



Working Women's Opinion on Entrepreneurship – an Empirical Study in Coimbatore

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ABSTRACT

Entrepreneurship is a vital input to industrial development which leads to the development of the nation. Entrepreneurship which is an economic movement has been initially dominated by men all over the globe. In recent time owing to the change in the society few women have taken up entrepreneurship as their career. On the other hand owing to societal constraints and personal life obstacles many women are found to engage themselves as employees in some organization. The present study aims to identify the working women's opinion on entrepreneurship and to find out the significant difference in their opinion based on socio-economic profile and their interest to become an entrepreneur. A sample of 150 working women in Coimbatore have been randomly selected as samples and primary data have been collected from them using a questionnaire. The data collected have been analysed using the statistical tools namely average score analysis, ANOVA and t-test. The results of the study show that irrespective of their socio-economic profile and their interest towards becoming an entrepreneur all the respondents have a positive opinion on entrepreneurship. Hence it has been suggested that special interest may be shown on working women to encourage them to become entrepreneurs.

Keywords : entrepreneurship, opinion on entrepreneurship, working women and women entrepreneurship

Introduction

Entrepreneurship is the driving force for economic development of the country without which labour, capital and technology remains unused. A country's economic progress lies in the progress of its entrepreneurs as it solves the threats like unemployment, regional imbalances, gender inequality and decreasing GDP. Realizing this, the Government of India has devised many self-employment generation schemes to help its citizens to start their enterprise and increase the nation's productive capacity. Economic development of the country starts with the improved standard of living of individuals. Hence it is imperative that the standard of living of women should also be improved. It is the nature of women to efficiently manage multiple tasks given to her but the patriarchal society still suppress her from exploring the world of business completely. The Government has made special reservation for women in all the schemes introduced to generate self-employment as a result of which a growth pattern is witnessed in the number of women who have started their own business. These women entrepreneurs not only improve their lives but are playing a major role in the upliftment of other women by offering employment opportunities to them.

Review of Literature

Abhishek Goel, Neharika Vohra, Liyan Zhang and Bhupinder Arora (2007)¹ in their study on "Attitudes of the youth towards entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship: A cross-cultural comparison of India and China" have hypothesized that more positive attitude would be seen in people from (i) entrepreneurial family backgrounds and (ii) entrepreneurially more developed regions. These hypotheses were tested on more than 5,000 respondents from India and China. The youth from entrepreneurial family background have been found to have

strong support from their family in both India and China which implies their positive attitude towards entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship. Regional development showed stronger influence on attitude among youth in India than in China. This study shows that the youth from both the countries are having a positive impact on risk taking attribute of entrepreneurship hence if timely assistance and appropriate business climate is provided more entrepreneurial activity can be witnessed.

Subhash and Sunita Rani (2007)², have conducted a study to analyse the impact of region (North India or South India) and educational background on the entrepreneurial orientation among young Indian women. The study is based on the primary data collected from 96 women in India through a structured questionnaire containing variables on the issues of entrepreneurial attitude and skills. Most of the women who are willing to become entrepreneurs have been driven by achievement motivation. The findings of the study show that South Indian women show more interest on entrepreneurship than their counterparts in North India and educational background of the women have no influence on their entrepreneurial orientation.

Statement of the Problem

Many women have come out of their household works and joined their peers in industries as employees. But just employment is not the right choice for women to contribute to the economic development of the nation and gain equality in the society. Entrepreneurship is the best possible opportunity which working women should utilize as they are capable of performing better than the women who lack expertise in the industry but many of them are not ready to become entrepreneurs due to various socio-economic barriers. In this context

the present study has been conducted to know the opinion of working women on entrepreneurship.

Objectives of the Study:

- To elucidate the opinion of working women on entrepreneurship.
- To compare the opinion of working women from different socio-economic background on entrepreneurship.

Methodology:

Using simple random sampling technique a sample of 150 working women in Coimbatore have been selected as respondents and primary data have been collected from the respondents using a structured questionnaire. Statistical tools namely average score analysis, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and t-Test have been used to examine the primary data. Secondary data for the study have been collected from various publications in journals, magazines, websites and books.

