



Women's Empowerment through F-Commerce: A Systematic Review of Opportunities, Challenges, and Socioeconomic Impacts

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Citation: Akter, S. (2026). Women's Empowerment through F-Commerce: A Systematic Review of Opportunities, Challenges, and Socioeconomic Impacts. *Society & Sustainability*, 8(1), 51-61. <https://doi.org/10.38157/ss.v8i1.777>.

Research Article

Abstract

Facebook commerce, or F-commerce, has emerged as a significant channel for women's digital entrepreneurship, particularly in developing economies, where women's formal labor-market participation, access to capital, mobility, and market entry remain constrained by gender norms. This is a systematic narrative review of peer-reviewed, credible institutional literature on the role of F-commerce in women's empowerment, focusing on opportunities, challenges, and socioeconomic impacts. This analysis is underpinned by Kabeer's resources-agency-achievements framework, with gender-aware entrepreneurship theory, social commerce, digital entrepreneurship, and digital inclusion studies. The reviewed evidence indicates that F-commerce can enhance women's market access, social capital, income generation, entrepreneurial learning, and household contributions. But the impacts of empowerment are not uniform, as women entrepreneurs face challenges such as limited access to finance, low digital literacy, online harassment, insecure payment systems, logistical difficulties, a lack of formal business status, dependence on the platform, and ongoing burdens of unpaid care work. The article claims that F-commerce has the potential to increase women's economic agency, but it is not a magic bullet that can change structural gender inequality. Safe governance of the platform, gender-sensitive digital training, simplified formalization of business, financial inclusion, reliable logistical support, and enhanced legal protection and social recognition of women's online entrepreneurship are essential for sustainable empowerment.

Keywords: F-commerce; Facebook commerce; women empowerment; women entrepreneurship; social commerce; systematic review.

1. Introduction

Social media has changed the face of e-commerce by bringing sellers and buyers together in new ways – via social networks, communities, user-generated content, and platform-mediated trust. In general, social commerce is understood as e-commerce using social media technologies to facilitate product discovery, information sharing, recommendations, and interactions and transactions (Liang & Turban, 2011; Zhang & Benyoucef, 2016). Social commerce, as opposed to traditional e-commerce, emphasizes reviews, referrals, community endorsements, personal communication, and relational trust (Hajli, 2015; Stephen & Toubia, 2010). F-commerce is a type of social commerce in which products or services are sold via Facebook pages, groups, Messenger, comments, live sessions, and community networks. This is especially noticeable in scenarios where micro and small entrepreneurs cannot necessarily afford to create their own website or even an online store.

F-commerce has gained momentum in recent years, making it easier for women to overcome certain hurdles of traditional entrepreneurship. In cases of restricted mobility, access to formal employment, social norms

regarding household responsibilities, and limited commercial space, women may opt for Facebook selling to access customers from the comfort of their homes (Basak, 2022; Fariha & Dey, 2025). F-commerce is mostly used in Bangladesh and other developing countries, including clothing, cosmetics, homemade food, boutiques, handicrafts, educational services, and small-scale businesses. These businesses can start with minimal capital and grow incrementally to generate income, social acceptance, and entrepreneurial confidence among women (Ripa et al., 2023; Tabassum, 2018).

The empowerment potential of F-commerce should, however, be tapped with caution. Empowerment is not equivalent to income alone. Kabeer (1999) provides an explanation of empowerment that outlines the interrelationship between resources, agency, and achievement. Resources are the material, human, and social circumstances that enable choice; agency is the capacity to set and pursue goals; and achievements are the actual results of that agency. In this sense, F-commerce can be a positive step towards women's empowerment if it enhances women's access to productive resources, enhances their business decision-making power, and improves their visible outcomes in terms of income, self-confidence, household bargaining power, social recognition, and business growth (Kabeer, 1999; Cornwall, 2016).

