



**Towards creating impactful female  
entrepreneurship empowerment programmes in  
Jaipur (India)  
-with lessons from Impact Hub Berlin**

## ABSTRACT

*Entrepreneurs have always been the drivers of the economy and their relentless pursuit towards discovering and developing new markets has played an important role in shaping the society as we see today. However, entrepreneurship has largely been a male-dominated domain and women have remained at its periphery, especially in emerging economies like India. In recent years the Indian public and private sector has pushed for numerous female entrepreneurship empowerment programmes, but have not met expected outcomes. Taking the example of Impact Hub Berlin (IHB), the Berlin edition of the Global Impact Hub network, a successful innovation lab and co-working space, where I interned for over eight weeks in the summer of 2019 to create their five years' impact report (forthcoming in September 2019) -- the paper seeks to inform IHB and the readers, of the successes and limitations of creating a similar programme or hub in a very different societal framework i.e Jaipur, India*

**TOWARDS CREATING IMPACTFUL FEMALE ENTREPRENEURSHIP  
EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMMES IN JAIPUR (INDIA) –  
WITH LESSONS FROM IMPACT HUB BERLIN**

Sanjna Sudan

MA Media Practice for Development and Social Change

University of Sussex

Supervisor: Prof. Emile Devereaux

2018-19

Candidate no: 196530

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## Preface

The manner in which this topic of my dissertation came about, is nothing short of serendipity. Through the course of my Masters in Media Practice for Development and Social Change, I've been mulling over my desire to be a tech-based social entrepreneur. Once I set myself on the path of being one, I quickly realized that it is a rather lonely and intimidating journey, especially for a woman from India. It almost seemed to me that the entrepreneurship ecosystems were not designed to be considerate to women and their needs even as they form half of the world's population.

I was fortunate to get an internship at Impact Hub Berlin (IHB) and was curious to know how female entrepreneurs dealt with their entrepreneurial aspirations in Europe, especially in the social innovation space. The experience gave me an inside perspective of social entrepreneurship ecosystem in Berlin and the summer I spent in this space was a splendid learning experience.

Within the Hub, an opportunity arose to do a study about how could Impact Hub Berlin's female entrepreneurship empowerment model (through programmes, community events etc) be implemented in the context of Jaipur, India (a project that is in the talks with GIZ, the German development agency) both Nele Kapretz, Managing Director and Maja Rotter, Head of Innovation at IHB (two incredibly inspiring German women) encouraged me to pursue it as a research topic and I couldn't be happier.

I've visited Jaipur at two very important junctures of my life- once as a 19 year old student at university and then as a 24 year old professional from Delhi, and each time the city left me feeling inspired by its cultural richness and also despondent for many reasons. Jaipur is a Tier

2 city in North India, which means the cost of living is not the same as Tier 1 cities like Delhi, and has a general calm and slowness to life which is very different from the hustle bustle of Tier 1 cities. Jaipur is therefore (like most Tier 2 cities in North India) somewhere between being traditionally rooted yet aspirational to live the Tier 1 life!

Once I had the idea, I began my journey towards writing this paper, where I assessed my own challenges of being an entrepreneur as an Indian woman from a Tier 2 city (I am originally from Chandigarh, another Tier 2 city in North India) and how an Impact Hub Berlin model could facilitate this. As time passed and I made my observations at the Hub, it was clear that hustling for funding was a challenge for all genders everywhere. However, in India the problem was deeper and rooted in the country's reluctance to take female entrepreneurs seriously. As a result, women are unable to take themselves seriously as entrepreneurs. Keeping this in mind, I prepared notes and tried to understand what was working for women at the Hub and could also potentially work for women in Jaipur. It has been an exciting journey and would not have been possible without my friends in Germany and in India (two of them are from Jaipur!), my supervisor Prof. Emile Deveraux at University of Sussex and my parents who never cease to believe in me. This is dedicated to all the Indian mothers, wives and young women who want to ignite their entrepreneurial ideas and empower others to do so too, wherever they are.

## Introduction

“Entrepreneurship is the act that endows resources with a new capacity to create wealth,” said Peter Drucker, the late management expert, and therefore much of the society we see today has been a result of entrepreneurs’ relentless pursuit towards discovering and developing new markets. Wealth is after all (of different amounts and types depending on context) seen as the key to living a safe, healthy and fulfilling lives where people can look after themselves and their loved ones.

The history of entrepreneurship in India is a fascinating one and has been the harbinger of many triumphs as well as tribulations, be it the ancient silk route or colonization. Furthermore, entrepreneurship in India has added layers of cultural complexity of caste as well as gender, which decided for thousands of years as to who could be an entrepreneur (Tripathi, 1971).

It has been claimed that entrepreneurship is the main vehicle of economic development (Anokhin, et al., 2008) as greater economic development is linked to more employment and eventually more money, or rather purchasing power in people’s hands to live a better quality of life. The flexibility and thrill that comes with being an entrepreneur has for generations led people to run businesses in India, where their skills were linked to their sense of identity (Tripathi, 1971).

