

# Quality of Education and Innovation: Roadblocks and the Pathways to Women Entrepreneurship

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## ABSTRACT

Education has a significant role in everyday life of people. Because, college graduates in every stream of subjects are at the helm of affairs from designing transport vehicles, imparting education in educational institutions, making policies of the nation, finding alternative and innovative solutions to the greatest challenges that the world faces. What matters is the quality in every activity which comes from the excellence of education that graduates get right from the kindergarten to the doctorate level.

Education is not a watertight compartment and if it is isolated from other systems in the society, quality and excellence cannot prevail. Excellence in education has a direct influence on the society – through, sociopolitical and economics. Hence, a theoretical proposition that quality of education influences the society and women entrepreneurship.

Author suggests to create a sustainable, innovative and futuristic society with equality between the genders. Every activity of politics has an implications on the society; societal culture provides a background for the present actions which subsequently influences economic policies of the nation. Every gamut of activity in the society has a direct influence on the women entrepreneurship.

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## 1. Introduction

Worldwide competition is the norm gradually getting wider acceptance and to bring the economic efficiency, mass entrepreneurship and innovation are vital to promote social and economic development. The demand for innovative products and services is massive and entrepreneurial talents has not yet reached the expected level (Barton et al., 2007).

Quality of education plays strategic role in nurturing the general and entrepreneurial skills among the students. Basic foundation of free thinking and appropriate culture of innovation must be laid right from the kindergarten in order for the children to think practically and reason every matter quantitatively. (Xiao et al., 2009).

Entrepreneurship is a great contributor to the continual societal progress. Entrepreneurs take enormous risk and adapt to ever changing competitive market dynamics and make an attempt to be proactive. From basic employment opportunities to providing the modest levels of economic wealth creation and enhancing the standard of living of the employed; from meetings the societal needs through incessant innovation of products and services to innovative and risky investments; from providing alternatives and enhancing the economic value addition to all stakeholders to bringing market stability by raising economic efficiency – all credit goes to the entrepreneurs.

Challenges continue to remain at any point of time in the journey of humankind. What changes is the scenario which is the game changer. Historically there were numerous differences between the genders in almost every activity – from education to the employment of women, from sharing property

to taking risky ventures, etc. in most of the matters till today. Dependency on women is very significant in families for raising children, taking care of household activities and so on.

With the passage of time, socio political, economic changes and technological revolutions have significantly altered age old established traditions all over the world. The changes brought by various factors that influence the entrepreneurial activities of women are being discussed under the following sections.

## 2. Quality of Education

The progress of any society depends on the quality of education. Excellent quality of education imparts students with relevant knowledge and skills required to meet the present needs and innovate for the future. Every service and product is being engineered and offered to the society by college graduates. When there are more complaints in the nation about the quality, this has a consequential effect of poor quality of education. Recognizing the strategic role of education, UNESCO pointed the crucial role of colleges and Universities in imparting the quality of education and creation of entrepreneurial culture (Li, F., 2018). Well developed countries have more equal societies with basic standard of living for all being ensured by the state. Such societies pay serious attention to the quality of education and individual does not struggle for a job after his/her graduation. While studying itself, students find part time jobs and attempt to self-depend economically.

Contrast to North American, European, Australian and few other countries where quality of education is given as a priority of the nation, developing and rest of the world has numerous

challenges of providing the best education. Consequently, poor education prevails everywhere with hardly any life-skills that can help students. Best quality of education represents the practical and relevant knowledge with hands on experience through internships in every educational degree/diploma or a certificate course. Every learning must be relevant to be practiced. When such relevance is there in education, an individual gets confidence in his/her skills and subsequently, based on the abilities and expertise one gains over a period of time, an entrepreneurial idea emerges (Kirkwood, J, 2009).

Table 1 presents a glimpse of India on various parameters right from hunger to economics. Most these surveys are conducted by the United Nations, World Economic Forum, World Bank, and other organizations.

**Table 1 – Global Indicators of India's Progress - in International Surveys 2018**

Sl. No	Category of Index	Global Rank
1	Global Hunger Index	103 / 119
2	Human Capital Index	158/195
3	World Happiness Report	133 / 155
4	Human Development Index	130 / 188
5	Global Gender Gap Report	108 / 144
6	Number of Billionaires	3 / 71
7	Ease of doing business index	77 / 190
8	Global Competitiveness Index	58 / 140
9	Global Innovation Index	57 / 130
10	Steel production	2 / 38
11	Press Freedom Index	138 / 180
12	E-Government	96 / 192
13	Global Peace Index	136/163
14	Environmental Performance Index	177 / 180
15	Non-Performing Asset (NPA)	3/150
16	Education Index	92/145
17	Trading Across Borders	80/190
18	World's laziest country	117/168
19	World Giving Index	124/146
20	Mastercard Index of Women Entrepreneurs (MIWE)	52/57
21	Early Initiation of Breastfeeding	56/76
22	Cigarette Package Health Warnings: International Status Report	5/206
23	Global Climate Risk Index 2018	6th
24	Global AI jobs	5th
25	Theft Ranking Index	19th
26	Management Development Report	44th
27	Global Passport Index ranking	66th
28	Start-up Industry Index	37
29	FDI confidence index	11th
30	Economic Freedom Index	130
31	World's most dangerous nations for women	1
32	Mental and Behavioral Disorders list	1st

