



Motivations and Issues for Women Entrepreneurs in Enhancing Business Performance in the Smart Tourism Sector of Bangladesh: A Case Study

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Abstract:

In this case study, the impact of female entrepreneurs' motivations and obstacles on business performance in Bangladesh's smart tourism industry is investigated. The purpose of the study is to provide light on the challenges that women face and the variables that encourage their involvement in entrepreneurship in the smart travel and tourism sector. This study aims to advance our understanding of women's entrepreneurship dynamics within the unique context of Bangladesh's smart tourism industry by carrying out an exhaustive investigation and analysis. The research uses a case study methodology and focuses on female entrepreneurs in

Bangladesh's smart tourism sector. The study looks into the main reasons why women choose to start their own businesses in this industry using qualitative techniques like surveys, interviews, and in-depth examinations of business performance metrics. The focus of the research is to provide insight into the tactics used by female entrepreneurs to overcome obstacles, innovate within their companies, and support the expansion of the travel and tourism industry. Additionally, the study looks at how these incentives and difficulties relate to business performance indicators like revenue growth, market presence, and sustainability in the end. The case study improves our knowledge of gender-specific dynamics in entrepreneurship from an academic perspective and has real-world applications for policymakers, organizations that assist small businesses, and female entrepreneurs. A more inclusive and encouraging business environment can be fostered by stakeholders by identifying the reasons behind women's entrepreneurial success in the tourism industry and addressing the obstacles they encounter. The ultimate goal of the case study is to enhance the success of individual female entrepreneurs in Bangladesh's tourism industry while also contributing to the industry's overall vibrancy.

Keywords: *Women Entrepreneurs, Smart Tourism, Motivations, Challenges, Bangladesh.*

Introduction

The research paper begins with an introduction that lays the groundwork for a thorough review

of the particular challenges faced by female entrepreneurs within the parameters of Bangladesh's tourism sector (Ραημανοβ γε φΔΙυοβ

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2023). An outline of the study's importance, the research topic, and the goals that will direct the inquiry are given in this section. Providing chances for entrepreneurship and economic empowerment, the smart tourism industry makes a substantial contribution to Bangladesh's GDP. The amount of women participating in the industry, especially in entrepreneurial roles, is still being investigated, despite the industry's noticeable growth (Shiri, & Jafari-Sadeghi, 2023). In this case study, the many obstacles women face in their quest for business success are explored along with the reasons behind their decision to start their own businesses in Bangladesh's tourism industry.

This case study's main goal is to comprehend the driving forces behind women entrepreneurs in Bangladesh's smart tourism industry (Gani, et al., 2023). Furthermore, the study attempts to pinpoint and examine the problems and difficulties these female entrepreneurs encounter in their pursuits. The study aims to provide nuanced insights into the gender-specific dynamics within the entrepreneurial landscape of Bangladesh's tourism industry by analyzing the interplay between motivations, challenges, and business performance. Globally, women's entrepreneurship is acknowledged as a catalyst for social and economic advancement (Dixit, et al., 2023). Understanding the driving forces and unique obstacles faced by female entrepreneurs in Bangladesh's tourism industry is essential for advancing inclusivity, encouraging economic empowerment, and providing guidance for focused support programs. By providing a context-specific analysis of the experiences of female entrepreneurs in a particular industry, this case study adds to the body of literature already in existence (Ben-Hafaïedh, et al., 2023).

The case study, in the particular context of Bangladesh's smart tourism industry, significantly advances academic understanding, policy development, and practical implications for the advancement of women's entrepreneurship. Subtle insights into the reasons behind women starting their own businesses in Bangladesh's tourism industry are offered by the case study (Ghouse, et al., 2023). The study advances our knowledge of gender-

specific dynamics in entrepreneurship by examining these motivations. Policymakers in Bangladesh can benefit from the case study's useful implications. Regulations intended to advance gender equality and inclusivity in the entrepreneurship sector can be informed by the study's findings. By providing insight into the experiences of female entrepreneurs in the travel and tourism industry, the case study advances the larger objective of economic empowerment.

