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UNVEILING THE PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN MIZORAM: A STUDY ON MOTIVATION AND SUCCESS

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the personal characteristics and success levels of women entrepreneurs in Mizoram, India. Using primary data collected from 350 women entrepreneurs from Aizawl, Kolasib, and Champhai districts using purposive and convenience sampling. Findings reveal that most women entrepreneurs are driven by intrinsic motivations such as personal satisfaction, independence, and the need for achievement. While trading and tailoring are the most common business types, the majority of entrepreneurs operate on a micro or small scale, with little to no formal training. The study found that women entrepreneurs in Mizoram generally achieve moderate to high levels of success, with variations across districts. Personal traits such as passion, commitment, and self-confidence contribute significantly to entrepreneurial outcomes. The results underscore the need for targeted government and institutional support, skill development programs, and financial accessibility to further empower women entrepreneurs and strengthen their contributions to Mizoram's economic growth.

KEYWORDS: *Women entrepreneurship, Personal characteristics, Motivation, Success level, Mizoram.*

INTRODUCTION

Female entrepreneurs significantly contribute to economic development, social inclusion, and poverty reduction. They facilitate the creation of employment and innovation across several sectors. Encouraging women to establish their own enterprises enables countries to harness a vast reservoir of untapped potential, generate employment opportunities, and enhance economic stability. Enhancing the number of women entrepreneurs not only improves GDP but also provides women with financial autonomy, increased status, and greater control over their lives not only in the family but also in the community (Lalthanmawia, 2025; Zote, 2020).

India is home to around 58.5 million entrepreneurs, with nearly 14% being women (Sixth Economic Cenusu 2013). Women-led MSMEs employ 45 million individuals and constitute around 23.3% of the workforce, which shows their significance to the economy (NITI Aayog, 2025). India has significant progress to make on women's economic engagement. It is positioned 57th among 65 nations on the Mastercard Index of Women Entrepreneurs. Women continue to encounter difficulties in obtaining loans, acquiring new skills, and dismantling gender preconceptions (Singh, 2025).

Research conducted in the Aizawl area indicates that the involvement percentage of women entrepreneurs in Mizoram is still very low (Lalhunthara, 2018; Lalmuanpuii, 2024). Women entrepreneurs in Mizoram predominantly participate in micro and small firms, significantly impacting sectors such as handloom, tailoring, and services (Lalnunthara, 2023; Lalmuanpuii, 2022). Despite societal acknowledgment of women's labour, they continue to encounter numerous challenges, including financial inadequacy, restricted market access, and limited training opportunities, exacerbated by traditional norms and social expectations (Zote, 2020).

This study seeks to clarify the personal characteristics and evaluate the success rates of Mizo women entrepreneurs, highlighting the unique environment and obstacles faced in this region. Although national initiatives and policy reforms increasingly emphasize women's entrepreneurship, the distinct socio-cultural and economic context of Mizoram requires a detailed analysis to inform targeted interventions. This study seeks to deepen the understanding of Mizo women entrepreneurs by examining motivational factors, performance outcomes, and persistent challenges, thus offering insights for future empowerment and inclusive development.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Lalhunthara (2018) examined the participation of women in MSMEs within Aizawl District and found that the proportion of women entrepreneurship was only 15%. It was only in the handloom business that women participation was higher while all other types of businesses were male dominated. Therefore, the study emphasized the importance of promotion of women entrepreneurship, creation of women cells, entrepreneurship education, financial support for women entrepreneurs and gaining entrepreneurship experience in order to promote higher participation of women in entrepreneurship in the area.

Lalmuanpuii et. al. (2024) investigated the motivational factors of women entrepreneurs in Aizawl City revealing the major motivational factors for women entrepreneurs such as 'building a business to pass on' and 'entrepreneurship was a lifelong goal'. Additionally, the study also showed that that the factors that strengthens their performance are 'emotional attachment to the entrepreneurial venture' and 'improvement in

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entrepreneurial activities'. The results of the study also demonstrate a strong relationship between motivational factors and performance of women entrepreneurs in Aizawl City.