Meanwhile, feminist entrepreneurship research cautions against treating women's entrepreneurship as a straightforward account of success. Ahl (2006) suggests that studies on women entrepreneurs tend to reflect male norms by assuming that women-owned enterprises are less important, smaller, and secondary. Brush, de Bruin, and Welter (2009) propose a gender-aware framework comprising markets, management, money, motherhood, and macro- and meso-environments. This framework is particularly relevant to F-commerce, as women entrepreneurs may have access to markets via Facebook but face challenges with finance, training, recognition, safety, time poverty, and institutional support (Brush et al., 2009; Al Omoush, 2024). This article is a systematic review of the opportunities and challenges of women's empowerment in F-commerce, as well as its socioeconomic impact. It discusses three research questions:

- (1) What are the opportunities for women's empowerment through F-commerce?
- (2) What are the problems that hinder women from participating and succeeding in F-commerce?
- (3) What socioeconomic impacts are reported for women, households and communities?

2. Methodology

This is a systematic review article. The principles of the review logic are based on PRISMA 2020 (Page et al., 2021), which offers guidance for conducting systematic reviews to transparently identify, screen, appraise, and synthesize literature. As the subject touches on business and information systems, Gender studies, Development studies, and entrepreneurship, qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods, conceptual, and review-based studies are acceptable for this review. The methodological appraisal logic is based on the Mixed Methods Appraisal Tool, which has been found appropriate for appraising a range of study designs in a mixed-methods review (Hong et al., 2018).

2.1 Search Strategy

It was decided that the search strategy would include studies on F-commerce, social commerce, women's empowerment/digital entrepreneurship, etc. Different search terms were used, combined with Boolean operators, and applied to the multidisciplinary and publisher databases. Studies published primarily from 2010 onwards were included in the search because social commerce emerged as a more apparent area of research in the 2010s (Liang & Turban, 2011; Zhang & Benyoucef, 2016). Recent studies on Bangladesh were also considered in the search, as F-commerce has experienced tremendous growth in the Digital Business Environments of South Asian countries (Fariha & Dey, 2025; Tabassum, 2018).

Table 1. Search strategy and source categories

Search component	Details
Core databases/platforms	Web of Science, Google Scholar, ScienceDirect, SpringerLink, Taylor & Francis Online, SAGE Journals, Emerald Insight, and institutional report repositories.
Main search string	“F-commerce” OR “Facebook commerce” OR “Facebook-based entrepreneurship” OR “social commerce” AND “women” OR “female entrepreneurs” OR “women entrepreneurs” AND “empowerment” OR “economic empowerment” OR “digital entrepreneurship”.
Supplementary search strings	“Facebook” AND “women entrepreneurship” AND “Bangladesh,” social commerce affordances” AND “female entrepreneurship” and “digital entrepreneurship” AND “women empowerment” AND “developing countries”.
Date coverage	Mainly 2010 - 2026, with older foundational empowerment and entrepreneurship theory included where needed.
Source types	Peer-reviewed journal articles, Systematic reviews, Conceptual articles, Book chapters, and credible institutional reports (GSMA, UNCTAD, World Bank, etc.).

2.2 Eligibility Criteria

Studies were included if they explicitly discussed F-commerce, Facebook-based business, social commerce, women's entrepreneurship, digital entrepreneurship, or entrepreneurship outcomes related to empowerment. Studies not focused on business or empowerment, not accessible in English, without methodological or conceptual relevance, or duplicates were excluded. Although some theory papers did not specifically address F-commerce, they were retained because they provided the foundation for the conceptual interpretation of empowerment and gendered entrepreneurship.

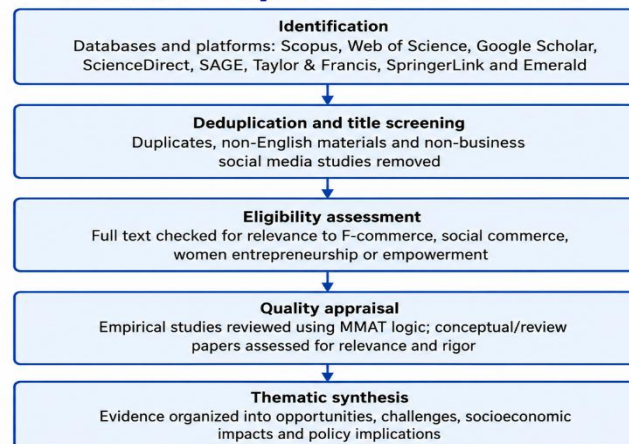
Table 2. Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Research in the area of F-commerce (Facebook-based selling), social commerce, digital entrepreneurship, women entrepreneurship, or empowerment.	Studies on the general use of social media that are not specifically related to business, entrepreneurship, or empowerment.
Peer-reviewed articles, credible book chapters, and institutional reports.	Blog posts, promotional articles, and non-academic opinion pieces are not supported.
Empirical (qualitative, quantitative, or mixed method) and conceptually important theoretical/review studies.	Duplicate records, inaccessible items, or sources without adequate publication details.
Literature relevant to developing economies and/or global social commerce debates written in English.	Research that does not relate to women, gender, entrepreneurship, and/or digital commerce.

