



Problems and Prospects of Women Entrepreneurs in India

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ABSTRACT

Women entrepreneurship development is an essential pre-condition to the development of the nation as a whole. Entrepreneurship amongst women has been a recent concern. The development of women entrepreneurship is very low in India, especially in the rural areas. Women have become aware of their existence; their rights and their work situation. 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 of middle classes as well as in rural areas have to go a long way to alter their role and to achieve equal rights and position because traditions are deep rooted in Indian society. The progress is more visible among upper class families in urban cities. This paper focuses on Indian women entrepreneurs who continue to inspire us with their versatile abilities, persuasiveness, problem solving abilities, willingness to take chances and risks and the ability to motivate people around them. The paper talks about the status of Indian women entrepreneurs and the problems faced by them when they ventured out to carve their own niche in the competitive world of business environment.

KEYWORDS :

1. Introduction

Women in India have come a long way from being just 'homemakers'. The world now sees them with a different eye and a new respect. Women entrepreneurship in India has come a long way from women working only part time. Successful women entrepreneurs in India have made their presence felt in every field be it the world of politics, music, fashion, movies and entertainment or business. Hindu scriptures defines women as the embodiment of 'Shakti' and she lives up to image every time, whether it is problem solving at home or running a successful business. Women constitute around half of the total world's population. So is in India also. They are therefore regarded as the better half of the society. In traditional societies, they were confined to the four walls of houses performing household activities and small businesses focused on fashion, food and other services sector. In modern societies, they have come out of the four walls to move rapidly into engineering industry with low labour intensity, manufacturing, construction and other industrial field... Women owned businesses are highly increasing in the economies of almost all countries. The hidden entrepreneurial potentials of women have gradually been changing with the growing sensitivity to the role and economic status in the society. Skill, zeal, wills, knowledge and adaptability in business are the five important determinants of women to emerge into business ventures. With the advent of media, women are aware of their own traits, rights and the work situations. The glass ceilings are shattered and women have started plunging into industry also and running their enterprises from papad to power cables successfully. The challenges and opportunities

Provided to the women of digital era are growing rapidly that the job seekers returning into job creators. They are flourishing as designers, interior decorators, exporters, publishers, garment manufacturers and still exploring new avenues of economic participation. In India, although women have been performing exceedingly well in different spheres of activities like academics, politics, administration, social work and so on, but the entrepreneurial world is still a male dominated one..

2. Meaning and definitions

Women entrepreneur is a person who accepts 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.

"Women entrepreneur refers equally to someone who has started a one women business to someone who is a principal in family business or partnership or to someone who is shareholder in a public company which she runs".

The Government of India has defined a women entrepreneur is "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".

3.Objectives of the Study

1. To study the present position of Women Entrepreneurship in Indian Economy.
2. To study the Problems of Women Entrepreneurship in Indian Economy
3. To suggest certain remedial measures to solve the problems of Women Entrepreneurship in Indian Economy.

4.Methodology of Study

The study is mainly based on secondary data taken from the reputed Published Sources like Economic Survey, various books and websites on Internet.

5.Problems of Women Entrepreneurs

Women Entrepreneurs encounter two sets of problems i.e. general problems entrepreneurs and problems specific to women entrepreneurs. These are discussed follows.

1. Problem of Finance

Finance is regarded as life blood for any enterprise be in big or small. However women entrepreneurs suffer from shortage of finance on two counts. Firstly women do not generally have property on their names to use them as collateral for obtaining funds from external sources. So that access to the external sources funds is limited. Secondly the banks also consider women less credit-worthy and discourage women borrowers on belief that they can at any time leave their business.

2. Scarcity of Raw Materials

Most of the women enterprises are plagued by the scarcity of raw materials and necessary inputs. Added to this are high prices of raw materials, on the one hand and getting raw material at the minimum of discount on the other. The failure of many co-operatives in 1971 engaged in based making is example how the scarcity of raw material sounds the death knell of enterprises run by women.

3. Male dominated Society.

The constitution of India speaks of equality between male and female. But in practice women are looked upon as abla i.e. Weak in all respects. In male dominated Indian society, women are not treated equal to men. This turn serves as a barrier to women entry into business.

4. Lack of Education

In India around 60% of women are still illiterate. Illiteracy is the root cause of socio- economic problem. Due to the lack of education women are not aware of business, technology and market knowledge. Also lack of education causes low achievement motivation among women.

5. Market Oriented Risk

A number of women have to face the challenges of market because of stiff competition. Many business women find it difficult to capture the market and compete with their product. They are not fully aware of

the changing market conditions.

6. Motivational Factors.

Successful business women can be self motivated through setting up a mind and taking up risk and accepting social responsibilities on shoulder. The other factors such as family support government policies, financial assistance etc. are also important to set up business.

7. Lack of Confidence

Women lack confidence in their strength and competence. The family members and the society are reluctant to stand beside their entrepreneurial growth.

8. Training Programs

Training programs are essential to new rural and young entrepreneurs who wish to set up a small and medium scale unit. The programs enrich the skill and potential of women entrepreneur.

6. How to Develop Women Entrepreneurs?

Right efforts on from all areas are required in the development of women entrepreneurs and their greater participation in the entrepreneurial activities. Following efforts can be taken into account for effective development of women entrepreneurs.

1. Consider women as specific target group for all developmental programmes.
2. Better educational facilities and schemes should be extended to women folk from government part.
3. Adequate training programme on management skills to be provided to women community.
4. Encourage women's participation in decision-making.
5. Vocational training to be extended to women community that enables them to understand the production process and production management.
6. Skill development to be done in women's polytechnics and industrial training institutes. Skills are put to work in training-cum-production workshops.

7. Training on professional competence and leadership skill to be extended to women entrepreneurs.
8. Training and counseling on a large scale of existing women entrepreneurs to remove psychological causes like lack of self-confidence and fear of success.
9. Counseling through the aid of committed NGOs, psychologists, managerial experts and technical personnel should be provided to existing and emerging women entrepreneurs.
10. Continuous monitoring and improvement of training programmes.
11. Activities in which women are trained should focus on their marketability and profitability.
12. Making provision of marketing and sales assistance from government part.
13. To encourage more passive women entrepreneurs the Women training programme should be organized that taught to recognize her own psychological needs and express them.

7. Schemes for Women Entrepreneurs

1. Seed Capital Scheme
2. National Equity Fund
3. Prime Minister's Employment Guarantee Scheme
4. Single Window Scheme.
5. Bank Schemes for Women Entrepreneur
6. Mahila Artik Vikas Mahamandal

8. Conclusion

Entrepreneurship among women, no doubt improves the wealth of the nation in general and of the family in particular. Women today are more willing to take up activities that were once considered the preserve of men, and have proved that they are second to no one with respect to contribution to the growth of the economy. Women entrepreneurship must be moulded properly with entrepreneurial traits and skills to meet the changes in trends, challenges global markets and also be competent enough to sustain and strive for excellence in the entrepreneurial arena.

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