

Review on Women Entrepreneurs and Empowerment of Women in India

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ABSTRACT

An entrepreneur is a vital component of the development process and an integral part of the socioeconomic transformation process. For the development of a society, full participation of all section of population including women is important. Entrepreneurship development among women can be reflected a possible approach to economic empowerment of women. Indian women are striking a balance between traditional and progressive values of the society in transition through playing dual responsibility at home and at the work place. In spite of the increasing number of women entrepreneurs, their participation remains inconsiderable and their share in the growth of national economy is significantly low, reason being the influence of rigid social attitudes and discriminating treatment towards women. Low mobility, high cost of production, low rate of achievement, shortage of finance, insufficient marketing facilities, shortage of raw materials and majorly the fulfilment of dual role at home and work place. Though women entrepreneurs possess good leadership qualities they do face many obstacles influenced by social and financial factors. It is important to promote entrepreneurship among women to improve the economic situation of the women. A proper environment with support from society, primarily their own family, and government can solve many of the issues and as such, government has rolled out several initiatives and schemes to help women entrepreneurs to overcome the barriers.

1. Introduction

“A women entrepreneur is defined as an enterprise owned and controlled by woman having a minimum financial interest of 51% of the capital and giving at least 51% employment generated to women”. Women Entrepreneurship refers to business or organization started by a woman or group of women. We can see that there has been a change in role of women due to growth in education, urbanization, industrialization and even because of keen awareness of democratic values.

“An enterprise owned and controlled by a women having a minimum financial interest of 51 per cent of the capital and giving at least 51 per cent of the employment generated by the enterprise to women.” — Government of India

An entrepreneur is an important constituent of the development process and an integral part of the socioeconomic transformation process. Full participation of all section of population including women is important for development of a society. Entrepreneurship development among women can be considered a possible approach to economic empowerment of women. Generally when people are empowered to create and manage their own business, it is possible to create wealth, jobs, individual and collective well-being becomes reality. It becomes easier for the Government to redistribute wealth and income when all those who can work are empowered to do so. Although women in India have taken the entrepreneur world by storm, they often face a set of challenges not typically shared by their male counterparts.

“A woman entrepreneur can be defined as a confident, innovative and creative woman capable of achieving self-

economic independence individually or in collaboration, generates employment opportunities for others through initiating, establishing and running the enterprise by keeping pace with her personal, family and social life.”—Kamal Singh

2. Types of Women Entrepreneur in India

- **Affluent Entrepreneurs-** Affluent women entrepreneurs are those women entrepreneurs who hails from rich business families. They are the daughters and wives of wealthy businessmen. They have the financial aid and the necessary resources to start a new enterprise and take business risks.
- **Pull Factors-** They are educated women living in urban areas with or without work experience who take the risk of a new enterprise with the help of financial institutions and commercial banks. These women take up a new business as a challenge in order to be financially independent.
- **Push Factors-** These women take up some business activity in order to overcome financial difficulties. Generally widows and single women manage an existing family business or develop a new business due to difficult family situations.
- **Rural Entrepreneurs-** These women belong to rural areas and choose a business suiting their resources and knowledge. Business carried out involves low investment, minimum risk and does not require any special skills.

- **Self-Employed Entrepreneurs-** They are uneducated women who fall below the poverty line. They choose tiny and small enterprise which are convenient to manage and adequate for the sustenance of her family.

3. Development of Women Entrepreneurship in India

Entrepreneurship amongst women has been a recent concern in India and the development of women entrepreneurship here is very low. Indian women are striking a balance between traditional and progressive values of the society in transition through playing dual responsibility at home and at the work place. Though women have realized their existence and their rights and increased their involvement in economic activities, only women of upper classes in urban cities do reach their goal in this field and women of middle class are not very much ready to alter their role in fright of social retaliation.

4. Indian Women Entry in to Industrial Sectors

Indian women have significantly entered into both traditional and non-traditional industries. Traditional industries include handicrafts, readymade garments, toy-making, nurseries, hotels and restaurants, crèches, dairy and poultry, education, canning, insurance, retail trade. Non-traditional industries include textile designing, fabrics and jewellers, engineering and electronics, printing, transport and repair services, leather and plastics products, chemicals, drugs and pharmacy, ceramics and many more.

