

Need for women Entrepreneurs in India

Nishra Shah^{1*}, Prof. Rena N. Shukla², Kinjal Parmar³

¹Civil Engineering Department, L. D. College of Engineering, India

²Civil Engineering Department, L. D. College of Engineering, India

³Civil Engineering Department, L. D. College of Engineering, India

Abstract

From the beginning, there have been many females faced obstacles in starting their own business. This paper is about encouraging female entrepreneurs especially in India, having high dreams and making huge success taking risks. The ratio of female to male entrepreneurs is very low and that proves that in today's world there is need for more female entrepreneurs too. This paper consists of case studies of few Indian female entrepreneurs like: Mallika Srinivasan, Kiran Mazumdar Shaw, Ekta Kapoor, Swati Piramal and Ruby Ashraf.

Keywords: encourage, entrepreneurs, obstacles.

INTRODUCTION

In the past, female operated small businesses as a way of supplementing their income. In many cases, they were trying to avoid poverty or were replacing the income from the loss of a spouse. At that time, the ventures that these women undertook were not thought of as entrepreneurial. Many of them had to focus on their domestic responsibilities. The term entrepreneur is used to describe individuals who have ideas for products or services that they turn into a working business. In earlier times, this term was reserved for men. Studies have shown that successful female entrepreneurs start their businesses as a second or third profession. Because of their previous careers, female entrepreneurs enter the business world later on in life, around 40–60 years old. The number of self-employed women has steadily increased over the past three decades, putting them at an approximate thirty-three percent increase. Many female-owned businesses continue to be home-based operations. Even though female entrepreneurship and the formation of female-owned business networks is steadily rising, there are a number of challenges and obstacles that female entrepreneurs face. One major challenge that many female entrepreneurs face is the effect that the traditional gender-roles society may still have on women. Entrepreneurship is still considered as a male-dominated field, and it may be difficult to surpass these conventional views. Other than dealing with the dominant stereotype, female entrepreneurs are facing several obstacles related to their businesses.

Obstacles specific to starting new firms

Women having lower personal financial assets than men, which means that for a given opportunity and equally capable individual, women must secure additional resources compared to men in order to exploit the opportunity; because, they control less capital.

Obstacles to managing a small firm

Studies on female entrepreneurs show that women have to cope with stereotypical attitudes towards them on a daily basis. Business relations constantly remind her that she is different, sometimes in a positive way such as by praising her for being a successful entrepreneur even though she is a woman.

Obstacles to growing firms

A specific problem of female entrepreneurs seems to be their inability to achieve growth, especially sales growth; which means, when women have a difficult time assembling external resources, they start as less ambitious firms that can be financed to a greater degree by their own available resources, but this also has consequences for the future growth of the firm. Basically, firms with more resources at start-up have a higher probability to grow than firms with fewer resources.

Other problems that are facing female entrepreneurs is how they are handling their decision-making models and stressful situations. Women compared with men are more susceptible to be influenced by their feelings than men when they have to make decisions. Also women have more likelihood of stress than men in difficult situations, without this mean that women are "weak". Despite the fact that many female entrepreneurs face growth barriers, they are still able to achieve substantial firm growth.

Below are few case studies of Indian Female Entrepreneurs who chose to tread a path of their own making. They took the plunge straight after working barely a couple of years, and they persevered until they made it big. They did not plan to take this path but when opportunity knocked they seized it and their stories here shows that you don't have to be 'born with it', you can develop an entrepreneurial bent of mind at any age. These individuals are using entrepreneurship to create social impact, or as a platform which allows them creative expression.

