Women Entrepreneurs in the Beauty Industry: Is it Sustainable?

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Abstract

Thousands of beauty care service providers have sprung up all over the country in the last decade as the significance of being and looking beautiful is increasing. Though there are a plethora of studies on women entrepreneurship, studies related to women in the beauty industry are not common, and there are hardly any studies that have examined the sustainability of beauty salons run by women entrepreneurs. The present research study was conducted to bridge the gap by suggesting a sustainable model for the beauty salon industry with the objectives to identify the factors that motivated women entrepreneurs to start their beauty salons, to know the reasons for selecting a particular location for opening a beauty salon, to identify the inter - relationship between elements of the business model and sustainability of beauty salons, and to present a sustainable business model. Data were collected from 350 women entrepreneurs in Chennai during October to December 2013 by using the questionnaire method and by adopting the simple random sampling technique. Frequency and percentage analysis were carried out to study the socio-demographic features of the respondents, and factor analysis was used to identify the factors affecting the motivation levels of the respondents. To discriminate the area of operation of beauty salons based on motivational dimensions, discriminant analysis had been employed. Path analysis was employed to study the inter-relationship between the elements of the business model and to ascertain the sustainability of the beauty salon business.

Keywords : business model, sustainability, beauty salons, women entrepreneurship, motivation

JEL Classification : C53, I19, M13,Q01

Paper Submission Date : March 26, 2014 ; Paper sent back for Revision : April 5, 2014 ; Paper Acceptance Date : June 9, 2014

The beauty care industry is a flourishing industry in India, with a growing number of beauty conscious women, and their demand for a variety of services depict the importance and growth of this industry. Thousands of beauty care service providers have sprung up all over the country in the last decade (Akter, B., 2008 ; Akter, S., 2008) as the significance of being and looking beautiful is increasing. At the social level, physical beauty is an advantage as being beautiful gives a person much more confidence (Young, 2011). The middle class consumers have upgraded their consumption lifestyle and this has increased their willingness to buy beauty products and services.

Review of Literature

Orhan and Scott (2001) identified a number of situations that relate to women's decisions to become entrepreneurs, namely "dynastic compliance," "no other choice," "entrepreneurship by chance," "natural succession," "forced entrepreneurship," "informed entrepreneur," and "pure entrepreneur". Lee (1997) concluded that women entrepreneurs were motivated by a high need for achievement, a slightly higher need for dominance, and a moderate need for affiliation and autonomy. DasGupta and Charon (2004) selected two

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industries - manufacturing and services industries to study the entrepreneurial motivation of 108 respondents. Five core motivations were identified by using principal component analysis. Five core factors that emerged out of the analysis were Entrepreneurial Core, Social Core, Economic Core, Work Core, and Individual Core. The strength of the motives was measured by using the 5 - point Likert rating scale. Entrepreneurial Core was the strongest motivating force. The motivation to achieve, confidence in one's talent and potential, the desire to bring about change, and innovation were highly motivating factors. The Social Core motive was found to be stronger among males in both the categories. The need for acquiring wealth was particularly low among females. The Economic Core dimension was also stronger in case of males relative to females in both the industries.

Jaiswal (2004) made an attempt to identify the motives responsible for women's entrepreneurial initiation and choice of their line of trade. The data were collected through personal interviews of 113 women entrepreneurs in Vadodara selected by snowball sampling. The major findings of the study highlighted that the motive "economic independence" ranked first among the respondents for their entry into entrepreneurship, followed by "utilization of skill" and "to exercise creativity" subsequently. "Achievement in life," "independence," and "earning profits" were the strongest motives stated by them in order of priority.

Smith-Hunter and Fucci (2006) found that the top four principal motivations for Brazilian women entrepreneurs to start their own businesses were: "needed a job," "to make more money," "always wanted to start my own business," and "a good way to find employment." Another key component of the top reasons for becoming a business owner centered on financial reasons. Langowitz and Minniti (2007) found that women tend to perceive themselves and the entrepreneurial environment in a less favorable light than men across all countries in the sample, regardless of entrepreneurial motivation. Apergis and Pekka-Economou (2010) suggested that a combination of pull and push motives, effective mentoring, personal characteristics such as risking failure, educational levels, creativity, innovativeness, ambitiousness, and marital status are important for the encouragement of women entrepreneurs to start up a new business.