Analysis and Interpretation:

Opinion on Entrepreneurship

In order to know the working women's perception on entrepreneurship a five point Likert Scale has been administered which constituted the following statements:

S1- Entrepreneurship creates more employment opportunities

S2- Entrepreneurship removes gender inequality

S3- Entrepreneurship contributes to increased national productivity

S4- Entrepreneurship enables economic independence

S5- Entrepreneurship has more status quotient than employment

S6- Entrepreneurship ensures improved standard of living

S7- Entrepreneurship facilitates maximum utilization of resources

S8- Entrepreneurship enhances balanced economic development of the country

S9- Entrepreneurship is the best solution for youth unemployment

S10- Entrepreneurship has been a major cause for improved infrastructural facilities in the country

The respondents were asked to rate their level of agreeability on the statements as great extent – 5, high extent – 4, to some extent – 3, least extent – 2 and not at all – 1. The averages of score given by the respondents for each statement have been computed to identify the opinion of working women on entrepreneurship. In order to find out whether the opinion of the respondents varies significantly owing to their socio-economic profile, ANOVA and t-Test have been employed and the results of the same have been presented below:

Table 1 Average Score Analysis

		S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8	S9	S10
Age	18 – 25 yrs	4.18	3.77	3.64	4.27	4.05	4.27	3.64	3.77	4.50	3.55
	26 – 35 yrs	4.22	3.39	4.20	4.15	4.26	4.31	3.70	3.70	4.33	4.41
	36 – 45 yrs	3.83	3.17	3.14	3.59	3.21	3.52	3.38	3.17	4.17	3.24
	46 – 55 yrs	4.13	3.67	4.07	3.83	4.00	4.13	4.63	3.83	4.40	4.40
	Above 55 yrs	4.53	3.47	4.00	4.07	3.67	4.27	4.13	4.33	4.87	4.07
Educational qualification	No formal education	3.88	3.12	3.50	4.00	3.88	4.23	4.58	4.31	4.54	4.35
	School level	3.97	3.84	4.00	3.66	4.22	4.13	3.63	3.78	4.37	4.22
	Graduate	4.30	3.57	3.61	3.83	3.39	3.61	3.39	3.35	4.09	3.65
	Post graduate	3.71	3.67	3.48	3.86	3.62	4.19	3.71	3.24	4.38	3.76
	Diploma	4.50	3.50	4.50	4.00	5.00	4.50	4.00	3.50	4.00	3.00
	Professional	4.55	3.25	4.25	4.36	4.02	4.23	3.91	3.70	4.52	4.09
Marital status	Married	4.14	3.48	3.89	3.90	3.81	4.03	3.88	3.63	4.42	4.10
	Unmarried	4.11	3.48	3.74	4.37	4.26	4.37	3.85	3.96	4.22	3.67
	Widow	5.00	3.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	4.00
Monthly income	Up to Rs.10,000	3.92	3.64	3.75	3.86	3.97	4.21	3.92	3.96	4.54	4.14
	Rs.10,001 – Rs.20,000	4.15	3.21	3.70	3.91	4.06	3.88	3.70	3.30	4.30	3.73
	Rs.20,001 – Rs.30,000	4.82	2.94	4.35	4.24	3.94	3.82	3.59	3.53	4.35	3.76
	Above Rs.30,000	4.42	3.63	4.12	4.33	3.50	4.33	4.08	3.54	4.08	4.21
Type of family	Joint	3.88	3.21	3.79	3.59	3.62	3.71	3.59	3.41	4.47	3.50
	Nuclear	4.23	3.54	3.89	4.10	4.00	4.23	3.94	3.78	4.37	4.17
Residential area	Urban	4.46	3.25	4.02	3.92	3.89	3.97	3.83	3.54	4.38	3.95
	Semi-urban	3.69	3.76	3.71	3.93	3.86	4.05	3.71	3.67	4.31	4.10
	Rural	4.16	3.49	3.80	4.13	4.00	4.38	4.04	3.96	4.49	4.04
Occupation	Government employee	4.61	4.11	4.56	4.39	4.17	4.39	4.22	3.83	4.56	4.67
	Private employee	3.88	3.45	3.61	3.84	3.88	4.01	3.75	3.60	4.31	3.90
	Professional	4.49	3.29	4.11	4.40	3.94	4.26	3.91	3.80	4.37	4.09
	Agricultural labour	4.67	3.00	4.00	3.00	3.67	4.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	3.67
Occupation of Spouse/ Father	Government employee	4.00	4.33	3.67	3.67	4.33	4.00	4.33	3.00	4.67	4.33
	Private employee	3.88	3.48	3.71	3.87	3.81	4.04	3.89	3.83	4.38	4.00
	Professional	4.55	3.15	4.35	4.15	3.90	4.35	3.75	3.60	4.25	4.05
	Business	4.66	3.66	4.03	4.34	3.93	4.00	3.79	3.48	4.52	4.00
	Agriculturist	4.27	3.00	3.82	3.82	4.45	4.64	3.73	3.82	4.27	4.00
Willing to become an entrepreneur	Yes	4.57	3.25	4.09	4.09	4.02	4.00	3.77	3.38	4.32	3.79
	No	3.93	3.59	3.74	3.93	3.86	4.18	3.91	3.88	4.43	4.14