Smart Tourism

The use of information and communication technology (ICT) to improve tourism's overall management, sustainability, efficiency, and experiences is known as "smart tourism." To optimize different facets of the tourism sector, digital technologies and data-driven solutions are integrated (Troisi, Visvizi, & Grimaldi, 2023). Collaboration between public and private sectors, technology providers, and local communities is necessary for the implementation of smart tourism practices (Torabi, et al., 2023). Destinations can boost their competitiveness, improve the visitor experience, and support the tourism industry's overall sustainability by adopting smart tourism concepts. Smart tourism is linked to a number of important elements and characteristics. Assembling and analyzing vast amounts of information about traveler trends, preferences, and behavior using big data analytics. This data-driven strategy aids in decision-making and offering improvement for companies and destinations (Rosário, & Dias, 2023). The incorporation of IoT devices to build a network of physically connected items, like beacons and sensors. IoT makes it possible to gather real-time data on variables like traffic, crowd density, and weather conditions in the context of smart tourism. Creation of mobile apps that offer real-time data, guidance for navigation, and tailored suggestions to travelers. Combining virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) technologies to improve tourists' immersive experiences. Content that enhances the physical world with an additional level of engagement (Omran, Ramos, & Casais, 2023).

By implementing technologies for effective waste management, public services, transportation, and city management, places can be transformed into smart cities or smart destinations (Rahman, et al., 2023). Encouraging both locals and tourists to live better is the goal of smart destinations. Implementing smartphone payment apps and digital payment systems to enable tourists to make cashless purchases. Installation of intelligent traffic control systems, ride-sharing applications, and autonomous or electric car technologies. utilizing technology to encourage environmentally friendly travel methods. Among

these are programs to track and cut down on energy use, effectively handle waste, and lessen the negative effects of tourism on the environment (Uddin, et al., 2023). Utilizing smart technology in hotels to improve visitor experiences. Automated check-in procedures, smart room controls, and customized services offered via mobile apps are a few examples of this. Allowing visitors and local authorities to communicate in real time. Providing emergency information, safety alerts, and local event updates can all benefit from this. A Comparative table of Smart tourism and typical tourism has been shown in table 1.

Table 1. Comparative Table of Smart Tourism and Typical Tourism

Feature	Smart Tourism	Typical Tourism
Information Access	Real-time information through mobile apps and IoT devices.	Reliance on traditional sources like guidebooks, maps, and brochures.
Personalization	Tailored experiences based on data analytics and user preferences.	Limited personalization; generic offerings for mass audiences.
Technology Integration	Extensive use of technologies like IoT, AR, VR, and data analytics.	Relatively limited technology integration; traditional practices.
Environmental Sustainability	Focus on sustainable practices using technology for eco-friendly solutions.	Sustainability initiatives may be limited and less technology-driven.
Payment Systems	Digital payment systems for cashless transactions.	Reliance on cash transactions; traditional payment methods.
Communication	Real-time communication with tourists through mobile apps and platforms.	Limited real-time communication; information dissemination challenges.
Transportation	Smart transportation systems with ride-sharing, autonomous vehicles, etc.	Conventional transportation modes with limited technological integration.
User Engagement	Interactive experiences using AR, VR, and social media.	Limited interactive elements; engagement relies on traditional methods.
Decision Making	Informed decision-making based on big data analytics and insights.	Decision-making based on historical data and traditional market research.
Security and Transparency	Block chain technology for secure and transparent transactions.	Traditional security measures; less emphasis on block chain solutions.
Destination Management	Smart destinations with technology-driven city management.	Traditional destination management practices.
Booking and Reservations	Block chain for secure and transparent bookings.	Conventional booking systems; reliance on centralized reservation platforms.
Tourist Experiences	Immersive experiences with AR-guided tours and VR-enhanced attractions.	Experiences based on physical attractions and traditional tours.

Motivations for Women Entrepreneurs

There are many different and complex reasons why female entrepreneurs in Bangladesh's tourism industry are striving to improve business

performance. These incentives show how societal, economic, and personal elements work together to encourage women to start their own businesses in the ever-changing travel and tourism sector (Liu-Lastres, Wen, & Huang, 2023). In order to foster an environment that

supports women entrepreneurs in Bangladesh's tourism industry, stakeholders, legislators, and support groups must have a thorough understanding of these drivers. Recognizing and addressing these drivers enables the creation of focused programs that increase the beneficial effects of women-owned enterprises on the sector and the community at large.

Economic Empowerment

In the tourism industry, female entrepreneurs are frequently driven by the possibility of generating revenue (Bagheri, et al., 2023). Establishing and growing businesses within the industry is a common motivation for many women, who want to become financially independent and contribute to household income.

Passion for the Tourism Industry

An authentic love of the travel and hospitality industry is a major motivator. Travel, cultural exchange, and the chance to give guests one-of-a-kind experiences are often the driving forces behind the success of female entrepreneurs (Eman, et al., 2023).