2.3 Data Extraction and Synthesis

The selected sources were coded based on author, year, country/ context, research design, platform focus, opportunities, barriers, empowerment outcomes, and policy implications. This synthesis took a thematic approach, given that the literature comprises empirical studies and conceptual and review papers.

PRISMA-Adapted Review Workflow



Note. Exact database counts should be finalized from exported search records before journal submission.

Fig. 1. PRISMA-adapted workflow used for the review process

The themes were identified by cross-comparing them among the studies and categorized into four analytical themes: enabling opportunities, capability development, constraints, and socioeconomic impacts. In this way, F-commerce can be evaluated not only as a business model but also as a “gendered digital practice” that exists within family, market, institutional, and platform environments (Ahl, 2006; Brush et al., 2009; Kabeer, 1999).

3. Theoretical Framework

The study brings together three streams of theory: women's empowerment, gender-aware entrepreneurship, and social commerce. Kabeer's (1999) resources-agency-achievements framework is helpful because it distinguishes access to opportunities from the ability to act and from the actual achievements of action. This is an important difference in F-commerce. A woman can have a Facebook page and a smartphone, but whether she can make decisions, control earnings, manage customer relationships, negotiate family responsibilities, and gain recognition for her work is a key indicator of empowerment (Kabeer, 1999; Cornwall, 2016).

There is a need to view entrepreneurship as a structure by adding a gender-aware lens. The markets, money, management, motherhood, and macro/meso environment factors are highlighted by Brush et al. (2009) as affecting women's entrepreneurship. These dimensions are directly relevant to F-commerce: women can access markets via Facebook, but they may not have funds to invest in stock, they may not have the know-how to make it grow, and they may not have time to run their businesses due to childbearing responsibilities, and they may not have institutional support towards formalization or safety. Ahl (2006) also warns that studies suggesting that women-owned businesses are lacking are flawed.