		S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8	S9	S10
Encourage any other women in family to become an entrepreneur	Yes	4.45	3.27	3.91	3.88	3.87	3.96	3.86	3.57	4.40	3.81
	No	3.84	3.67	3.82	4.10	3.96	4.27	3.86	3.84	4.38	4.25

Source: Computed

From the above table it has been found that the level of agreeability of the respondents in the age group of 18 to 25 years is high towards "entrepreneurship enables economic independence" and "entrepreneurship ensures improved standard of living". Working women in the age group of 26 to 35 years have highly agreed that "entrepreneurship has been a major cause for improved infrastructural facilities in the country", respondents belonging to the age group of 36 to 45 years and those who are above 55 years of age have agreed that "entrepreneurship is the best solution for youth unemployment" and the respondents whose age group is 46 to 55 years have agreed that "entrepreneurship facilitates maximum utilization of resources".

Respondents who have no formal education have high level of agreeability on "entrepreneurship facilitates maximum utilization of resources", respondents who have school level education and those who are post graduates have highly agreed that "entrepreneurship is the best solution for youth unemployment", respondents who are diploma holders have high level of agreeability towards "entrepreneurship has more status quotient than employment", and the graduate working women and professionally qualified respondents have high level of agreeability for "entrepreneurship creates more employment opportunities".

The level of agreeability of the married respondents is high towards "entrepreneurship is the best solution for youth unemployment", unmarried respondents have highly agreed that "entrepreneurship enables economic independence" and "entrepreneurship ensures improved standard of living" and the respondents who are widow have high level of agreeability on "entrepreneurship creates more employment opportunities", "entrepreneurship has more status quotient than employment", "entrepreneurship ensures improved standard of living", and "entrepreneurship is the best solution for youth unemployment".

The level of agreeability of the respondents whose monthly income is up to Rs.10,000 and Rs.10,001 to Rs.20,000 has been high towards "entrepreneurship is the best solution for youth unemployment" and the respondents whose monthly income ranges from Rs.20,001 to Rs.30,000 and above Rs.30,000 have highly agreed that "entrepreneurship creates more employment opportunities".

The respondents living in joint family and nuclear family have high level of agreeability towards "entrepreneurship is the best solution for youth unemployment".

The level of agreeability of the respondents belonging to urban area is high towards "entrepreneurship creates more employment opportunities" and the respondents of semi-urban and rural areas have highly agreed to the statement "entrepreneurship is the best solution for youth unemployment".

Respondents who are government employees have high level of agreeability on "entrepreneurship has been a major cause for improved infrastructural facilities in the country", working women who are private employees have highly agreed that "entrepreneurship is the best solution for youth unemployment" and the respondents who are professionals and who are agricultural labourers have high level of agreeability towards "entrepreneurship is the best solution for youth unemployment".