Cohoon, Wadhwa, and Mitchell (2010) presented a detailed exploration of men and women's entrepreneurial motivations, background, and experiences. The study identified the top five financial and psychological factors motivating women to become entrepreneurs. These were - desire to build wealth, the wish to capitalize on the business ideas they had, the appeal of a startup culture, a long standing desire to have their own company, and working with someone else did not appeal to them. Bhatnagar, Bhardwaj, and Gandhi (2010) found that women entrepreneurs were involved in boutiques, beauty parlors, interior decoration, consultancy, and so on. The major factors motivating women entrepreneurs to start up their own businesses included self-achievement, profit and money making, confidence in the products and services offered.

According to Paige and Littrell (2002), success is clearly defined as an intrinsic criteria, which includes freedom and independence, controlling a person's own future, and to be the boss ; while extrinsic criteria are increased financial returns, personal income, and good wealth. Masuo, Fong, Yanagida, and Cabal (2001) stated that success is commonly defined in economic or financial measures, which includes return on assets, sales, profits, employees, and survival rates and other aspects like customer satisfaction and personal development & achievement.

A study of Nigerian women business owners by Ehigie and Umoren (2003) found that a high self-concept regarding their role in business and commitment to business can help women to become more successful entrepreneurs. This study also revealed that entrepreneurial success depends on psychological factors such as self-concept, managerial competence, work-stress, and business commitment. Another factor, such as internal motivation, is an important factor that can contribute to success in business. The role of the extended family in providing capital for new firms and facilitating apprentice training of its members is significant to the success of prospective entrepreneurs (Nafziger, 1969). Finally, innovation in business through information communications technology (ICT) plays an important role in supporting women entrepreneurs in business by gaining a low-cost structure and achieving higher returns per customer (Marlin & Wright, 2005).

According to a study conducted by Shahbazi and Akareem (2013), customers give higher preference to service quality as a choosing criterion and employee competency, brand image, and pricing came consecutively in line in selecting a beauty salon for service. Designing proper value proposition for appropriate groups of customers is

more important. According to Kotler and Armstrong (2012), the most important criteria for market segmentation are the demographic variables. The study attempted by Akareem and Hossain (2012) stated that customers' perception differs with a difference in age group, gender, income, expenditure, education, and so on .

According to Khan and Tabassum (2012), customer satisfaction is created by four service quality factors. These factors are Support and Facility, Employee Performance, Customer Relation, and Communication. This study was carried out in high-end beauty salons in Bangladesh. For employees to be retained, job satisfaction is significant in retaining the employees from leaving the job (Muralidharan, Venkatram, & Krishnaveni, 2013).

Ͻ **The Elements of a Business Model and the Relationships Among them for Sustainability :** According to Osterwalder (2004), a business model for sustainability is the activity system of a firm which allocates resources and coordinates activities in a value creation process, which overcomes the public/private benefit discrepancy. That is, a business model for sustainability is the structural template of a business logic which creates a sustainable business. This can be achieved by extending value propositions to integrate public and private benefits (product/service pillar), making customers involved, and be responsible partners in the value creation process (customer interface pillar), taking advantage of partnerships which enhance resources and activities (infrastructure management pillar), evaluating combined measures like the environmental shareholder value, and the environmental/ social business model value (financial aspects pillar) (Yip, 2004). The proposed path model for sustainability of the beauty salon business is presented in the Figure 1.

Objectives of the Study

Set in this back ground, the objectives of the present study are as listed below :

(1) To identify the factors that motivate women entrepreneurs to start beauty salons,
(2) To examine the reasons for selecting a particular location for starting a beauty salon,
(3) To identify the inter - relationship between elements of a business model and sustainability of beauty salons,
(4) To present a sustainable business model for running beauty salons.

Methodology

Since there was a dearth of tested questionnaires in literature, a questionnaire was developed and was used for the present study. The primary data was collected from the owners of beauty salons, and the secondary data were

Figure 1. Sustainability Model for Beauty Salons
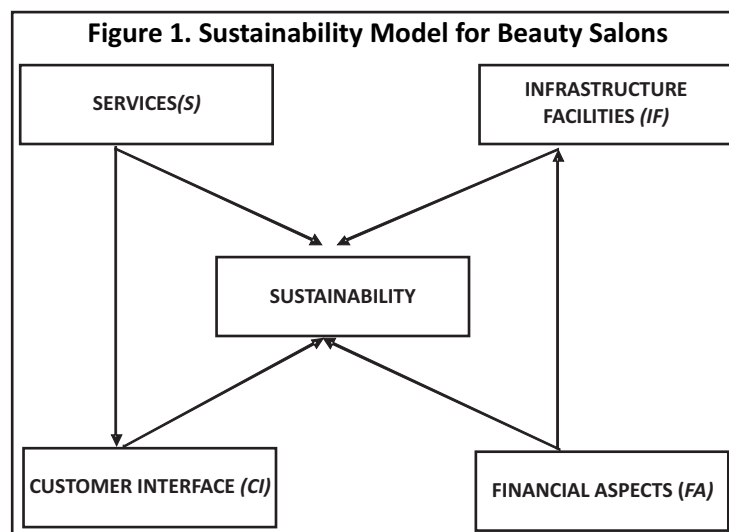
obtained from journals, research papers, research reports, conference proceedings, magazines, newspapers, and websites. The time period of the study is from October to December 2013.