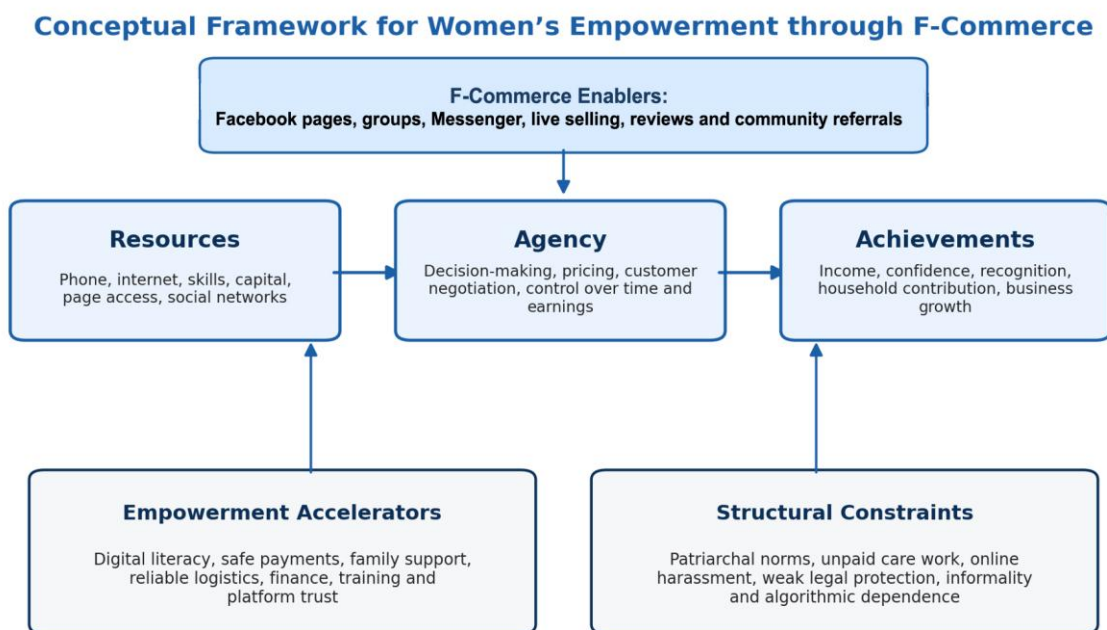


Fig. 2. Conceptual framework for women's empowerment through F-commerce

The mechanism of social commerce is explained by the social commerce theory. Liang and Turban (2011) view social commerce as a research field in which social technologies are changing e-commerce, and Hajli (2015) demonstrates that forums, communities, ratings, reviews, and referral programs help create trust and purchase intention. In F-commerce, these features serve as tools for women entrepreneurs to communicate with customers, build a reputation, and minimize the need for a formal advertising budget. The discussion is extended with Camacho and Barrios (2022), who demonstrate how Facebook's affordances can facilitate female entrepreneurship in patriarchal societies of scarce resources.

4. Results: Thematic Findings

4.1 Overview of Selected Literature

Based on the literature reviewed, F-commerce is typically discussed through qualitative interviews, surveys, conceptual analysis, and social commerce models. The literature reveals that studies in Bangladesh have provided direct evidence on women's entrepreneurship through the Facebook platform, and studies on social commerce in general have explained Platform Affordances, Trust, Consumer interaction, and Digital Business Adoption. A summary of major sources used in the synthesis is provided in Table 3.

Table 3. Selected literature matrix used in the thematic synthesis

No.	Source	Context/focus	Design	Key contribution to the review
1	Kabeer (1999)	Women's empowerment measurement	Conceptual	Provides the resources-agency-achievements framework for assessing empowerment outcomes.
2	Ahl (2006)	Women's entrepreneurship research	Critical review	Shows why gender-sensitive analysis is needed to avoid treating women's business as deficient.
3	Brush et al. (2009).	Gender-aware entrepreneurship	Conceptual	Introduces markets, money, management, motherhood, and macro/meso environment as key analytical dimensions.
4	Liang & Turban (2011)	Social commerce framework	Conceptual/review	Defines social commerce as a research field shaped by social media technologies and e-commerce.
5	Hajli (2015)	Social commerce trust and purchase intention	Quantitative model	Shows how ratings, reviews, referrals, and online communities build trust and purchase intention.
6	Zhang & Benyoucef (2016)	Consumer behavior in social commerce	Literature review	Synthesizes consumer decision-making, interaction, and social influence in social commerce.
7	Nambisan (2017)	Digital entrepreneurship	Conceptual	Explains how digital technologies transform entrepreneurial processes, boundaries, and uncertainty.
8	Beninger et al. (2016).	Women entrepreneurs and social media in Egypt	Empirical	Connects social media use with women's entrepreneurial empowerment in a developing context.
9	Melissa et al. (2013).	Urban women entrepreneurs in Indonesia	Empirical	Shows how social media can support women's business visibility and activity in urban settings.
10	Tabassum (2018)	Facebook-based women entrepreneurship in Bangladesh	Empirical	Identifies opportunities and challenges of Facebook-based women entrepreneurship in Bangladesh.
11	Basak (2022)	Women entrepreneurship through F-commerce in Bangladesh	Qualitative	Highlights the motivation, experiences, and achievements of Bangladeshi women entrepreneurs using Facebook.
12	Camacho & Barrios (2022)	Facebook affordances and female entrepreneurship	Qualitative/conceptual	Explains how Facebook features support female digital subsistence entrepreneurship.
13	Ripa et al. (2023).	Digital marketplace and women entrepreneurs in Bangladesh	Empirical	Links digital marketplace participation with women's economic contribution.
14	Al Omoush (2024)	Social commerce business adoption among women	Quantitative	Identifies entrepreneurial mindset, perceived value, social commerce literacy, and collaborative ecosystems as drivers.
15	Fariha & Dey (2025)	Women's F-commerce experiences in Bangladesh	Qualitative	Examines empowerment possibilities, challenges, and post-COVID-19 experiences among women F-commerce entrepreneurs.
16	GSMA (2025)	Mobile gender gap	Institutional report	Provides evidence on the continuing gender gap in mobile internet adoption and smartphone access.

