



Women Entrepreneurship: An Overview of Indian Scenario

M S Kokila¹, Mr. Arun Raghu Babu¹, Dr. Raja Kamal Ch¹

¹Senior Assistant Professor, New Horizon College Marathalli, Bangalore

¹Senior Assistant Professor, New Horizon College Marathalli, Bangalore

¹Assistant professor, Kristu Jayanti College, Bangalore

Abstract

In this era of economic liberalization and globalization Women entrepreneurship is gaining importance in India. The current policies and institutional assistance for developing entrepreneurship skills, providing education and training has been a great motivator for women to take up entrepreneurship. Although women in India constitute only one third of the economic enterprise still there have been numerous evidences of successful women entrepreneurs who have brought fame to India. In the recent era lot of unemployed women have taken up entrepreneurship based on their skills and training and even the employed ones' are leaving the workforce with the intent of taking up entrepreneurship. The demographic appearance and economic growth of the country have changed because of the increased presence of women as entrepreneurs. Despite of the motivating economic achievement that India has attained because of more women taking up entrepreneurship still there exists issues that need to be recognized and approved and registered with Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, Ministry of Science and Technology, Govt. of India addressed. This paper talks about the Factors leading to women entrepreneurship, advantageous of entrepreneurship for women along with highlighting the Impediments faced by women while taking up entrepreneurship

Keywords: Women Entrepreneurship, Enterprise, Entrepreneurs & Economic Growth

Introduction

Entrepreneurship is considered as one of the most important factors contributing to the economic development of any nation. Entrepreneurs have been considered instrumental in initiating and sustaining socio-economic development. There are evidences to believe that countries which have proportionately higher percentage of entrepreneurs in their population have developed at a faster rate as compared to countries, which have lesser percentage of

them.

Women entrepreneurs may be defined as the women or a group of women who initiate, organize and operate a business enterprise. Government of India has defined women entrepreneurs based on women participation in equity and employment of a business enterprise. Accordingly, a woman running an enterprise is defined as "an enterprise owned and controlled by a women having a minimum financial interest of 51% of the capital and giving at least

51% of the employment generated in the enterprise to women". In the traditional society, they were confined to the four walls, identifying themselves only with household roles, but in the modern society, they are coming out to participate in all sorts of activities.

Kamal Singh who is a woman entrepreneur from Rajasthan, has defined woman entrepreneur as "a confident, innovative and creative woman capable of achieving self-economic independence individually or in collaboration, generates employment opportunities for others through initiating, establishing and running the enterprise by keeping pace with her personal, family and social life."

Women entrepreneurs are key players in any developing country particularly in terms of their contribution to economic development. In recent years, even among the developed countries like USA and Canada, Women's role in terms of their share in small business has been increasing. At the same time women are doing a wonderful job striking a balance between their house and career. Now women have taken up entrepreneurial role in order to break the myth and give meaning to their lives.. The traditional roles of housewives are gradually changing into women entrepreneurs. Better education, changing socio cultural values and need for supplementary income are some of the factors responsible for this noticed change. When proper exposure, education and knowledge are imparted to them, Indian women will prove themselves to be highly potential productive force for the development of the nation.

The woman entrepreneur in India possesses various qualities and that is how they are

different from the rest of the lot. A woman entrepreneur is one who incubates new ideas, starts her enterprise with these ideas and provides added value to society based on their independent initiative. She is self-confident and has faith in herself and her abilities. She has the strength to bring the change and overcome resistance. She is a good decision maker. Her typical feature is that she is hard working, may be works on the principle that "Hard work is the key to success". For sure she is optimistic. She should approach her venture with a hope fly high and succeed and attitude for success rather than with a fear of failure. She is generally good in both creative thinking and analytical thinking. Leadership is her best quality. It is the process of influencing and supporting others to work enthusiastically towards achieving objectives.

Review Of Literature

Looking at the scope of development in Women Entrepreneurship in India various researchers are taking a keen interest in it. A women Entrepreneur from Rajasthan Kamala Singh's study (1992) on Women Entrepreneurs has made an attempt to diagnose the women entrepreneurs profile and has identified dominating entrepreneurial traits, their motivational forces and performance both quantitatively as well as qualitatively. Her work specifically aimed at understanding the entrepreneurial development among women is a unique attempt which has highlighted their current status and contribution in the Indian economy. LalithaIyer's study (1991) on "Women Entrepreneurs Challenges and Strategies" analyses major constraints faced

by women entrepreneurs and reflects upon specific policies and programmes for women entrepreneurship development. Darrene, Harpel and Mayer, (2008) performed a study on finding the relationship between elements of human capital and self-employment among women. The study showed that self-employed women differ on most human capital variable as compared to the salary and wage earning women. The study also revealed the fact that the education attainment level is faster for self employed women than that for other working women. A study by Rani (1996) found that the availability of leisure time motivated women entrepreneurs from higher income classes. Contrary to the above, women entrepreneurs are forced to take entrepreneurship in the absence of any other means of contributing to family income (D'Cruz, 2003). Studies have also shown that, family support and encouragements are the highest facilitating factor which helped women to aspire entrepreneurship (Pillai and Anna, 1990).