⊃ **Selection of the Study Area :** In the world of fashion, beauty, and career counseling, many women are successfully running their own beauty parlors and designer labels. Chennai, being a metropolitan city, the number of working women is high when compared to other places in Tamil Nadu. Furthermore, the number of women in higher educational institutions is going up, which has resulted in increased demand for such personalized services. Considering the volume of business for beauty salons, Chennai city was purposively selected for the present study.

⊃ **Sampling Procedure and Sample Size Determination :** It is estimated that nearly 4500 beauty salons are operating in Chennai city, and by adopting the random sampling technique, the data were collected from women entrepreneurs who were in the beauty salon business. A structured questionnaire was distributed to 500 women entrepreneurs of beauty salons, and 350 questionnaires were found to be valid. The pilot study was carried out with 35 respondents, and the reliability was checked using Cronbach's alpha for different statements. Statements which did not seem to be useful for the study, the ones that were found to be overlapping, and the variables that were not significantly contributing to the improvement of the Cronbach's alpha were also removed.

⊃ **Tools Used for Analysis :** To identify the factors affecting the motivation levels of beauty salon owners, exploratory factor analysis was employed, and to discriminate the area of operation of beauty salons based on motivational dimensions, discriminant analysis was used. Path analysis was employed to study the inter-relationship between the elements of the business model and the sustainability of the beauty salon business.

⊃ **Scope of the Study :** The main aim of the study is to identify the motivational factors that encouraged women to open up beauty salons and the influence of these factors on the level of success of women's entrepreneurial venture, that is, the beauty salons. The present research also attempted to examine the interrelationship between the elements of a business model and the sustainability of the business model for the successful running of beauty salons. This study also suggests some motivational and marketing strategies for sustainability of the beauty salon business. This study was carried out in Chennai city only and it excludes unisex salons, salons operated by men, and franchised salons.

Hypotheses

⊃ **H01 :** There are no significant motivational dimensions to discriminate the area of operation of beauty salons.

⊃ **H02 :** There is no significant inter-relationship between the elements of the business model and the sustainability of the beauty salon business.

⊃

Analysis and Results

⊃ **Socio - Demographic Features :** The socio - demographic features of women entrepreneurs of beauty salons were analyzed, and the results are presented in the Table 1. The results show that about 43.71 % of the women entrepreneurs belonged to the age group of 31 - 40 years, followed by 21- 30 years (32.29 %), 41 - 50 years (20.86 %), below 20 years (1.71 %), and above 50 years (1.43 %). The results indicate that about 36.29 % of the women entrepreneurs of beauty salons were educated up to the graduation level, followed by beauty training course (32.00 %), higher secondary (19.43 %), post graduation (9.14 %), and secondary education (3.14 %). It is apparent that about 78% of the women entrepreneurs were married, followed by unmarried (14.57 %), divorced (5.43 %), and living separately (2.00 %). It is observed that about 75.71% of the women entrepreneurs belonged to

Table 1. Socio - Demographic Features of Women Entrepreneurs

Particulars	Frequency	%
Age(Years)		
Below 20	6	1.71
21 to 30	113	32.29
31 to 40	153	43.71
41 to 50	73	20.86
>50	5	1.43
Educational Qualifications		
Secondary	11	3.14
Higher Secondary	68	19.43
Graduation	127	36.29
Post Graduation	32	9.14
Training Course	112	32.00
Marital Status		
Unmarried	51	14.57
Married	273	78.00
Divorced	19	5.43
Living separately	7	2.00
Type of Family		
Nuclear	265	75.71
Joint	85	24.29

a nuclear family, and the remaining 24.29 % of the respondents belonged to a joint family.