4.2 Opportunities Created by F-Commerce

First of all, F-commerce reduces the barriers to entrepreneurship. Traditional business may involve hiring shops, moving around, obtaining formal permissions, recruiting sales staff, and requiring greater start-up capital. F-commerce enables women to start with a Facebook page, a small inventory, personal networks, and home-based operations. According to the theory of Digital entrepreneurship, the physical location, fixed assets, and traditional organizational forms are less important in business processes, reflecting the reduced

boundedness of entrepreneurial activity (Nambisan, 2017). Studies conducted on Bangladesh indicate that such flexibility is especially crucial for women who are often burdened with household duties, subjected to social constraints, and have fewer job prospects (Basak, 2022; Fariha & Dey, 2025; Tabassum, 2018).

A second opportunity is market access. Women can reach customers beyond their immediate neighborhoods through posts, shares, groups, Messenger chats, and live product showcases. A number of studies on social commerce have shown that social interaction, reviews, recommendations, and community participation can help establish consumer trust and thereby influence purchase intention (Hajli, 2015; Zhang & Benyoucef, 2016). This indicates that, for women entrepreneurs, reputation can be built through customer feedback and relational communication, not just through costly advertising or physical stores.

The third is flexibility. F-commerce can be conducted from home, and there are opportunities to set up and adjust the work schedule according to domestic duties. This is sometimes referred to as an advantage of women entrepreneurs as it enables them to engage in business without being completely detached from the household-based roles (Basak, 2022; Beninger et al., 2016). But, flexibility has its own two sides. It can enable women to earn more, but if so, it can also make it seem normal for women to carry out paid and unpaid care duties simultaneously with no extra support at home (Cornwall, 2016; Brush et al., 2009).

The fourth is entrepreneurial learning. F-commerce means that women should learn how to communicate with their customers, how to take pictures of their merchandise, how to calculate the price, how to handle the returns and complaints from their customers, how to package their items, how to coordinate shipping, how to promote their products online, and how to handle the processing of digital payments. These skills can help to boost confidence and agency. According to Al Omoush (2024), the entrepreneurial mindset, perceived value, social commerce literacy, and collaborative ecosystems are significant factors in the successful adoption of social commerce by women. This implies that empowerment is not generated solely through the platform, but also through women's capacity to turn their access to the platform into skills, strategies, and ongoing business activities.

4.3 Challenges and Constraints

However, some constraints identified in the literature limit empowerment. The first is the digital divide that exists between men and women. F-commerce depends on having a smartphone, access to the Internet, digital literacy, confidence in payment methods, and regular communication. Women's mobile internet usage in low- and middle-income countries is lower than men's, and a significant share of women who do not use mobile internet are in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa (GSMA 2025). This difference is significant, as participation in F-commerce requires not only owning a mobile device but also low-cost data, privacy, trust, and competence.

The second challenge is financial exclusion. Most F-commerce businesses run by women begin with family or personal savings and are unable to grow due to a lack of collateral, credit history, bookkeeping, and a formal banking relationship. Useful here is the gender-aware framework by Brush et al. (2009), which defines money as start-up finance, but also encompasses access to formal credit, financial control, and financial growth resources. In many developing contexts, women can earn income but lack autonomous control over capital or decision-making regarding business expansion (Kabeer, 1999; Ripa et al., 2023).

