
Problems and Prospects of Women Entrepreneurs

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ABSTRACT

Women entrepreneur is a person who accepts the challenging role to meet her personal need and become economically independent. There are economical, social, religious, cultural and other factors existing in the society which responsible for the emergency of the entrepreneurs. The Government of India has designed special packages of additional benefits and incentives to attract and assist women entrepreneurs. The new economic policy which led to liberalization and globalization was expected to bring new opportunities. But in spite of all these, a large number of them are not functioning or found sick for several reasons. This envisages a study of real factors responsible for the poor conditions of women entrepreneurs in order to suggest urgent measures to solve this problem. This paper is an attempt to highlight the “Problems and Prospects Of Women Entrepreneurs”.

INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship can help women’s economic independence and improve their social status. Automatically the women get empowered once they attain economic independence. The development of women entrepreneurship enables society to understand and appreciate their abilities. It enhances their status and leads to integration of women in nation – building and economic development. It provides them psychological satisfaction and imbibes a deep sense of achievement to create their enhanced identity in society. (Sanjay Tiwari, 2007) The educated women do not want to limit their lives in the four walls of the house. They demand equal respect from their partners. However Indian women have to go a long way to achieve equal rights and position because traditions are deep rooted in Indian society where the sociological setup has been a male dominated one. Despite all the social hurdles, India is brimming with the success stories of women. They stand tall from the rest of the crowd and are applauded for their achievements in their respective field. The transformation of social fabric of Indian society, in terms of increased educational status of women and varied aspirations for better living, necessitated a change in the life style of Indian women. She has competed with man and successfully stood up with him in every walk of life and business is no expectation for this. These women leaders are assertive, persuasive and willing to take risk. They managed to survive and succeed in this cut throat competition with their hard work, diligence and

perseverance. Ability to learn quickly from her abilities, her persuasiveness, open style of problem solving, willingness to take risk and changes, ability to motivate people, knowing how to win and lose gracefully are the strength of the Indian women entrepreneurs. (I.G.RUQQA, 2016)

II REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Margaret Henning and Anne Jar dim (1979) conducted the study of women at managerial position by analyzing the life and career history of twenty five women at the top management position in business and industry. The study reveals that women can build extremely successful management careers even without legal pressures to aid them. The study further reveals the price they paid their personal lives were mortgaged to pay for their careers. (Jardim, 1979)

III. OBJECTIVES

1. To analyze the problems and prospects of women entrepreneurs
2. To know the status of women entrepreneurs in India
3. To evaluate whether there is any improvement in the standard of living of women entrepreneurs.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

For any study there must be data for analysis purpose. To meet the research objectives the Researcher employed desktop research by reviewing relevant texts, websites, journals, magazines and newspapers. In depth, literature review helped the researcher

V. ENTREPRENEURSHIP

In simple terms entrepreneurship is the sum total of all activities performed by an entrepreneur. Thus entrepreneurship is the function that seeks investment and production opportunities. It is a creative activity involving innovation and risk bearing. It is an organizing function, a purposeful activity and an act of transformation.

According to Arthur H Cole entrepreneurship is “ the purposeful activity by an individual or group of associated individuals undertaken to initiate ,maintain or aggrandize profits through business units by production or distribution of goods and services ;(1, 10)

Entrepreneurship is a creative response to an environment, the identification of opportunities in an environment so as to utilize the opportunities in the most beneficial manner. It is an ability of sensing opportunities where other sees chaos, contradiction and confusion. According to Peter F Drucker, Entrepreneurship is a systematic innovation.

Entrepreneurship is actually practice rather than being an art or a science. It is a philosophy. It is a discipline with a knowledge base theory .It involves a fusion of capital, technology and human talent. Entrepreneurship is equally applicable to big and small businesses, to economic and non-economic activities. (<http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in>)

VI. ENTREPRENEUR

The word ‘entrepreneur’ is derived from the French word ‘entreprenre’ which means ‘to undertake’. Originally it was meant to designate an organizer of musical or other

entertainments. An entrepreneur is a person who organizes and operates a business concern for the purpose of making profit. He is a especially talented person having the qualities of skill, initiative, and an insight of innovation to achieve high goals .He looks for opportunities, identifies and seizes them for making economic gains. Entrepreneurs play a vital role in the economic development of the country .The economic progress of a country depends primarily on the success or failure of the entrepreneurial development in that country. (Abraham, 2010)