Community Development

A strong sense of community duty drives the actions of many female entrepreneurs (Hanafiah, et al., 2023). With the goal of fostering local economies, generating jobs, and improving the general well-being of their communities, they see their companies as tools for community development.

Overcoming Gender Stereotypes

The urge to question cultural norms and gender stereotypes is one of the driving forces behind this (Khan, 2023). The aspirations of female entrepreneurs are to defy conventional wisdom, demonstrate their competence in leadership positions, and open doors for other women to pursue careers in the tourism industry.

Cultural and Artistic Expression

It's possible that women entrepreneurs are driven by a desire to highlight Bangladesh's diverse culture (Alonso Gallo, & Gutiérrez López, 2023). By showcasing the nation's

distinctive cultural heritage through their enterprises, they hope to draw tourists and promote cross-cultural interaction.

Independence and Autonomy

One of the driving forces is the desire for autonomy and independence. Women business owners aspire to be free to decide for themselves, direct the course of their companies, and govern their careers (Dewitt, et al., 2023).

Social Impact

A more comprehensive sense of social impact motivates some female entrepreneurs. They see their businesses as platforms for bringing about positive change, whether it is via community involvement, sustainable practices, or solving social issues (Martins, et al., 2023).

Educational and Skill Development

There is clear motivation for both professional and personal development. Women entrepreneurs may view the tourism industry as a platform for lifelong learning, skill enhancement, and knowledge acquisition (Dias, et al., 2023).

Networking and Relationship Building

Among the motivations is the desire to establish deep connections within the sector. It is believed that networking with suppliers, stakeholders, and other companies can improve business prospects and build a positive ecosystem (Arslan, et al., 2023).

Legacy Building

For some women entrepreneurs, leaving a lasting legacy are a driving force (Ahmetaj, Kruja, & Hysa, 2023). They regard their companies as contributions to the market and hope to have a beneficial influence that goes beyond their own entrepreneurial endeavors.

Issues for Women Entrepreneurs

Though women entrepreneurs may view the smart tourism industry as a platform for lifelong learning, skill enhancement, and knowledge acquisition in Bangladesh. But the ability of female entrepreneurs in Bangladesh's tourism

industry to improve business performance may be impacted by a number of obstacles and problems (Mohiuddin, 2023). A comparative table of motivations and issues for women entrepreneurs has been shown in table 2. These difficulties frequently result from a confluence of structural, economic, and societal variables. A comprehensive strategy involving the cooperation of governmental organizations, business associations, financial institutions, and the general public is needed to address these problems (Ediagbonya, & Tioluwani, 2023). The tourism sector in Bangladesh can benefit from initiatives aimed at empowering women entrepreneurs, offering tailored training, expanding access to finance, and creating a more welcoming business atmosphere. These measures can help overcome obstacles and improve the overall performance of women-led businesses in the industry.

Sociocultural Barriers

Women entrepreneurs may be hampered by ingrained gender stereotypes and cultural norms. Women may have fewer opportunities in the tourism industry due to cultural norms that enforce traditional gender roles (Khan, et al., 2023).

Limited Access to Financial Resources

It could be difficult for female business owners to get loans or investment capital. Insufficient financial resources can hinder the start-up and expansion of companies in the tourism sector (Scott, 2023).

Work-Life Balance

Managing obligations to your family and your career can be difficult. Women entrepreneurs frequently juggle being a homemaker, a caregiver, and a business owner, which can affect how well they balance work and personal obligations (Je, Khoo, & Yang, 2023).

Limited Networking Opportunities

Building professional networks is essential to the expansion of businesses. Women entrepreneurs may find it more difficult to establish alliances, access markets, and become more visible in the travel and tourism industry if they have fewer

networking opportunities (Snellman, & Solal, 2023).

Market Visibility Challenges

Gaining market recognition can be difficult, especially in a cutthroat sector like tourism. It may be difficult for female business owners to stand out from the competition and market their companies successfully (Haeruddin, Musa, & Kurniawan, 2023).

Navigating Regulatory Frameworks

Getting through bureaucratic procedures and complicated regulatory frameworks can be very difficult. It is possible for female entrepreneurs to encounter difficulties with permits, licensing, and adhering to industry rules (Almathami, & Mair, 2023).

Lack of Mentorship and Guidance

A lack of mentorship and direction can impede one's ability to advance professionally. It's possible that female entrepreneurs don't have access to seasoned mentors who could offer guidance, counsel, and assistance in negotiating the complexities of the travel industry (Gutierrez, & Vafadari, 2023).