The third challenge is to be safe online. Women entrepreneurs need to be seen online, interact with strangers, post pictures of their products, run live sessions, and attend to messages in their inbox. This visibility can lead to harassment, fraud, unwanted contacts or emotional stress/reputational attacks. World Bank's research on cyber harassment and women's safety highlights that the level of legal protection and enforcement is not consistent across countries (World Bank, 2024). From the Bangladesh context, recent studies reveal that inappropriate messages, social stigma, and lack of support and emotional burden are also barriers for women in F-commerce (Fariha & Dey, 2025; Kulsum et al., 2025).

The fourth challenge concerns logistics, payments, and customer trust. Courier services, cash-on-delivery, and informal payment methods can be essential to small women-led businesses. Late deliveries, product

return disputes, fraudulent orders, and payment uncertainty can lead to losses in profits and trust. Trust is an important aspect of social commerce, and trust must be built on both sides: customers must trust sellers, and women entrepreneurs must trust customers, payment systems, logistics companies, and platform rules (Hajli, 2015; Zhang & Benyoucef, 2016).

The fifth challenge is platform dependency. F-commerce entrepreneurs rely on Facebook algorithms, page reach, account security, group rules, message visibility, and platform policies. When there is a sudden decrease in organic reach, hacking of a Facebook account, restriction of content, or an increase in ad costs, there can be a direct impact on sales. According to the literature on digital entrepreneurship, digital platforms introduce certain types of uncertainty and create new dependencies and vulnerabilities (Nambisan, 2017; Nambisan et al., 2019). Women entrepreneurs thus require multiple channels, safe page management, and their own customer records.

4.4 Socioeconomic Impacts

F-commerce can help enhance individual income, confidence, digital literacy, entrepreneurial identity, and self-worth. Previously, women with limited employment opportunities may have begun to view themselves as entrepreneurs and economic contributors. This refers to the achievement aspect of empowerment, where digital activities lead to tangible improvements in income, confidence, and social recognition (Kabeer, 1999; Fariha & Dey, 2025).

F-commerce at the household level can be a source of income for the family, support children's education, cover health costs, and enhance household resilience. The empowerment effect, however, depends on the control women exercise over their income and on their family's acceptance of their work as a proper business rather than a side occupation. If women's income is "swallowed up" in household spending without any change in decision-making power, then empowerment is partial (Cornwall, 2016; Kabeer, 1999).