However, if one digs deeper, it doesn't take much time to realise that entrepreneurship all over the world has largely been a male-dominated domain and women have remained at its periphery. In India in particular, according to a World Bank report published in 2017, female labor force participation rates (LFPRs) have been amongst the lowest in the world. Even as the Indian economy has expanded 7.7 percent year-on-year in the first three months of 2018, being well ahead of neighbours such as Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal, its female labour participation continues

to be lower than them (WorldBank, 2017). This has a lamentable impact on the country's performance as a whole and its outcomes for its people.

But the question we should ask is what stops women from becoming entrepreneurs? Or even wanting to be one? After all, it is no news that being self-employed would give women the flexibility and sense of independence that perhaps being a homemaker or being employed in the organised or unorganised sector will not give them.

Studies state that cultural reasons like being solely responsible for child-rearing and other domestic tasks that are imposed in India onto women across all castes and classes, making them take a back seat and they are forced to leave their non-flexible jobs in both urban and rural India (WorldBank, 2017). Therefore, the Indian government in recent years has realised this gap, and its dismal effect on the economy, and is working towards fixing it.

Being a woman with aspirations to be a social entrepreneur in India, I interned at Impact Hub Berlin, which happens to be one of the leading accelerator and co-working spaces in Berlin, and have explored in this paper the systems that work well for female entrepreneurs in Berlin and could potentially empower female entrepreneurs in Jaipur, Rajasthan.

The key areas discussed in this paper to improve existing female entrepreneurship empowerment programmes in Jaipur taking Impact Hub Berlin's example, are spread across three sections, which are:

- **Part 1: Enabling or building co-working spaces that encourage female participation**

- **Part 2: Increasing Women's Self-Efficacy and Eventually Knowledge Base Through Informal Community Building Activities**
- **Part 3: Supporting Locally Produced Media & Voices to Create a Culture of Female Entrepreneurship**

There are many other suggestions and areas for learning and improvement, but these three themes particularly stood out for me at Impact Hub Berlin and therefore I shall unpack them in greater detail.

### **Methodology**

The research is based on existing data and literature review on female entrepreneurship in India and particularly about Jaipur and the state of Rajasthan. Apart from this, my own observations and experiences during my eight-week-long stint at Impact Hub Berlin have been a guiding force behind this work. Some of the statistics have been taken from Impact Hub Berlin's five years report that I worked on during my time at the organisation, which will be published in September 2019.

### **Regional Context**

The capital of India's largest state Rajasthan, Jaipur has historically been the land of glorious *Maharajas* as well as home to the rich and entrepreneurial community of the trading caste. In the past decade, Jaipur has made its presence felt in the global arena for the renowned Jaipur Literature Festival (JLF), an annual literary festival in the city that is attended every year by who's who of the literary world. I visited the city for the first time to attend the JLF with my friends in the year 2012, and by the time I left the city I was completely in awe of its historical richness.

Today, it is considered one of the rising startup hubs in India and a mushrooming ground for accelerators, with the likes of the Bhamashah TechnoHub coming up here, which happens to be one of the largest startup ecosystem building projects in India (BrandLabs, 2018).

However, women's participation in its entrepreneurial growth has remained low or has not been highlighted, and therefore it is important that we recognize the city's context in order to better understand what can be cherry-picked from Impact Hub Berlin programmes and applied in Jaipur's context.

Understanding context involves acknowledging the different actors included in the entrepreneurship process, and also when, where and under what institutional conditions the entrepreneurship process emerges (Welter, 2011). Furthermore, it is important to realise that one of the first steps towards successful implementation of the plans and programmes is to study carefully the environment (cultural ethos, economic opportunities and spatial accessibility) and under which they are proposed and implemented (Deka & Barua, 1991).

With 77.41% of females being literate, which is higher than the average Indian female literacy 65.46% (GOI, 2011) there is immense potential for female entrepreneurship in the city of Jaipur. However, the state of Rajasthan has always been known to be a patriarchal society and its deeply ingrained practices have created a culture that accepts discrimination against women with no qualms. The state's government has however, tried to empower local rural or semi-urban non-literate women to form Self-Help Groups, Village Organizations and Cluster Level Federations as part of programmes like RGAVP (Rajasthan Grameen Aajeevika Vikas Parishad) to learn new skills and empower themselves. However, little has been done in urban areas where potential for empowering female founders is immense.

This paper will, therefore, particularly take the urban city of Jaipur into consideration and explore the challenges faced by women here, who do have a certain degree of literacy.

Realising the potential that exists in the city and the state for its women, new innovation hubs like Atal Innovation Incubation Centre (funded by NITI Aayog, a Think Tank powered by Government of India) launched Womenpreneur incubation program at Banasthali Vidyapith University in 2018 in Jaipur, to guide aspiring women entrepreneurs from idea to growth stage. Other accelerators like Startup Oasis and Sheroes Women Entrepreneurship Program have also created female entrepreneurship empowerment programmes (FEEP) which is a huge leap forward, and this paper aims to extend from the existing work being done in this space.

