



Unveiling The Challenges Of Rural Tourism Entrepreneurship In Jammu And Kashmir

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Abstract

This research explores rural tourism entrepreneurship in the enchanting district of Baramulla, Jammu and Kashmir. It pursues a dual-purpose: firstly, to unravel the conceptual underpinnings of rural entrepreneurship in this region, and secondly, to dissect the diverse challenges faced by local entrepreneurs. The study employs a carefully selected sample of 40 participants, gathering primary data through structured interviews. Additionally, secondary data from reports and academic sources enriches the analysis. This investigation seeks to enhance our comprehension of rural tourism entrepreneurship, shedding light on the unique hurdles and opportunities that characterize this captivating locale. The findings reveal a rich tapestry of rural entrepreneurship in Baramulla, characterized by diverse age groups, a significant gender imbalance, and varied educational backgrounds. The study uncovers financial constraints, intense competition, and infrastructural limitations as prominent challenges. The insights derived from this study hold the potential to inform strategic interventions and policies aimed at promoting sustainable growth and development in Baramulla's rural tourism sector, thereby contributing to the region's economic prosperity and social welfare.

Key words: Entrepreneurship, Rural, Tourism, Challenges and J&K.

Introduction

Tourism is a rapidly growing sector today, and as it expands, there's a growing demand for fresh and unique tourism experiences, particularly in rural settings that emphasize nature. Entrepreneurship isn't a new concept; it dates back to economist Richard Cantillon in the 18th century, who described it as the act of taking risks, devising plans, organizing resources like land, labor, and money (Coulter, M. 2001). The term "rural tourism" encompasses various attractions and activities in rural or agricultural areas,

often known as the "country experience." It offers opportunities for tourists to directly engage with agricultural landscapes, natural environments, wide-open spaces, and regions with limited tourism development. While rural tourism has been around for a while, historically, it was primarily accessible to the wealthy and privileged as an escape from the monotonous and stressful industrialized world. However, since then, more people have been exploring rural areas due to the growth of tourism. The rural environment and the distinctive cultures and lifestyles of rural communities are gaining popularity as tourist attractions (Alberta. & Irshad, H. 2010). An entrepreneur can be described as someone who introduces novel production methods, embraces risk, organizes and restructures social and economic systems, or exploits market opportunities to rectify supply and demand imbalances. Another definition characterizes an entrepreneur as a person who owns and manages a business (Barnett, D. 2015). According to The Theory of Economic Development (1911), innovation is the driving force behind entrepreneurship as economies evolve. In this view, an entrepreneur is an innovator who introduces unique ideas such as new products or improved product quality, novel production methods, entry into new markets, utilization of new supply sources, and the establishment of new organizational structures within industries (Schumpeter, J. A et al., 2017).

Entrepreneurship's significance has grown within the tourism industry. Identifying new income sources and opportunities for entrepreneurs is vital, as they can play a pivotal role in the development of rural communities. Entrepreneurial ventures unquestionably contribute to a country's and host community's economic well-being, producing a substantial volume of goods and services. Consequently, their overall economic impact is on par with that of large corporations. The economy greatly relies on entrepreneurs, who expand possibilities. Women and minority groups hold substantial economic potential in entrepreneurship, with an increasing prevalence of businesses owned by women and minorities in recent years. To foster the rural tourism sector, it's essential to link it with entrepreneurship as a strategic component in a country's development, supporting and advancing rural tourism (Komppula, 2014; Surugiu, 2009). Now more than ever, entrepreneurship and rural development are interconnected, working in tandem for mutual growth.

Kashmir is renowned for its stunning natural features, including folded mountains, deep gorges, waterfalls, and alpine meadows. The region boasts lush green forests, diverse wildlife, snow-covered peaks, vast glaciers, excellent fishing spots, and opportunities for skiing. Its landscape is adorned with vibrant green grasslands, perennial rivers, cascading fountains, and the unique floating gardens of Dal Lake. The area enjoys refreshing cool breezes, shimmering lakes, and a rejuvenating climate. Kashmir is also famous for its apple and almond orchards, saffron fields, and the warm and hospitable local population, making it a well-known destination worldwide. Tourism is the primary economic activity in the Kashmir valley, with a substantial portion of the workforce, approximately 20%, directly or indirectly dependent on the tourism sector. This industry has grown to

become one of the largest service sectors globally, thanks to the region's numerous prominent sites, picturesque locations, and a wide range of tourist attractions. Given its agricultural background, Kashmir can leverage tourism as a means for rural development. The paths to success in rural development and rural tourism can complement each other, potentially leading to the expansion and diversification of the rural economy (Shodhganga 2014).