Limited Training and Skill Development Programs

Women entrepreneurs may have skill gaps as a result of limited access to training and skill development opportunities. Success in the fast-paced tourism industry depends on staying current with technological advancements, industry trends, and business management techniques (Mohamad, et al., 2023).

Perceived Lack of Credibility

There may be opinions that women entrepreneurs lack competence or credibility. Another obstacle to starting and expanding a business may be overcoming these prejudices and demonstrating their expertise.

Sustainability Challenges

Finding a balance between sustainability and profitability can be difficult. Maintaining the financial sustainability of their businesses while

implementing sustainable practices can present challenges for female entrepreneurs.

Table 2. Comparative table of Motivations and Issues for Women Entrepreneurs

Factors	Motivations for Women Entrepreneurs	Issues for Women Entrepreneurs
Economic Empowerment	Income generation	Limited access to financial resources
Passion for Tourism	Love for travel and hospitality	Sociocultural barriers and gender stereotypes
Community Development	Local impact and community development	Work-life balance
Overcoming Gender Stereotypes	Challenging societal norms and gender biases	Market visibility challenges
Cultural and Artistic Expression	Showcasing cultural richness of Bangladesh	Lack of mentorship and guidance
Independence and Autonomy	Entrepreneurial independence	Perceived lack of credibility
Social Impact	Creating positive change through business	Vulnerability to external shocks

Effect of Female Inequality in Bangladesh

Bangladesh's tourism industry may be significantly impacted by gender inequality. Despite being a major driver of the nation's economy, gender inequality can have a number of negative effects on the tourism industry. In order to address gender inequality in the tourism industry, it is necessary to establish a welcoming and encouraging atmosphere that gives women equal opportunities across the board (Dykes, et al., 2023). An increasingly dynamic and long-lasting tourism industry in Bangladesh can be achieved through programs that support diversity, guarantee equal pay, and remove obstacles for women starting their own businesses. There may be less female participation in the tourism industry as a result of gender inequality. This may result in a lack of qualified women filling different positions within the industry, which would reduce the sector's overall diversity and level of expertise. Stereotypes and conventional gender roles may be a factor in the occupational segregation that exists in the tourism industry (Dykes, et al., 2023). Women may find it more difficult to obtain leadership or technical roles and may be overrepresented in jobs that are primarily administrative or service-oriented. In the tourism sector, there can be gender-based wage

differences, with women frequently making less than men for equivalent roles. Women in the tourism industry may have fewer opportunities to start their own businesses as a result of gender inequality. Obstacles to obtaining capital, connections, and assets may hinder women from initiating and expanding their own travel-related enterprises.

A lack of diverse perspectives in the formulation of industry policies and strategies can result from the underrepresentation of women in management and executive roles. The variety of viewpoints and cultural insights that tour guides and service providers can offer visitors may be restricted by a lack of diversity among them (Wall-Reinius, Kling, & Ioannides, 2023). The demand for travel to a place that is thought to be unsafe for women may decline, which would hinder the expansion of the sector as a whole. The underrepresentation of women in decision-making positions may lead to marketing tactics that are ineffective in reaching female travellers. The social and economic obstacles that impede the growth of sustainable tourism practices may be exacerbated by gender inequality. In the dynamic tourism industry, a range of viewpoints and life experiences are essential for generating innovative ideas and maintaining a competitive edge.

Study Implications

There are several implications for different stakeholders, including policymakers, support organizations, businesses, and the women entrepreneurs themselves, from the study on the issues and motivations of female entrepreneurs in improving business performance in Bangladesh's tourism sector. The research findings highlight the necessity of an all-encompassing strategy to enable female entrepreneurs in Bangladesh's tourism industry. The successful creation of an inclusive and supportive environment for women-led businesses necessitates the joint efforts of various stakeholders in addressing the identified issues and harnessing motivations (Taylor, 2023). The primary focus of policymakers ought to be on crafting and executing financial inclusion strategies that cater to the unique requirements of female entrepreneurs operating in the tourism industry. Facilitating access to grants, loans, and other financial resources is part of this. Regulations should be reformed to streamline administrative procedures and improve the business climate for female entrepreneurs in the travel and tourism sector. In order to eradicate gender prejudice and advance equality, e Training programs that improve women entrepreneurs' abilities in areas like digital marketing, business management, and regulatory framework navigation can be created and offered by business support organizations. Establish mentorship programs to link female entrepreneurs with seasoned mentors who can offer advice, insights, and assistance in conquering obstacles (Riojas, 2023).