### **Lessons from Impact Hub Berlin for Jaipur**

Impact Hub Berlin in Germany is a successful social enterprise which is an innovation lab as well as a coworking space for social impact organisations and professionals. It is the Berlin edition of the global Impact Hub network, which is spread across 100 cities all over the world and local innovators use their local hubs to co-create solutions through consulting, accelerating and mentoring startups directed at social impact. Impact Hub Berlin, in particular, prides itself on its large base of female entrepreneur membership who run their respective enterprises in this co-working space. Apart from the co-working space IHB hosts events for local entrepreneurs in the city, some especially directed at female entrepreneurs. They also run accelerators for female led enterprises, and enterprises for female empowerment causes.

Even as for much of the nineteenth and twentieth century, Germany faced great economic, social and political upheavals with Berlin at its center, it did not stop it from re-establishing itself as a financially strong and entrepreneurial country in the twenty first century; now with a female i.e Angela Merkel, as its longest serving head of state.

IHB is situated in the heart of Berlin in Kreuzberg and was founded in 2014 as a response to the growing number of social impact organisations that mushroomed in the capital city of Germany. It is said that every twenty minutes, a startup is founded in Berlin and therefore it has become a hub over the years (Thiele, 2019).

Excluding barriers to entrepreneurship that are common to both genders (access to capital and business networks and adequate training) IHB is able to overcome challenges that female entrepreneurship empowerment programmes (FEEP) in Jaipur have not been able to.

While there is a lot that Jaipur based female entrepreneurship programmes can learn from IHB, there still exist challenges of different cultural

and economic contexts which we shall take into consideration. The following three parts will explore the three key lessons that can be learnt and tweaked as per Indian contexts.

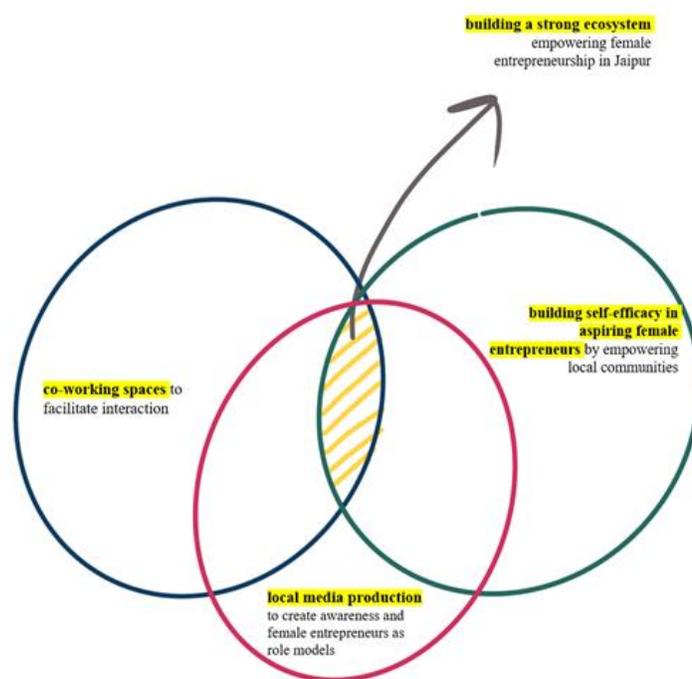


Figure 1: Three areas for growth of FEEPs in Jaipur

**PART 1: Enabling or building co-working spaces that encourages female participation**

*“Impact Hub is the safe space where we challenge our ideas, receive the support, inspiration & where we’ve found fellow changemakers with whom we can develop and realize our vision.”*

- Vivian Otto, JourVie, (IHB, 2019)

Co-working spaces, as the name suggests are shared spaces for people to work and collaborate. Today it is said that more than 500,000 individuals use more than 2000 coworking-spaces worldwide (Johns & Gratton, 2013). A distinct example of a shared economy in practice, entrepreneurs find co-working spaces useful, as it lowers their administrative duties, helps access good locations and social interactions which provide knowledge sharing, exchange of views and finding potential investors and collaborators (B.Bouncken, 2016). Coworking-users develop social ties, learn from others, and jointly improve idea generation and implementation in entrepreneurship (Hughes, et al., 2011), similar to incubation (Hughes, et al., 2007).

At Impact Hub Berlin, their co-working space is the key offering, where the majority of its members are women. Vivian (quoted above) is one who runs her social enterprise Jourvie, that lifts the stigma around eating disorders.

