

## **ICTS' ROLES TO WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP: AN ABSORPTIVE CAPACITY PERSPECTIVE**

**Dr. Md. Mahbubul Alam\***

### **Executive Summary**

Entrepreneurship development can play a pivotal role in ensuring women's right to equality and an adequate standard of living, and it should be the prime agenda in every development discourse. Women entrepreneurs in rural areas particularly in developing countries, continually be confronted by their Information and Communication Technology (ICT) use at home and office, which is often characterized by a number of deficiencies. Therefore, the objectives of this study were to determine the extent of women's entrepreneurial capacity, and the effect of selected entrepreneurial factors and ICT factors on the entrepreneurial capacity of women in rural areas. Based on the relevant literature, a conceptual model of the study was proposed. Data were collected from the selected women entrepreneurs (127) from two upazilas of Gazipur district and one upazila of Manikganj district using a structured interview schedule during 15<sup>th</sup> August-15<sup>th</sup> September, 2019. Data were analysed by partial Least Square-based Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) using SmartPLS V2.0 M3 whereas the constraints faced by women entrepreneurs in running their business were analysed qualitatively. Result revealed that the extent of entrepreneurial capacity of women were found to be reasonably satisfactory and was positively influenced by their perceived innovativeness followed by pro-activeness that jointly explained 45.9 percent of the variance of entrepreneurial capacity, while self-dependency, risk-taking propensity were found to be non-significant. Two antecedents, ICT use for communication and ICT use for collaboration, positively influenced the extent of ICT use and jointly explained 20.3 percent of the variance of the extent of ICT use. Although these two variables significantly influence ICTs use, this research did not find any contribution of ICT use to the entrepreneurial capacity. Concerning the constraints faced by women entrepreneurs, 'resource-related constraints' and 'physical damage' were most frequently reported by respondents. Finally, this study proposed several theoretical and practical recommendations about improving women's entrepreneurial capacity in rural areas.

---

\* Professor, Dept. of Agricultural Extension and Information System, Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University, Dhaka-1207