Lalthanmawia (2025) studied the importance of women's empowerment through entrepreneurship concentrating on issues faced by women entrepreneurs and explored the motivational factors, income distribution and economic impact. The study concluded that women entrepreneurs in the state still require additional support for their entrepreneurial endeavors, especially in the areas of financial aid from government and NGOs, market infrastructure and information and business skills. The results of the study also showed that women's social, economic and psychological well-being is improved by their engagement in income-generating activities leading to their empowerment.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the study are as follows:

i. To examine the personal characteristics of the women entrepreneurs under study.
ii. To investigate the impact of personal characteristics on the motivation of women entrepreneurs under study.
iii. To analyze success level of women entrepreneurs under study.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Data Collection

Primary and secondary data were utilized for the study. The questionnaire method was used to acquire primary data from the entrepreneurs. Secondary data needed for the study were collected through various sources such as books, journals, etc.

Sampling

350 women entrepreneurs were chosen from three districts in Mizoram, i.e., Aizawl, Kolasib and Champhai using purposive and convenience sampling method. Aizawl District was chosen because it is the capital of Mizoram and has the most population, making it a hub for commercial operations. The other two districts were chosen randomly to allow for a comparative study. The distribution of sample units from the three districts is as follows:

Table 1. Distribution of sample units	
Aizawl	200
Kolasib	80
Champhai	70
Total	**350**

DATA ANALYSIS

Type of Business: Table 2 display the quantity and distribution of the respondents on the basis of the type of enterprises/business operated by them in three locations i.e, Aizawl, Kolasib and Champhai.

Table 2. Type of Business

Particulars	Aizawl		Kolasib		Champhai		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Trading	75	37.5%	32	40%	59	84.3%	166	47.4%
Tailoring	36	18%	14	17.5%	5	7.1%	55	15.7%
Steel & Aluminium works	0	0%	1	1.3%	0	0%	1	0.3%
Blacksmith	0	0%	1	1.3%	0	0%	1	0.3%
Mobile Repair	1	0.5%	0	0%	0	0%	1	0.3%
Food Processing	18	9%	1	1.3%	3	4.3%	22	6.3%
Bakery	10	5%	3	3.8%	2	2.9%	15	4.3%
Beauty Parlour	13	6.5%	8	10%	0	0%	21	6%
Restaurant	20	10%	14	17.5%	0	0%	34	9.7%
Handloom	9	4.5%	2	2.5%	1	1.4%	12	3.4%
Spa	6	3%	1	1.3%	0	0%	7	2%
Florist	10	5%	2	2.5%	0	0%	12	3.4%
Handmade Bag	0	0%	1	1.3%	0	0%	1	0.3%
Butcher	2	1%	0	0%	0	0%	2	0.6%
Total	**200**	**100%**	**80**	**100%**	**70**	**100%**	**350**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey

Trading is the predominant business type with the largest concentration in Champhai. The second most prevalent type of business is Tailoring with the most concentration in Aizawl at 18%, followed by restaurant business which constitute 9.7% of all the business under study.

Steel & aluminium works, mobile repair, blacksmith, are rare, typically with only one establishment or less in each area. Food processing, bakery, beauty parlour are generally prevalent, with fiffering proportions in different locations.

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Age of Entrepreneurs

From Table 3, we can see that the age group of 30 to 39 represents 44.3% of all entrepreneurs, making up the largest group of entrepreneurs overall. The age group of 70 years and beyond makes up the smallest group with 0.6% of the total.

Table 3. Age of entrepreneurs

Age	Aizawl		Kolasib		Champhai		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
20 to 29	15	7.5%	14	17.5%	7	10%	36	10.3%
30 to 39	97	48.5%	34	42.5%	24	34.3%	155	44.3%
40 to 49	68	34%	20	25%	26	37.1%	114	32.6%
50 to 59	19	9.5%	8	10%	11	15.7%	38	10.9%
60 to 69	1	0.5%	2	2.5%	2	2.9%	5	1.4%
70 and above	0	0%	2	2.5%	0	0%	2	0.6%
Total	**200**	**100%**	**80**	**100%**	**70**	**100%**	**350**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey

The distribution of entrepreneurs across age groups is somewhat similar across the three districts with 30 to 39 age range being the largest group. However, there are some differences, such as the 40 to 49 age range being the largest group in Champhai.