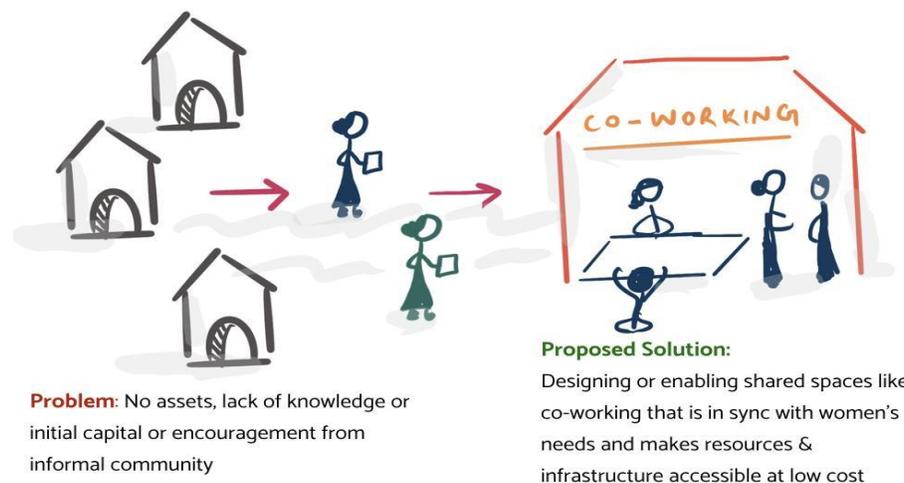
Key users of IHB coworking space are self-employed people, freelancers or microbusinesses. The creative space team of IHB looks after the space’s use, bookings and events, carefully moderating the whole space’s use every day to facilitate members' needs. In fact, a few members who were expecting, (of which one was a new mother) and they were able to confidently use and work in the space along with their little ones. According to a recent survey (of its members) and report by Impact Hub Berlin 100% members said that the environment of the space was

positive and 84.6% members said that the space helped them get access to better infrastructure (IHB, 2019).

While there is very little research on female entrepreneurs' demographics in Jaipur or even Rajasthan, going by OECD's 2017 (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) report, entrepreneurs in India can be divided into those *with* and *without* workers, as their characteristics and determinants tend to differ from each other (OECD, 2015). According to the report, the number of female entrepreneurs have doubled over the past ten years to about 10 million outside the agricultural sector mostly due to the rise in enterprises *without* hired workers, which meant that more women became entrepreneurial and a part of the labour force as *self-employed* workers. However, most of their work was in the unorganised sector, which they enter due to lack of consistent work opportunities elsewhere. Indian female entrepreneurs with hired workers are most active in services, followed by manufacturing and trade (OECD, 2015). The service industry is huge and varied, and the basis for growth for self-employed female labour might be different for different socio-economic contexts in India, but it can still be concluded that for self-employed women in the service industry, being affiliated to a co-working space and community will enable them to learn new skills, gain credibility, build valuable connections and delve into knowledge sharing activities in a safe, shared and cost-effective space. It will help them move from being self-employed to be employers with workers eventually. These needs after all, are a prerequisite for anyone looking to create new economic opportunities for themselves. Peuter et.al in their paper *The ambivalence of coworking: On the politics of an emerging work practice*, argue that rather than dismissing coworking as inevitably or exclusively aligned with 'the new spirit of capitalism' in which autonomy, flexibility, creativity, and networks are embraced at the

expense of stable employment, social protection, and a critique of exploitation, they should be seen as spaces that have the potential to be a platform for collective action (Peuter, et al., 2017).

In India, Self-Help Groups amongst women have been successful in the past due to these very reasons. SEWA (Self-employed women's association) for instance was one such association that grew out of a labour union and starting growing in the 50s and 60s to help poverty-stricken women collectively raise themselves out of poverty by diversifying their source of income, collaborating, micro financing small businesses and eventually setting up their own bank that gave low cost loans to the women. Self-employed women who participate in SEWA as a union, learnt to join forces and find a voice of their own through collective struggle, as most of them did not have working capital or owned any assets (Datta, 2003). Cooperatives, which are independent and have their own management teams, focus on employment, financial services, health and childcare, and other related that are important for women's wellbeing (Datta, 2003). Therefore, it is important that a coworking space for women learns from this experience even while designing a programme for urban women as the SEWA model successful in the rural context.



*Figure 2: Creating co-working spaces to connect the dots (made by self)*

At Impact Hub Berlin for instance, F-Lane programme, which is an annual seven-week acceleration program for high-potential digital impact ventures focusing on female empowerment, offers childcare support and a stipend for women who join the accelerator in Berlin for the entire duration of the programme (F-lane, 2017).

While certain studies claim that incubators represent the “best value” in terms of economic development for new businesses, due to a high return on investment and low program costs, in the context of empowering female entrepreneurs in Jaipur, India, an additional co-working model within an incubator (or vice versa) might be ideal. Jaipur’s entrepreneurship environment for its women is still in its nascent stages and a physical space that is secure and trusted (by them and their communities), outside homes would be an important step forward in encouraging women to build connections through events and interactions.

For example, if incubators like Atal Innovation Hub in Jaipur could potentially invest in building an additional co-working space alongside its Womenpreneur incubator, where women who are not members of the incubator’s cohort but seeking to be entrepreneurs can be encouraged to use the space and interact with the programme’s current cohort- it would be immensely fruitful. **Possibilities of being an investor, collaborator or an entrepreneur herself** could sprout up and lead female members to be more empowered in the startup space and sow the seeds of creating a female entrepreneurship ecosystem in Jaipur. An entrepreneurship ecosystem can be defined as a system that is formed by people, startups in their various stages and various types of organizations in a location (physical and/or virtual), interacting with each other to create new economic opportunities or organisations (Commons, 2019).