MALLIKA SRINIVASAN

Mallika Srinivasan, the current Chairperson and Chief Executive Officer of Tractors and Farm Equipment Limited (TAFE), is known for her entrepreneurial skills and contribution to the Indian agriculture machinery business and academia. Today, TAFE is the third largest tractor manufacturer in the world and the second largest in India in terms of volume, and it has branches in 82 countries. In less than three decades, Mallika Srinivasan managed to establish TAFE as a mass manufacturer of quality tractors for the international market and a resilient organization that is capable of weathering the ups and downs of the tractor business. In addition, Mallika Srinivasan strengthened TAFE's partnership with AGCO, an American agricultural equipment manufacturer, for the growth of both the organizations. Under Mallika Srinivasan's leadership, TAFE managed to record a revenue of Rs 98 billion (US\$ 1.6 billion) and with that, the company became known as one of the most profitable tractor companies in the world. At an early age, Mallika Srinivasan took a keen interest in business studies, particularly Economics. This is the reason why she pursued her Master's degree in Econometrics from Madras University and an MBA from the Wharton School of Business, University of Pennsylvania. The leadership skills and business acumen that she gained at Madras University and the Wharton School of Business came in handy when she joined TAFE and she managed to increase the competitiveness of the firm. And today, Mallika Srinivasan is one of the most successful female CEOs in the country. Over the years, Mallika Srinivasan accumulated a number of accolades and awards and this speaks volumes of her leadership abilities, foresight and determination to succeed. In 2011, Mallika Srinivasan was named the Entrepreneur of the Year by Ernst and Young. In addition, she was included in Forbes Asia's list of the Top 50 Asian Power Businesswomen. But more importantly, she was awarded the Padma Shri for Trade and Industry by the government of India. This is indicative of Mallika Srinivasan's significant contribution to the Indian business scene. It is said that a successful leader is someone who not only ensures that his/her organization reaps profits but he/she is someone who also looks into the welfare of the society. And Mallika Srinivasan is one of them. Despite her busy schedule, she makes it a point to do something for the society. In fact, she supports the Sankara Nethralaya, the Cancer Hospital in Chennai, and several educational and healthcare facilities in Tirunelveli. In addition, she promotes and supports the musical tradition of Carnatic music through the Indira Sivasailam Endowment Fund. Mallika Srinivasan is an inspiration to all of us – it is because she followed her dreams and pursued a career of her choice that she is successful and happy in life today. She was a gold-medalist in Econometrics at Madras University and a member of the Dean's Honor List at the Wharton School of Business.



KIRAN MAZUMDAR SHAW

Kiran Mazumdar completed her initial schooling from Bishop's Cotton Girl's High School. She had aspired being a doctor instead she ended up doing her BSc in Zoology with Honors from Mount Carmel College of the Bangalore University. Two years later she completed her post graduate studies from Ballarat College, Melbourne University qualifying as a master brewer. Kiran began her professional career working as a trainee brewer at Carlton & United Beverages. After working there for four years she switched her job to work at Biocon Biochemicals Limited which was based in Ireland. Later that year she founded Biocon in India with an initial capital of only 10,000 rupees. Business was not easy due to lack of funds. All the banks she turned to for loans were hesitant because biotechnology was not a familiar concept in India at that time. Another reason was her gender. A female entrepreneur was another rare idea for Indians and one bringing in a completely new field was even stranger. She even had difficulty hiring people to work for her. Kiran was not discouraged from this lack of support. Instead she worked hard with whatever she had and built a company that is now recognized as one of the leading firms of the company. After Biocon got an IPO in 2004, Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw became the richest woman in India. Because of her strong determination, Kiran steered her company towards growth and success. She made more than 2000 high value R&D licensing deals from 2005 to 2010. She helped Biocon to achieve global recognition and develop markets by acquisitions, in-licensing and partnerships. In 2007, Biocon was ranked by Med Ad News as one of the leading biotech companies worldwide and the 7th biggest biotechnology employer in the world. Kiran is responsible for Biocon's innovative abilities, worldwide reliability and global scale in marketing and manufacturing activities. Kiran founded the Biocon Foundation which is a philanthropic

organization carrying out environmental and health programs to help the weak parts of the society. In 2007, she also established a cancer care center in Bangalore.



EKTA KAPOOR

Ekta Kapoor is the Director, Producer, Venture Capitalist and Businesswoman, and presently acts as the Joint Managing Director & Creative Director of her Bombay Stock Exchange listed – Balaji Telefilms. She has completed over 15,000 hours of television content since inception. And Ekta Kapoor has become an unmatched example for the entire woman race along with all the aspiring young creative minds and entrepreneurs; by single handedly earning her stature in the industry. Ekta Kapoor has completed her education from Bombay Scottish School, Mahim and had attended the Mithibai College. Ekta started at quite an early age of 17, and she had first tried her hand to work with Kailash Surendranath – the ad/feature-filmmaker, but was unsuccessful. After completing her bachelor's degree in Commerce, Ekta Kapoor began her production house – Balaji Telefilms, in 1994. Now although, she had begun with huge hopes but unfortunately her first six telefilms pilots and three filmed ventures had turned out to become drastic failures, and only in 1995, when she launched the television serial – Hum Paanch, she received the much needed success. Ekta Kapoor is the founder & Managing Partner of Balaji Telefilms Ltd, founded in the year 1994. As per the stats mentioned; Balaji's revenues in 2014 were INR 4.2544 billion whereas their net income was INR 0.10 billion. Balaji Telefilms has 3 Subsidiaries under its wing which are Balaji Motion Pictures, ALT Entertainment & BOLT Media Limited. Since the very beginning; Balaji has produced many & highly popular soap operas and have left behind their mark with some of the highest grossing movies. She has been awarded with Start-up Entrepreneur of the Year award by Ernst & Young in 2001, honoured as the 'ITA Scroll Honour of the Year' in 2003, honoured as the 'Performer of the Year' by Screen awards in 2011, received the 'Great Woman Award' for the Most Successful Woman in 2012, received the 'Phalke Iconic Film & Television Producer award' from in the Dadasaheb Phalke Academy Awards in 2012, awarded as 'Box-Office Surprise of The Year' by ETC Bollywood Business Awards in 2012, and listed amongst the '50 most powerful women in Asia' by Forbes 2012.



