

PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES FACED BY WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN INDIA - A STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Women Entrepreneur is a person who accepts challenging role to meet her personal needs and become economically independent. Many women have this quality but they never got a platform to showcase their talents and hence they don't know their real abilities. Women in India are taking more responsibilities in bringing up children and maintaining a better home with love and affection. At the family level, the task of coordinating various activities in a much effective manner, without feeling the pinch of inconveniences, is being carried out by the women folk. This paper focuses on problems and challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in India. Women are equally competent in running business but still lacks behind in spite of women empowerment movement in our country, there are social, cultural and economic hurdles in the way of women entrepreneurship and the major problem is lack of entrepreneurial environment. In spite of having the potential and talent, women are deprived of opportunities, information and education. Some of the major problems identified are women's family obligations, Gender inequality, Problem of Finance, Low-level risk taking attitude, and the male -female competition. The problems of women entrepreneurs can be eradicated by appropriate training, incentives, encouragement and motivation, social recognition of their entrepreneurial abilities, and family's moral support.

Key Words: Empowerment, Women Entrepreneur, Independent, Social Barriers, Environment, Gender inequality.

INTRODUCTION

The Indian culture made them only subordinates and executors of the decisions made by other male members, in the basic family structure. The traditional set up is changing in the modern era. The transformation of social fabric of the Indian society, in terms of increased educational status of women and varied aspirations for

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better living, necessitated a change in the life style of Indian women both in urban as well as in rural areas. Women Entrepreneurship is a person who accepts challenging role to meet her personal needs and become economically independent. A strong desire to do something positive is an inbuilt quality of entrepreneurial women, who is capable of contributing values in both family and social life. This is great news. But, a part of women in some parts of the country still do not know their power. The societal set up in India has been traditionally a male dominated one. Women contribute significantly to the running of family businesses mostly in the form of unpaid effort and skills. The value of this effort is underestimated both by the families that take it for granted and in academic studies. At the family level, the task of coordinating various activities in a much effective manner, without feeling the pinch of inconveniences, is being carried out by the women folk. Women entrepreneurship is essential for every nation. They are needed to compete with well developed nations; both men and women should participate in all activities on equal basis. Men performance is good, as an entrepreneur, women also should grow well as an entrepreneur. Like a male entrepreneurs a women entrepreneur has many functions. They should explore the prospects of starting new enterprise; undertake risks, introduction of new innovations, coordination, administration and control of business and providing effective leadership in all aspects of business. Generally women plays dual role, like a house wife and employee, such situations automatically the stress levels of women would gradually increase. Though they are satisfied by playing dual role, definitely they will face stress to handle two roles at a time. Government of India has described women entrepreneurs as an enterprise/venture owned and controlled by women having at least financial interest of 51% of the capital and giving at least 51% of employment generated in the organization to women.

Economic growth and development of the country is determined by human, physical and financial resources. An economy can move on to higher levels of growth either by acquiring a larger quantum of the factors of production or through technical progress in India, and the women entrepreneurship is part of the economic growth of development in India.

Women entrepreneurship is both about women pose in society and the role of Women Entrepreneurship in the same society. Women are visaged with specific obstacles (such as family responsibilities) that have to be overcome in order to give them access to the same opportunities as men. Also, in some countries, women might experience obstacles with respect to holding property and entering contracts. Increased participation of women in the labor force is a prerequisite for improving the position of women in society and self-employed women. The role of Women entrepreneur needs to be considered in the economic development of the nation for various reasons (Nicholas and Victoria, 2010).

Entrepreneurship refers to setting a new business to take advantages from new opportunities. Entrepreneur is the key factor of entrepreneurship and now women are successful in this as they have qualities desirable for entrepreneurship development. Entrepreneurship is a suitable profession for women than regular employment. Women are taking interest in the Entrepreneurship in present years than past. The women have achieved immense development in their mind. With increasing dependency on services sectors, many opportunities are there for women. During last two decades, increasing numbers of Indian women in have entered the field of entrepreneurship and also they change the face of business. Women have been taking interest in recent year in self-business. In the process of Entrepreneurship, women have to face various problems and these problems get doubled because of her dual role as earner and homemakers. In India most of the homemakers want to start their own business but there is so many problems faced by them. They feel frustrated in dual role. Govt. started several programmed for the training of women entrepreneurship. Training program create the interest among women and helpful to increase the skills and also to build the social attitude, high confidence.

