



Women Entrepreneurship In India Issues and Challenges

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ABSTRACT

Women entrepreneurship development is an essential part of human resource development. The development of women entrepreneurship is very low in India, especially in rural areas. Women have become aware of their existence their rights and their work situation. The progress is more visible among upper class families in urban areas. Entrepreneurship amongst women has been a recent concern. This paper focuses on the review available on women entrepreneurship. The paper talks about the status of women entrepreneurs and the issues, problems and challenges faced by them when they ventured out to carve their own niche in the competitive world of business environment

Keywords : Entrepreneurship, Human Resource Development, venture, niche.

Introduction

We have seen that the Indian economy has been witnessing a drastic change since 1990, with new policies of economic liberalization, globalization and privatization initiated by the Indian government. India has great entrepreneurial potential. Even after 64 years of independence women participation in economic development of the country is very low as compared to other areas. Any policy or plan where a woman is not involved may not

Be successful in a country where half of the population is women. Many Evidences shows that entrepreneurship is not a male dominant. Women entrepreneurship has gained a little momentum in the last three decades with the increase in the number of women enterprises and their substantive contribution to economic growth.

In this dynamic world, women entrepreneurs are playing an important role for sustained economic development and social progress. In India, women play a key role in the society but their entrepreneur ability is not tapped properly due to their low status. It is evident from the Fifth Five Year Plan (1974-78) onwards their role has been explicitly recognized with a marked shift in the approach from women welfare to women development and empowerment.

And the development of women entrepreneurship has taken place in our plan priorities. Several policies and programmes are being framed and implemented for the development of women entrepreneurship in India in the five year plans. Though there came a change in viewing and thinking towards women but they have to be given equal rights as described in our constitution. The inequalities towards gender should be routed out. Former president APJ Abdul Kalam has rightly said that "empowering women is a prerequisite for creating a good nation, when women are empowered, society with stability is assured. Empowerment of women is essential as their thoughts and their value systems lead to the development of a good family, good society and ultimately a good nation."

Concept of Entrepreneur

The word 'entrepreneur originates from the French Word "Entreprendre "which means to undertake '. During the 18th century, the word 'Entrepreneur' was used to refer to economic activities .Many authors has defined the concept differently in their own words. The entrepreneur is a person who combines capital and labor for production. According to Cantillion "entrepreneur is the agent who buys means of production at certain prices, in order to sell at prices that are certain at the moment at which he commits himself to his cost". According to P.F Drucker "he is one who always (1) searches for change (2) responds to it (3) exploits it as an opportunity."

Required qualities of Women as an Entrepreneur

Any successful entrepreneur should be imaginative, hard working, persistence, risk taking and capable of earning profit. All these qualities are present in a women entrepreneur.

1) Imaginative: It refers to the creative approach or inventive ideas to face the competitive environment. A Well-planned approach is required to examine the prevailing situations and to recognize the opportunities. It further implies that women entrepreneurs have involvement in tuning the organization offering support and services.

2) Trait to work hard: Women entrepreneur are more talented to work hard. The inventive and imaginative thoughts have to come to a fair play. Hard work is required to build up an enterprise.

3) Persistence: Women entrepreneurs need an intention to fulfill their dreams. They have to make a dream transferred into an idea enterprise; Studies have proven that successful women work hard.

4) Ability and desire to take risk: The desire refers to the willingness to face the risk and ability to show the competencies and proficiency in planning and forecasting the estimates and calculations.

5) Profit earning capacity: She should be able to get the desired success and the profits for the invested capital in the business. She should be capable of getting the maximum returns on the invested capital.

Apart from all these she should be involved in all functions involved in carrying out the enterprise which may also include idea generation , and screening, determination of objectives and so on....

Supportive measures for women entrepreneurship in India

Supportive measures by Government of India are

Direct & indirect financial support

Yojna schemes and programmes

Technological training and awards

Federations and associations

Much direct and indirect financial support is given by nationalized banks, state financial corporations, district industries centers, SIDBI, SSIDCs for encouraging women entrepreneurs. And not only financial support but many schemes were organized like Mahila Udyog Needhi, Nehru Rojgar Yojna, TRYSEM, DWACRA, etc.

Schemes for women Entrepreneurship

In order to overcome the problems faced by the women entrepreneurs the government of India has launched the scheme Trade Related Entrepreneurship Assistance and Development of Women (TREAD) in 1998. The scheme envisages development of micro/tiny women enterprises in the country both in the urban and rural areas. The main objective of the scheme is to empower women through development of their entrepreneurial skills by eliminating constraints faced by them in their sphere of trade.

Many technological training programmes have been organized by institutes like

- Stree Shakti package by SBI
- Entrepreneurship development institute of India
- TREAD, NDIBET
- Women's university of Mumbai

Many Federations and Associations have been formed like

- National Alliance of Young Entrepreneurs (NAYE)
- India Council of Women Entrepreneurs, New Delhi
- Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA)

Business Opportunities and Ranks of Indian Women Entrepreneurs

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Area	Rank
Cosmetics and Beauty Parlors	01
Garments and Textile Items	02
Education and Training	03
Interior Decoration	04
Nursery and Crèches	05
Handicrafts	06
3P's (Pickles, Powder [spices] and Pappad)	07
Consultancy Services	08
Medicare (Medical and Paramedical)	09
Engineering Goods	10

Women Entrepreneurship in India

States	No of Units Registered	No. of Women Entrepreneurs	Success Percentage
Tamilnadu	9618	2930	30.36
Uttar Pradesh	7980	3180	39.84
Kerala	5487	2135	38.91
Punjab	4791	1618	33.77
Maharashtra	4339	1394	32.12
Gujarat	3872	1538	39.72
Karnatka	3822	1026	26.84
Madhya Pradesh	2967	842	28.38
Other States & UTS	14576	4185	28.71
Total	57458	18,848	32.82

Women work participation is also gradually increasing since 1970 which was 14.2 and now it has been raised to nearly 35 percent.