⮑ **Factors Affecting the Motivation Levels of Beauty Salon Owners :** In order to identify the factors affecting the motivation levels of beauty salon owners, exploratory factor analysis was used. The principal component method of factor analysis was carried out with Eigen values greater than 1 through varimax rotation, and the results obtained through rotated component matrix are presented in the Table 2. The results of the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO test) measure of sampling adequacy (KMO = 0.739) and Bartlett's test of sphericity (chi-square value = 0.0025; significance= 0.000) indicate that the factor analysis method was appropriate.

There are five independent groups which were extracted, accounting for a total of 69.22 % of the variation on 16 attributes. Each of the five factors contributed to 18.26 %, 16.54 %, 15.55 %, 10.38 %, and 8.49 % of the variance respectively.

⮑ **Factor 1 :** From the Table 2, it is inferred that out of 16 attributes, five variables have high and relatively tightly grouped factor loadings on Factor 1. This factor consists of:

➜ To improve economic status (0.73),
➜ Freedom to work from own place (0.88),
➜ Work with full independence (0.90),
➜ Earning money(0.79),
➜ Low investment (0.77).

Hence, this factor is named as **Economy.**

⮑ **Factor 2** is formed with:

Table 2. Factors Motivating Women Entrepreneurs to Start Beauty Salons

Particulars	Rotated Factors Loadings on				
	Economy	Profit	Knowledge	Social Support	Desire
Own Interest					0.87
Desire to be self employed					0.68
Continuing the family business				0.68	
To improve economic status	0.73				
Freedom to work from own place	0.88				
Work with full independence	0.9				
Earning money	0.79				
Getting personal satisfaction			0.67		
Gaining social status				0.71	
Support from friends and relatives				0.53	
Low investment	0.77	0.75	0.77	1.18	1.02
Previous experience	4.41	0.87	0.9	10.38	8.49
Knowledge in this field	18.26	0.83	1.54	60.73	69.22
Heavy demand	18.26	2.92	15.55		
High profit margin		16.54	50.35		
Easy to start and maintain		34.8	0.8		
Eigen Value					
% of Variance					
Cumulative % of Variance					
Cronbach's Alpha					

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. Rotation converged in 9 iterations.

➔ Heavy demand (0.75),
➔ High profit margin (0.87),
➔ Easy to start and maintain (0.83).

This factor is named as **Profit**.

⊃ **Factor 3 :** This factor includes:

➔ Getting personal satisfaction (0.67),
➔ Previous experience (0.77),
➔ Knowledge in this field (0.90).

This factor is named as **Knowledge.**

⊃ **Factor 4 :** This factor is formed with:

➔ Continuing in the family business (0.68),
➔ Gaining social status (0.71),
➔ Support from friends and relatives (0.53).

This factor is named as **Social Support.**

Table 3. Motivational Factors and Area of Operations

	Wilks' Lambda	F	df1	df2	Sig.
Motivation					
Own interest	0.987	2.202	2	347	0.112
Desire to be self employed	0.994	1.130	2	347	0.324
Continuing the family business	0.948	9.567	2	347	0
To improve economic status	0.935	11.979	2	347	0
Freedom to work from own place	0.991	1.550	2	347	0.214
Work with full independence	0.982	3.267	2	347	0.339
Earning money	0.957	7.757	2	347	0.001
Getting personal satisfaction	0.979	3.742	2	347	0.225
Gaining social status	0.887	2.184	2	347	0.347
Support from friends and relatives	0.896	2.206	2	347	0.328
Low investment	0.945	7.095	2	347	0
Previous experience	0.964	6.549	2	347	0.002
Knowledge in this field	0.972	2.033	2	347	0.207
Heavy demand	0.912	16.817	2	347	0
High profit margin	0.935	11.989	2	347	0
Easy to start and maintain	0.947	2.791	2	347	0.314

⊃ **Factor 5 :** This factor includes:

➔ Own interest (0.87),
➔ Desire to be self employed (0.68),

This factor is named as **Desire.**

The Cronbach's alpha of the scale was 0.80, indicating that each measure demonstrated acceptable internal consistency. Hence, it is inferred that Economy, Profit, Knowledge, Social Support, and Desire are the factors affecting the motivation levels of women entrepreneurs to start beauty salons. As per the results, women enter into the beauty salon business mainly because they have the freedom to work with full independence in their own place. With full freedom and independence, they can exhibit their professional skills perfectly to improve their economic status by generating more profits, as the beauty salon business needs a small amount of seed capital to start with basic services. These results are supported by the results obtained by Shane and Khurana (2003) and Cassar (2007), who explained that the need for independence is a feature of the personalities of entrepreneurs and refers to the desire of the individual to plan his or her own work and make his or her own decisions.