The level of agreeability of the respondents whose father/spouse is a government employee and whose father/spouse

is a private employee has been high towards "entrepreneurship is the best solution for youth unemployment", level of agreeability is high towards "entrepreneurship creates more employment opportunities" for the working women whose father's/ spouse's occupation is business and for the respondents whose father/spouse is a professional. The respondents whose father/ spouse are agriculturists have highly agreed that "entrepreneurship ensures improved standard of living".

The level of agreeability of the working women who are willing to become entrepreneurs is high towards "entrepreneurship creates more employment opportunities" and the respondents who are not willing to become entrepreneurs have high level of agreeability on the statement "entrepreneurship is the best solution for youth unemployment".

Working women respondents who will encourage other women in their family to become entrepreneurs have highly agreed that "entrepreneurship creates more employment opportunities" and the level of agreeability of the respondents who will not encourage other women from their family to become entrepreneurs is high towards the statement "entrepreneurship is the best solution for youth unemployment".

Hence it is concluded with the Average Score Analysis that majority of the respondents have a high level of agreeability for the statement, "entrepreneurship is the best solution for youth unemployment" followed by "entrepreneurship creates more employment opportunities". The overall results show that respondents' level of agreeability on all statements fall between great extent and some extent. Hence, it is inferred that all the working women respondents have a positive opinion on entrepreneurship which shows a sign of future prospect for the transformation of working women into women entrepreneurs.

ANOVA

H₀: There is no significant difference in the opinion of working women classified based on their socio-economic variables such as age, educational qualification, marital status, monthly income, residential area, occupation and occupation of their spouse / father about entrepreneurship.

Table 3
Personal factors Vs. Opinion on entrepreneurship

Mean		Opinion score			F	Table Value	Sig.
		S.D	No.				
Age	18 – 25 yrs	3.96	.50	22	8.99	3.32	S**
	26 – 35 yrs	4.07	.28	54			
	36 – 45 yrs	3.44	.76	29			
	46 – 55 yrs	4.11	.43	30			
	Above 55 yrs	4.14	.73	15			

Educational qualification	No formal education	4.04	.49	26	2.29	2.21	S*
	School level	3.98	.93	32			
	Graduate	3.68	.26	23			
	Post graduate	3.76	.49	21			
	Diploma	4.05	.17	4			
	Professional	4.09	.36	44			
Marital status	Married	3.93	.61	120	.49	2.99	NS
	Unmarried	4.00	.41	27			
	Widow	4.20	.00	3			
Monthly income	Up to Rs.10,000	3.99	.49	76	1.11	2.60	NS
	Rs.10,001 – Rs.20,000	3.80	.84	33			
	Rs.20,001 – Rs.30,000	3.94	.48	17			
	Above Rs.30,000	4.03	.38	24			
Residential area	Urban	3.92	.42	63	1.10	2.99	NS
	Semi-urban	3.88	.76	42			
	Rural	4.05	.55	45			
Occupation	Government employee	4.35	.51	18	5.38	3.78	S**
	Private employee	3.82	.58	88			
	Professional	4.07	.38	35			
	Agricultural labour	3.90	.77	9			
Occupation of Spouse/ Father	Government employee	4.03	.88	6	.52	2.37	NS
	Private employee	3.89	.60	84			
	Professional	4.01	.39	20			
	Business	4.04	.54	29			
	Agriculturist	3.98	.51	11			

Source: Computed S* - Significant at 5% level S** - Significant at 1% level NS – Not Significant

The opinion scores have suggested that the opinion of respondents classified based on their age about entrepreneurship has varied significantly. Hence with the F-ratio value it is apparent that there is significant difference in the opinion of the respondents on entrepreneurship thereby, rejecting the null hypothesis at 1 per cent level of significance.

It is found from the opinion score of the respondents classified based on their educational qualification that the difference in the mean score is high. Hence, with the F-ratio value it is understood that there is significant difference in the opinion on entrepreneurship of the respondents. Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected at 5 per cent level of significance.

