

Economic Empowerment of Women Through a Mix of Traditional and Modern Channels: A Case for Women Led Informal Sector Venturing

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Abstract

This note discusses economic empowerment of women through the use of digital technology in the informal sector. Although the informal sector has inherent problems, by developing purposeful policies and programs, women's capacity can be developed to use opportunities created by the digital technology and help them empower themselves to create new business ventures and fight for their dignity and rights.

Keywords

Empowerment, India, informal sector, women

There are two predominant schools of thought pertaining to the understanding of the informal sector. The hardcore theorists of developmental economics believe that the informal sector is an economic nuisance and that its existence or presence in any economy is a vice than virtue (Henry, 1987). These theorists associate the informal sector with underdevelopment, stagnation, exploitation and vicious circles of poverty. As per them, it falls upon the state governments to curb this sector and formalise the economies. This school of thought focuses on the developmental trajectory solely from the lens of the formal sector and formal institutions. On the other hand, the modern empiricist school of thought sees the informal sector through the lens of survivalist system (Tokman, 2007). It is argued that the formal sector has failed to absorb the surplus labour and the informal sector has come to rescue the poorest of the poor from starvation and hunger (Bigsten et al., 2004).