



## Women Achievement and Power towards Entrepreneurship

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### ABSTRACT

*In earlier days women were confined to the four walls of houses and led a protected life. In the present modern society they have come out of the walls and take part in all sorts of activities competing successfully equal to men. This has become possible because of the safeguards, industrialization and urbanization. It has been proved globally that women have been performing exceedingly well in various fields such as education, administration, politics, sports, medicine, aeronautics, trade and industries, social work, transports, science and technology etc. The very fact that the world's largest democracy [India] was headed by a woman Smt. Indira Gandhi is a big complement to the capacity, caliber and character of women. Thus Women Entrepreneurs are helpful to the society in various departments to economic and social development of our country. The social –economic advancement of a country can best be judged by the status and position, which it can bestow on its women. Despite barriers and obstacles, some women do make it to the top. They exhibit the technical domain in which qualities needed for excellence are generally considered feminine viz., warmth, patience, hard work, sincerity, understanding and sensitivity. They enter the arena where expectations about leadership and management are more compatible with the male stereotype and masculine traits such as forcefulness, decisiveness, risk-taking, problem analysis, negotiating and bargaining. In recent years women in larger numbers are entering the managerial world. it was the last bastion of male dominance.*

### Keywords:

#### 1.1 Introduction

In earlier days women were confined to the four walls of houses and led a protected life. In the present modern society they have come out of the walls and take part in all sorts of activities competing successfully equal to men. This has become possible because of the safeguards, industrialization and urbanization. It has been proved globally that women have been performing exceedingly well in various fields such as education, administration, politics, sports, medicine, aeronautics, trade and industries, social work, transports, science and technology etc. The very fact that the world's largest democracy [India] was headed by a woman Smt. Indira Gandhi is a big complement to the capacity, caliber and character of women. Thus Women Entrepreneurs are helpful to the society in various departments to economic and social development of our country.

#### 1.2 Women Entrepreneurs

A woman or a group of women who initiate, organize and run a business enterprise is defined as women entrepreneur[s]. The Government of India has defined women entrepreneur as "an enterprise owned and controlled by a woman having a minimum financial interest of 51% of the capital and giving at least 51% of the employment generated in the enterprise to women".

Women entrepreneurs are those women who conceive the idea of a business enterprise, initiate it, organize and combine the factors of production, operate the enterprise, undertake risks and manage the economic uncertainty involved in running a business enterprise.

#### 1.3 Women's Power

The social –economic advancement of a country can best be judged by the status and position, which it can bestow on its women. One of the most important changes that have taken place in recent times is the growing status of women. Economic factors among others have freed women from the shackles of outworn tradition, prejudice and ignorance. The world of work is undergoing a transformation. Although wom-

en are assuming new roles at all levels, women moving into the middle and upper echelons of management are destined to exert considerable influence on the future of business large have already made dramatic progress in selecting, developing and retaining women executives, especially during the last 20 years. Despite barriers and obstacles, some women do make it to the top. They exhibit the technical domain in which qualities needed for excellence are generally considered feminine viz., warmth, patience, hard work, sincerity, understanding and sensitivity. They enter the arena where expectations about leadership and management are more compatible with the male stereotype and masculine traits such as forcefulness, decisiveness, risk-taking, problem analysis, negotiating and bargaining. In recent years women in larger numbers are entering the managerial world. it was the last bastion of male dominance . Women have already entered and made themselves acceptable in infrastructural services such as technicians, doctors, engineers and pilots. Entry into the managerial cadre is a reality but a difficult process. Many aspiring women have found the doors of the organizations to similarly employ men and deny the opportunity to similarly educated skilled and trained women. One woman management graduate literally gate crashed the interview and demanded that she be tested on interview and demanded that she be tested on managerial skill, knowledge, attitude and her capabilities. She broke the barriers and got the job.

#### 1.4 Functions of Women Entrepreneurs

Similarly to men entrepreneurs women entrepreneurs have to perform all the functions involved in setting up an enterprise such as idea generation and scanning, determination of objectives, project preparation, product analysis, determination of forms of business organization, combination of factors of production etc.

Fredrick Harbinson has listed out the following five functions of a women entrepreneur.

1. Exploration of the prospects of starting a new business enterprise.

2. Undertaking of risks and the handling of economic uncertainties involved in business.
3. Introduction of innovations or imitation of innovations.
4. Coordination, administration and control.
5. Supervision and leadership.

The major entrepreneurial functions can be broadly classified under three categories.