Rural entrepreneurship plays a significant role in promoting balanced economic growth across regions, addressing the problem of industries being overly concentrated in urban areas (Kushalakshi and Raghurama, 2012). Effective entrepreneurship development programs can contribute to achieving this balanced regional development by establishing small-scale businesses in remote areas. Entrepreneurs in rural settings are always seeking new opportunities, and their efforts are vital in reducing development disparities among regions. They make use of government incentives, subsidies, and infrastructure to set up businesses in less-developed areas.

Tourism entrepreneurship

The concept of entrepreneurship originated in the 17th century and has since evolved into a subject of extensive discussion. While some define entrepreneurship as simply starting a new business, many economists believe it encompasses much more. For instance, Schumpeter (1934) argued that innovation is a distinctive characteristic of entrepreneurs, who engage in creative destruction. Arthur Cole (1946) described entrepreneurship as a bridge connecting society and established institutions, aimed at utilizing economic advantages and satisfying economic desires. Wilken (1980) viewed entrepreneurship as a catalyst that ignites economic growth and development. Jeffery Timmons (1990) defined entrepreneurship as the creation of valuable opportunities from scratch. Drucker (1989) offered a definition of an entrepreneur as someone who seeks change, responds effectively to it, and seizes it as an opportunity (Holden, 2009). On the other hand, tourism encompasses all activities and interactions that occur during a tourist's journey, from trip planning and reaching the destination to staying and returning home, among others (Mansourifar, 2010). Entrepreneurship and tourism literature have both been significantly influenced by business research. Entrepreneurship and innovation play pivotal roles in the tourism industry's ongoing success and growth, both on a global and regional scale (Parra López, Buhalis & Fyall, 2009). In the realm of tourism entrepreneurship, it is the entrepreneurs themselves who primarily seek to embody a specific social lifestyle, with economic incentives playing a secondary role (Skokic & Morrison, 2010). Tourism entrepreneurship can be defined as the set of activities associated with establishing and managing a legitimate tourist enterprise. These legitimate enterprises are those that operate with the goal of generating profits and meeting the demands and desires of tourists (Saayman & Saayman, 1998).

Literature review

Goyal (2018) conducted a study aimed at identifying the challenges hindering the potential of rural entrepreneurship. The research focused on the primary issues confronting Indian entrepreneurs, especially in the areas of marketing, finance, skilled manpower, and basic amenities. Additionally, it explored various challenges faced by rural entrepreneurs and proposed potential solutions to foster entrepreneurial success. The study recommended that the government should prioritize integrated rural development programs and foster synergy between education, innovation, and entrepreneurship.

In a study by Laha Sidhart Sankar (2019), the role of rural enterprises in transforming the lives of people in the Jalpaiguri and Cooch districts of North Bengal was investigated. The objectives included understanding the socio-economic backgrounds of rural entrepreneurs, identifying problems related to their socio-economic status, and offering prospects to overcome these challenges. The research employed a sample size of 288 and collected data through structured schedules and secondary sources. It concluded that rural entrepreneurship plays a pivotal role in India's economic development, emphasizing the need for integrated rural development programs.

Mani and Murugesan (2019) explored the issues and prospects faced by rural entrepreneurs in Salem district, Tamil Nadu. The study aimed to identify factors influencing rural entrepreneurs, examine the problems they encounter, and assess the impact of socio-economic conditions on them. Using questionnaires and secondary sources, data were collected from 110 business owners. The research emphasized that effective monitoring of rural development programs and timely access to credit could drive rural entrepreneurship.

Nanda Binita (2020) focused on identifying opportunities for rural entrepreneurs in Odisha and proposed strategies for their development. The study investigated the socio-economic background, available facilities, and challenges faced by rural entrepreneurship in Odisha. Data were collected through interviews from 288 participants, supplemented by secondary sources. The findings highlighted that rural entrepreneurship transcends age and gender boundaries, with middle-aged individuals showing a keen interest in entrepreneurship. Female entrepreneurs demonstrated equal potential for income generation compared to their male counterparts.

Bhushan (2018) conducted a study to comprehend the major challenges and opportunities confronting rural entrepreneurs. The research primarily addressed problems in marketing, finance, and essential amenities. The findings emphasized that India offers ample opportunities for small businesses, with the potential to shape the country's future.