By acquiring the required skill sets, beauty salons can be operated even from residences. The initial investment for starting a salon can be kept low based on the comfort level and services offered to the customers. With a low initial investment, the possibility of generating high profits is feasible, as there is a great demand for such personalized services from women. A study conducted by Braiker (2004) reported that customers have started visiting spas instead of gyms for relaxation. So, profit level is also a key factor that motivated the entrepreneurs to start a beauty salon.

Women entrepreneurs in beauty salons can be successful if they are equipped with the requisite skill sets and knowledge coupled exposure to latest advanced technology in beauty treatments. As the beauty salon business is more personalized in nature, customers' satisfaction with the services provided by the salon is of vital importance for the salon's success. Timmons (1994) stated that apprenticeship within the framework of a small business gives the relevant experience in the business environment. For women entrepreneurs to be successful in any business,

Table 4. Eigen Values

Function	Eigen Value	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Canonical Correlation
1	.332	82.90	82.90	.799
2	.069	17.10	100.00	.554

their family, friends, and relatives play a prominent role. With proper extended support, women entrepreneurs can attain a good social status in the society through success in their entrepreneurial ventures. Parents become positive role models and act a source of inspiration to the child to start with a new business or to continue in the family business (Hisrich & Peters, 1989). However, the present study reveals that almost 90% of the respondents were first generation entrepreneurs as the beauty salon business started gaining hold in south India recently (since the last two decades). For women's entrepreneurial ventures to be successful, their desire to be self-employed and their interest in the field of business along with keeping oneself abreast with new technologies and prevailing trends are of paramount importance for the sustainability of a business.

Discriminant Analysis for Area of Operation of Beauty Salons Based on Motivational Dimensions

In order to discriminate the area of operation of beauty salons based on motivational dimensions, discriminant analysis was applied, and the results are discussed in the following sections :

➲ **Selection of Discriminating Variables :** In order to determine the significant contribution of motivational dimensions for the area of operation of beauty salons, the F- test was used for Wilk's Lambda. The ANOVA results are presented in the Table 3. The F- test is significant for seven variables - continuing the family business, to improve economic status, earning money, low investment, previous experience, heavy demand, and high profit margin as the p - value is less than 0.05.

➲ **Estimation of the Discriminant Function :** In this study, discriminant analysis was carried out in three areas of operation of beauty salons, that is, urban, semi - urban, and sub-urban, and it resulted in two discriminant functions and consequently, the first two Eigen values, and the results are presented in the Table 4.

The highest value (0.33) corresponds to the first discriminant function, which shows that it has the strongest power of discrimination of the two functions. Also, the first function accounts in a ratio of 82.90 % for the dispersion of the group means, as compared to the second function, which accounts for 17.10 %. The canonical correlation coefficient, measuring the relation between discriminant factorial coordinates and the grouping variable, shows that 63.84% [i.e, $(0.799)^2$] of the total variance accounts for the differences among the three areas of operation of beauty salons through the first discriminant function.

➲ **Standardized Canonical Discriminant Function Coefficients :** The standardized coefficients for the discriminant function were calculated and the results are presented in the Table 5. The discriminant function coefficients were used for calculating the discriminant score for each case in particular. Taking into the account that the first function has the highest discriminating power, the first discriminant function is:

$$z = 0.037Z_1 + 0.005 Z_2 + 0.290 Z_3 + 0.452 Z_4 - 0.195Z_5 + 0.031 Z_6 + 0.497Z_7 - 0.110Z_8 + 0.198Z_9 + 0.201 Z_{10} + 0.051 Z_{11} - 0.405 Z_{12} + 0.243 Z_{13} + 0.474 Z_{14} + 0.486 Z_{15} - 0.279 Z_{16}$$

Z_1 to Z_{16} are standardized X_1 to X_{16} variables.