Objective

- Discuss the factors responsible for Women Entrepreneurship
- Identify the advantages of Entrepreneurship among women.
- Highlight the impediments of Women Entrepreneurship

Factors responsible for Women Entrepreneurship

The factors that lead women to take up entrepreneurship can be majorly classified as PUSH and PULL Factors. Push as the word itself signifies speaks of necessities.

Where women feel that their family income is insufficient, they are into the role of the sole bread earner, they are not able to find a suitable employment for themselves. These are generally factors which keep more importance for women than for men. Pull clearly signifies being drawn towards something which is attractive.

To name a few Push Factors would include- Death of the primary bread earner of the family which consequently generates a need to earn lively hood for the women in the family. Another reason could be separation from husband. Many women feel a need to generate a source of income for themselves and their dependents after getting separated from their life partner. Similar to this are the issues related with the health of the primary bread earner of the family. If the husband or the male member of the family suffers from health problems it generates a natural need for the women to take up a role of earning to fulfill the basic needs of her family and meet necessary expenses.

The Pull Factors would include – Financial Independence which is the prime end result of profits generated out of business to a great extent pull many women towards entrepreneurship. Idea to make use of the existing skills and education and simultaneously keeping one self-engage can be one of the reason for women to get attracted towards entrepreneurship. Providing employment to others and helping others in the society to gain economic empowerment can be one pull factor that can eventually lead to economic up gradation in the society. In Indian society women have always been looking forward to attain higher social status and an

opportunity to become an entrepreneur is great booster towards the fulfillment of their goal of attaining higher social status for themselves through their own efforts.

Entrepreneurship Advantages for Women

In the Indian scenario empowering women has always been a matter of concern. But because of the recent development of “Women Entrepreneurship” India is able to meet the challenge of women empowerment. Entrepreneurship is advantageous for women in lot of way and mostly these advantages are in the form of professional, personal and social capabilities that women build over a period of time. They improve their economic position and standard of living, develop a sense of achievement, enhance their awareness and increase their self-confidence by many folds. They show increased participation in social and professional settings which develops leadership skills in them. They develop skills to solve women and community related problems and never the less improve their decision making skills with reference to profession, family and community. All these are signs of women empowerment which are frequently evident in societies that promote women entrepreneurship.

Problems encountered by Women while taking up Entrepreneurship

Establishing and operating an enterprise is not an easy task for women. Constraints have always been there for women entrepreneurs to run their enterprise successfully earning profit and ensuring that the enterprise grows yielding profit. Despite of Indian women enthusiastically entering into entrepreneurship they face a

lot many challenges which act as hindrance in either in starting up a business or running it successfully. Some of the common challenges are:

1) Lack of Finance: Finance is the essential or is the first and for most resource for venture creation. It is considered critical that women entrepreneurs have adequate knowledge and information of the various financial institutions which are rendering financial assistance to entrepreneurs and many other help for the women entrepreneurs in the region. When it comes to financing venture women actually depend on their savings which is generally a minimal amount and not good enough to take risk with. It is a myth that banks are not ready to finance women. Banks don't have doubt on women capability and they never take gender into consideration while financing but they place high premium on security of principal and interest amount that is why they take mortgage on bank finance.

2) Stepping into new markets: Women focus less on attaining training and experience in on how to participate in the market place and are therefore unable to market goods and services strategically. Also International Market is an additional factor they've never been exposed to and therefore lack of knowledge about what is internationally acceptable. Marketing is completely based on developing contacts and that is a big question for women. Women may also fear or face prejudice or sexual harassment, and may be restricted in their ability to travel to make contacts.

3) Lack of Training: On larger perspective women on average get less opportunities to education than men since the beginning, and technical and vocational skills can only be developed on a strong foundation of basic primary and secondary education where women lag behind. Also women have double work burden and childcare responsibilities making it more difficult to gain relevant skills and knowledge, thus making them less able than men to attend formal and informal trainings. Lack of training on occasions leads to their inefficiency in operations.

4) Difficulties in managing: There are times when because of various constraints, lack of ability to develop business network and less ability to manage men entrepreneurship becomes a wasteful attempt for women. The increasing number of female students and their excellent performance in management education is a proof to the fact that women are giving importance to management skills and trying to get formal education in the same to become more efficient.

5) Mobility Restrictions: Coming from a conservative society Women in India have got restricted mobility. Though women faced lots of problems being mobile in entrepreneurial activity, but certainly by the expansion of education awareness to all. The mobility problem has been solved to certain extent.

6) Dual Responsibility: For men in 9:00 am to 5:00 pm job their work finishes

after 5:00 pm but for a woman her other set of roles and responsibilities take place in her life after her office hours and these are household responsibilities related to her family and kids. Sometimes with these dual set of responsibilities if women are not able to strike a balance they get into a position of choosing either of the two set of responsibilities i.e. work or family. But with increasing awareness in the society and support of men in the family women entrepreneurs are able to balance both the ends.

The ones mentioned above are some of the common impediments that most of the women entrepreneurs are facing in India at present. To resolve this it requires devising measures to integrate women as decision-makers, participants and beneficiaries in all relevant expansion activities and to deal with the totality of problems women face as entrepreneurs.

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