5. Problems Faced By Women Entrepreneurs

Women entrepreneurs in India face many problems to get ahead their life in business. The major problems faced by women entrepreneurs can be classified under social, financial, organizational, production, marketing and psychological etc. Social barriers to women entrepreneur include unjust social, economic and cultural system prevailing in the Indian society; discriminating treatment; lack of social acceptance; resistance and inhibition; inadequate encouragement and motivation; responsibility towards family; contribution remain unaccounted i.e., lack of recognition and traditional Indian culture/social attitudes do not appreciate independence for women particularly in rural areas etc.

Prioritization- Regularly trapped between household routines and the business they would like to dedicate their life to, women are struggling to dedicate all their time to a business. Prominent in tier-II and tier-III cities, women are often chained back due to the responsibilities they owe to their families. This poses as a hindrance to their professional growth.

Marketing problems- To enter a field which has been dominated by males, is a frightening task for women. Men have also ruled over the marketing zone for many years that's why women find themselves lagging behind in this area. They have to rely on middlemen and outsource these tasks to capture bigger markets which eat up a major chunk of their profits.

Limited access to resources- Women are often looked down upon with suspicion in this country when they ask for a space to run their business. The attitude of the society in general towards a woman trying to compete in a man's world is deterring. This also results in women receiving lesser access to varied resources like raw materials, labour, machinery etc.

Funding issues- Venture capitalists look to invest in businesses which are promising. However, they have the general pre-conceived notion that women aren't dedicated towards the cause and might leave the business any time. This belief leads to lesser capitalists investing in women-run businesses. What is worse is that their scope of funding viz angel investors also gets limited due to the same reason.

Male-dominated society- The constitution and social media speak of equality between the sexes, but, no one can deny the fact that the country is still a patriarchal and male-dominated society. Due to this regressive belief, women are considered weak and economically unstable which hinders their chances of starting up a successful venture Any deviation from this belief isn't treated very favourably which is why women have to work doubly hard to make things happen.

The other problems faced by women entrepreneurs include compliance of formalities; delay in getting power connection ; delay in machinery supply; delay in getting loan amount; lack of adequate finance where large investments are required; discrimination against women in granting loans; lack of access to external funds because of lack of confidence shown by banks, suppliers and clients; biased assessment about their ability to repay loans; lower credit approvals having a question on the capabilities whether women can run the enterprise or not; shortage of working capital; shortage of funds for expansion; repayment of loan; non-availability of raw materials; shortage of skilled man power; power shortage; labour unrest / strikes; marketing problems; lack of demand for the product; warehousing problems; transport problems; shortage of technology and management problems etc.

6. Women Entrepreneurship in India

States	No of Units Registered	No. of Women Entrepreneurs	Percentage
Tamil Nadu	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
Karnataka	3822	1026	26.84
Madhya Pradesh	2967	842	28.38
Other States & UTS	14576	4185	28.71
Total	57,452	18,848	32.82

Top 10 States/UTs in terms of Women Entrepreneurs benefited under Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana during 2016-17

In India, there were 15999000 Women Entrepreneurs benefited (number of accounts opened) under Pradhan Mantri

Mudra Yojana (PMMY) during 2016-17 as on Nov.25, 2016. The amount disbursed to these Women Entrepreneurs during the same time period under PMMY was Rs.37052.59 Crores. The top 10 States/UTs in terms of number of Women Entrepreneurs benefited under PMMY during 2016-17 as on Nov.25, 2016 were: Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Bihar, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Jharkhand.

Out of the above said top 10 States/UTs, top 5 states were Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Bihar and West Bengal; which benefited (number of accounts opened) 2435864, 1890285, 1669527, 1516870 and 1467957 of Women Entrepreneurs respectively under PMMY during 2016-17. Under PMMY these 5 states Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Bihar and West Bengal disbursed Rs.5700.43 Crores, Rs.4707.78 Crores, Rs.3985.29 Crores, Rs.2889.26 Crores and Rs.2724.61 Crores respectively to Women Entrepreneurs during 2016-17. These top 5 states accounted for 56.13% of the total number of Women Entrepreneurs benefited (number of accounts opened) under PMMY in India as a whole during 2016-17 as on Nov.25, 2016.

Out of the above said top 10 States/UTs, bottom 5 states were Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Jharkhand; which benefited (number of accounts opened) 1428262, 1358811, 1156996, 423014 and 410025 of Women Entrepreneurs respectively under PMMY during 2016-17. Under PMMY these 5 states Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Jharkhand disbursed Rs.2907.17 Crores, Rs.2608.24 Crores, Rs.2632.86 Crores, Rs.1077.59 Crores and Rs.847.34 Crores respectively to Women Entrepreneurs during 2016-17.