All districts have a very lower percentage of entrepreneurs in the 20-29 bracket, suggesting that entrepreneurship may not be as prevalent among younger people.

Marital Status of Women Entrepreneurs

Table 4 shows that married individuals make up the biggest proportion of the women entrepreneurs, totaling 52.9%, followed by 27.4% who are single individuals and 10.3% who are divorced. The smallest group are the widows who make up 9.4%.

Table 4. Marital status

Particulars	Aizawl		Kolasib		Champhai		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Single	55	27.5%	32	40%	9	12.9%	96	27.4%
Married	106	53%	32	40%	47	67.1%	185	52.9%
Divorced	22	11%	5	6.3%	9	12.9%	36	10.3%
Widow	17	8.5%	11	13.8%	5	7.1%	33	9.4%
Total	**200**	**100%**	**80**	**100%**	**70**	**100%**	**350**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey

When it comes to the marital status of the entrepreneurs, they are distributed similarly across all three districts, with married group being the largest in each district.

Number of Years Operated

Table 5 presents data on the number of years that the women entrepreneurs in three districts Aizawl, Kolasib and Champhai, have been in business. They are broken down into 7 groups: 3 to 5 years, 6 to 10 years, 11 to 15 years, 16 to 20 years, 21 to 25 years, 26 to 30 years and 31 to 35 years.

Table 5. Number of years operated

Number of years	Aizawl		Kolasib		Champhai		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
3 to 5	62	31%	40	50%	24	34.3%	126	36%
6 to 10	93	46.5%	18	22.5%	19	27.1%	130	37.1%
9 to 15	33	16.5%	19	23.8%	12	17.1%	64	18.3%
14 to 20	7	3.5%	1	1.3%	3	4.3%	11	3.1%
19 to 25	4	2%	2	2.5%	6	8.6%	12	3.4%
24 to 30	1	0.5%	0	0%	4	5.7%	5	1.4%
31 to 35	0	0%	0	0%	2	2.9%	2	0.6%
Total	**200**	**100%**	**80**	**100%**	**70**	**100%**	**350**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey

The analysis of the data tells us that many entrepreneurs are relatively new to their business. 37.1% of all entrepreneurs have been in business for 6 to 10 years followed by 36% of entrepreneurs who have been in business for 3 to 5 years. Making up 0.6% of the entrepreneurs, the smallest group has been in operation for 31 to 35 years. In all three districts, the distribution of entrepreneurs across time periods is rather similar. However, there are variation such as 3-to-5-year time

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frame being the largest group in Kolasib. There is a general trend of fewer entrepreneurs who have been in business for longer time periods.

Educational Background of the entrepreneurs

From Table 6, we can see the distribution of entrepreneurs based on their educational level. 38.7% of all entrepreneurs have an educational background below HSLC, making it the largest group of businesses, followed by entrepreneurs having completed their HSLC, Graduate and HSSLC respectively.

Table 6. Educational background

Particulars	Aizawl		Kolasib		Champhai		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Below HSLC	70	35.2%	28	35%	37	52.9%	135	38.7%
HSLC	52	26.1%	12	15%	11	15.7%	75	21.5%
HSSLC	39	19.6%	15	18.8%	9	12.9%	63	18.1%
Graduate	35	17.6%	20	25%	11	15.7%	66	18.9%
Post Graduate	3	1.5%	5	6.3%	1	1.4%	9	2.6%
Others	0	0%	0	0%	1	1.4%	1	0.3%
Total	**199**	**100%**	**80**	**100%**	**70**	**100%**	**349**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey

The distribution of educational level of entrepreneurs is somewhat similar in all three districts, with educational level of below HSLC being the largest group in all. Entrepreneurs having post graduate degree is also the smallest group in each district.