Table 5. Standardized Canonical Discriminant Function Coefficients

Motivation	Function 1	Function 2
Own interest (Z_1)	0.037	0.318
Desire to be self employed (Z_2)	0.005	0.395
Continuing the family business (Z_3)	0.29	0.29
To improve economic status (Z_4)	0.452	-0.105
Freedom to work from own place (Z_5)	-0.195	0.629
Work with full independence (Z_6)	0.031	-0.974
Earning money (Z_7)	0.497	0.376
Getting personal satisfaction (Z_8)	-0.110	0.053
Gaining social status (Z_9)	0.198	0.219
Support from friends and relatives (Z_{10})	0.201	-0.316
Low investment (Z_{11})	0.051	-0.167
Previous experience (Z_{12})	-0.405	0.823
Knowledge in this field (Z_{13})	0.243	-0.114
Heavy demand (Z_{14})	0.474	-0.160
High profit margin (Z_{15})	0.486	-0.469
Easy to start and maintain (Z_{16})	-0.279	0.257

Table 6. Structure Matrix

Motivation	Function	
	1	2
To improve economic status	.615*	0.179
Earning money	.591*	0.09
Previous experience	.540*	0.041
Heavy demand	.456*	-0.002
High profit margin	.452*	-0.132
Work with full independence	0.315	.313*
Desire to be self employed	0.312	.346*
Support from friends and relatives	0.312	.364*
Easy to start and maintain	0.267	.281*
Getting personal satisfaction	0.242	.274*
Own interest	0.220	-.242*
Gaining social status	0.164	-.216*
Freedom to work from own place	0.228	.346*
Knowledge in this field	0.102	.367*
Low investment	0.254	.331*
Continuing family business	0.160	.278*

Note: * indicates largest absolute correlation between measure and discriminant function

The size of the coefficients of the variables - to improve economic status, earning money, previous experience, heavy demand, and high profit margin - discriminate best among the three areas of operation of beauty salons.

Table 7. Efficiency of Discriminant Function

Area of Operation	Predicted Group Membership			
	Count			Total
	Urban	Semi-Urban	Sub-Urban	
Urban	145	9	8	162
Semi-Urban	8	84	6	98
Sub-Urban	10	5	75	90
Urban	89.50	5.56	4.94	100.00
Semi-Urban	8.16	85.72	6.12	100.00
Sub-Urban	11.11	5.56	83.33	100.00

Note: 86.86 % of original grouped cases are correctly classified

Table 8. Standardized Structural Path Analysis

Path Relationships	Standardized Coefficients	t - test	p -Value
$S \Leftrightarrow CI$	12.621**	7.457	0.001
$CI \Leftrightarrow IF$	13.732**	7.510	0.001
$IF \Leftrightarrow FA$	10.864**	7.916	0.000
$S \Leftrightarrow IF$	11.273**	7.457	0.001
$CI \Leftrightarrow FA$	11.664**	7.708	0.001
$S \Leftrightarrow FA$	9.224**	8.154	0.000
Sustainability ← Service *(S)*	0.184**	6.784	0.000
Sustainability ← Customer interface *(CI)*	0.162**	7.346	0.000
Sustainability ← Infrastructure facilities *(IF)*	0.110**	6.939	0.000
Sustainability ← Financial aspect *(FA)*	0.134**	7.102	0.000

Note: ** indicates significant at 1% level

➲ **Structure Matrix :** The structure matrix coefficients are presented in the Table 6. From the Table, it can be inferred that the results indicate the correlation between each predictor measure and the discriminant function. For the first discriminant function, it can be seen that correlation coefficients have high values for five measures, that is, to improve economic status, earning money, previous experience, heavy demand, and high profit margin, which means that these measures are strongly correlated with the first function. These measures would probably characterize the best division of the three areas (urban, semi-urban, and sub-urban) of operation of beauty salons.

For the second function, work with full independence, desire to be self-employed, support from friends and relatives, easy to start and maintain, getting personal satisfaction, own interest, gaining social status, freedom to work from own place, knowledge in this field, low investment, and continuing family business are strongly correlated. These measures would also probably characterize the best division of the three areas of operation of beauty salons. Hence, the hypothesis (H01) is rejected.

➲ **Efficiency of the Discriminant Function :** The efficiency of the discriminant function is presented in the Table 7. Based on the discriminant function, 86.86 % of the measures had been correctly classified.

➲ **Inter-Relationship Between the Elements of a Business Model and the Sustainability of the Beauty Salon Business :** The inter-relationship between the elements of a business model and the sustainability of the beauty clinic business was analyzed by employing path analysis, and standardized structural path analysis results are presented in the Table 8.

From the results of the path analysis, it can be inferred that the path coefficient for services *(S)* against customer interface *(CI)* is 12.621 with a *p*-value of 0.001; the path coefficient for customer interface *(CI)* against infrastructure facilities *(IF)* is 13.732; the path coefficient for infrastructure facilities *(IF)* against financial aspects *(FA)* is 10.864 with a *p*- value of 0.000; the path coefficient for services *(S)* against infrastructure facilities *(IF)* is 11.273 ; the path coefficient for customer interface *(CI)* against financial aspects *(FA)* is 11.664 ; the path coefficient for services *(S)* against financial aspects *(FA)* is 9.224, indicating that these are significant at the 1% level of significance.