The Bhamashah TechnoHub in Jaipur is a massive entrepreneurship ecosystem building project, to create a thriving community of investors, startups and professionals based out

of a co-working space which claims to have space to house 700 startups (BrandLabs, 2018). However, little is known about how the hub will encourage or empower female participation in the region.

In London (United Kingdom) for instance, spaces like Blooming Founders and Allbright have realised the importance of giving women spaces that are less intimidating and have designed their programmes to help women be entrepreneurial in different ways.

At Impact Hub Berlin, WOMENA, a dubai based angel investing group, hosts ‘Womentum’ event every year in Berlin. It is a great example of how a local programme for female entrepreneurship empowerment could be hosted within a global mix gendered space. Womentum is an early stage tech accelerator for women from MENA region. They create social media content (predominantly videos, as the video consumption in their focus group is high) about and during the event, that is all about mentoring female entrepreneurs from MENA region in a two weeks long programme at IHB, at the end of which they pitch their start-up and win funding (Womona, 2018).

I was fortunate to witness the programme and the eventual pitching this year in July at IHB, where they gave the participating entrepreneurs as well as the members of the co-working space the chance to build relationships and network with each other. The WOMENA team along with the Womentum cohort for this year, flew down to Berlin for the programme. I met some exemplary women who against all odds founded their businesses in MENA region and at the end of the event they even showcased their work at UAE embassy which was attended by the Berlin startup community.

Once the event is over, the community keeps in touch through the website, meetups and events in Dubai and therefore use online and offline channels to build an ecosystem within

MENA region for female investors and entrepreneurs where they educate, acknowledge and empower female led businesses beyond the physical programme. This model is, therefore, highly local yet global with possibilities of giving exposure to women outside their immediate comfort zone and therefore, could be something female startup accelerators in Jaipur could aspire for.

Therefore, there is merit in establishing these support systems alongside incubators and accelerators and creating spaces for aspiring female entrepreneurs to connect with current entrepreneurs. Such spaces will facilitate more programmes like the WOMENA to sprout up and the interactions facilitated within this constant space would help in building trust, knowledge sharing as well as empowering women without workers, i.e self-employed women to have the management skills, knowledge and ‘self-efficacy’ (discussed in the next section) that help them grow their enterprise and potentially hire or collaborate with other women. Women tend to empower other women when given the chance, as shown by research and survey done by Inc. and Fast Company where they found that women founders are disproportionately likely to hire other women (Weisul, 2018). The study found that such businesses have workforces that are 66 percent female. Impact Hub Berlin also regularly creates and curates events by and for its female co-working space members to foster such relationships where they advise and teach each other new skills and information.

## **PART 2: Increasing Women’s Self-Efficacy and Eventually Knowledge Base Through Informal Community-building Activities**

Birley in her paper ‘*The role of networks in the entrepreneurial process*’ stated that there are two types of networks or institutions from which an entrepreneur can draw help: formal and informal. The formal includes all the local, state, and Federal agencies such as banks,

accountants, lawyers, realtors, Chamber of Commerce. However, because it is often seen as both expensive and time-consuming, most of these institutions offer help to new firms as only a small part of their services (Birley, 1985). Moreover, in their interaction with the entrepreneurs, they are not usually in the business of diagnosing needs, but rather of satisfying them by responding to specific requests.

The informal network includes family, friends, former colleagues, or previous employers, a group which might be less informed about the options and schemes open to the entrepreneur, is more likely to be willing to listen and to give advice. Thus, there are problems with both sources-the formal sources may or may not offer help immediately and may deter by their bureaucracy, and the informal may extend help in bits and pieces (Birley, 1985). Nevertheless, both are important for an entrepreneur.

In the context of Jaipur, a study done by Atal Incubation Centre, Banasthali Vidyapith by Shastri et.al in 2019, reveals that the challenges faced by female entrepreneurs originated mainly from informal institutions (like family, local community etc) and not from formal institutions. The women in the study stated that they felt their work was not encouraged, recognized and appreciated by their informal network. On the contrary, the formal institutions did not pose a problem.