Thematic Synthesis of Reviewed Literature

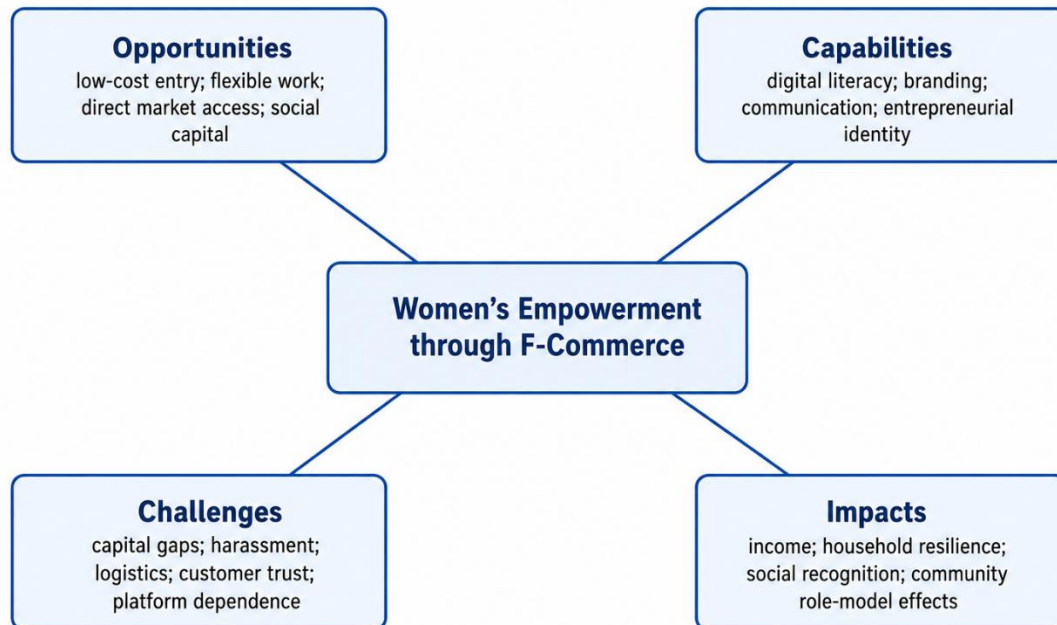


Figure 3. Thematic synthesis of opportunities, challenges, and impacts

At the community level, successful women entrepreneurs can serve as role models and increase the visibility of women entrepreneurship. Peer learning, referral assistance, and emotional support can be found in Facebook groups or in networks run by women. Research in Egypt and Indonesia has shown that social media can help women entrepreneurs build networks and gain market visibility, which may not always be possible in traditional business settings (Beninger et al., 2016; Melissa et al., 2013).

F-commerce, at the macro level, can help drive SME growth, increase participation in the digital economy, and create informal employment. However, these are all necessary conditions for inclusive digital infrastructure, consumer protection, platform governance, and formalization support, all of which are necessary for broader development benefits. The importance of institutional reforms, safe participation, and enabling legal environments for women's economic inclusion has been highlighted by UNCTAD (2023) and the World Bank (2024). Thus, F-commerce should not be considered an empowerment strategy or a single solution, but rather a part of a broader digital inclusion ecosystem.

Table 4. Thematic synthesis of opportunities, challenges, and socioeconomic impacts

Theme	Key findings	Empowerment interpretation
Low-cost entry	Starting small with a Facebook page, small stock, family networks, and a home-based operation, women can begin.	Increases access to resources, but this does not necessarily mean agency.
Market access	Posts, groups, Messenger, reviews, and referrals are ways women can connect with larger customer networks.	Improves social capital and customers' visibility.
Flexibility	F-commerce can play around the family and the lack of mobility.	May make participation more difficult while increasing unpaid care responsibilities.
Digital skill development	The females are taught about branding, customer relations, product display, payments, and logistics coordination.	Increases capability and confidence.
Finance and formalization barriers	Lack of capital, inadequate bookkeeping, and a lack of a trade license limit the business's growth.	Restricts turning opportunities into long-term success.
Online safety risks	Harassment, fraud, and unwanted messages and reputational attacks lead to diminished confidence and visibility.	Threatens agency and may push women to withdraw from public digital spaces.
Platform dependency	Business vulnerabilities include algorithm changes, accounting insecurities, and a decrease in organic reach.	Establishes new forms of dependence in digital entrepreneurship.
Socioeconomic outcomes	May have improved income, household contribution, recognition, role modeling, and community learning.	Delivers when women take control, respect, and decision-making power.

5. Discussion

Based on the review, F-commerce provides conditional empowerment. It has the potential to increase resources for women by providing access to digital markets, customers, networks, and opportunities for information and income. It can enhance agency in women's decisions on product, price, promotion, communications, savings, and reinvestment. It can also lead to earning an income, increased confidence, contributing to the household, gaining community recognition, and growing a business for women. This trend fits very well with Kabeer's (1999) definition of empowerment as a process of increasing from limited choice to more control over life choices.

But F-commerce empowerment is not automatic. A woman can create a Facebook page and sell products without control over income, relief from unpaid work, protection from harassment, or access to formal finance. That is why Cornwall's argument (2016) is important: empowerment does not mean merely individual involvement in an income-generating activity, but the transformation of relationships, institutions, and structures. The potential for F-commerce to empower women is limited if their workloads do not decrease, even as the work environment becomes more empowering.

The review also shows the relevance of the theory of gender-aware entrepreneurship. The framework by Brush et al. (2009) is useful to understand the empowerment and constraints of F-commerce. While Facebook can open markets, women require money, management skills, institutional support, family recognition, and safety. Ahl's (2006) critique is also pertinent, as women's F-commerce businesses cannot be considered informal, small, or secondary. Rather, they must be interpreted in the context of structural factors, including capital obstacles, care work, digital inequalities, and social norms and platform governance.

Social commerce is what makes F-commerce possible; it transforms social interaction into commercial trust. The presence of reviews, comments, referrals, live demonstrations, and personal communication reduces the uncertainty of online transactions (Hajli, 2015; Zhang & Benyoucef, 2016). These affordances can be used by women entrepreneurs to build a reputation even without a shop. However, this platform visibility comes with a risk as women can be subjected to online abuse, fraud, or reputational threats (World Bank, 2024; Fariha & Dey, 2025).