The above mentioned top 10 states accounted for 85.99% of the total number of Women Entrepreneurs benefited (number of accounts opened) under PMMY in India as a whole during 2016-17 as on Nov.25, 2016.

Note: Source: Rajya Sabha Session – 241, Unstarred Question No.2322; Amount data values are in Rs. Crores.

Dataset URL: <https://data.gov.in/catalog/answers-data-rajya-sabha-questions-session-241>

Resource Title: State/UT-wise SC/ST and Women Entrepreneurs benefited under Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) during 2015-2016 and 2016-17 (as on 25.11.2016) (From: Ministry of Finance)

Source: Rajya Sabha

7. Review Of Literature

Jeanne Halladay Coughlin with Andrew R Thomas (2002) talks about the self-employed women in developing countries and women-owned business enterprises in developing countries. The authors discuss the economic, social and personal motivations for female entrepreneurs, the challenges faced by female entrepreneurs, the tools and processes helping female entrepreneurs and gives entry-strategy analysis, monitoring and evaluation of programmes in support of women entrepreneurs. The authors provide female entrepreneurs' resource guide. Their book also reviews some case studies of women entrepreneurs in the developing countries.

Bharti Kollan and Indira J Parikh (2005) focused on the understanding of the history of Indian Women Entrepreneurs. They presented how transformation has occurred in the social roles of women in employment, entertainment and leadership. The author's research paper also talks about the problems faced by them when they start their venture in the competitive world of business environment.

Bhowmik Krishna (2006) analyses the need for women to enter into employment, various opportunities for employment and the attitude of their life partners towards the women's employment. The author reveals the problems faced by women in their dual performance at home and outside home and analyses the marginalization of women by exploiting them and reviews the need for women empowerment and the related issues like ongoing approaches and strategies of the government and non-government organizations.

Shradha Shivani, S.K. Mukherjee and Raka Sharan (2006) presents the findings of an empirical study conducted in India to examine links between entrepreneurial success achieved by male and female entrepreneurs and socio-cultural variables like caste, religiosity, family structure and family support and suggests the required structural interventions for ensuring growth of entrepreneurship in this context.

Anil Kumar (2007) concentrates on discussing the social and financial structure of enterprises owned by women entrepreneurs and the obstacles faced by women in business. The author also enumerates the perception of women towards various entrepreneurship related issues and asks a question that to what extent the expectations of women entrepreneurs were fulfilled by the supporting agencies.

Piyali Ghosh, Cheruvalath and Reena (2007) presented a paper which is a theoretical study of the current status of female entrepreneurs in the country. It discusses the many challenges they face, focusing on their level of education and socio-cultural constraints. It also suggests some solutions to overcome such barriers. These include giving them proper training, developing an entrepreneurial attitude in them, 'attributional augmenting', understanding their entrepreneurial motivation, and, most importantly, removing the discriminating social customs imposed on them.

M. Jan and N Shar (2008) made an attempt to explore the economic opportunities for women, empower them through cooperative sector of economy, develop entrepreneurship skills among them and thereby improve their socio-economic status.

V S Ganesamurthy (2008) edited a book consisting of 35 papers authored by scholars working in the area of economic, social and political empowerment of women. The areas touched upon in the book include socio-economic status, women entrepreneurship, and women in politics.

Swarnalatha K & Anuradha R. K. (2014), Women in India face many problems and constraints to get ahead in their life in business. They should explore the prospects of starting new enterprise; undertake risks, introduce innovations, coordinate

administration and control business and provide effective leadership in all aspects of business.

Vinothalakshmi J.; Ganesan, R. (2013) has expressed the other faces of Indian Women entrepreneurship in recent phenomenon and in the process have to face various problems. The emergence of women entrepreneur and their contribution to the national economy is quite visible in India. The government of India has defined women entrepreneurs based women participation in equity and employment of a business enterprise. Women constitute the family which leads to society and family. Social and economic development of women is necessary for development of any country. Purpose of the study is to find out problem. Sharma Priyanka (2013), focused on her articles about understanding Indian women, of their identity, and especially of their role taking and breaking new paths, will be incomplete without a walk down the corridors of Indian history where women have lived and internalized various role models. Shah H. (2012), The acceleration of economic growth requires an increased supply of women entrepreneurs. Veena S. Samani, (2008) in her thesis threw light on a specific section of working class – the women engaged in food processing. The study shows that majority of women in Gujarat have expertise and unique skill of preparing and processing food. The food processing may be of different types and quantity, but these enterprises have been found to be great success whether attached with home or not.

