

PROSPECTS OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Entrepreneurship has traditionally been defined as the process of designing, launching and running a new business, which typically begins as a small business, such as a startup company, offering a product, process or service for sale or hire.¹ It has been defined as the "...capacity and willingness to develop, organize, and manage a business venture along with any of its risks in order to make a profit." While definitions of entrepreneurship typically focus on the launching and running of businesses, due to the high risks involved in launching a start-up, a significant proportion of businesses have to close, due to a "...lack of funding, bad business decisions, an economic crisis -- or a combination of all of these" or due to lack of market demand.

Entrepreneurship is a rapidly rising concern of a modern competitive economy and its contribution in economy is viably recognized worldwide. But the point to ponder is the fact that it is generally perceived as a male-gendered concept in India. And the women who start up their businesses have to face some teething problems. Women Entrepreneurship is considered to be an effective instrument for the economic empowerment of the women. Women in India remained economically undeveloped for many decades. In the recent past only the concept of Women Entrepreneurship is gaining momentum. Despite number of measures and incentives taken by the government of India the women entrepreneurs are not increasing at a greater rate. This is due to some practical problems in the process of entrepreneurship by women. This paper attempts to analyze and highlight various Problems and Prospects of Women Entrepreneurship in India.

Keywords: *Entrepreneurship, Opportunities, Business decision, Lack of Funding etc*

I. INTRODUCTION

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 set up has been a male dominated one. Women are considered as weaker sex and always made to depend on men folk in their family and outside, throughout their life. The Indian culture made them only subordinates and executors of the decisions made by other male members, in the basic family structure. 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 the 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 exception for this. These women leaders are assertive, persuasive and willing to take risks. 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 risks and chances, ability to motivate people, knowing how to win and lose gracefully are the strengths of the Indian women entrepreneurs

Objectives of the Study The following are the objectives of the present study:

- To know the status of women entrepreneurs in India.
- To know various problems encountered by women entrepreneurs in India.
- To know the future prospects for the development of women entrepreneurs in India.
- To know various steps to develop women entrepreneurship in India.
- To know various government schemes for the development of women entrepreneurs.

II. METHODOLOGY

The present study is based only on secondary data. The data were collected from books, journals, website and annual reports.

Concept of Women Entrepreneurs

Women Entrepreneurs may be defined as the women or a group of women who initiate, organize and operate a business enterprise. The Government of India has defined women entrepreneurs as —an enterprise owned and controlled by women having a minimum financial interest of 51 per cent of the capital and giving at least 51 per cent of the employment generated in the enterprise to women. Women entrepreneurs engaged in business due to push and pull factors which encourage women to have an independent occupation and stands on their own legs. A sense towards independent decision-making on their life and career is the motivational factor behind this urge. Saddled with household chores and domestic responsibilities women want to get independence. Under the influence of these factors the women entrepreneurs choose a profession as a challenge and as an urge to do something new. Such a situation is described as pull factors. While the push factors for women engaged in business activities are family compulsion and the responsibility

Women Entrepreneurship in India

It is estimated that presently women entrepreneurs comprise about 10% of the total entrepreneurs in India. The term “Women Entrepreneurship” means, an act of business owner -ship and business creation that empowers women economically, increases their economic strength well as position in society. Hence women-entrepreneurs have been making a considerable impact in all most all the segments of the economy which is more than 25 percent of all kinds of business .In India “Entrepreneurship” is very limited amongst women especially in the formal sector, which is less than 5 percent of all the business. Indian women business owners are changing the face of businesses of today, both literally and figuratively. The dynamic growth and expansion of women-owned businesses is one of the defining trends of the past decade, and all indications are that it will continue unabated. For more than a decade, the number of women-owned businesses has grown at one-and-a-half to two times the rate of all businesses. Even more important, the expansion in revenues and employment has far exceeded the growth in numbers.

III. REASONS FOR WOMEN TO BECOME ENTREPRENEURS:

Self esteem, recognition, Self determination, and career goal are the key drivers for choosing to entrepreneurship by women .Sometimes, women choose such career path for proving their potential, caliber in order to achieve self satisfaction. However, dismal economic conditions of the women arising out of unemployment in the family and divorce can compel women into entrepreneurial activities. The days have gone when women always passed her whole life within the boundaries of house now women are found indulged in every line of business. The entry of women into business in India is an extension of their normal home activities. But with the spread of education and passage of time women started shifting from doing work at home or kitchen to the business venture. Skill, knowledge and adaptability in business are the main reasons for women to emerge into business ventures. Women Entrepreneur is a person who accepts challenging role to meet her personal needs and become economically independent.

A strong desire to do something positive is an inbuilt quality of entrepreneurial women, who is capable of contributing values in both family and social life. With the advent of media, women are aware of their own traits, rights and also the work situations. The challenges and opportunities provided to the women of digital era are growing rapidly that the job seekers are turning into job creators. Many women start a business due to some traumatic event, such as divorce, discrimination due to pregnancy or the corporate glass ceiling, the health of a family member, or economic reasons such as a layoff. But a new talent pool of women entrepreneurs is forming today, as more women opt to leave corporate world to chart their own destinies. They are growing as designers, interior decorators, exporters, publishers, garment manufacturers and still exploring new avenues of economic participation.