VII. WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

Women play a very important and vital role in every aspect of life thereby needs a great balance between work, personal life, family life and social life. Women entrepreneurship is like a discipline for a child that begins at home. Women have been entrepreneurs in different ways. A wife is an entrepreneur as she manages her time, strategies and plans on ways to secure her children’s future, passionate about her home, family etc. Women entrepreneurship has been recognized as an important source of economic growth. Women entrepreneurship can make a particularly strong contribution to the economic well-being of the family and communities, poverty reduction and women empowerment

Women entrepreneurs are those who initiate or adopt a business activity. Women entrepreneurs are those who think of a business enterprise ,initiate it ,organize and combine all the factors of production ,operate the enterprise and undertake risk and handle economic uncertainty involved in running it. Women entrepreneurs are highly increasing in the economies of almost all countries. The hidden business potentials of women have been increasing with the growing sensitivity to the role and economic status in the society. The knowledge, skill and compliance in the business are the core reasons for the women to come forward into the business ventures. Women entrepreneurs engage in business due to push and pull factors which give confidence to women to have a self-sufficient occupation and stands on their foots. Logic towards independent decision making on their life and carrier is the motivational factor behind their success. Women entrepreneur is a person who accepts challenging role to meet her personal desires and turn out to be economically independent. A strong desire to do enormous positive is an integral quality of entrepreneurial women, who is competent of contributing values in both family and social life. With the introduction of media, women are conscious of their own qualities, rights and also the work situations. . Right efforts in all areas are vital in the development of women entrepreneurs and their greater involvement in the entrepreneurial activities. (wadhvani foundation)

VIII.FUNCTIONS OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

As an entrepreneur, a women entrepreneur has to perform all the functions involved in establishing an enterprise. These functions include idea generation and screening, determination of objectives, project preparation, project analysis, determination of forms of business organization, completion of promotional formalities, raising funds, procuring men, machine and materials and operation of the business.

According to Frederick Harrison, like a male entrepreneur, a women entrepreneur has five functions via,

1. Exploring the prospects of starting new enterprises

2. Undertaking of risks and the handling of economic uncertainties involved in business.
3. Introduction of innovations or initiation of innovations.
4. Co-ordination, administration and control , and
5. Supervision and providing leadership in all business aspects.

The above functions can be summarized into three i.e. risk bearing ,organization and innovation .These functions are not always of equal importance .Risk bearing and innovations are of paramount importance for establishing or diversifying an enterprise .Organization is needed for improving the efficiency of operation of the undertaking. (Abraham, 2010)

IX. OUTSTANDING LEADERSHIP QUALITIES

To be a successful entrepreneur, the women entrepreneurs should possess the following leadership qualities:

1. Willingness to face challenges
2. Effort to achieve objectives
3. Aspiration to reach high levels
4. Intelligence
5. Patience
6. Optimism
7. Power to withstand uncertainty
8. Skill in learning new things
9. Desire to acquire new knowledge and to the ability to apply it
10. Merciful approach
11. Power to resist criticisms
12. Desire and capacity to guide and lead others. (Abraham, 2010)

X. WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN INDIA

Indian government defines women owned business as an entity where a women or a group of women owns at least 51% of the capital and give 51% Of generated employment to women. Women are 48% of Indian population Least their participation is still below par as only 34% of Indian women are engaged in financial and economic activities ,many of which are unpaid and underpaid workers. With gender liar problems in some regions of India, women have also become victims of unemployment .this liar has proven to be advantageous as women have a taken up entrepreneurship to fill the void and prove their critics wrong. (Women Intrade)

Women entrepreneurship in India represents a group of women who have broken away from the beaten track and are exploring new vistas of economic participation. Women in India entered business due to pull and push Factors .Their task has been full of challenges. In spite of family opposition, many women have a proud themselves independent successful

entrepreneurs'. The emergence of women entrepreneurs and women-owned firms and their significant contribution to the economy are visible in India and these businesses are ready for its continued growth in future. In India women are relatively powerless with little a no control over resources and little decision making power. Women in the informal sector are found to home-based workers, engaged in the petty manufacture of goods, either on piece rate basis or on own account and as petty traders or service specialists. Nowadays women are well educated with technical and professional qualifications. Many of them have medical, management similar degrees and diplomas. Many entered their family business as equal partners. Women setup their own boutiques, clinics, small manufacturing enterprises. They have their own personal choices and courage to undertake new ventures. However, many have to face family antipathy and do not get adequate support from their family. (<http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in>)

