

Women Entrepreneurship in India-Challenges

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Abstract: Entrepreneurship refers to the act of setting up a new business or reviving an existing business so as to take advantages from new opportunities. Last five decades have seen phenomenal changes in the status of women in India. According to NSSO 6th Economic census, only 14% of business establishments in the country are being run by women entrepreneurs. Indian women do 9.8 times care work than Indian men do. Women in India face many problems to get ahead their life in business. They face difficulty due to specific women problems in India, arising due to old traditions, socio cultural norms, male dominant society, family responsibilities, Indian values and ethics. This paper focuses on challenges and problems that are resulting in restricting the expansion of women entrepreneurship in India.

Keywords: Women entrepreneurs, challenges, dominated society, economic growth, Entrepreneurship.

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I. Introduction

Women constitute about 48.5% of the Indian population. Women entrepreneurship is the process in which women initiate a business, gather all resources, undertake risks, face challenges, provides employment to others and manages the business independently. According to definition given by Government of India-“A women entrepreneur is defined as an enterprise owned and controlled by women having a minimum financial interest of 51% of the capital and giving at least 51% employment generated to women. Approximately 1/3rd of the entrepreneurs in the world are women entrepreneurs. Women entrepreneurship also refers to business or organization started by a women or group of women. There has been a change in role of women due to growth in education, urbanization, industrialization and awareness of democratic values.

II. Objectives

- To analyze the present status of Indian women entrepreneurs.
- To examine the challenges faced by the women entrepreneurs.

III. Review Of Literature

Dr. Vaibha Tiwari, Deepaayachit, 2014, say about the “Emergence of women entrepreneurship in India”. Their objectives are to motivate women to setup and run their enterprises. And to identify challenges faced by women, remedies to the challenges faced by women. They say that “India is male dominated society, women are economically and socially dependent on them. But now becoming more and more demanding in greater equality to overcome those challenges.

Dr. vijayakumar. A and Jayachitra. S. In topic “Women entrepreneurs in india” 2013. They discussed characteristics of women entrepreneurs, problems and challenges faced by them, role of government to develop women entrepreneur in india. Women entrepreneurs must be moulded properly to sustain and survive.

Shikhamahajam, university of delhi, 2013. “women entrepreneurship in India”. They discussed on status of women entrepreneurs in India, challenges faced by them and life of an entrepreneur, with recommendations for women entrepreneurship.

GSNG Rama mohanrao 2016 “status of women entrepreneurship in India”. They say about the reason for women entrepreneurship and challenges faced between work and domestic commitments, gender gaps in education, lack of finance, heavy household responsibilities and so on. He concluded by, If women be an entrepreneur she can provide a livelihood to more women atleast. The unexplored talents of young women identified used to various types of industries to increase productivity in the industrial sector.

Arun K V “women entrepreneurship in India challenges and oppurtunities” 2015. He instead saying that his objectives of study is to evaluate the factors responsible for encouraging women and to study the policies, programs, institutional network and involvement of support agencies. He concluded by women entrepreneurship must be moulded properly with entrepreneurial traits and skill to meet challenge to sustain and strive in entrepreneur because there involvement improves entrepreneurship

Bharathrajan.R,“Women entrepreneurs & Problems of women entrepreneurs”. They discussed about roles of women entrepreneurs and status of women entrepreneurs in India,barriers faced by women entrepreneur and suggestions for it.

Hemanthkumar.P, bulsara, jyotichandwani,shailesh2014. “Women entrepreneurship in India:An exploratory study”talk about female entrepreneurial utilities.

Dr.Ranazehramassood, “women entrepreneurs,characteristics of successful women entrepreneurs. They say women should be confident,willing to learn,cost conscious, co-operation, alligence to cut throat the competition and prevent levels of illetracy among entrepreneurs. They concluded that women have the potential to determine set-up,uphold and supervise their own enterprise the right kind of assistants from family society and government can make these women entrepreneur.

Clayton Johnson,Rathikaasrani,anupamaramaswamy-“Accelerating women entrepreneurship in India” 2015. The study objective is about evaluate the ecosystem of common entrepreneur and identify the challenges faced by women entrepreneur while starting and expanding the business,ecosystem analyzing conclude by framework of policy,finance, market,knowledge, culture and network and technology etc.and also the conceptual nature of entrepreneurship institutional factors,personal aspirational factors and socio cultural factors.

Renugopal , jai Prakash; “Women entrepreneurship in India-problems and prospects”- discussing reasons for women becoming entrepreneurs ,slow progress of common entrepreneurs in India,suggestions for the growth of women entrepreneurs and started by government.

IV. Challenges Faced By Women Entrepreneurs

PROBLEM OF FINANCE:

Finance is regarded as “life-blood” for any enterprise,be it big or small. However women entrepreneurs suffer from shortage of finance on two counts. Firstly women do not generally have property on their names to use them as collateral for obtaining funds from the external sources, Thus their access to the external sources of funds is limited.

Secondly the banks also consider women less credit-worthy and discourage women barrowers on the belief that they can at any time leave their business given in such case,women entrepreneurs are bound to depend on their own savings and loans from friends and relatives which are expectedly meager and negligible. Thus women enterprises fail due to the shortage of finance.