IV. PROBLEMS OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

Gender Inequality

India is a male dominated traditional society where women are not supposed to be equal to men folk. They are treated as subordinate to husbands and men, physically weak and lesser confident to be able to shoulder the responsibility of entrepreneur.

Lack of Education

Women in India are lagging far behind in the field of education. Most of the women (around sixty per cent of total women) are illiterate. Those who are educated are provided either less or inadequate education than their male counterpart partly due to early marriage, partly due to son's higher education and partly due to poverty. Due to lack of proper education, women entrepreneurs remain in dark about the development of new technology, new methods of production, marketing and other governmental support which will encourage them to flourish.

Problem of Finance

Women entrepreneurs suffer a lot in raising and meeting the financial needs of the business. Bankers, creditors and financial institutions are not coming forward to provide financial assistance to women borrowers on the ground of their less creditworthiness and more chances of failure.

Skepticism of Financial Institution

Financial Institutions and bankers are skeptical about the entrepreneurial abilities of women. These institutions consider women loanies as higher risk than men.

Obsolescence of technology & resulting increase in cost of production

Women entrepreneurs face technology obsolescence due to non-adoption or slow adoption to changing technology which is a major factor of high cost of production.

Low risk-bearing capacity

Women in India are by nature weak, shy and mild. They cannot bear the amount of risk which is essential for running an enterprise. Lack of education, training and financial support from outsides also reduce their ability to bear the risk involved in an enterprises.

Lack of entrepreneurial aptitude

Lack of entrepreneurial aptitude is a matter of concern for women entrepreneurs. They have no entrepreneurial bent of mind. Even after attending various training programs on entrepreneurship they fail to tide over the risks and troubles that may come up in an organizational working.

Limited managerial ability

Women entrepreneurs are not efficient in managerial functions like planning, organizing, controlling, coordinating, motivating etc. of an enterprise. Therefore, less and limited managerial ability of women has become a problem for them to run the enterprise successfully.

Legal formalities

Fulfilling the legal formalities required for running an enterprise becomes an uphill task on the part of an women entrepreneur because of the prevalence of corrupt practices in government offices and procedural delays for various licenses, electricity, water and shed allotments. In such situations women entrepreneurs find it hard to concentrate on the smooth working of the enterprise.

Lack of self confidence

Women entrepreneurs because of their inherent nature, lack self-confidence which is essentially a motivating factor in running an enterprise successfully. They have to strive hard to strike a balance between managing a family and managing an enterprise.

V. SCHEMES FOR PROMOTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

According to the Third All India Census of Small Scale Industries conducted in 2001-02 and subsequent estimates made, only 10.11% of the Micro and Small Enterprises in India are owned by women while 9.46% of the MSE enterprises are managed by women. In order to promote progressively women enterprises in the MSE sector, various schemes have been formulated by this Ministry and some more are in the process of being finalized, aims only at the development of women enterprises in India. Significant schemes in India those specifically introduced for women for providing special benefits to women-

1.Trade related entrepreneurship assistance and development scheme for women (TREAD):

With the objective of encouraging women in starting their own ventures, government launched a Scheme, namely, (TREAD) Trade Related Entrepreneurship Assistance and Development during the 11th Plan. The scheme envisaged economic empowerment of 297 women through the development of their entrepreneurial

skills in non-farm activities. There are three major parts of the scheme; Govt. of India has grant up to 30% of the total project cost to the Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) for promoting entrepreneurship among women. The remaining 70% of the total project cost is financed by the lending agency as loan for undertaking activities as envisaged in the project. Up to Rs.1 lakh per program can be granted by govt. of India to training institutions / NGOs for providing training to the women entrepreneurs.

2. Micro & Small Enterprises Cluster Development Programme (MSE-CDP):

a) Existing Clusters: Cluster is described as a group of enterprises, normally 20 or more producing same/similar products/services. The Cluster Development Programme being implemented envisages diagnostic study of identified clusters of traditional skill-based MSEs to identify suitable technologies and their providers and to facilitate adoption of available technology meeting the specific needs of the end users. The Cluster Development goals at improved competitiveness, technology improvement, adoption of best manufacturing practices, marketing of products, employment generation etc. The scheme provides support for capacity building, common facilities, marketing etc. the delivery, absorption and diffusion of the identified technology from its producers to the recipient user/cluster of small enterprises. b) Physical infrastructure: This Ministry implemented the IID Scheme to provide developed sites with infrastructural facilities like exhibition/display centers, telecommunications, drainage and pollution control facilities power distribution network, roads, water, raw materials, common service facilities storage and marketing outlets, and technological back-up services, etc. This scheme has been subsumed in the MS-ME-Cluster Development Programme. All the features of IID Scheme have been retained. To create physical infrastructure for women enterprises central grant of 40% of the project cost subject to a maximum of Rs.2 crore is available. The Ministry of MSME is trying to enhance the quantum of grant to 80% in a project of Rs.10 crore.