CONCEPT OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

Women Entrepreneurs may be defined as the women or a group of women who initiate, organize and operate a business enterprise. The Government of India has defined women entrepreneurs as —an enterprise owned and controlled by women having a minimum financial interest of 51 per cent of the capital and giving at least 51 per cent of the employment generated in the enterprise to women. Women entrepreneurs engaged in business due to push and pull factors which encourage women to have an independent occupation and stands on their own legs. A sense towards independent decision-making on their life and career is the motivational factor behind this urge. Saddled with household chores and domestic responsibilities women want to get independence. Under the influence of these factors the women entrepreneurs choose a profession as a challenge and as an urge to do something new. Such a situation is described as pull factors. While in push factors women engaged in business activities due to family compulsion and the responsibility is thrust upon them.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In the last few decades women had started to realize the value of self-employment and they are now utilizing their capabilities in entrepreneurial activities. Researchers claim that family issues such as giving proper time and fulfilling family culpabilities are the chief issues confronted by them.

Hafizullahet (2012), the study highlighted that male dominance in culture creates problems for female entrepreneurs in terms of limiting their mobility, business participation and market interactions. The further

arguments of the research revealed that women entrepreneurs of India have to face both environments; traditional and contemporary in order to run their enterprises. Traditional category includes socio cultural and religious elements while contemporary category is a sub category of above mentioned factors and includes constitutional structure, policy making and other institutional mechanism.

Palaniappan., Ramgopal and Mani (2012), the study revealed that the lack of proper leadership, planning and inadequate financial resource allocation is some other difficulties that women usually face during execution of their businesses. Many women have these qualities but they never got a platform to showcase their talents and hence they do not know their real abilities. Matching the basic qualities required for entrepreneurs and the basic characters of Indian women reveal that, much potential is available among the Indian women on their entrepreneurial ability. This potential is to be recognized, brought out and exposed for utilization in productive and service sectors for the development of the nation. The vast majority of the world's poor are women. Two-thirds of the world's illiterates are female. Of the millions of school age children not in school, the majority are girls. The current world food price crisis is having a severe impact on women. Around the world, millions of people eat two or three times a day, but a significant percentage of women eat only once. And, now, many women are denying themselves even that one meal to ensure that their children are fed.

Afza, Hassan and Rashid (2010), His study recognized poor economy and stereotyped society as other factors liable of causing glitches for female entrepreneurs. The major factors that restrain women from business are gender-based discrimination, lack of communal support, limited access to information, inadequate education & training facilities, absence of trust in one's capabilities and access to resources.

Ms. Themozhi G., in her study titled "A Study on Women Entrepreneurship in Coimbatore District", has provided the status of women and motivational factors with their relation to socio – economic background. She has covered the entrepreneurial performance of women and also the various constraints encountered by women.

Ms. Chandra P. in her study "Women Entrepreneurs – A Study with Special reference to beauty parlours in Virudhunagar District" has found that majority of the beauty parlour women entrepreneurs have been facing financial problems.

Ms. Nisha Ashokan, in her study titled "Measuring the Performance of Enterprises run b Women Entrepreneurs in Chennai", has analyzed the financial efficiency and the financial stability of enterprises run by women.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the problems and challenges faced by the women entrepreneurs in India.
- To examine the types of issues and problems they encounter in order to reach the level of success.
- To know the theoretical aspects of women entrepreneur in India.
- To study the socio-demographic variables of women entrepreneur.

PROBLEMS FACED BY THE WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN INDIA

The problems and constraints experienced by women entrepreneurs have resulted in restricting the expansion of women entrepreneurship. Women in India face many problems to get ahead their life in business. Women entrepreneurs face a series of problems right from the beginning till the enterprise functions. Being a woman itself poses various problems to a woman entrepreneur. A desirable atmosphere is necessary for every woman to inculcate entrepreneurial values and involve greatly in business dealings. But Women in India are faced many problems to get ahead their life in business.

- **Family ties** - Women in India are very emotionally attached to their families. They are supposed to attend to all the domestic work, to look after the children and other members of the family. They are over burden with family responsibilities like extra attention to husband, children and in laws which take away a lots of their time and energy. In such situation, it will be very difficult to concentrate and run the enterprise successfully.
- **Male dominated society**- Even though the constitution speaks of equality between gender male chauvinism is still the order of the day. Women are not treated equal to men. Their entry to business requires the approval of the head of the family. Entrepreneurship has traditionally been seen as a male preserve. All these put a break in the growth of women entrepreneurs.
- **Lack of education** - Women in India are lagging far behind in the field of education. Most of the women (around sixty per cent of total women) are illiterate. Those who are educated are provided either less or inadequate education than their male counterpart partly due to early marriage, partly due to son's higher education and partly due to poverty. Due to lack of proper education, women entrepreneurs remain in dark about the development of new technology, new methods of production, marketing and other governmental support which will encourage them to flourish.
- **Self-Confidence** – In India women have lack of self-confidence in their strength and ability. The family members and the society are unwilling to stand beside their organizational growth. To a certain degree,

this situation is changing with Indian women and yet to face an incredible amend to boost the rate of growth in entrepreneurship.