Entrepreneurship education that focuses on the particular opportunities and challenges faced by women in the tourism industry can be implemented into educational institutions. The development of practical skills and the encouragement of an entrepreneurial mind set should be the main goals of this education. To meet the needs of female entrepreneurs in the tourism industry, financial institutions ought to create financial products specifically designed for them. Examples of this could be initiatives to promote financial literacy, specialized loan programs, and flexible repayment options.

encourage and enforce gender-inclusive practices in the tourism industry. Women business owners can participate in advocacy campaigns to advance gender parity in the sector. Engaging in networking events and becoming a member of industry associations can augment one's visibility and generate prospects for collaboration (Jacobsen, Kristensen, & Bruun, 2023). Trade associations have the authority to start initiatives that honour and highlight the accomplishments of female entrepreneurs in the travel and tourism industry. This can encourage people to follow their entrepreneurial dreams and help dispel stereotypes. International organizations can help female tourism industry entrepreneurs implement sustainable business practices by offering resources and support. The creation of comprehensive programs that address the challenges and motivations faced by female entrepreneurs can result from cooperation between the public and private sectors as well as non-governmental organizations (Narimanov, 2023).

Discussion

The case study's main conclusions and how they relate to our knowledge of the dynamics of women's entrepreneurship in the context of Bangladesh's tourism sector are the main topics of discussion. The case study's analysis highlights the complex interactions among female entrepreneurs' business performance, obstacles, and motivations in Bangladesh's tourism industry (Schin, Cristache, & Matis, 2023). The results serve as a basis for well-informed policymaking and doable actions meant to cultivate an atmosphere that encourages and facilitates the expansion of women-owned enterprises in this fast-paced sector. Motivating female entrepreneurs in the tourism industry is the possibility of achieving economic empowerment. One of the main motivators for women to start their own businesses is their desire to become financially independent and contribute to the household income. One key motivation that comes to light is a sincere love for the travel and hospitality sector. Travel,

cultural exchange, and the desire to give guests one-of-a-kind experiences are what motivate women entrepreneurs (Mercan, & Selçuk, 2023). The study shows that women entrepreneurs are highly motivated to support community development. A strong sense of community duty motivates many business owners, who seek to boost local economic growth and provide jobs. One of the strongest motivations is to overcome societal expectations and gender stereotypes. Future generations of women in the tourism industry look to female entrepreneurs to challenge conventions, break down barriers, and set an example for them.

Women entrepreneurs face obstacles due to deeply ingrained sociocultural barriers, such as gender biases and societal expectations (Tarasovych, et al., 2023). These obstacles could show up as restricted access to opportunities, networks, and resources. One major issue is limited access to financial resources. The growth and scalability of businesses owned by women may be impeded by their inability to obtain loans or investments. Building professional networks and establishing market visibility can be difficult tasks. A company's ability to grow may be hindered by a lack of networking opportunities, especially in an industry where partnerships and relationships are essential. It can be difficult to navigate complicated regulatory frameworks. Red tape and bureaucratic obstacles may face female entrepreneurs, making it more difficult for them to conduct business in the tourism industry. Notwithstanding obstacles, female entrepreneurs exhibit perseverance and inventiveness in their business tactics. In order to get past obstacles, many people take innovative measures like using digital platforms for marketing and implementing sustainable business practices. Through their businesses, women entrepreneurs make a positive social and economic impact in their communities (Bindhu, & Panakaje, 2023). By cultivating positive relationships with local communities, this not only aligns with their motivations but also improves their business performance. Women entrepreneurs demonstrate resilience in the face of adversity. Long-term business performance is influenced by an individual's capacity to

overcome challenges, absorb knowledge from past mistakes, and persevere through their entrepreneurial endeavors.

Conclusion

The case study offers insightful information about the intricate terrain of women's entrepreneurship in Bangladesh's travel and tourism sector. A complex story with implications for academics, policymakers, and practitioners aiming to promote gender-inclusive economic development is revealed by the synthesis of motivations, obstacles, and their effects on business performance. In the Bangladeshi tourism industry, women entrepreneurs' main driving forces seem to be their aspirations for financial independence and economic empowerment. Their desire to increase financial autonomy and contribute to household income is what motivates them to get involved. The instance research highlights the tenacity, inventiveness, and social contributions made by female entrepreneurs in Bangladesh's tourism industry. The study recognizes the obstacles that women-owned businesses encounter, but it also provides a basis for well-informed decision-making, policy development, and doable actions that aim to establish an atmosphere that supports the steady expansion and prosperity of these businesses in the ever-changing and dynamic tourism sector.

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Conflict of Interests

There is no conflict of interest.

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