33	Highest number of helping people	2nd
34	Commonwealth Innovation Index	10 <sup>th</sup>

Source: India Today. (2019). India's rank in various international surveys in 2018, December 21, 2018

Education Index of India worldwide is 92/145 and skilled labor force is abysmally low at 18.5% of total labor force. Youth who are not in school or employment 15-24 age group are 27.5% and of the per cent of the unemployed of the same age group youth is 10.5 (UNDP1, 2018). Which clearly shows the negligence of successive governments both at state as well central level. Currently, India's expenditure on education hours at about 4% of the GDP. In the last 4 years, education sector got very negligible share in the GDP. At the other side of it, NITI Ayog, India's planning agency has highlighted to increase it to 6% by year 2022.

Quality of India's educational system and the lack of investments in public education are major issues which put gets India 53<sup>rd</sup> rank on a global annual talent ranking released by IMD Business School, Switzerland (Business Line, 2018). Educational infrastructure is very poor, faculty training is abysmal and totally outdated and many vacant positions are yet to be filled. Instead of increasing quality expenditure on education, additional educational seats in educational institutions are going to be created from the forthcoming academic year 2019-20.

### 3. Innovation and entrepreneurship education

- a) Societal culture has a significant influence on the innovation in the nation. Few societies are pro-innovative and encourage risk-taking nature of their children. Societies where free-thinking and living as per his/her choice encourages more innovative ideas. Examples of these are European and American cultures. In contrast, most of the parents concern too much about their children because of numerous factors in Indian culture. Few reasons include high degree of corruption and criminalization of politics. Historically the nation is risk-aversion and this culture is not pro-entrepreneurial. This the reason students prefer to take up jobs than to start a firm on their own.

The spirit of education must be to inculcate an innovative thinking right from the kindergarten education. Based on the abilities and other factors an individual takes a decision either to be an entrepreneur or take up a job.

Innovation education is a philosophy that insists on "innovation orientation" and focuses on the cultivation of students' innovative ideas to practical use. Innovation education is the foundation of entrepreneurship education and the goal must be to cultivate people with innovative spirit and practical ability. Therefore, innovation and entrepreneurship education is a kind of practical education to cultivate students' awareness, ability and spirit of innovation and entrepreneurship (Li, F. (2018).

To create an innovative culture, a nation must prioritize education as the key force beyond every activity. Once a strategic goal of the education is set by the policy makers, it must percolate down to every educational institution. Both the physical infrastructure of educational institutions and recruiting, training, nurturing the right talented faculty members along with supporting staff be created. Holistic policy with an aim to support and nurture good feelings among the faculty must be implemented which consequentially, will unfurl the internalized goals of nation building through innovation teaching.

Innovation must be perpetual and not for a specific period more focus is being given. Every department of the public – transport, education methods, defense, health, etc. must work with an aim to improve upon the existing ways of doing the work. For an example, 3M Company encourages every employee idea and works upon to create a commercial product after an idea passes through a phase of initial business prospect potential. That is why this company is one of the most innovative companies worldwide.

In fact, most thriving companies in the world are innovative and to be innovative sustainable culture in organizations must be created and nurtured. Japanese work on the principle of incessant innovation and South Korea is following the same. China is adept at learning from reengineering. However, basic innovation can happen only when there is a culture in the society that supports for that. Basic innovation comes from the basic research in which every nation must put efforts adequately to reap long-term and sustainable benefits of innovation culture in the nation.

India's Global Innovation Index is 57 out of 130 in 2018 and Global competitiveness Index 58 / 140 (Table 1). This clearly points the roadblocks for innovation which consequently affects the competitiveness which stands at 58 out of 140 countries ranked in 2018. India, along with China figure in tier-4 category (mid-range) in Social Progress Index 2018 (Wikipedia2. (2019). This index indicates overall progress of the society. These indicators point to invest adequately in the overall development of the society.

#### **b) Societal influence**

Influence of societal culture is significant on the overall personality of an individual. Personal attitude and overall approach of an individual is shaped by the prevailing societal culture. Societal culture of developing countries differ significantly from other countries such as developed economies, Arab nations, etc. Moreover, democracies with rampant corruption have more barriers to surmount women entrepreneurs.

People often cite and attach religion as the source of different roles for men and women. For most of the mundane household work and taking care of the children, women continue to play a critical role in many developing countries. Even if entrepreneurial orientation is there among women, they are not openly encouraged by many. People have risk-aversion culture in countries such as India. This not only affects women, but men too.

Other factors that hinder entrepreneurship include, lack of gender parity. Hindu texts present diverse and conflicting views on the position of women, ranging from feminine leadership as the highest goddess, to limiting her role to an obedient daughter, housewife and mother (Wikipedia, 2019). In India, boys are preferred over girls and men are given importance in most matters, leaving girls a secondary treatment. This creates differences in the society and it has reached an alarming level of sex ratio at 1.07. Strikingly, rich states with and more educated people have high preference for males.