The path coefficient for sustainability against services *(S)* is 0.184 ; the path coefficient for sustainability against customer interface *(CI)*   is 0.162 with a *p*-value of 0.000, indicating that these are significant at the 1% level of significance. The path coefficient for sustainability against infrastructure facilities *(IF)* is 0.110 ; the path coefficient for sustainability against financial aspects *(FA)* is 0.134 with a *p*-value of 0.000, indicating that these are significant at the 1% level of significance.

Hence, the results reveal that service *(S)*, customer interface *(CI)*, financial aspects *(FA)*, and infrastructure facilities *(IF)* are significantly, positively, and directly influencing the sustainability of the beauty salon business in the given order of importance. Hence, the hypothesis H02 is rejected. The path diagram for sustainability of the beauty clinic business is presented in the Figure 2. The outcome of this model is highly applicable in the real world scenario, especially in Chennai. The model fit parameters are presented in the Table 9.The model indicates an excellent fit with a chi-square statistic of 2.461. The goodness of fit index (GFI) is 1.00, and the comparative fit index (CFI) is 0.98. The GFI and CFI indicate a perfect fit. The standardized root mean residual (RMR) is 0.02, and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) is 0.01, indicating an excellent fit.

Discussion

The results clearly indicate that majority of the respondent women entrepreneurs entered in the beauty salon business between 31 - 40 years of age ; most of the respondents were graduates, with professional training in beauty services. Most of the respondents were married, settled, and had the support of their family members to start their own venture, that is, a beauty salon. According to the present study, women from nuclear families are entering in this business as they can earn money, and also, it is not very difficult to maintain the work-life balance.

The path analysis shows the inter-relationship between elements of business model sustainability. To integrate
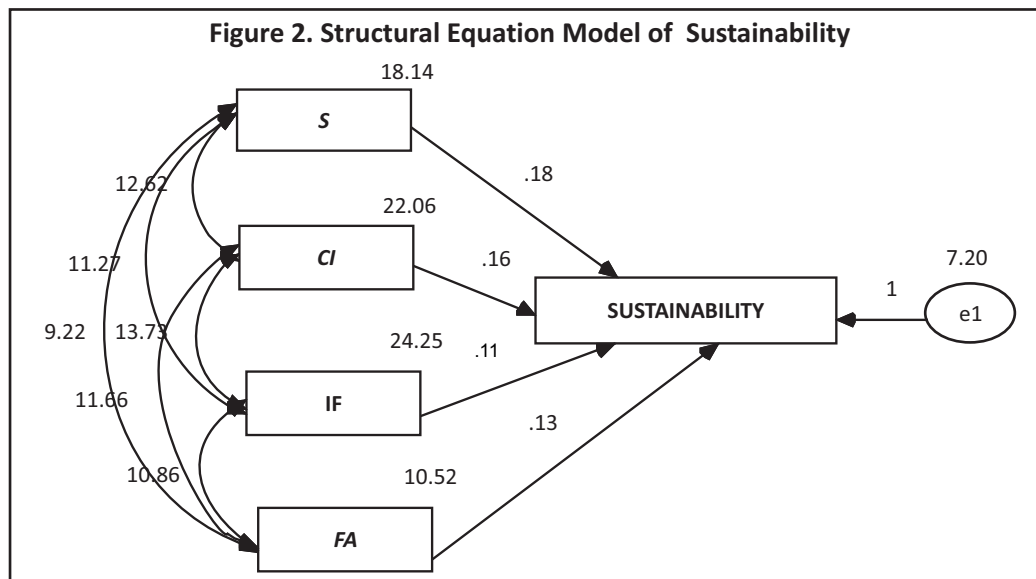

Figure 2. Structural Equation Model of Sustainability

Table 9. Model Fit Parameters

Chi-Square Value	*p* -Value	GFI	CFI	RMR	RMSEA
2.461	0.000	1.00	0.98	0.02	0.01

a sustainable business, service, infrastructure facilities, customer interface, and financial aspects are very important (Yip, 2004) in the service industry. With respect to beauty salons, the service provider must be trained in different types of services (Ullman, 2013) starting from basic eyebrow threading to advanced facial treatments. Quality in service is another important aspect, which implies delivering the service promptly, in time, with complete satisfaction for both the customer and the service provider. Courtesy, time management, honesty, experience, communication skills, proper training in different types of services, willingness to help the customers, maintaining a database of customers, and maintaining good customer relations show importance towards customer interface for value creation.