8. Essential Strategies Of Successful Women

- **Empower women.** Women lead differently than men; qualities such as being holistic, collaborative, inclusive, and consultative are strengths that will help you succeed in a global economy.
- **Own your destiny.** The founder of USABridge sells wedding accessories online, used to think that making \$1 million was an impossible dream. After all, she'd started with five veils and five tiaras, \$30,000 in debt, and work out of her apartment. But when the first \$1 million came, she moved her target to \$3 million, then to \$5 million.
- **Be the architect of your career.** For entrepreneurs, building success includes putting together networks that can connect you to money, markets, management and suppliers.
- **Who you know does matter.** To speed up business growth and avoid pitfalls that can stunt growth, you need multiple networks: those that provide support and those that provide connections. Often, the two overlap; sometimes they are separate. The value of networks to improve access to financing, innovation, and recourses is a given.
- **Advocate unabashedly for yourself.** Building street creed by increasing your visibility can take many forms, from pushing an industry agenda to winning awards.
- **Winning awards is great way to show you have the right stuff.** Don't be shy: Nominate yourself.

- **Translate the stories that numbers tell to drive strategic results.** To run a successful company, you must understand the financial fundamentals of your company.
- **Women put their heads in the sand when it comes to doing their financials.** It's not just about the financials. Even in a slow economy, opportunities emerge that, if you use them well, can rocket your business to success.

9. Strengthening Women Entrepreneurship Development Programs

In India, such programs have been made an integral part of industrial development (through the government's Five-Year Plan ,Niti Aayog) because they serve a variety of important objectives for self-employment, development of rural and under-developed areas, and benefiting less privileged groups, including women. The above segment identifies nine areas where women entrepreneurship development programs can be reinforced.

1) Improving support from institution

It is important that women entrepreneurship development programs to foster the creation of manufacturing or service microenterprises be supported by more than just the government; support from key banking and financial institutions and other assistance agencies is required by women entrepreneurs. Both the trainers and women entrepreneurs would also become more confident in their effort because of the involvement of these support organizations in their endeavour.

2) Building up the support infrastructure

At an organizational level, it is essential that women entrepreneurship development is taken up by more specialized organizations that have a stronger commitment to this activity. A different culture is required to promote, motivate and develop sustainable infrastructure for fostering women entrepreneurship. The organization and the trainers must be doing training and development work continuously rather than an existing officer "spared" for a program here and there. The scale of operations within any country will have to be fairly large, because the entrepreneurial potential among women living in poverty is high even in the most underdeveloped regions.

3) Widening the team of trainer-motivators

It is a strategic weakness in women entrepreneurship development efforts that a large number of programs focus only on technical training or only provide credit for women living in poverty. Sometimes, organizations provide marketing for the women entrepreneurs and make them only wage-earning beneficiaries. There is a need to select and groom new trainer-motivators to provide a broad spectrum of support to help women entrepreneurs start and grow microenterprises throughout South Asia.

4) Identifying opportunities

One of the more urgent needs is to identify a variety of tiny, micro-, and small-scale project opportunities that the women entrepreneurs can take up. This is necessitated by the fact that new women entrepreneurs in the region – due to their limited educational background, vision, and capabilities – need the help of support organizations to identify opportunities. Many of these entrepreneurs have very limited resources, and support agencies intend to firm up the opportunity without wasting their precious resources accumulated for the venture. Adequate advance work needs to be undertaken in identifying prospective projects to suit local entrepreneurial needs in terms of investment, technology, skills, resources, and markets. Most of the existing organizations are ill equipped for this work and will need training in project identification strategies.

5) Training and counselling

Given the supply of competent trainers, inventory of project possibilities, and untapped potential of aspiring women entrepreneurs, the development tasks then require counselling and teaching material in local languages. This is where a major gap exists. Training manuals, training materials, audio-visual aids, etc. have been developed by many organizations, especially by ICECD over last 27 years. It should be the task of country-level trainers to translate available training material to suit the requirement of the region. Adequate funding will have to be ensured for this work.

6) Identifying women for entrepreneurship

A major thrust of women entrepreneurship in most Asian countries is for under-privileged groups of women. However, it has to be recognized that not everyone can be turned into an entrepreneur. Programs can identify aspiring entrepreneurs with good potential for success and provide them with training, counselling, and support to set up businesses. Therefore, our major thrust should be to accelerate the number of tiny, micro, and small enterprises, and therefore, supply a first generation of women entrepreneurs from rural or urban areas, who in turn, will generate jobs for others. This trend needs further encouragement through appropriate changes in the institutional financial assistance schemes, which at present, are often not liberal enough to recognize a woman as a genuine self-dependent business owner.