Women's Contribution to the Economy

Most of the women in India work and contribute to the economy in one or the another form, much of their work is not recognized or accounted in official statistics. A survey estimates that over 90 percent of workingwomen are involved

in the informal sector. The informal sector includes activities like artisan, domestic activities. Women in southern India are given a more important place than women in northern India. Cultural restrictions vary from region to region. But in the recent years, conditions of working women in India have improved considerably. More and more women find themselves in positions of respect and prestige; more and more workplaces are now populated with women who work on equal terms as men. In recent years there have been explicit moves to increase women's political participation. Women have been given representation in the Panchayati Raj system as a sign of political empowerment. There are many elected women representatives at the village council level. At the central and state levels too women are progressively making a difference. Today we have women Chief Ministers in six large states of India, women president and women lok sabha speaker. The Women reservation bill is slated to further strengthen political participation.

Problems and challenges of Women Entrepreneurs in India

Women in India are facing many problems to prove themselves as successful entrepreneurs. The problems are detailed as below

1. The major problem to women entrepreneurs is the status of women in the society. Male dominant social order makes women very uncomfortable.

2. The financial companies also underestimate about the abilities of women and they put unrealistic and unreasonable conditions for women loanies. According to a report by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), "despite evidence those women's loan repayment rates are higher than men's, women still face more difficulties in obtaining credit," often due to discriminatory attitudes of banks and informal lending groups (UNIDO, 1995b).

3. Indian women give more emphasis to family ties and relationships. Married women have to make a fine balance between business and home. The interest of the family members is a determinant factor in the realization of women folk business aspirations.

4. Another argument is that women entrepreneurs have low-level management skills. They have to depend on office staff and intermediaries, to get things done, especially, the marketing and sales side of business. Here there is more probability for business fallacies like the intermediaries take major part of the surplus or profit. Marketing means mobility and confidence in dealing with the external world, both of which women have been discouraged from developing by social conditioning. Even when they are otherwise in control of an enterprise, they often depend on males of the family in this area.

5. Knowledge of alternative source of raw materials availability and high negotiation skills are the basic requirement to run a business. Getting the raw materials from different source with discount prices is the factor that determines the profit margin.

6. Knowledge of latest technological changes, know how, and education level of the person are significant factor that affect business. Many women in developing nations lack the education needed to spur successful entrepreneurship. They are ignorant of new technologies or unskilled in their use, and often unable to do research and gain the necessary training (UNIDO, 1995b, p.1). Although great advances are being made in technology, many women's illiteracy, structural difficulties, and lack of access to technical training prevent the technology from being beneficial or even available to females ("Women Entrepreneurs in Poorest Countries," 2001).

According to The Economist, this lack of knowledge and the continuing treatment of women as second-class citizens keep them in a pervasive cycle of poverty ("The Female Poverty Trap," 2001). The study indicates that uneducated women don't have the knowledge of measurement and basic accounting.

7. Low level risk taking also affect them from getting into business. Low level education makes them low self confidence and self reliance and also affect them in taking good decisions and in stepping forward.

Measures to Develop Women Entrepreneurs

These are certain suggestive measures to develop women entrepreneurs in India. 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 programmers.
2. Better educational facilities and schemes should be extended to women folk from government part.
3. Vocational training and Skill development to be extended to be implemented in women's polytechnics and industrial training institutes. Skills are put to work in training-cum-production workshops
4. Counseling through the aid of committed NGOs, psychologists, managerial experts and technical personnel should be provided to existing and emerging women entrepreneurs.
5. To encourage more passive women entrepreneurs the Women training programme should be organized that taught to recognize her psychological needs and express them.
6. State finance corporations and financing institutions

should permit by statute to extend purely trade related finance to women entrepreneurs and provide more working capital assistance both for small scale venture and large scale ventures. Women's development corporations have to gain access to open-ended financing.

7. Infrastructure, in the form of industrial plots and sheds, to set up industries is to be provided by state run agencies. Industrial estates could also provide marketing outlets for the display and sale of products made by women.
8. A Women Entrepreneur's Guidance Cell set up to handle the various problems of women entrepreneurs all over the state.

Conclusion

Today women are more energetic and more enthusiastic and challenging in starting their enterprises and proving they are not second to anyone. Despite of many problems and challenges Indian women are proving their worth as successful entrepreneurs such as Shri Mahila Griha Udyog Lijjat Pappad in 2006, Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, who started Biocon - one of India's first biotech companies, was rated India's richest woman. So Proper facilities and training needs are provided so that Women entrepreneurship can be moulded properly with proper entrepreneurial traits and skills to meet the changes and challenges in global markets and also be competent enough to sustain and strive for excellence in the entrepreneurial arena.

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