Previous occupation of the entrepreneurs

Table 7 shows that 50.3% of all the entrepreneurs under study were previously unemployed before becoming entrepreneurs, while 41.7% were self-employed. Only 2% of the respondents had government jobs, making it the smallest category among the respondents.

Table 7. Previous Occupation

Particulars	Aizawl		Kolasib		Champhai		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Unemployed	113	56.5%	34	42.5%	29	41.4%	176	50.3%
Self employed	74	37%	37	46.3%	35	50%	146	41.7%
Private Company	5	2.5%	7	8.8%	3	4.3%	15	4.3%
Government job	3	1.5%	2	2.5%	2	2.9%	7	2%
Any other	5	2.5%	0	0%	1	1.4%	6	1.7%
Total	**200**	**100%**	**80**	**100%**	**70**	**100%**	**350**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey

The study indicated that a significant number of women entrepreneurs were previously jobless, with a lower representation of women entrepreneurs who were working in private companies, and holding government jobs and other past employment.

Family Background

Table 8. Monthly income of parents(combined)

Particulars	Aizawl		Kolasib		Champhai		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Less than Rs 10,000	40	20.7%	39	50.6%	19	44.2%	98	31.3%
Rs 10,000 to Rs 50,000	100	51.8%	30	39%	17	39.5%	147	47%
Rs 50,001 to Rs 1,00,000	47	24.4%	7	9.1%	3	7%	57	18.2%
Rs 1,00,001 to Rs 2,50,000	3	1.6%	0	0%	3	7.0%	6	1.9%
Rs 2,50,001 to Rs 5,00,000	2	1.0%	1	1.3%	1	2.3%	4	1.3%
More than Rs 10,00,000	1	0.5%	0	0%	0	0%	1	0.3%
Total	**193**	**100%**	**77**	**100%**	**43**	**100%**	**313**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey

47% of the respondents' parents had a monthly salary falling within the Rs 10,000 to Rs 50,000 range, making it the most common income bracket. Another 31.3% had a monthly income of less than Rs 10,000 followed by 18.2% who had Rs 50,000 to Rs 1,00,000.

There is a common trend of fewer parents' monthly income in the higher income groups. The study showed that the monthly income of the parents of entrepreneurs is quite consistent among the three districts.

Training received by women entrepreneurs

Table 9 shows whether the entrepreneurs under study underwent any sort of training related to their business prior to starting their business.

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Table 9. Training received by Respondents								
Particulars	**Aizawl**		**Kolasib**		**Champhai**		**Total**	
	N	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**
Respondents with Training	43	21.5%	20	25%	8	11.4%	71	20.3%
Respondents without Training	157	78.5%	60	75%	62	88.6%	279	79.7%
Total	**200**	**100%**	**80**	**100%**	**70**	**100%**	**350**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey

21.5% of entrepreneurs in Aizawl underwent training while 78.5% did not. 25% of entrepreneurs in Kolasib received training, whereas 75% did not. And 11% of entrepreneurs from Champhai had some sort of training, meanwhile 88.6% did not.

The data indicates that only a small number of entrepreneurs received business-related training before launching their business. Among the districts, Kolasib has the largest percentage of entrepreneurs that received training. Nevertheless, most entrepreneurs in all districts did not receive any business- related training.

Source of Finance

Table 10. Source of capital								
Particulars	**Aizawl**		**Kolasib**		**Champhai**		**Total**	
	N	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**
Own Savings	104	52%	35	43.8%	39	55.7%	178	50.9%
Funded by Relatives	34	17%	11	13.8%	26	37.1%	71	20.3%
Borrowed from relatives	19	9.5%	1	1.3%	1	1.4%	21	6%
Borrowed from friends	9	4.5%	2	2.5%	1	1.4%	12	3.4%
Money lenders	6	3%	1	1.3%	0	0%	7	2%
Banks	28	14%	30	37.5%	3	4.3%	61	17.4%
Total	**200**	**100%**	**80**	**100%**	**70**	**100%**	**350**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey

As shown in Table10, the major sources of capital for the 50.9% of the respondents are their own funds, funds from family were the source of capital for 20.3% of the respondents. Loan from banks come at third with only 17.4 % of the respondents relying on it for their capital. It is interesting to note that loan from banks was the source of capital for 37.5% of the respondents from Kolasib, which is much higher as compared to Aizawl and Champhai.