SCARCITY OF RAW MATERIALS:

Most of the women enterprises are affected by the scarcity of raw material and necessary inputs, added to this are the high prices of raw material,At the minimum of discount, on the other the failure of many women co-operatives in 1971 engaged in basket-making is an example how the scarcity of raw material sounds the death-knell of enterprises run by women.

STIFF COMPETITION:

Women entrepreneurs do not have organizational set-up to pump in a lot of money for canvassing, promotion and advertisement. Thus they have to face a stiff competition for marketing their products with both organized sector and their male counter parts, such a competition finally results in the liquidation of women enterprises.

LIMITED MOBILITY:

Unlike men, women mobility in India is highly limited due to various reasons.A single women asking for room is still looked upon suspicion, cumbersome exercise involved in starting an enterprise coupled with the officials humiliating attitude towards women compels them to give up idea of starting an enterprise.

FAMILY TIES:

In India, it is mainly a women duty to look after the children and other members of the family.Man place a secondary role only.Incase of married women,she has to maintain a good balance between her business and family. Her total involvement in family leaves little or no energy and time to devote for business.Support and approval of husbands seem necessary condition for women entry into business.accordingly ,the education level and family background of husbands positively influence women’s entry into business activities

MALE-DOMINATED SOCIETY:

Male domination still the order of the day in India. The constitution of India speaks of equality between sexes, but in practice women are looked upon as weak in all aspects.women suffer from male reservation about a womens role,ability and capacity and are treated accordingly in the nutshell, in the male-dominated Indian society,women are not treated equal to men. This in turn serves as a barrier to women entry into business.

LOW RISK-BEARING ABILITY:

Women in India lead a protected life, they are less educated and economically not self-dependent, all these reduce their ability to bear risk involved running an enterprise. Risk-bearing is an essential requisite of a successful entrepreneur. In addition to above problems, inadequate infrastructural facilities, shortage of power, high cost of production, social attitude, low need for achievement and socio economic constraints also hold the women back from entering into business.

PATRIARCHAL SOCIETY

Our stereotype society personifies women as Goddess Durga. When it comes to where women stand in the society, they are never at par but always below men. Our culture relates women with hearth and home. Their roles are limited to being wives, mothers and daughters. Sadly, they think if a woman is empowered it renders a man powerless. This keeps women away from formal education.

ILLITERACY

In India around three-fifth (sixty %) of women are illiterate. Illiteracy is the root cause of socio economic problem. Due to the lack of education and that too quality education, women are not aware of business, technology and market knowledge also, lack of education causes low achievement motivation among women. Thus lack of education creates one type or other problems for women in the setting up and running of business enterprises. Illiteracy is one of the biggest obstacles which chains the growth of women. This results in women not being aware and lacking the required confidence in building an enterprise. Educated and well informed women can get acknowledged for their struggles irrespective of the challenges and obstacles that the society thrusts on them.

FAMILY SUPPORT

Family support is the greatest motivator for a woman entrepreneur, setting up her new enterprise. Mostly, Indian families are orthodox. Neither do they appreciate the decision of a woman to start her very own venture nor do they believe in her entrepreneurial capabilities. This scares a woman and she starts thinking that she will not be able to maintain a balance between her work and family. Lack of family support hinders a woman from going out and generating income.

BALANCE BETWEEN WORK AND HOME

Maintaining a work and personal life balance is tough for all entrepreneurs. Women, however have to struggle more. Women are multitaskers. This is a well celebrated fact. But, when you are struggling with your enterprise you are bound to be less entertaining towards your family. This is expected from the males in the family. A woman who once fails to fulfill her family needs becomes a not-so-suitable wife and daughter-in-law. This fear of imbalance demotivates a woman.

WOMEN: NOT TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY

Investors, workers, everyone takes women for granted. A woman might come up with the next revolutionary, million dollar business plan. She will still not be taken seriously. Males have a tendency to believe women lack in skills and brains. Women now believe they have to think, eat, work, and behave like a man to be taken seriously. People have a tendency to think, "Oh! You are the CEO, definitely your father/husband invested in your project." or "The backbone of this enterprise is some male!" At every step a woman has to prove herself, her ideas, managerial skills and capabilities.

LACK OF EXPOSURE

Women lack education, forget about career guidance. They have absolutely no idea about the opportunities in the field of business. They do not have access to technology. Lack of exposure and information terrifies a woman. It restricts her from testing her true potential as an entrepreneur.

LACK OF SELF-CONFIDENCE

Be it illiteracy, lack of skills or no family/society support whatsoever, all this leads to lack of self-confidence. Every time a woman is forced to prove her abilities, her self-confidence decreases. A woman is continuously grilled for her ideas, funding, working methods, managerial skills, etc. All this demotivates her. Instead of boosting her confidence, she is constantly given a reality check that she is a woman and she is inferior in her skills. This reduces her self confidence to such a level that she herself doubts her skills as a woman entrepreneur.