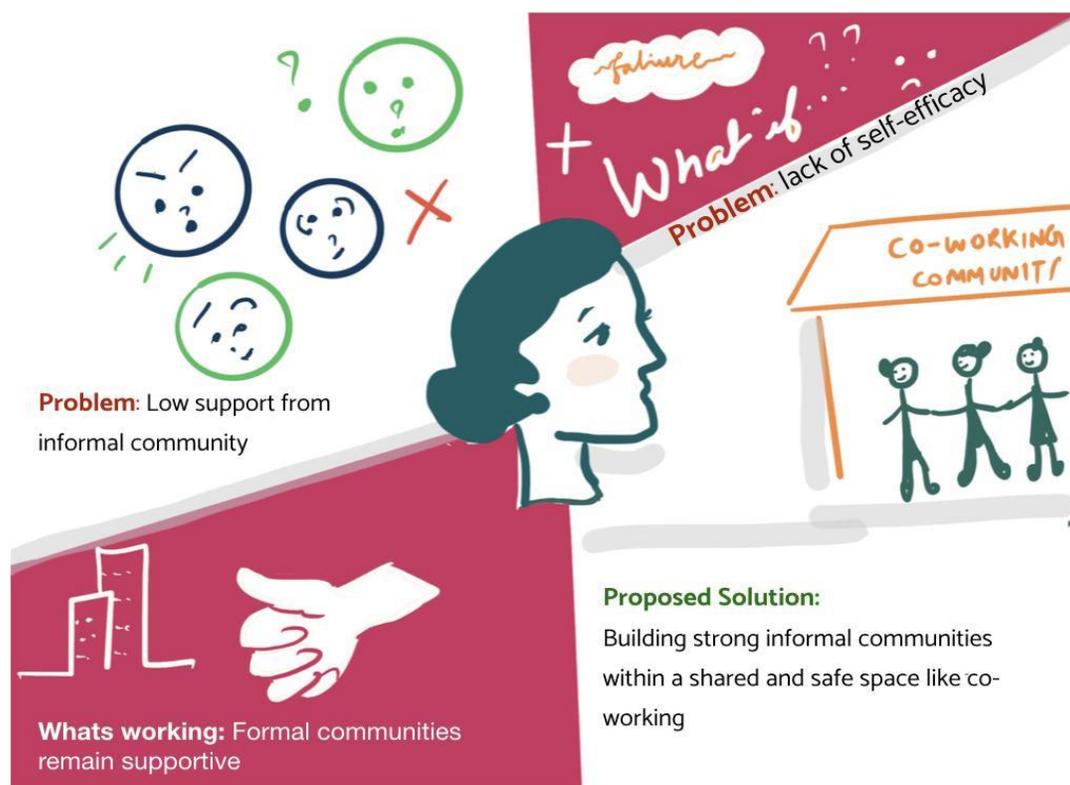
The formal institutions like the Indian government has worked extensively in building systems that support female entrepreneurs (Trade Related Entrepreneurship Assistance and Development Scheme for women-TREAD, Micro and Small Enterprises Cluster Development Programme or Mahila E-haat amongst many others) and a pan-India study done by sheatwork.com in 2017 revealed that the state of Rajasthan was in fact among the top five states offering the maximum number of schemes for women entrepreneurs in India (SheAtWork, 2017).

However, low support from informal institutions was a severe blow on women's self-efficacy on being an entrepreneur, as according to the study by Shastri et.al, motivation factors for women in Jaipur to start their enterprises included their urge for creativity, innovation, self-identity and independence and also enabling them to contribute to their society.

*Building self-efficacy for entrepreneurship:* Psychologist Albert Bandura has defined self-efficacy as one's belief in one's ability to succeed in specific situations or accomplish a task, and according to Kazumi et. al, self-efficacy therefore, can be considered a key component of women's behavioral intentions (Shinnar, et al., 2014) and entrepreneurial outcomes (Bulanova, et al., 2016). It is thought to exert a strong influence on the business goals, learning behaviors, perseverance and growth aspirations of individuals who launch or run businesses (Kazumi, & Kawai, 2017). For women in Jaipur, their self-efficacy suffers due to lack of support from their communities, and it is important that any female entrepreneurship empowerment programmes keeps this in mind as a key challenge to tackle in Jaipur.

This rationale is consistent with Stephan and Uhlaner (2010) who posit that socially supportive institutional environments prompt nascent entrepreneurs to experiment with venture creation and to enthusiastically learn from their mistakes and failures due to the availability of tangible and intangible resources (Stephan & Uhlaner, 2010). Therefore, it is essential for female entrepreneurs to gain institutional approval of their entrepreneurship in a local society or community because social legitimacy facilitates the allocation of resources and mitigates the liabilities of inexperience to promote better venture performance and eventually uplifts their self-efficacy (Kazumi, & Kawai, 2017).

Informal social networks in fact, enable female entrepreneurs to develop entrepreneurial confidence and aspirations by offering potential access to innovative business ideas, entrepreneurial thinking, experiential knowledge and financial support (Kickul et al., 2007; McGowan et al., 2015).



*Figure 3: Low support from informal communities can decrease women's self-efficacy and eventually willingness to take risks (illustration made by self)*

The institutionalization of a “one-is-not-alone” culture in a society like Jaipur can support women and encourage them to invest more in their entrepreneurial activities by providing emotional security and reducing fears of business failure (Hopp & Stephan, 2012). With regard to the link between informal institutions and entrepreneurial cognitions, entrepreneurship scholars provide evidence that women’s participation in entrepreneurial activity increases in a society, community or country where entrepreneurial visions are highly valued, admired and legitimized (Baughn,

2006). Impact Hub Berlin does the same, both as a part of their programmes as well as community building exercises (discussed ahead) in its co-working space. (Hopp & Stephan, 2012)

*Increasing her knowledge base:* Ever since Drucker in 1969 coined the term knowledge economy, analysts have argued the world economy is driven increasingly by the intensive production, diffusion, and use of knowledge (Powell & Snellman., 2004)

Lack of informal network's support, therefore is linked to lack of willingness to learn more or be open to experimenting or making mistakes, which entrepreneurs in their early years do.