The opinion of the respondents whose marital status is widow have the high mean score of 4.20 and the mean score of 3.93 has been found among the working women who are married. These scores show that there is no vast difference between them. With the F-ratio value it has been concluded that there is no significant difference in the opinion on entrepreneurship of the respondents thereby, the null hypothesis is accepted.

Respondents whose monthly income is above Rs.30,000 have

a high mean score of 4.03 and the working women whose monthly income lies between Rs.10,001 and Rs.20,000 has the least mean score of 3.80. The F-ratio value suggests that there is no significant variation in the opinion on entrepreneurship of the respondents classified based on their monthly income thereby, the null hypothesis is accepted.

The high mean score 4.05 is found for the respondents residing in rural area and the least mean score 3.88 is found for the respondents living in semi-urban area. The F-ratio value confirms that irrespective of their residential area there is no significant difference in the opinion towards entrepreneurship of the respondents thereby, the null hypothesis is accepted.

Opinion score of the respondents who are government employees is high (mean 4.35) and for the respondents who are private employees a low mean score of 3.82 has been registered which shows that there exists a wide gap between the two values. The F-ratio value suggests that there is significant difference in the opinion on entrepreneurship of the respondents classified based upon their occupation. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected at 1 per cent level of significance.

The respondents whose spouse/ father is a business person has the high mean score of 4.04 and the low mean value of 3.89 has been found for the respondents whose spouse/ father is a private employee. The F-ratio value ensures that there is no significant variation in the opinion on entrepreneurship of the respondents classified based on their spouse's / father's occupation thereby, the null hypothesis is accepted.

t-Test

H₀: There is no significant difference in the working women's opinion on entrepreneurship classified based on the variables such as type of their family, willingness to become an entrepreneur and whether or not they will encourage women from their family to become entrepreneurs.

Table 4
Personal factors Vs. Opinion on entrepreneurship

Mean		Opinion on entrepreneurship score			t	Table Value	Sig.
		S.D	No.				
Type of family	Joint	3.68	.82	34	2.39	1.960	S*
	Nuclear	4.03	.45	116			
Willing to become an entrepreneur	Yes	3.93	.50	53	.30	1.960	NS
	No	3.96	.60	97			
Encourage any other women in family to become an entrepreneur	Yes	3.90	.51	77	1.08	1.960	NS
	No	3.99	.62	73			

Source: Computed S*-Significant at 5% level NS-Not Significant

On an average the level of agreeability towards entrepreneurship among the respondents from nuclear family is high (mean 4.03) and the respondents who live in joint family also have a high level of agreeability towards the statements explaining the advantageous features of entrepreneurship (mean 3.68). The t-Test value reveals that the opinion of working women respondents belonging joint family and nuclear family on entrepreneurship has varied significantly. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected at 5% level of significance.

There has been no significant variation in the opinion of the respondents irrespective of their willingness towards becoming an entrepreneur as the mean values show that respondents have highly agreed the importance of entrepreneurship. Hence the null hypothesis is accepted.

Working women respondents who will encourage women from their family to become entrepreneurs and those who will not encourage the same have a high level of agreeability to-

wards the positive implication of entrepreneurship to an individual and to the nation as a whole. t value shows that there is no significant variation in the respondents' opinion on entrepreneurship. Hence the null hypothesis has been accepted.

Suggestions:

The following suggestions have been given based on the findings of the study.

- Working women shall be given special preference by the government to start their own enterprise in their field of expertise.
- Special industrial estate can be formed by the government to encourage experienced women to generate employment opportunities thereby leading to the progress of women fraternity as a whole.

Conclusion

In order to overcome the problems of gender inequality, sub-standard position in family and inability to lead a self-sustaining life it is not enough for women to work under others. They should become entrepreneurs and provide employment opportunities to others which will lead to improved standard of living of women as a result of which economic development of the country is facilitated. On an average working women

are said to have a positive opinion on entrepreneurship. This shows that given an opportunity they may become entrepreneurs which is viable with the recent development of policies on self-employment by the Government of India where importance for women entrepreneurship is stressed.

“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”

- Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam

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