7) Supporting women entrepreneurs through to operation

So far, the focus of women entrepreneurship development programs has been on individual development. The spread of women entrepreneurship development programs is a result of recognition and financial support provided by the governments, financial institutions, central banks, and the development corporations and banks, bilateral, and multilateral donors, and many others. This movement also has been professionally and qualitatively strengthened by the setting up of resource organizations such as ICECD and many other organizations in the South Asia region.

8) Fostering an entrepreneurial culture and environment

To ensure a future supply of entrepreneurs, an entrepreneurial culture and spirit should be encouraged in families from early childhood. Further, the overall environment, especially the policies, schemes of assistance, and their

implementation, must induce and encourage women entrepreneurship. In spite of the first recommendation reflecting a long-term goal, the second one offers scope for early actions for the benefit of all women entrepreneurs, whether trained or untrained, whether starting tiny, micro, or small enterprises. The present strategy of developing women entrepreneurs focuses on uneducated rural and urban women who are living in poverty. The time has come for an effort to inculcate a spirit of enterprise, self-dependence, creativity, and high goals among women in developing nations. Entrepreneurship should be made part and parcel of the education curriculum.

9) The entrepreneurial environment

Despite a large number of organizations to promote and assist women entrepreneurs and a variety of schemes to attract and facilitate them, the environment is still not sufficiently conducive for women entrepreneurs to actually set up enterprises. Often, an entrepreneur has to go through a complex set of procedures and formalities to start a business, which not only create irritations and delays but frustrate her efforts until she is exhausted. An urgent need, therefore, is to simplify procedures and formalities. Part of the problem is one of attitudes, which are built on regulatory roles rather than developmental roles. All these agencies need to be gender sensitive. ICECD's recent efforts, therefore, in conducting extension motivation and entrepreneurial orientation and gender sensitization programs for such officers, is consistent with the broad view that good training can help create better and more dedicated trainers who can bring the desired change through entrepreneurship.

10. Socio-Economic Environment And Its Influence On Women Entrepreneurs

The economic development of any country can be achieved with the planned and persevering business activities facilitated. Entrepreneurship grasps all the opportunities for commercial exploitation through creating employment on one hand and earning profits on the other. In every business enterprise, different environmental variables exist internally and externally.

Thus the business environment consists of two sub-environments viz., internal (micro) environment and external (macro) environment including market environment. The business environment is the product of various dynamic factors, i.e., economic, social, political, geographical, religious and technological. Usually, business decisions are taken in the presence of these environmental factors and the business operations include the conditions, events, factors that influence the working of business. These environmental variables have either a positive or negative influence on the enterprise.

Despite the fact that women's contribution towards the economic growth of the nation is explicit, their association remained unnoticed and unaccounted. Till recently women were kept away from holding decision making positions. Even now, when majority of the industry is managed by women, they do face sarcasm from the male society. And our development policies and programs tend not to view women as integral to the economic development process. Indian women no longer

remain satisfied as housewives and they have entered into both traditional and non-traditional industries. In spite of the increasing number of women entrepreneurs, their participation remains inconsiderable and their share in the growth of national economy is significantly low, reason being the influence of rigid social attitudes and discriminating treatment towards women. Low mobility, high cost of production, low rate of achievement, shortage of finance, insufficient marketing facilities, shortage of raw materials and majorly the fulfillment of dual role at home and work place.

11. Conclusion

Though women entrepreneurs possess good leadership qualities they do face many obstacles influenced by social and financial factors. It is important to promote entrepreneurship among women to improve the economic situation of the women. A proper environment with support from society, primarily their own family, and government can solve many of the issues and as such, government has rolled out several initiatives and schemes to help women entrepreneurs to overcome the barriers.

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12. Recommendations and suggestions

- 1) There should be a system to provide guidance for women throughout the activity of entrepreneurship, right from initiating the venture, getting finances, marketing the products etc.
- 2) Special Policies have to be formulated by the government for the scheduled and backward categories to take active participation in entrepreneurship.
- 3) Women Entrepreneurship development is to be made an exclusive part of curriculum at under graduate and professional education. Proper education, knowledge and exposure when imparted to women, their potentials will be proved to be the highest productive force.
- 4) Women could be motivated at a higher level to take up equal participation in manufacturing sectors also and they may be encouraged to enter into large scale industries in a great number.