1. Risk bearing,
2. Organization,
3. Innovations.

### 1.5 Women Entrepreneurs: Profile

Woman entrepreneur may be described as a woman of commitment who is independently employed and has a close relationship with her father. After obtaining a graduate degree, she gets married. She enters into the fields of entrepreneurial venture at the age of late 30's or early 40's when her children are somewhat self-sufficient. She is usually from a middle class family and her biggest problem is lack of sufficient business training especially in the financial area. However in the recent years, with increase in literacy level the women have gained confidence to do all the work, which was hitherto considered as the prerogative of men. They have shown excellent results and proved that no field is unapproachable to trained and determined modern women.

### 1.6 Qualities of a Woman Entrepreneur:

Some of the outstanding qualities of a woman entrepreneur are given below:

Accepts challenges, Adventurous, Ambitious, Conscientious, Full of drive, Educated, Enthusiastic, Determined to excel, Hardworking, Keen to learn and imbibe new ideas, Patient, Experienced, Industrious, Intelligent, Motivated, Perseverance, Skilful, studious, Optimistic.

### 1.7 Psycho - social Barriers

Though some women entrepreneurs are performing exceedingly well in various fields of activities, the fear of success haunt women in general. Growth of entrepreneurship is impeded by various psycho- social factors.

#### Some of them are given below.

1. Poor self image of women
2. Inadequate motivation
3. Discriminating treatment
4. Faulty socialization
5. Role conflict
6. Lack of courage and self-confidence
7. Cultural values
8. Inadequate encouragement
9. Lack of social acceptance
10. Unjust social, economic and cultural system
11. Lack of freedom of expression
12. Afraid of failures of criticism
13. Susceptible to negative attitudes
14. Non-persistent attitudes
15. Low dignity of labour
16. Lacking in leadership qualities such as planning, organizing, controlling, coordinating and directing.

### 1.8 Growth and Development of Women Entrepreneurship

The US Bureau of census reported in 1977 that there were only, 7,02,000 business that were owned by women. This was only 7.1% of the total business firms in us. However, the number is increasing at a rapid rate. In 1984, according to the Internal Revenue Service, the number of female sole proprietorship was 3.1 million or 22% of all sole proprietorships. The highest number of women is found in laundries, dry cleaning, hair- dressing, private nurseries, hotels etc. In US, the Small Business Administration [SBA], a Government controlled agency provides financial assistance and offers courses in counseling to improve managerial competence among women entrepreneurs.

In India, women are regarded as the "better half of the society". In reality our society is still male dominating one. Due to our traditional socio-cultural conventions and taboos, the development of women entrepreneurship is very low in our country. In earlier days women were engaged in the unorganized sectors like agriculture, handicrafts, handlooms and cottage based industries. The entry of Indian into entrepreneurship is a recent phenomenon.

In the beginning women entrepreneurship was identified as an extension of kitchen activities and denoted by 3ps namely pickles, powder and pappad. The increase in literacy level and awareness about trade and industries motivated the women to shift from 3ps to 3ES namely Engineering, Electronics and Energy.

Indian woman gets into the business due to two reasons namely "pull factors" and "push factors". Pull factors encourage women to have an independent occupation. These factors influence the women entrepreneurs to choose a profession as a challenge and as an adventure with an urge to do something new. Push factors are those, which compel women to take up business enterprises to get over financial difficulties and responsibility is thrust on them due to unfortunate family circumstances.

### 1.9 Tenth Five Year Plan 2002-2007

During the 10th five year plan, women entrepreneurship are considered as special importance to the economic development of our country due to the following reasons.

1. To treat women as specific target groups in all development programmes.
2. To devise and diversify vocational training facilities for women to suit their varied needs and skills.
3. To provide assistance for marketing of products of women entrepreneurs.
4. To involve women in decision- making process.

In India several institutional arrangement have been made to develop women entrepreneurship. The commercial banks and state financial corporations provide loans to women entrepreneurs on preferential basis and concessional terms. SIDCO and DICs provide loans, subsidies and grants to small-scale women entrepreneurs in preparing project reports, purchasing machinery, training the staff etc.

To develop women entrepreneurship the United Nations declared the decade 1975-85 as the decade for women. The UNIDO preparatory meeting on the Role of Woman in Industrialization in Developing Countries held at Vienna in February, 1978, identified several constraints such as social attitudes, institutional barriers, inadequate employment opportunities, inappropriate and inadequate training, insufficient information and so on which held women back from participating in industrial activities. The world conference of the United Nations Decade for Women held at Denmark in 1980 adopted a programme for promoting women entrepreneurship.

The first National Conference of Women Entrepreneurs held at New Delhi in 1981. Recommended the need for development of the country. It also called for priority to women in allotment of land, sheds, sanction of power, licensing, financial assistance etc. national alliance to young entrepreneurs [NAYE] had setup a women's wing in 1975. Three international conferences and 8 National conventions of women entrepreneurs have been organized by NAYE in different cities of India.