RISK TAKING

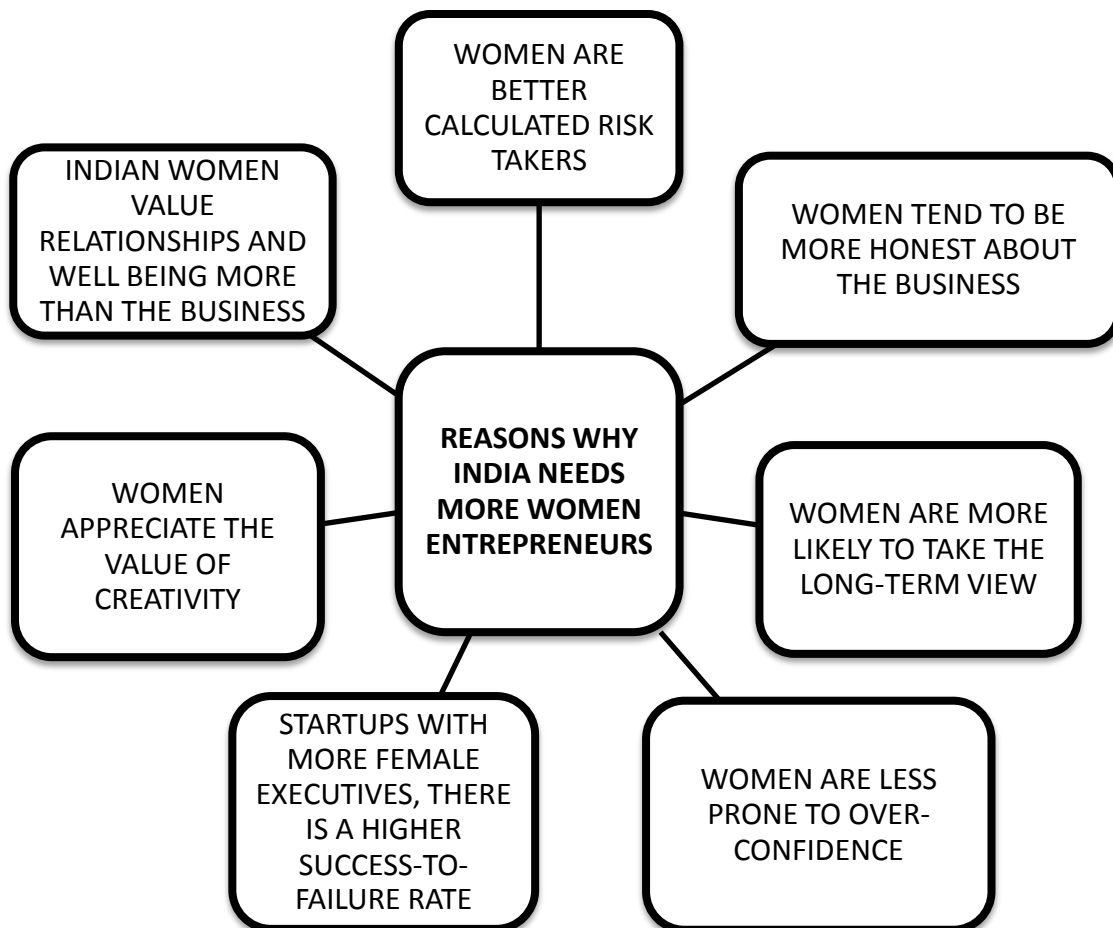
Women tend to withdraw, exhibiting low risk-taking abilities. From their childhood women see money matters and decisions to be handled by male heads of the family. They are accustomed to men taking the decisions be it financial or otherwise. Women thus are socialized to being more soft-spoken and reserved. Thus, investors find men to have more risk-taking and leadership traits.

SAFETY

Women entrepreneurs' biggest challenge is their safety. Crime rates have increased alarmingly. They face the decision of possibly risking their lives while working late hours. When they attend a seminar, there are very few women entrepreneurs in the hall. This less number scares a lady and she is threatened of her security. And

shockingly women prefer to rather not work. Women need the urge, determination and passion to overcome all the obstacles. The society has changed, but the change is very slow. It's a long journey for women to be accepted at par. However, one should keep this fact in mind that, the economy, GDP of a developing country like India, will only increase when both the genders work hand in hand. Thus, the society should motivate more women entrepreneurs.

V. Why Women Entrepreneurship Is Essential ?



VI. Conclusion

Women constitute almost half of the population in India but they are not enjoying their freedoms, equalities, privileges, rights as equal as males. Since implementation of five year plans in India, many policies were introduced to reduce inequalities between women and men. Both government and NGO's sectors were trying to empower the women. Industries mostly promoted by Indian women are agarbatti making, papad making, embroidery, handicrafts, catering services, running restaurants, snack bars, beauty parlours, fancy stores, hardware/electrical ,readymade/cloths, food processing/paper products etc. A shift in these activities industries, trade, commerce, hotels and other large scale enterprises owned by women entrepreneurs may be sustained. These women face lot of challenges as above discussed. Many capable and talented women are suppressed due to such problems. Support from government organisations and non government organisations should be provided for such activities. For economic inclusive growth it is essential to promote and increase women entrepreneurship in India.

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