3. Credit guarantee fund scheme:

In May, 2000 The Government had introduced the Credit Guarantee Fund Scheme for Small Industries with the objective of providing credit to SSI units, particularly small units, for loans up to Rs. 25 lakh with no collateral/ third party guarantees. The Scheme is being operated by the Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Small Industries (CGTSI) set up jointly by the Government of India and SIDBI. In the case of women enterprises, the guarantee cover is up to 80% of the credit subject to maximum guarantee limit of Rs. 20 lakh. The member lending institutions (MLI) availing of guarantee from the Trust have to pay a one-time guarantee fee of 1.5% of the credit facility (comprising term loan and / or working capital) allowed by the lending institution to the borrower and annual service fee of 0.75% per annum on the amount of credit facility extended by the MLI, which is covered under the scheme. 298

4. Help for Entrepreneurial and Managerial Development:

MSME DIs regularly conducts EDPs/MDPs for existing and potential entrepreneurs and charge fee for such courses. To encourage more entrepreneurs from among the SC/ST, women and physically challenged groups, it is proposed that such beneficiaries will not be charged any fees but, instead paid a stipend of Rs.500/- per capita per month. 50,000 entrepreneurs will be trained in IT, Fashion Technology, Agro & Food Processing, Catering, biotechnology Pharmaceutical, etc. through specialized courses run by MSME DIs. 20% of courses conducted by these Institutions shall be exclusively for women

5. Scheme for Women Entrepreneurs to Encourage Small & Micro Manufacturing Units

DC (MSME) has formulated a scheme for women entrepreneurs to support Small & Micro manufacturing units owned by women in their efforts at developing overseas markets, to enhance participation of representatives of small/micro manufacturing enterprises under SIDO stall at International Trade Fairs/Exhibitions, to enhance export from such units. Under this scheme participation of women entrepreneurs in 25 international exhibitions is envisaged during the 11th Plan.

6. Dena Bank to support India's women entrepreneur. Dena Bank will help Government of India's initiative to promote women entrepreneurs for self-employment ventures in any kind of non-farm activity.

At present, the Government of India has over 27 schemes for women. Some of these are:

- Assistance to Rural Women in Non-Farm Development (ARWIND) schemes
- Entrepreneurial Development programme (EDPs)
- Indira Mahila Yojana
- Indira Mahila Kendra
- Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP)
- Khadi And Village Industries Commission (KVIC)
- Management Development programmes
- Women's Development Corporations (WDCs)
- Marketing of Non-Farm Products of Rural Women (MAHIMA)
- Mahila Vikas Nidhi
- Mahila Samiti Yojana 299
- Mahila Vikas Nidhi
- Micro Credit Scheme
- Micro & Small Enterprises Cluster Development Programmes (MSE-CDP).
- NGO's Credit Schemes
- NABARD- KfW-SEWA Bank project
- National Banks for Agriculture and Rural Development's Schemes
- Priyadarshini Project- A programme for Rural Women Empowerment and Livelihood in Mid Gangetic Plains'
- Prime Minister's Rojgar Yojana (PMRY)

VI. FUTURE PROSPECTS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

Throughout the world, it is observed that the ratio of Women entrepreneurs is increasing tremendously. The emergence as well as development of Women entrepreneurs is quite visible in India and their over- all contribution to Indian economy is also very significant. Today the role of Women entrepreneurs in economic development is inevitable because women are entering not only in selected fields but also in fields like Trade, Industry and Engineering.

The industrial structure and the enterprises are undergoing a radical change. Information Technology has transformed the very technique of doing business individually. Business ownership provides women with the independence they crave and with the economic and social success they need. Nationally, business ownership

has great importance for future economic prosperity. Globally, women are enhancing, directing and changing the face of how business is done today. Ultimately, female business owners must be recognized for who they are, what they do, and how significantly they impact the World' Global Economy.

VII. SUGGESTIONS

- Awareness programmes regarding the entrepreneurship should be conducted in order to educate the women.
- Healthy business environment should be promoted for the development of women entrepreneurship.
- There should be proper platform where problems encountered by women entrepreneurs can be addressed.
- Women should be encouraged to take the benefits of policy measures introduced by the Government to promote the status and level of women entrepreneurs in the country

VIII. CONCLUSION

Women are an important human resource of the nation and every state should try to utilize them as mediators of economic growth and development. Encouragement for women entrepreneurship is one of the ways for that. But unfortunately it is seen that the traditional mind set of the society and negligence of the state and respective authorities are important obstacles in the women entrepreneurship development in India. Therefore, there is need of continuous attempt to inspire, encourage, motivate women entrepreneurs

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