In 1989, the industrial development bank of India [IDBI] set-up the Mahila Udayam Nidhi [MUN] and Mahila Vikas Nidhi [MVN] schemes to help women entrepreneurs. The MUN had provided 15% equity assistance for new units with project cost not exceeding Rs.10lakhs. The MVN scheme extends aid to voluntary agencies in decentralized industries for training-cum-production centers and management and skill up gradation. The industrial policy Resolution of 1991 emphasized the

need for conducting special entrepreneurship development programmes for women. This policy also recommended product and process oriented courses enabling women to start small-scale industries.

The seminar on "Women and Rural Entrepreneurship" held at Madurai Kamaraj University, in 1990 arrived at the following two conclusions and recommendations.

1. Women are not weak but very strong
2. The industrial and business opportunities are many electronics, engineering, plastic injection, moulding, food and allied activities, pharmaceuticals, energy etc.

Centre for entrepreneurship development [CED] at Madurai, is conducting entrepreneurship training programme for women at reputed educational institutions under the sponsorship of SIDBI. The CED has recently taken up a project sponsored by the International Labour Organization [ILO] to provide entrepreneurship training to 2400 mothers of child labourers at Tirupur and Virudhunagar.

Recently, in Tamilnadu, the government had initiated to set up a women's industrial park called 'Tirumullaivoyal Women's Industrial Park' at Ambathur near Chennai. The park is proposed to setup in an area of 218 acres of land. The development plots and industries sheds will be allotted to women entrepreneurs through SIDCO.

In Tamilnadu, entrepreneurship training was given to one-lakh women in 2001-2002 and it has been proposed to give training to 1.25lakh women during the year 2002-03.

The growth of women's education increases their participation in the non-agriculture professions. Women are gradually coming forward to face challenges and assume responsibilities in various fields-economic-social- and political.

The number of women entrepreneurs in the field of engineering and electronic is on the rise. Women entrepreneurs manufacturing solar cookers in Gujarat, small foundries in Maharashtra and T.V. capacitors in Orissa have proved beyond doubt that given the opportunities, they can excel their male counterparts.

Case studies of several women entrepreneurs have revealed their women possess a futuristic outlook and the capacity to nurture new enterprises. These case studies highlight the problems faced by women entrepreneurs and steps taken by women entrepreneurs to overcome the various obstacles to succeed in their ventures the active participation of women entrepreneurs is essential in the development of small -scale industry.

#### 1.10 Problems of Women Entrepreneurs

The basic problem of woman entrepreneur is being a woman. In many developing countries marriage is treated as the only carrier for women. Despite the constitutional and legal equality, women suffer from male reservations. This attitude of reservations creates problems at all levels like family support, training, licensing, banking and marketing. Some of the specific problems encountered by women entrepreneurs are listed below.

##### 1. Problem of Finance

Finance is the "life-blood" for any enterprise. The access of women to external sources of funds is limited for the reason that they do not generally own properties on their name. Financial institutions consider women less credit worthy and discourage women borrowers on the belief that they may leave their business at any time. Under these circumstances the women entrepreneurs are found to rely on their own savings and loans from friends and relatives, which may not be adequate.

##### 2. Scarcity of Raw Material

Most of the women enterprises are suffering from the scarcity

of raw materials and inputs besides their high cost. In the purchase of raw material, the middle- men either denies discount or give the minimum discount to the women entrepreneurs.

##### 3. Stiff Competition

Women entrepreneurs do not have organizational set up and they are not able to spend much money for canvassing and advertisement. They have to face a stiff competition from both organized sector and male entrepreneurs marketing their products.

##### 4. Limited mobility

The mobility of women in India is highly limited due to humiliating attitude of men towards them.

##### 5. Family ties

The main duty of Indian women is to look after the members of their family. This leaves little time and energy to devote to business.

##### 6. Lack of education

In India more than 50% of the women are still illiterate. Lack of qualitative education leads to unawareness of business technology and market knowledge and causes low achievement motivation. It also creates problems for women in setting up and running of business.

##### 7. Male dominated society

Though the constitution of India speaks of equality between sexes, in practice women are treated next to men. This male domination serves as an impediment to the entry of women into business.

##### 8. Low risk bearing ability

Risk bearing is an essential requisite of successful entrepreneur. Most of the Indian women are less educated and economically not independent. This reduces their ability to bear risk involved in running a business.

Besides the above problems there are some other problems, which are common to both male and female entrepreneurs. They are inadequate infrastructural facilities, shortage of power, high cost of production, social attitude, low need for achievement and socio economic constraints.

#### 1.11 Suggestions for the Development of Women Entrepreneurs

Today there is a greater awareness among women. Educating women is absolutely essential in straightening their personality. The need of the hour is to provide an opportunity in a conducive atmosphere, free from gender differences. Today no field is unapproachable to trained and determined modern women. To make the movement of women entrepreneurship a success, both the government and non-Government agencies have to play a vital role on the following lines.