For instance, according to sheatwork.com report, 80% of women entrepreneurs in India are self-financing their businesses with little utilization of the various government schemes that provide financial aid to women entrepreneurs (SheAtWork, 2017).

The study states that this can be linked to women's lack of knowledge and confidence in approaching and using these schemes. Furthermore, as discussed earlier in the paper, over the last decade there has been a rise in self-employed women, and therefore women rely on themselves or their families to be human resources for their enterprises who might not be the most encouraging. Emphasis on building a strong informal network can enable female entrepreneurs to fill their gaps in knowledge and confidence in herself.

Therefore, it is evident that:

- women lack a supportive environment to flourish as entrepreneurs in Jaipur Rajasthan, as they do not get the access to knowledge and mentorship to take risks and experiment.
- Furthermore, due to lack of informal support, their low levels of self- efficacy stops them from being able to access existing opportunities and resources that are being made available to them.

*What can be a possible solution to change this:*

At IHB, community building activities and social interactions are considered valuable. Weekly internal communications newsletters, inside the community (the space enrolls about 200 members at a given time, who pay a small fee and choose their type and duration of membership) are circulated applauding certain members of their recent achievements and also informing each other of the various asks and offers as well as funding or mentoring opportunities that are available at the hub.

Furthermore, each Friday there is 'Friday-winedown' where everyone is encouraged to come and interact with each other and also bring along their friends or family to enrich these interactions. Kaffee & Kuchen (Coffee and Cake) meetups on Mondays where a community member bakes a cake for everyone, and Community Lunches on Wednesdays where everyone sits to eat a meal together, are interactions designed to build meaningful informal networks within the community.

While interactions within communities has been part of culture in India and all over the world, there is a noticeable and interesting difference in the content of these interactions at the hub. Here they are carefully moderated by both Community and Creative Space teams at Impact Hub, to facilitate professional ties, and therefore, people talk about their professional concerns and insights which could lead to favorable entrepreneurial outcomes.

However, being the capital of Germany, Berlin's culture is empowering towards its women, who consider themselves safe when venturing out to make new connections. Culture, therefore is an important facet of a city/community's view towards female entrepreneurship and the shift has to happen gradually in Jaipur. How? That is a question that is yet to be answered, but perhaps media can play a huge part.

### **PART 3: Supporting Locally Produced Media & Voices to Create a Culture of Female Entrepreneurship**

Gerard Hendrik Hofstede a Dutch social psychologist defined culture as “the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from those of another” (Hofstede, 1980). Cultural influences can therefore be a major reason in how different communities deal with work ethics, responsible conduct, spirited motivation, dynamic management, entrepreneurial initiatives, willingness to take risks, and a variety of other aspects of human behavior which can be critical to economic success (Sen, 2004). Therefore it is not surprising that economists over the years have been increasingly looking at culture to explain the divergent economic fortunes of different nations.

In context of India, in particular the state of Rajasthan, cultural perspectives towards female entrepreneurship is not very encouraging. According to a study by Eswaran et al (2013), Indian women from higher income social groups are subject to more restrictions on work and social life on behalf of men, because of status concerns. Upper social class women are meant to preserve their purity or respectability by staying away from men other than their husbands, which in some parts of the country, generally imply that they must stay at home. Lower social class women, on the contrary, would not generally be subject to such constraints given less concern for status, and low incomes necessitating that women also work (Eswaran, et al., 2013).

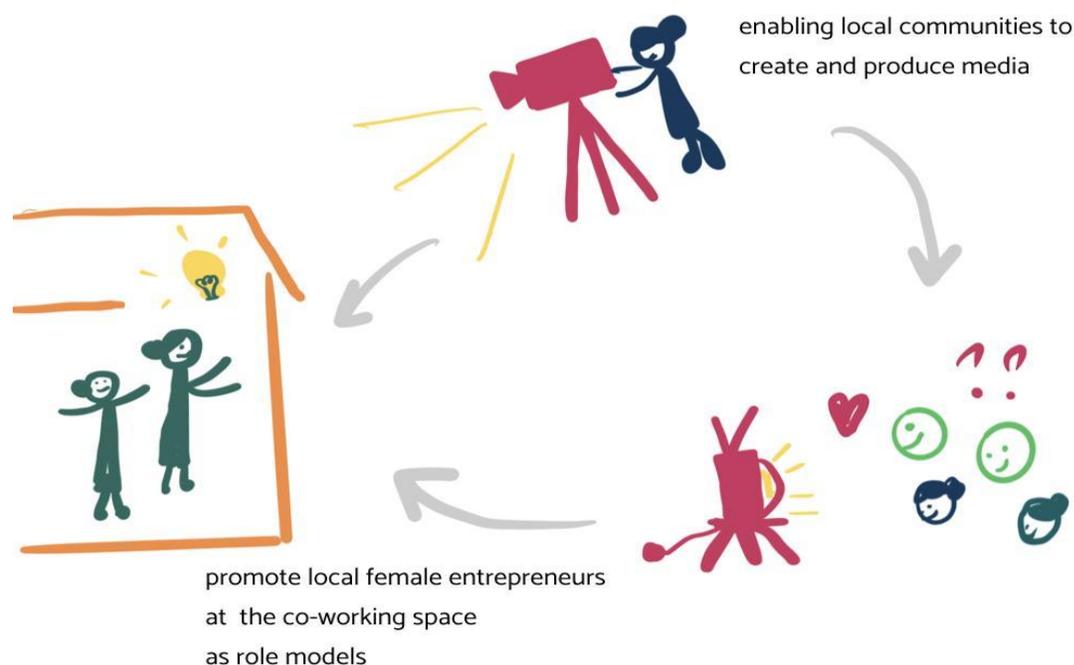
The gender typecasting for entrepreneurship is not specific to India but is a challenge globally. Heilman (1983) stresses that individuals aspire to hold jobs that are socially acceptable for their sex, while avoiding those considered appropriate for the opposite sex. Gender stereotypes