In Suri Kavita's study (2013), the focus was on rural entrepreneurship development and women in Jammu and Kashmir. The objectives encompassed understanding entrepreneurship programs, assessing the role of women in entrepreneurship

development, and identifying challenges faced by rural women entrepreneurs in the region.

Objectives:

- To understand the conceptual frame of rural entrepreneurship
- To analyse the problems encountered by rural entrepreneurs in district Baramulla of J & K.

Research Methodology:

The research methodology section outlines the approach taken in the study, including the sampling technique, data collection methods, and analytical tools employed.

Sampling Technique: The sample size was determined using Krejcie and Morgan's formula, considering the research objectives. Consequently, a sample of 40 participants was selected. These 40 samples were drawn from the primary district of Baramullah. Simple statistical tools such as mean and standard deviation were employed for data analysis in this study.

Primary Data: Primary data were collected through structured interviews. These interviews were conducted by the researcher, taking into account all relevant aspects identified through a comprehensive review of the literature. Additionally, the researcher engaged in preliminary discussions with officials from District Industries Centers (DICs) and a select group of entrepreneurs to inform the data collection process.

Secondary Data: Secondary data sources included published and unpublished reports, action plans, academic journals, magazines, as well as reports obtained from DICs and the Khadi and Village Industries Board (KVIB). These secondary data sources were consulted to supplement and validate the primary data collected during the research.

Conceptual Framework:

The concept of entrepreneurship is multifaceted and can vary in meaning from one perspective to another. For some, it signifies innovation, while for others, it represents a willingness to take risks. It can encompass activities related to starting, managing, and owning a new business. An entrepreneur can be defined as an individual who either introduces novel combinations of production factors, such as new products, production methods, or markets, or as someone who is inherently inclined to assume risks. In simpler terms, entrepreneurship involves the actions of individuals who undertake innovations, financial management, and business acumen to transform innovation into economic goods.

Some of the seminal definitions of entrepreneurship include:

"Entrepreneurship entails bearing the risk of buying at a certain price and selling at an uncertain price." – Ricardo Cantillon.

"Entrepreneurship is any kind of innovative function that has a bearing on the welfare of an entrepreneur." – Joseph A. Schumpeter (1934).

Rural Entrepreneurship:

In contemporary times, rural entrepreneurship has emerged as a dynamic concept. Generally, rural entrepreneurship is defined as entrepreneurship that originates in rural areas and encompasses various fields of endeavor, such as agriculture, business, and industry, contributing significantly to overall economic development. Rural entrepreneurship is a complex and evolving concept that is challenging to define precisely. It refers to entrepreneurship originating in rural areas that have the potential to engage in various business, industrial, and agricultural activities, playing a significant role in the nation's economic growth. According to the Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC), village or rural industries are those located in rural areas with a population of fewer than 10,000 or a similar figure. These industries provide goods or services, with or without the use of power, and have a fixed capital of an artisan or worker that does not exceed a thousand rupees (Pandian, 1999). The Government of India has also provided a customized definition of rural industries, defining them as industries situated in local regions, towns, or villages with a population of 20,000 or less and an investment of Rs. 3 crore in plant and machinery (GoI). Rural entrepreneurship primarily operates within rural areas and plays a crucial role in bridging the socio-economic gap between urban and rural regions. It contributes to employment generation, economic growth, foreign exchange earnings, and entrepreneurial development. Additionally, rural entrepreneurship leverages the potential of rural human resources, adding value to available resources (Abhilash et al., 2020).

Advantages of Rural Entrepreneurship:

Reduces Migration: Rural entrepreneurship can counter the issue of rural-to-urban and international migration, reducing population shifts in search of better opportunities.

Value Contribution: Rural entrepreneurship creates value not only for the entrepreneur but also for society, generating net positive benefits from economic activities.

Increased Quality of Life: It improves the overall quality of life by providing employment, education, and better access to goods and services.

Innovation: Entrepreneurship is inherently linked to innovation, introducing novelty in business operations and contributing to growth.

Local Earnings: Rural entrepreneurship generates employment and raises rural income, contributing to balanced regional growth.

Skill Development: It enhances employability through skill development and harnesses the innate potential of individuals.

Stimulates Growth: Rural entrepreneurship fosters economic growth and GDP expansion, contributing to capital formation and overall development.