XI. HURDLES FACED BY WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

The basic problem of difficulty of a women entrepreneur is that she is a woman. This pertains to her responsibility towards family, society and work. With joint families breaking up, many women simply don't have support of elders. Women have been confronted by such dilemmas ever since they started leaving home for the workplace. On the other hand, the attitude of society towards her and constraints in which she has to live and work are not very conducive. In spite of constitutional equality, in practice the attitude of men is tradition bound. The attitude of those who are responsible for decision making, planning and research is not of equality. Women still suffer from male domination. The dominant attitude of men creates difficulties and problems at all levels that are family support, training, banking, licensing and marketing. Women in rural areas have to still further. They have to face not only resistance or reservation from men but also from elderly women who are ingrained in the attitude of inequality. In rural areas joint families are still norm. The overbearing presence of elders restrains even young men from venturing out; so one can imagine how much an young girls needs to put up to become economically independent. Though in rural areas women are working along with men since times immemorial, their contribution in monetary terms remains unaccounted, or if at all accounted, it is given a very low value. They are mostly engaged in low paid, backbreaking agricultural activities or act as helpers in handicrafts.

It is not that women do not have skills or capacity but they are not properly trained or initiated in craftsmanship because it is taken as taboo. The male chauvinists feel that it is wasted because when she gets married she takes away the skill with her. Therefore, women can only acts as helper she was not allowed to function independently. Training is basic for any entrepreneurship. Facilities are available, many institutions have been imparting training under various schemes but again social attitude do not appreciate this independence and thus keep women away both in urban rural areas.

At the government level, the licensing authorities and labor officers and sales tax inspectors ask all sorts of questions like what technical qualifications you have, how will you manage labors, how will you manage both business, does your husband approve etc.

Most important problems are asked regarding strategies for marketing both of raw materials and finished goods. To market her products she has to be at the mercy of middlemen who eat a big chunk of profit. Besides these the middlemen try to exploit women entrepreneurs at

both ends .They deny her discount or they give the minimum discount in the purchase of raw materials and on the other hand try to extract maximum credit and on purchase of finished products from her. (6, 37)

If she decides to eliminate middlemen, it involves a lot of running about. Secondly, in these days of stiff competition, a lot of money is required for using advertisement. If the product happens to be a consumer product then it takes time to win people away from other products and makes this product popular. And then there is a tendency to always question the quality of the product produced by women entrepreneurs, though many agree that they are most sincere in marketing and time schedule.

Women entrepreneurs have to face two types of problems viz. General problems of entrepreneurs and problems specific to women entrepreneurs. The following are the important problems faced by women entrepreneurs. (Thakur, 2009)

XII. PROBLEMS FACED BY WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

It is said that the major problem faced by a women entrepreneur is that she is a women. Apart from the general problems faced by entrepreneurs, women entrepreneurs have to address specific problems. Some of the problems are mentioned below.

1. Patriarchal society

A kind of patriarchal –male dominant social order is a block to them in their way towards the success. Entrepreneurship is traditionally regarded as a monopoly of the men. If at all any women came up with the idea of business ventures, it would be frowned upon. The male dominated society always wanted the female counterparts to play a side role.

2. Shortage of Finance

The financial institutions are skeptical about the entrepreneurial abilities of women. The bankers consider women as less credit worthy. They often impose unrealistic and unreasonable conditions to grant loan to women entrepreneurs. According to UNID report, “despite evidence that women’s loan repayment rates are higher than men’s women still face more difficulties in obtaining credit “(3,71) often due to discriminatory attitudes of banks. The main constrain for a women is that she does not have any intangible asset in her name to offer as security.

3. Family responsibilities

Women’s family obligations also prevent them from becoming successful entrepreneurs. Indian women give more emphasis to family ties and relationships. Married women have to make a fine balance between business and home. Having primary responsibilities for children, home and dependent family members, women find it difficult to devote all their time and energies to their business. The financial institutions discourage women entrepreneurs on the belief that they can at any time leave their business and becomes housewives again. Moreover, the success of women as entrepreneur often depends on the co-operation she receives from her family members.

4. Dependence on intermediaries

They have to depend on office staffs and intermediaries to get things done, especially, the marketing and sales sides of business. Here, there is more probability for business fallacies like the intermediaries taking major part of the surplus or profit.

5. Shortage of raw materials

Knowledge alternative source of raw materials availability and high negotiation skills are the basic requirements to run a business. Getting the raw materials from different sources with discount prices is the factor that determines the profit margin. But women entrepreneurs often are found lacking in this knowledge and skills which in turn affect their business adventures.