- Priorities in allotment of industrial estates to women entrepreneurs.
- Adequate training programmes to women including mobile training centers.
- Financial assistance at subsidized interest rate.
- Assistance in marketing of their products by giving preference to their products in Government's purchasing policy.
- A majority of women entrepreneurs are from middle class families with low technical education, but desire to become entrepreneurs. Their potential should be identified and trained.
- One single nodal agency may be established to provide adequate infrastructural facilities such as flow of adequate working capital, technology, electricity, land and marketing facilities.

#### 1.12 Women Entrepreneurship in India

In India, marriage is the only career for most women. Even professionally, they have confined their activities to teaching, office work, nursing and medicine. It is rarely that they enter professions like engineering and business. In 1990, the In-

dian female population was 437.10 million representing 46.5 percent of the total population. There are 126.48 million women workforce, out of which only 1,85,900 women were self employed. Majority of them are engaged in the unorganized sectors like agriculture, agro based industries. There were 295680 women entrepreneurs of the total 2.64 million entrepreneurs in India during 1995-96. Of this, a majority were concentrated in low paid, low skilled, low technology and low productivity jobs in the rural and unorganized sector. The new industrial policy has stressed the importance of entrepreneurship among women. This would help improve their economic and social conditions. This would help improve their economic and social conditions. This policy has redefined women's units' as units in which they have the majority share holdings and management control.

In 1996, the department of small -scale industry under the ministry of industry had taken the initiative to train one lakh women entrepreneurs to take up trade related activities.

### 1.13 Women Entrepreneurs in Several Industries

Today we see women entrepreneurs in several industries namely electronics, engineering, readymade garments, eatables, handicrafts, doll making, poultry, plastics, soap, ceramics, printing, nurseries, crèches, drugs, textile designing, dairy, canning, knitting, beauty parlors, jewelers design, solar cooker etc. some other potential areas are bio-technology, information technology, tourism and other service sectors.

"Women entrepreneurs- An exploratory study of Hyderabad" reveals that the motivational factors of self interest and inspiration from others are critical factors that lead one towards successful woman entrepreneur. The challenge and adventure to do something new, liking for business and independent occupation are some of the attractive leverages for women.

### 1.14 Successful Women Entrepreneurs

A selected representatives of successful women entrepreneurs are mentioned here.

Smt. Sumati Moraji - Shipping Corporation  
Smt. Sharayu Daftary - Automobile Radiators  
Smt. Chandragandhi Govindarajulu - Chandra Textiles, Coimbatore.  
Smt. Radha Thiyagarajan-Thiyagarajar Mills, Madurai.  
Smt. Ragashree Pathy – Rajashree Group of Companies, Coimbatore.  
Smt. Malliga Seenivasan-Tractor and Farm Equipments.

### Smt.D.Jayalakshmi Devaraj

Managing Director, Sri Vigneshwara Group of Companies, Coimbatore.

Smt.D. Jayalakshmi Devaraj was just like any other housewife till June 1983. After the sudden demise of her husband, she took up the challenge of running the industry started by her husband. The total sales of the industry has been raised from 33 lakhs in 1984 to Rs.50 lakhs in 1988. She was the winner of the CODDISSIA award 1989 for the best women entrepreneur.

### Smt. Rajashree Pathy

Chairperson and Managing Director of Raja Shree Group of Companies, Coimbatore.

In 1990, Ms. Rajashree Pathy took on the mantle of the company when her father died. Under her able leadership the Rajashree group has grown to a turnover of Rs.300 crores from 50 crores in 1990. The group has expanded by setting up two new units each in the sugar and textile field apart from automobile retailing business.

To upgrade her skills Ms.Pathy underwent a "Owner/president management programme" at Harvard Business School between 1994 –96. She was also selected as one of the members of global leadership for tomorrow Davos, Switzerland. The hallmark of Ms. Pathy's legacy has been optimal utilization of existing facilities and cashing in diversification opportunities.

### Ms.Richa Goyal

PATA Award Winner

A young travel and tourism entrepreneur, Richa Goyal received the Faces of the future' award at the 51st Pacific Asia Travel Association's Annual Conference held at New Delhi in January 2002. She was among the 12 young travel professionals selected worldwide. Ms.goyal is part of the top management team of one of the largest wholesale airline and tourism marketing company.

### 1.15 Conclusion

Even if the women have barriers in the society such as look for the family, discrimination in sex, they overlook the barriers and stand in the field of entrepreneurship and help the development of the society and improvement of our country. Many women entrepreneurs encounter the problem and equally compete with men and gets success in the field of entrepreneurship. In modern days, women occupy great role in our country and exceed in commercial growth and economical growth. Hence women entrepreneurship have unique place in development of the society in our country.

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