In sum, the literature indicates that F-commerce is an empowering path, with its attendant empowering and disempowering conditions. It can help women's economic participation, but for long-term empowerment, the question is whether women can enter the business sector, formalize safely, access finance, control profits, manage digital risks, and gain recognition within the household and the community. Future empirical studies should hence not only record sales or incomes but also control for earnings, business survival, decision-making power, time use, psychological empowerment, as well as digital safety outcomes and formalization outcomes.

6. Policy and Practical Recommendations

The results show that women's empowerment in the context of F-commerce needs support from the government, digital platforms, financial institutions, training institutions, logistics institutions, civil society, and family members. While a platform can't resolve gender equality, a supportive ecosystem can help women turn digital access into ongoing gender agency and success.

Table 5. Policy and practical recommendations

Area	Recommendation	Expected contribution
Digital skills	Providing practical training on page management, product photography, pricing, content writing, customer handling, bookkeeping, and digital safety.	Increases women's skills in running and developing their businesses online.
Financial inclusion	Create women-centric loan products for microfinance and SMEs based on transaction history, mobile payment data, and business page evidence.	Minimizes capital limitations and helps businesses grow.
Platform safety	Enhance harassment reporting, privacy controls, seller verification, fraud detection, and account recovery.	Promotes safe online participation and reduces the withdrawal of visibility.
Formalization	Make online trade licensing, tax education, and small business registration easier.	Facilitates legal recognition, access to finance, and consumer confidence.
Logistics and payments	Establish effective courier relationships, have online payment systems, and dispute resolutions in place.	Reduces delivery, return, and payment risks.
Family and community support	Increase social awareness of women's digital entrepreneurship, with campaigns and peer networks.	Increases household reinforcement, legitimation, and community role-modeling effects.

7. Research Gaps and Future Research Directions

The available literature is helpful but contains some inconsistencies. First, many f-commerce studies are cross-sectional or qualitative, which are insufficient for understanding long-term business survival and empowerment outcomes. Longitudinal studies are required to investigate how F-commerce businesses among women develop, formalize, or eventually die off. Second, there is a need for additional studies using a mixed-method approach that links income data with subjective empowerment and experiences of household bargaining power and digital safety. Thirdly, urban and rural women, married and unmarried women, students, homemakers, and full-time entrepreneurs should be compared in their empowerment experiences because there are likely to be differences in these experiences by social position.

Fourth, the platform's governance needs to be explored in greater depth in future studies. In addition to being market players, f-commerce entrepreneurs also rely on platform algorithms, content moderation, and security and paid visibility of their accounts. Fifth, there is a need to pay more attention to intersectionality, which involves class, education, location, age, marital status, and disability. Lastly, more policy-relevant research is needed to determine if training, financial support, formalization support, and/or digital safety interventions have a positive impact on women's agency and socioeconomic outcomes.

8. Conclusion

F-commerce has created a vital path for women's entrepreneurship in Bangladesh and other developing economies. It has the potential to reduce barriers to business entrepreneurship, improve market access, boost income potential, build digital skills, and enhance women's identity as entrepreneurs. The literature reviewed indicates that F-commerce may positively impact women's empowerment by enabling greater access to resources, greater agency, and meaningful improvements in their lives, including greater control over income, increased confidence, recognition, and household decision-making power.

F-commerce is not a magic bullet for gender inequality, however. Digital divides, constrained access to finance, inadequate formalization, logistics issues, online harassment, the unpaid care load, and platform dependency remain issues for women entrepreneurs. Hence, women's empowerment with F-commerce can be interpreted conditionally, relationally, and structurally. Its enduring effects depend on whether women are provided with training, safeguarding, investment, institutional recognition, and social empowerment to ensure that the digital opportunity is translated into lasting empowerment. An F-commerce ecosystem that is gender-sensitive can enable Facebook entrepreneurship to transcend into a means of broader economic engagement and social change.

Conflict of Interest: The author declares no conflict of interest.

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