For every business to be sustainable, proper financial planning is a must. Even though beauty treatments are availed by majority of the women in Chennai throughout the year, this business experiences peak profits during festival seasons and weddings. Offers, discounts, add on services, free services, free sample services, discounts in package offers, usage of membership cards, discounts for prompt service every month add to the financial aspects for making the business sustainable. Nowadays, beauty salons are considered as a place for women to rejuvenate and unwind by getting massages and spa treatments. To provide the same, more emphasis needs to be placed on infrastructural facilities by providing AC rooms, separate rooms for spa treatments, sterilized towels and knifes, security for the customers' belongings, modern equipments, neat and hygienic employees, good ambience, and responsive service providers to attend to the needs of the customers.

Managerial Implications

As the beauty care industry is in the growth stage in India, many modern services have to be included in its product range to meet the competition with network and branded salons. To do so, as per international standards, and to compete with branded salons, regular and proper training is more important. Every step-in customer must be treated to his full satisfaction based on flexi timings, accuracy, and with empathy. Service quality dimensions like reliability, responsiveness, empathy, assurance, and tangibles must be taken utmost care of. Well planned interiors with good comfort level, hygiene, modern equipments, safety for customers' belongings, attractive pricing strategies, perfect promotional strategies, maintaining privacy while attending the customers, nature of treatments offered will enhance the success of the beauty salons. The area where the salon is located is also crucial, as a well placed salon will bring in the required number of footfalls to the same. Hence, proper strategic reasoning must be done before deciding upon where to open a salon which is operated by women for women.

Conclusion

The foregoing analysis reveals that majority of the women entrepreneurs of beauty salons belonged to the age group of 31 - 40 years, and were graduates. The majority of the women entrepreneurs of beauty salons were married and belonged to nuclear families. The factor analysis shows that Economy, Profit, Knowledge, Social Support, and Desire were the factors affecting the motivation levels of the respondents for starting a beauty salon. The discriminant analysis indicates that economic status, earning money, previous experience, heavy demand, and high profit margin discriminate best among the three areas (urban, semi-urban, and sub-urban) of operation of beauty salons. Based on the discriminant function, 86.86 % of the measures have been correctly classified.

The path analysis shows that service, customer interface, financial aspects, and infrastructure facilities are significantly, positively, and directly influencing the sustainability of the beauty salon business in the given order of importance. In order to make the beauty salon business more profitable and successful, in addition to regular

beauty services, the beauty salons should also provide modern beauty therapies at affordable prices to the customers. In order to attract more customers and to gain customers' confidence, awards, service quality certificates, modern therapeutic aids, and exhibits of beauty processes should be displayed at appropriate places in the salon.

Hence, to be successful in the beauty salon business, the service provider must create a unique and special experience for the customer. The results of the survey revealed crucial areas for the success of the salon business. These are to make a best impression on the customer for service, upgrading the technical and professional skills of the beauticians, employee competency, creating a brand image, providing quality services, and showing empathy to the customers. Other important components for success in this business are leadership, proper system of recruitment, hiring and providing training to talented employees, marketing, accounting, and understanding the cultures of different people.

Limitations of the Study and Scope for Further Research

Although this study has made a valuable contribution, it is not devoid of any limitations. This study was restricted to the domicile of Chennai city, so generalizing the findings to other locations may not be possible. Studies pertaining to salons operating in rural areas could be attempted separately. In order to extend the findings to other geographical locations, comparative studies could be attempted in the future.

The present study, being descriptive in nature, throws up several interesting research questions, which can be taken up by future studies. How to measure the impact of beauty salons in terms of social and economic empowerment of women entrepreneurs? What are the preferences with respect to types of services offered by beauty salons and do they differ across age, educational qualifications, occupations, residential areas, and other demographic and lifestyle variables in both urban and rural areas? Is it possible to replicate/ scale up the success of beauty processes and products from one beauty salon to another in a chain of beauty salons? What strategies need to be employed to activate satisfaction and loyalty of customers? With the emerging beauty consciousness among women, the impact of cultural, sub-cultural, and social values need to be evaluated, especially in rural areas and comparisons between urban, semi-urban, sub-urban, and rural areas could be explored further for the success of women entrepreneurs of beauty salons.

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