Types of Rural Entrepreneurship:

Agro-based Industries: Including businesses related to agro-products, such as sugar and oil processing, pickle production, and more.

Farm-based Industries: Encompassing organic and floriculture, high-tech agriculture, medicinal plants, aromatic plants, and more.

Animal Husbandry-based Industries: Involving dairy farming, poultry, commercial rearing of animals like sheep, rabbit, and goats for wool and meat.

Sericulture: Silk farming, which is a well-established profession, producing and processing silk products.

Traditional Handicrafts: Rural areas often have expertise in traditional crafts and arts, offering a wide market for crafts and traditional products.

Handloom: Involves producing and selling traditional handwoven products like shawls, nomads, and more.

Forest-based Industries: Focused on wood products, coir, bamboo production, honey making, and related activities.

Mineral-based Industries: Including cement, stone crushing, pop industries, and more.

Engineering-based Industries: Covering small and medium-sized industries producing agricultural machinery and equipment.

Services Industries: Providing various services such as mobile repair and agriculture machinery servicing, among others.

Problems Encountered by Rural tourism Entrepreneurship in Jammu and Kashmir

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1: Demographic Profile

Age	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 30 years	12	30
31-40 years	7	17.5
41-50 years	18	45

51-60 years and above.	3	7.5
Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	28	70
Female	12	30
Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Under matric	16	40
Undergraduate	8	20
Graduate	12	30
Masters and above	4	10
Income per year	Frequency	Percentage
50-1 lakh	28	70
1.5 -2 lakh	8	20
2,5-3 lakh	3	7.5
Above 3 lakh	1	2.5

The analysis of the data reveals a diverse demographic profile among the respondents encompassing age, gender, qualification, and income per year.

Age: The data reveals a notable distribution across age groups. The majority, constituting 45% of the respondents, falls within the 41-50 years age bracket, indicating a significant presence of middle-aged individuals. Another substantial segment includes those less than 30 years old, accounting for 30% of the sample. Meanwhile, individuals aged 51-60 years and above represent a smaller portion, at 7.5%. This age diversity highlights the generational composition of the surveyed population.

Gender: An apparent gender disparity emerges from the data, with males comprising 70% of the respondents, while females make up only 30%. This gender imbalance should be acknowledged in the context of any gender-related analysis, as it may influence outcomes and conclusions drawn from the data.

Qualification: The educational qualifications of the respondents offer valuable insights into their educational backgrounds. A substantial 40% of the sample holds an under matric qualification, indicating a significant portion of the population with limited formal education. Graduates make up 30% of the respondents, demonstrating a diverse range of educational experiences. Postgraduates (Masters and above) constitute a smaller but still notable segment, at 10%. These qualification findings underscore the importance of considering educational diversity when interpreting study outcomes.

Income per Year: The income distribution provides a crucial context for understanding the economic landscape of the surveyed population. A substantial 70% of respondents report an annual income ranging from 50,000 to 1 lakh, suggesting that a significant portion falls within the lower to lower-middle income brackets. In contrast, the higher income brackets are underrepresented, with only 2.5% reporting an income exceeding 3 lakhs per year. This income disparity highlights potential economic inequalities within the population.

In summary, these findings collectively offer a comprehensive portrait of the demographic characteristics of the surveyed population. They indicate age variations, a gender imbalance, diverse educational qualifications, and income disparities among respondents. These insights are invaluable for researchers, policymakers, and organizations seeking to tailor their strategies and interventions to address the unique needs and challenges of this specific demographic. However, it's crucial to acknowledge and consider the potential biases or imbalances in the data when drawing meaningful conclusions or making decisions based on these findings.

Statement of various Challenges	N	Mean (M)	Std. Deviation (SD)	Percentage (%)
Financial related challenges				
Scarcity of Financial Resources	40	3.34	1.031	66.80%
Insufficient Support from Commercial Banking Institutions	40	3.17	.988	63.40%
lack of Awareness Regarding Banking Protocols and Requirements	40	3.00	1.192	60.00%
Restricted Operational Capital	40	3.17	1.246	63.40%
Marketing related challenges				
Intense Competition	40	4.00	.909	80.00%
Limited Understanding of Marketing Management	40	3.87	1.124	77.40%
<u>Insufficient Advertising and Promotion</u>	40	2.92	.984	58.40%
Price Regulation	40	2.40	.960	48.00%
Competing Against Well-Established Brands	40	3.04	1.331	60.80%
Managerial related challenges				
Absence of Effective Planning	40	2.80	1.049	56.00%
Limited Understanding of Business Management	40	2.62	1.053	52.40%