Personal Characteristics and Motivation

The data presented in Table 11 offer insights into the personal characteristics of women entrepreneurs in Mizoram. The respondents were asked how their personal characteristics motivates them to start their business. The responses, scaled from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), provide a nuanced understanding of the motivations and traits that define these entrepreneurs.

Table 11. Personal Characteristics				
Statement	**Min**	**Max**	**Mean**	**Mode**
My need for achievement	2	5	4.2	4
I started it for my own satisfaction and growth	3	5	4.2	4
I wanted to be independent	2	5	4.2	4
My Competitive Nature	1	5	3.5	3
My Risk-Taking Nature	1	5	3.3	3
My Self Confidence	2	5	3.6	3
To Gain Power	0	5	3.5	3
I wanted to use my creativity and innovativeness	2	5	3.5	3
My robust work ethic (hard working)	0	5	3.6	3
I have a passion for my business	0	5	4.0	4
My goal-oriented nature	2	5	3.7	3
My commitment	2	5	3.6	3
Good communication skills	1	5	3.3	3

**1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4= Agree, 5= Strongly Agree*
Source: Field Survey

The mean scores for "*My need for achievement*," "*I started it for my own satisfaction and growth*," and "*I wanted to be independent*" are all 4.2, with a mode of 4, indicating that these entrepreneurs strongly agree with these statements. This suggests that a desire for achievement, personal satisfaction, and independence are key drivers for women entrepreneurs in Mizoram.

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The mean score for "*I have a passion for my business*" is 4.0, with a mode of 4, suggesting that these entrepreneurs generally agree that they have a strong passion for their business. This passion could be a significant factor in their entrepreneurial success and resilience

In contrast, traits such as "*My competitive nature*," "*My risk-taking nature*," "*My self-confidence*," "*To gain power*," "*I wanted to use my creativity and innovativeness*," "*My robust work ethic (hard working)*," "*My goal-oriented nature*," "*My commitment*," and "*Good communication skills*" have mean scores ranging from 3.3 to 3.7. These characteristics are viewed more neutrally, as they are neither strongly agreed upon nor strongly disagreed with. This indicates that while these traits are considered important, they are not as central to the motivations of these entrepreneurs.

Success Levels of Women Entrepreneurs

Table 12 provides insights into the distribution of success levels among women entrepreneurs across different districts in Mizoram. The respondents are categorized into five success levels: Very Low, Low, Moderate, High, and Very High.

Table 12. Success Level

Particulars	Aizawl		Kolasib		Champhai		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Very Low	2	1	0	0	0	0	2	0.6
Low	1	0.5	0	0	0	0	1	0.3
Moderate	119	59.5	39	48.8	10	14.3	168	48
High	77	38.5	41	51.3	59	84.3	177	50.6
Very High	1	0.5	0	0	1	1.4	2	0.6
Total	200	100	80	100	70	100	350	100

Source: Primary data

A significant 50.6% of entrepreneurs report a high level of success, suggesting that many women entrepreneurs in Mizoram are achieving notable success in their ventures. Across all districts, 48% of entrepreneurs report a moderate level of success.

FINDINGS & SUGGESTIONS

The findings suggest that women entrepreneurs in Mizoram are primarily motivated by intrinsic factors such as personal fulfilment and independence. This intrinsic motivation could contribute to their resilience and commitment to their entrepreneurial pursuits. The emphasis on personal satisfaction and growth indicates that these entrepreneurs view their businesses as opportunities for personal development and self-realization

The findings suggest that women entrepreneurs in Mizoram are generally achieving moderate to high levels of success. The variation across districts, with Champhai showing the highest success rates, may indicate regional differences in support systems, market conditions, or entrepreneurial culture. These insights can inform policy initiatives aimed at enhancing entrepreneurial success across different regions.

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