out in a week. So, I did my testing and then told my mother. She said "Rida, do people buy such things?". So, she asked me whether someone buys such things or not, so I told her that there are people like me who do buy such things. So, I kept telling her repeatedly that people do buy them. People love stationery. I show her all the things and she appreciates them. It has gotten better but not so much that she will assist me in my work."* (Rida)

Every woman interviewed positively responded when asked if the venture has empowered them. Being independent gives them a sense of accomplishment which eventually empowers them in face of all the cultural or societal restrictions they have to face in a developing country like Pakistan.

*"I can raise my voice so there is empowerment. If I had to sit at home for one and a half years, and I did not have a job concerning my field, I would have been left behind. But now I am interacting with everyone through social media, so it does empower me."* (Hamna)

Women despite facing the challenges that come with online presence were observed to be quite satisfied by their experiences, as the price paid for being online and vulnerable to online world is quite less than the benefits, they reap from being a digital entrepreneur. Also, the hassle of online business is quite minimal when compared to conducting business offline. Although working online ensures work-life balance by providing the opportunity to work from home, but one of the responded Mischele, pointed out a very important drawback of being in online business:

*"There is no 9-5 timing for me. I am answering to queries, receiving orders around the clock. These cellphones are all the time buzzing with work related stuff. So its like I am all the time working. Sometimes it gets too much, but again I am allowing this by not keeping a work phone separate."* (Mischele)

## 5   Discussion and Conclusion

This article contributes to the literature on women's digital entrepreneurship. It highlights the contributing factors of social networking digital platforms to enable women's digital entrepreneurship. The questions answered in this article are mainly that how social networking digital platforms facilitate the entrepreneurial capability of women. As answered by most respondents that social media has given the freedom to women to start their ventures amidst social and cultural constraints. Given the social and cultural restrictions related to gender segregation, the social media digital platforms have the potential to improve the lived experiences of women [3], which was also confirmed by this study. It was also assessed that most women start their business because of becoming financially independent, which eventually benefits the economy and also their living standard. This research also confirmed through interviews that social media platforms play an important role in women's entrepreneurship [7]. They aid in developing networking with partners and customers.

The findings identified two main themes addressing the role of digital platforms such as social networking sites (e.g., Instagram, Facebook) aiding in women's digital entrepreneurship and empowering women in the society that are marginalized part of the culture and face many restrictions when it comes to nearly competing men. This study focused on the context of the developing country Pakistan. The research built upon the literature focusing on women's entrepreneurship in developing countries amidst patriarchal and culture-bound societies.

The findings identified two main themes generated through the interaction with women digital entrepreneurs. The first one is the digital social networking platforms addressing the challenges of time, location, and the ease of doing business for women. Enabling factors for women digital entrepreneurs are saving time, which women dealing with other home duties or studies regard as an important factor. Another main enabler is the ease of operating a business regardless of any place you are. Digital platforms such as Social Networks are regarded as an easy medium for doing business as it is very handy and with the help of a phone, you can conduct many operations regarding online business. Also, these networking platforms are already being used for entertainment and networking purposes by women which makes it easier. Interviewed respondents found this medium most preferred. Instagram was the most favored social media network as

they were already using that platform for networking with friends and family. Mostly mentioned that their target market was already on the market so marketing and selling products through social media were easier.

Social media platforms have an immense role in creating female digital entrepreneurs. These platforms are mostly thrived by women and thus have more space for products targeting women. These platforms such as Facebook and Instagram have greeted a high number of entrepreneurs and influencers in recent times. The Covid quarantine emerged at a time when a huge number of women starting their ventures or blogs emerged. As they had more time on their hand and they were bound to their homes so decided to be more productive. Especially students with various talents were seen most for taking advantage of social networking sites for their ventures.

The second theme identified is digital platforms breaking cultural barriers and empowering women. Women are from a group of marginalized people who have been kept away from entrepreneurship, especially in developing countries due to cultural and social constraints. With the advent of digitalization, the inclination toward entrepreneurship has rocketed upward by women. It has given the flexibility and safe space to conduct business by using their creative skills such as content creation, craft, cooking, retailing, and services. In developing countries such as Pakistan, women are not encouraged to go out and conduct business or even do jobs. Women are mostly responsible to handle home affairs. Also, their safety is preferred by male members of the family therefore they are mostly restricted to their home. Digital platforms have made the lives of women easier by reducing socially created barriers in society. Women now feel empowered that they can run their ventures even while being at the ease staying at any location they prefer. The enabling factor for women in a developing country for entrepreneurship is most importantly safety. And it was established that social media platforms are a safe space for conducting business for women.

Social Networking Digital Platforms come with lots of facilitating factors for digital entrepreneurs, but no place can be completely free from challenges [42]. There are several digital-related challenges faced by women operating online. Women interviewed mostly mentioned scams, harassing, not paying, or returning packages while selling their products online. These challenges can demotivate women who have a lesser budget for investment. Also, as there is no restriction on expressing themselves, people become so much demotivating and criticize unnecessarily. Online sexual harassment is also one of the main concerns for women operating online [10]. Still, as observed, the risk of going out as compared to operating from home are very less.

Through this article, the importance of social media platforms is focused on creating more female digital entrepreneurs. It adds to the literature on female digital entrepreneurship. These platforms bring marginalized people into the face of the world. This article will make the enablers of female entrepreneurial culture focus more on digital networking sites as spaces for generating more female digital entrepreneurs.

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