are not only descriptive—denoting differences in how men and women actually are—but prescriptive as well—denoting norms regarding behaviors that are suitable for each, namely, how men and women “should” behave (Heilman, 2001). While Heilman's work examined gender and work stereotyping in US others (Schein, 1996) suggest it is a global phenomenon persisting in different cultures.

In India, when it comes to the idea of women running enterprises, it is not necessary that it is seen as a sign of empowerment. In fact, according to the report by OECD women got into entrepreneurship due to lack of job opportunities in organised or unorganised sector (OECD, 2015). This would push women to create their own businesses as a way out of unemployment (Minniti & Naudé, 2010). Furthermore, scholars like Eswaran et al (2013) argue that, in India, female labour force participation might be a U-shaped function of time, as according to them, when the family income rises ‘it is entirely conceivable that married women change the nature of their activity, from market work to status-related work within the household.’ as their own perception of how they ‘should’ behave makes them feel that they belong at home (Eswaran, et al., 2013). The authors find a negative effect of wealth on female labor force participation when interacted with education. Jaipur is no different, and one can safely assume this hypothesis to hold true for this otherwise upcoming entrepreneurial hub, and therefore it is important to understand the cultural dynamics around female entrepreneurship in this region.

To make things better, it is important that entrepreneurship is not seen in such a skeptical light and be seen to have the potential to create new economic opportunities for women, which can be flexible (for instance self-employed/freelance roles) as well as contribute to overall growth of their family’s income.

However, the question what a female entrepreneurship empowerment programme could do to fix this big a problem remains unanswered. But for WOMENA, the answer was creative entertaining content to create awareness and giving local role models a voice. As Nick Couldry posits that ‘Voice if properly understood, is the value that motivates the production of alternative media, and enables us to assess whether such production is effective in terms of those media’ s goals: effectiveness must involve, to some extent at least, the possibility of being listened to’ (Couldry, 2015).



*Figure 4: Media created by and for local groups can create impact*

WOMENA for its Womomentum programme at IHB have used their strength of having a strong media Dubai based production team and experience, to produce a series around the Womomentum accelerator, where they interview and tell stories about the women who have been selected to be a part of the accelerator that year. Fast paced, informative, catchy and localised, these videos are relatable for the women and their families of the region and help create local role models.

Their tag line ‘Accelerating equality through creative content and entrepreneurial experiences’ seeks to build on the role media can play to create role models. Their published video content on social media pages like Facebook and Youtube have already garnered more than 40,000 views per video in just eight weeks. However, there is little research done on Jaipur or Rajasthan’s consumption of social media content, but India still one of the biggest consumers and creators of social media content. What type and medium of campaigning might be best for Jaipur’s context is not included under the purview of this paper but understanding and researching the same will be of immense value. Empowering local stories, women and their skills in being able to create such content should be the way to go.

**Conclusion:**

Therefore, it can be concluded that with the right community building activities in a safe and trusted space would enable women in Jaipur who already aspire to be entrepreneurs, make a leap of faith and fulfil their ambitions. Furthermore, it is evident that the problem with fewer female entrepreneurs in the state is not so much about lack of resources or help from the government, but it is due to low emotional support and low levels of self-efficacy, because women do not have many local female entrepreneur role models to look up to. Women become self-employed when they are forced to due to lack of employment opportunities and it is not something the community aspires for its women, which ultimately lowers women’s confidence in themselves or their ability and independence to earn a living for themselves and their families. It would be immensely helpful if a survey or a study is conducted about the impact locally produced media (ideally by the women themselves) can have on shifting mindsets about female entrepreneurship in the region, as the problem is rooted in the community’s unwillingness to encourage women to

start their businesses. What the Impact Hub Berlin taught me is that finding solutions at the intersection of policy, corporations, governance and socio-economic environment in a shared space like an innovation lab, is indeed the way to go.

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