Social taboos and traditions need to change in order to bring equality between the genders which is good for the society. A society, an organization and every place with less women have irreparable loss on the productivity (Vossenber, S., 2013).

India's Gender Development Index (GDI) is 0.841 and Gender Inequality Index (GII) 0.524 which show the average level of development with respect to the gender. While Human Development Index (HDI) for women in India is 0.575 and for the men it stands at 0.683 (Wikipedia1, 2019)

In 2018 India was ranked as number one (Table 1) in World's most dangerous nations for women. This gives an indication of numerous issues of inequality among the genders as well as many other social problems, multiplying each day.

The first Human Capital Index (HCI) published for 2019 by the World Bank comes with a conclusion that for 56% of the world's population the HCI is at or below 0.50; and for 92% it is at or below 0.75. Hence only 8% of the population can expect to be 75% as productive as they could be. The HCI uses survival rates and stunting rate instead of life expectancy as measure of health, and quality-adjusted learning instead of merely years of schooling as measure of education (Business Standard, 2018).

#### **c) Political implications**

Politics are changing in their intent and ethics on massive scale worldwide. The consequences of such changes are there on national security to every policies that have an impact on the citizens. Suitable legislations can bring parity between the genders and enhance the productivity of organizations too. True democracy provides equality between the genders in

every field which is present in well developed countries of European and Americans.

Freedom in every angle is likely to bring numerous benefits to the society in long run and every nation must make an attempt towards equality without race, gender, or any other discrimination.

There has been a contrasting approach and development across many economies. At one end of the spectrum – there is an increasing globalization across well developed countries. While at the other end, countries want more political freedom and prefer more economic integration with ongoing globalization. Many countries are taking protective measures to safeguard the interest of various stakeholders in the nation. For an example, present political regime in the U.S. does not allow citizenship for foreigners. This is to provide and make available more economic opportunities for the citizens of the U.S. similar is the situation in most of the countries today.

#### d) Economic scenario

Economic benefits of interconnected commercial world are going to be there and the reality is that all have to live with a competition. Economic policies significantly influence every economic activity and social activities too.

True globalization aims at creating worldwide market and competition which necessitates every nation to benefit, must enact sustainable economic policies that promote innovation and entrepreneurship on a massive scale.

To promote entrepreneurship among women, suitable economic legislation, coupled with complete support including the training for skills, marketing and innovation are vital. Few women are leveraging on the technology and venturing entrepreneurship from homes.

The most important parameter that indicates how easy to do business in a country is “Ease of doing business index - 70 / 190 for 2019”. India has been improving on this index. Still there are challenges which are indirectly influencing due to the fact that India is highly corrupt nation. Because corruption is rampant, it is likely to affect systemically. Still there is no level-playing field even within India as businesses are at state level are separated and not able to expand beyond certain geographic areas. Those who could manage are very large corporations. Unless there is a business environment that ensures freedom to start and compete anywhere in India, except certain designated areas. Ease of doing is very investor friendly in all well developed countries (Sobel et al, 2007). The following indices (table-2) point the overall status of the nation and how complexities are deep rooted in the societal culture and systems (Hoselitz, B. F., 1952). Every nation has to liberalize

the trade norms and the regulatory measures to start businesses.

Reason for non-inclusive preference of doing business while exploiting economic opportunities is over increasing population, chasing few resources especially in countries with large population. Moreover, nations have very poor policies and implementation of policies is without a serious intention because of socially rooted corruption (Carter&Allen,1997).

**Table 2, Type of Inequality in India**

Sl. No.	Type of Inequality	Value
1	Inequality-adjusted HDI (IHDl), rank 101	0.468
2	Inequality in education (%)	38.7
3	Inequality in income (%)	18.8
4	Inequality in life expectancy (%)	21.4
5	Inequality-adjusted education index	0.341
6	Inequality-adjusted income index	0.509
7	Inequality-adjusted life expectancy index	0.590
8	Overall loss in HDI due to inequality (%)	26.8

Source: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/IND#>,  
March 3, 2019

#### 4. Conclusion

Gender inequality remains a major barrier to human development. Girls and women have made major strides since 1990, but they have not yet gained gender equity. The disadvantages facing women and girls are a major source of inequality (Brindley, C., 2005). All too often, women and girls are discriminated against in health, education, political representation, labor market, etc. -with negative consequences for development of their capabilities and their freedom of choice Gender Inequality Index (GII).

Self-learning, self-organization, and self-adaptation are the key abilities every entrepreneur need to possess. In a changing socio-political and economic scenario, there are numerous entrepreneurial opportunities which particularly women can thrive at and these should be grabbed as early as possible (Winn, J., 2005&Birley, S., 1987). There will be challenges of one nature to an altogether different at every point of time. What is required to sustain the challenges is the spirit of reasoning, taking strategic decisions and moving with a great pace.

Wealthy economies represent happier livable societies and such societies are a consequences of excellence in education, coupled with socio-political and economic policies with an aim of gender parity in every profession. The role of women is crucial at home, work place or even as entrepreneurs. Hope for the best entrepreneurial endeavors of women.

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