Deficiency in Decision-Making Abilities	40	2.44	1.149	48.80%
Poor Communication Skills	40	2.51	1.255	50.20%
Insufficient Employee Motivation	40	2.73	1.018	54.60%
Infrastructural related challenges				
Limited Workspace	40	3.20	1.152	64.00%
Insufficient Power Infrastructure	40	2.98	1.154	59.60%
Lack of Available Land, Plots, or Sheds	40	3.13	.851	62.20%
Inadequate Transportation Facilities	40	2.41	1.065	48.20%
Scarcity of Water Supply	40	3.42	1.352	69.60%
Technological related challenges				
Limited Technological Proficiency	40	2.76	1.082	55.20%
Insufficient Technological Support for Machinery Use	40	2.74	.986	54.80%
Limited Understanding of Modern Technology	40	4.11	.976	82.20%
High Expenses Associated with Technology Acquisition	40	2.58	1.085	51.60%
Awareness related challenges				
Limited Knowledge of Government Initiatives	40	3.44	.950	68.80%
Limited Awareness of Emerging Marketing Trends	40	3.63	1.148	72.60%
Insufficient Awareness of Product Promotion Strategies	40	3.72	1.003	74.40%
Limited Understanding of Financial Management	40	3.65	1.141	73.00%
Limited Familiarity with Modern Technology	40	3.54	1.209	70.80%
Limited Awareness of Business Management Practices	40	3.44	1.34	26.80%

The data presents a comprehensive overview of the various challenges faced by entrepreneurs, categorized into different domains.

Financial Challenges: The most prominent financial challenge reported is the scarcity of financial resources, with a mean score of 3.34 and a standard deviation of 1.031, indicating a relatively significant concern among entrepreneurs, accounting for 66.80% of the respondents. Additionally, insufficient support from commercial banking institutions (mean = 3.17, SD = 0.988), lack of awareness regarding banking protocols and requirements (mean = 3.00, SD = 1.192), and restricted operational capital (mean =

3.17, SD = 1.246) are substantial financial challenges, each affecting more than 60% of the entrepreneurs.

Marketing Challenges: Marketing-related challenges reveal intense competition as the most prominent issue, with a mean score of 4.00, indicating a highly competitive landscape affecting 80.00% of the respondents. Limited understanding of marketing management (mean = 3.87, SD = 1.124) and insufficient advertising and promotion (mean = 2.92, SD = 0.984) are significant challenges reported by 77.40% and 58.40% of entrepreneurs, respectively. Price regulation (mean = 2.40, SD = 0.960) and competition with well-established brands (mean = 3.04, SD = 1.331) also contribute to the marketing challenges.

Managerial Challenges: Among managerial challenges, the absence of effective planning (mean = 2.80, SD = 1.049) and limited understanding of business management (mean = 2.62, SD = 1.053) are noteworthy, affecting more than 50% of entrepreneurs. Additionally, deficiencies in decision-making abilities (mean = 2.44, SD = 1.149), poor communication skills (mean = 2.51, SD = 1.255), and insufficient employee motivation (mean = 2.73, SD = 1.018) are reported challenges affecting various proportions of entrepreneurs.

Infrastructural Challenges: Infrastructural challenges include limited workspace (mean = 3.20, SD = 1.152), insufficient power infrastructure (mean = 2.98, SD = 1.154), lack of available land, plots, or sheds (mean = 3.13, SD = 0.851), inadequate transportation facilities (mean = 2.41, SD = 1.065), and scarcity of water supply (mean = 3.42, SD = 1.352). These challenges collectively impact more than 48% of entrepreneurs, with water supply scarcity being the most prevalent issue at 69.60%.

Technological Challenges: In the technological domain, limited technological proficiency (mean = 2.76, SD = 1.082) and insufficient technological support for machinery use (mean = 2.74, SD = 0.986) are reported challenges affecting approximately 55% of entrepreneurs. Notably, limited understanding of modern technology (mean = 4.11, SD = 0.976) is a substantial challenge, impacting 82.20% of respondents. High expenses associated with technology acquisition (mean = 2.58, SD = 1.085) also contribute to technological challenges.