6. Lack of education and technological knowledge

Knowledge of latest technological changes, knowhow and education level of a person are significant factors affect business. The literacy rate of women in India is found at low level compared to male population. Many women lack the education needed to spur successful entrepreneurship. They are ignorant of new technological innovations. Uneducated women do not have the knowledge of measurement and basic accounting.

7. Low risk bearing capacity

Though the risk tolerance ability of the women folk in day to day life is compared to male members, in business it is the other way. Low level education results in low level self esteem and self-reliance to the women folk to engage in business, which is full of risk taking. Moreover the fact that she is not economically independent makes her all the more risk averse.

8. Low mobility

A major handicap of women entrepreneur is her inability to travel from one place to another at any time. The confidence to travel across day and even different regions and states are found less in women compared to male entrepreneurs. Even if she moves about, she is looked upon with an eye of utter suspicion.

9. Low achievement motivation

Achievement motivation of the women folk is found less compared to male members. The low level of education and confidence leads to low level achievement and advancement motivation among women folk to engage in business operations and running a business concern. Another factor that results in low achievement motivation is that she basks in the glory of her near and dear ones. This is because she is always in the shade of either her father or husband or son. (3, 73)

10. Stiff competition

The male- female competition is another factor which develops hurdles to women entrepreneurs in the business management process. Despite the fact that women entrepreneurs are good in keeping their service prompt, due to lack of organizational skills when compared to male entrepreneur's women have to face constraint from competition. Many women enterprises are often found with improper organizational set up.

11. High cost of production

High cost of materials, intermediary charges, low productivity, underutilization of capacity all add to the cost of production of a women entrepreneur. So she will have to struggle to market her products.

In addition to the above difficulties, lack of infrastructural facilities, shortage of power, and difficulty in obtaining licenses from various control boards and a number of other socio-economic problems stand as hurdles to the women entrepreneur. (SINHA)

XIII. OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Women Entrepreneurship is definitely a solution to manage the economic disparity and rising impact of technological and informational forces. To overcome this impediment women entrepreneurs have the power of diverting the forces towards development and progression by putting in their own potentials and skills to improve economic conditions of any country. The additional business opportunities that are recently approaching for women entrepreneurs are (Kavitha Sangolagi, 2016)

Educated women entrepreneurs (Literates)	Un-Educated women entrepreneurs (Illiterates)
1. Eco Friendly Technology 2. Bio Technology 3. It Enabled Enterprises 4. Event Management 5. Telecommunication 6. Herbal and Health Care	1. Tourism Industry 2. Plastic Materials 3. Mineral Water 4. Sericulture 5. Floriculture 6. varmiculture 7. Food, Fruits and vegetable Processing 8. Cold-storage factories 9. Soap factories 10. Poultry farming 11. Textile industries 12. Silk enterprise 13. Leather factories 14. Packaging and packing 15. Pulses mills 16. Rice mills 17. Cattle rearing etc.

XIV. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Separate finance divisions can be opened by various financial institutions and banks for providing easy and ready finance to women entrepreneurs.
2. Women entrepreneurs must be given priority over other entrepreneurs in the supply of controlled and scarce raw materials.
3. The government of local authorities must give tax exemptions to the supply of raw materials.
4. Both Central and State Governments should give priority for starting new ventures.
5. More training programs should be provided to make the entrepreneurs get acquaint with the technological changes.
6. The family members should support the women entrepreneurs for the successful conduct of their business
7. More assistance should be given in conducting research and development studies particularly in the area of their specialization.
8. Women should attend training programs, seminars, workshop and conferences. This may help to reduce the challenges they face in business.

XV. CONCLUSION

The study on “problems and prospects of women entrepreneurs” is conducted to analyze the problems and prospects and to give better suggestions for their improvement. This study revealed that most of the women entrepreneurs have faced financial, labour and technical problems in their business field .In spite of these problems, the lack of family support is another main problem that the women entrepreneurs are facing. Women entrepreneurs require better support from the governments more understanding from the family and greater innovations and specialization from their own side.

Women entrepreneurship must be molded properly with entrepreneurial traits and skills to meet the changes in trends, challenges in global markets and also be competent enough to sustain and strive for excellence in the entrepreneurial arena. Apart from training programs, Newsletters, mentoring, trade fairs and exhibitions also can be a source for entrepreneurial development. As a result, the desired outcomes of the business are quickly achieved and more of remunerative business opportunities are found. Henceforth, promoting entrepreneurship among women is certainly a short-cut to rapid economic growth and development.

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