- **Socio-Cultural Barriers** – Family and personal obligations sometimes works as a great barrier for succeeding in business career of women entrepreneurship. Only few women are capable of managing both home and business efficiently, giving sufficient time to perform all their responsibilities in priority.
- **Risks Related to Market** – Tuff competition in the market and lack of mobility of women make them dependent on middle man essential. Many business women find it very difficult to capture the market share and make their products well popular and accepted by customer. They are not fully conscious of the changing market environment conditions and hence can effectively exploit the services of media and internet.
- **Mobility Constraints** - Women in India have to face lot of restriction on their mobility, our society still have some conservativeness, and due to that career of women is limited to four walls of kitchen. Though women faced lots of problems being mobile in entrepreneurial activity, the mobility problem has been eliminated to very certain extent by the expansion of education awareness to all.
- **Business Administration Knowledge** – Women must be educated and trained continuously to acquire the skills and understanding in all the required functional areas of business venture. This will make women to excel in decision making and develop good business skills.
- **Financial Assistance** – Most of the women especially in rural areas are not aware about the financial assistance provided by various institutions. The efforts taken for Women entrepreneurs may not able to reach the entrepreneurs in rural and backward areas.
- **Training Programs** - Depending upon the needs, duration, skill and the purpose of entrepreneur there are various workshops and training programs available the social & welfare association. Such kinds of programs are really helpful to new and young entrepreneurs who desire to start a small and medium sized business on their own.
- **Cost** - Some business have highly production and operation cost that adversely affects the expansion of women entrepreneurs. The installations of new machineries during expansion of the productive capacity and like similar factors discourage the women entrepreneurs from entering into new areas.

CHALLENGES OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN INDIA

Entrepreneurship was once considered a man's territory, but each year, more and more women set out on the journey to launch and lead their own companies. These business-savvy ladies inspire other women with dreams of founding startups, but many female business owners face still face significant obstacles because of their

gender. Female CEOs shared a few of the biggest challenges women entrepreneurs face today, and how to overcome them.

- **Women entrepreneurs think they need to act like men** - Most female business owners who have attended networking events can relate to this scenario. When women entrepreneurs have to talk business with primarily male executives, it can be intimidating. To compensate and protect themselves, women often feel as though they need to adopt a stereotypically male attitude toward business.
- **Emotions and nurturing skills can affect women's businesses** - Though trying to act like a man does not guarantee success for a female entrepreneur, allowing her 'feminine' qualities to stand in the way of getting things done is not necessarily recommended, either. By nature, women are more emotional and nurturing, which can sometimes be a hindrance to running a business.
- **Women often lack the support of other female business leaders – Various female business leaders** felt insecure about being in the minority as women who excelled in math and science, and longed for more camaraderie and support from female peers in their fields.
- **Many women have to balance raising families with running their businesses** - Work-life balance is often a goal of entrepreneurs across the board, but mothers who start businesses have to simultaneously run their families and their companies.
- **Women entrepreneurs are afraid of failure** - According to 'Global Entrepreneur Monitor' the fear of failure is the top concern of women who launch startups. Failure is a very real possibility in any business venture, but it should not be viewed as negative.

CONCLUSION

Women entrepreneurs face many problems in various aspects of finance, marketing, health and family. After independence, law guaranteed equal rights and equal opportunities in education and employment for women. The Primary motivations to women to get success as an entrepreneur not only in the form of financial assistance and government schemes, there should be psychological support from family members and husband. Even though, government supporting in financial aspects, without having moral support from near and dears women may not get success as an entrepreneur. When it is a business, business is all about profits, losses and tensions. Someone should support in all times positively to avoid problems. This support will support a lot not only women and all. Now a days the aspirations of women entrepreneurs are increasing because their self-confidence, self-esteem, self-motivations are increased. The literacy rate is gradually increasing, becoming well aware of all things; enhancements in knowledge levels will make women to have aspirations in future.

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