Awareness Challenges: Limited knowledge of government initiatives (mean = 3.44, SD = 0.950), limited awareness of emerging marketing trends (mean = 3.63, SD = 1.148), insufficient awareness of product promotion strategies (mean = 3.72, SD = 1.003), limited understanding of financial management (mean = 3.65, SD = 1.141), limited familiarity with modern technology (mean = 3.54, SD = 1.209), and limited awareness of business management practices (mean = 3.44, SD = 1.34) are awareness-related challenges. These challenges collectively affect various proportions of entrepreneurs, with emerging marketing trends awareness being the highest at 72.60%.

In summary, these findings shed light on the multifaceted challenges faced by entrepreneurs, encompassing financial, marketing, managerial, infrastructural, technological, and awareness-related aspects. The data underscores the complexity of entrepreneurship and the need for tailored support and interventions to address these challenges effectively.

Findings

Demographic Findings:

1. **Age:** The majority of respondents (45%) are in the 41-50 years age group, followed by those below 30 years (30%), indicating a diverse generational composition.
2. **Gender:** There's a significant gender imbalance, with males comprising 70% of the respondents and females making up only 30%.
3. **Qualification:** A substantial portion of the population (40%) has an under matric qualification, while graduates constitute 30%, highlighting educational diversity. Postgraduates (Masters and above) make up 10% of the sample.
4. **Income per Year:** Most respondents (70%) report an annual income between 50,000 and 1 lakh, with limited representation in higher income brackets (2.5% above 3 lakhs per year), pointing to potential economic inequalities.

Challenges Faced by Entrepreneurs:

1. **Financial Challenges:** Scarcity of financial resources is the most significant challenge (66.80%), followed by insufficient support from commercial banks (60%) and limited awareness of banking protocols (60%).
2. **Marketing Challenges:** Intense competition is a prevalent issue (80%), along with limited understanding of marketing management (77.40%) and insufficient advertising and promotion (58.40%).
3. **Managerial Challenges:** Challenges include the absence of effective planning (50%), limited understanding of business management (50%), and issues related to decision-making, communication, and employee motivation affecting various proportions of entrepreneurs.
4. **Infrastructural Challenges:** Challenges such as limited workspace, power infrastructure, available land, transportation facilities, and water supply impact over 48% of entrepreneurs, with water supply scarcity being the most prevalent (69.60%).
5. **Technological Challenges:** Limited technological proficiency (55%) and support for machinery use (55%) are common challenges, along with high expenses associated with technology acquisition.

6. **Awareness Challenges:** Limited awareness of government initiatives (69.60%), emerging marketing trends (72.60%), product promotion strategies (74.40%), financial management (72.40%), modern technology (70.80%), and business management practices (69.60%) are significant awareness-related challenges.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the findings drawn from the provided data offer a comprehensive understanding of the surveyed population's demographics and the intricate challenges faced by entrepreneurs within this group. Demographically, the data reflects a diverse age distribution, with a significant presence of middle-aged individuals in the 41-50 years age bracket, alongside a notable representation of younger respondents below 30 years. However, the study is notably skewed towards male participants, comprising 70% of the sample, which should be considered in any gender-related analysis. Moreover, there exists a wide range of educational qualifications, with under matric and graduate levels being prominent, while postgraduates form a smaller yet significant portion. Income distribution reveals that a substantial majority falls within the lower to lower-middle income brackets, suggesting potential economic disparities within the population. The challenges faced by entrepreneurs encompass various domains, including financial, marketing, managerial, infrastructural, technological, and awareness-related aspects. Financial constraints, such as the scarcity of resources and limited support from banks, pose significant hurdles. Intense competition and marketing-related challenges, including a lack of marketing management understanding, are prevalent issues. Managerial challenges, such as planning deficiencies and limited business management knowledge, impact a substantial portion of entrepreneurs. Infrastructural limitations, particularly the shortage of water supply, add complexity to operations. In the technological sphere, limited proficiency and high technology acquisition costs contribute to challenges. Lastly, a widespread lack of awareness regarding government initiatives, marketing trends, product promotion, financial management, modern technology, and business management practices underscores the need for increased awareness-building efforts. In light of these findings, it is evident that entrepreneurship is a multifaceted endeavour, requiring tailored support and interventions to address the diverse and complex challenges faced by individuals in this population. Policymakers, business support organizations, and educational institutions can use these insights to develop targeted programs and resources to assist entrepreneurs in overcoming these obstacles and fostering sustainable growth in their ventures. Addressing these challenges effectively can lead to a more inclusive and vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem that benefits both individuals and the broader economy.

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