SWATI PIRAMAL

Swati Piramal, the Vice Chairperson of Piramal Enterprises Ltd, the company which relates to a leading drug discovery company that aims to bring affordable medicines at a reasonable price globally. She is one of the leading scientists involved in healthcare and had contributed new medicines and public health services which have been successful for curing many diseases. She serves on the Dean's Advisory Board of both the Harvard School of Public Health and the Harvard Business School and is on the board of Indian and International Academic institutions i.e. IIT Bombay and Harvard University. She has been held in Board Positions of healthcare, financial services, manufacturing and service companies and was in the University of Pennsylvania commonly known as UPenn. She helped the foundation with effective public policy that has encouraged private and public institutions and these institutions work together for solving the problems in the healthcare and business. She was in the government public policy committees for trade, planning, environment, arts, women's entrepreneurship, national integration, and regional development. Swati Piramal completed her M.B.B.S from the University of Mumbai and received her Master's degree in Harvard School of Public Health. She then married Ajay Piramal, the Chairman of Pratham and ThePiramal Group. She leads a team of scientists in cancer, diabetes, inflammation and infectious disease research which contains a portfolio of over 200 international patents and 14 new drugs. For about two decades she worked in the prevention of chronic diseases like Diabetes, Arthritis and Heart Disease. She later founded the Gopikrishna Piramal Hospital in Mumbai

which was launched for public health campaigns against chronic disease, Osteoporosis, Malaria, Tuberculosis, Epilepsy and polio. She also worked for the arthritis treatment of disabled children, the elderly and sports injuries in Sports-medicine Centre. As a Director of the Piramal Foundation she was engaged in inter-disciplinary and field based education which promotes health in rural India with HMRI. This is a mobile health service that empowers projects in community education. Swati Piramal was presented BMA Management Woman Achiever of the Year Award in 2004, received Chemtech Pharma Award for Outstanding Contributions in Pharma Biotech industries and Lucknow National Leadership Award, in the Young Leader in the field of Science and Technology in 2006, was conferred by Rajiv Gandhi Award for Outstanding Woman Achiever by the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation in 2007, received Global Empowerment Award in UK in 2010, was conferred by Padma Shri by the President of India and the Lotus Award at New York from Children's Hope India in 2012, and received the Kelvinator Sree Shakti Award in 2014.



RUBY ASHRAF

Ruby had a hobby of designing clothes and she turned it into a flourishing business, and her company is named 'Precious Formals' which is one of the leading suppliers of prom dresses in America. Ruby grew up in Delhi. She was exposed to business, meetings and clients from very early age. She also quit medical school, got a bachelor's and masters in science from Delhi University and got admission in Birmingham, England to do a PhD in Fish Embryology. Also, she got admission in IIM Ahmedabad and in 1983 her business groomed very drastically. Out of campus her first job was in HR department of BHEL. Ruby got married with Javed, a professor in Rice University in Houston and in 1987 they shifted to America. An old and enduring love for clothes took Ruby in a different direction. She always had the title 'Best Dressed Girl' of the batch. So, she herself started creating case studies and searching for information regarding clothing industry in all over America. Ruby chose to focus on evening wear because the margins, design and demand were high. It was her lucky break when she designed a dress for her husband's boss' wife, and also a photograph of it appeared in magazine named Rich and Famous; gave her the drive to turn her passion into a business. And then with no formal training she started designing her own clothes and also her friends'. To learn the art of dressmaking she went to school in Delhi and then also spent a year visiting retailers across the country to build up her knowledge of market demands and retailer needs. She then got her husband's company for opening the factory in Delhi and not in America, as the hand work needed on material is done in Delhi but not America. After finding a lot of weaknesses in her as a designer, she realized that you should always look around for future trends in fashion world. And those qualities helped her in establishing and sustaining in Indian, American and China market as well. For Precious Formals she was awarded with 'The Dallas Fashion award and the Atlanta DIVA award'. And contestants in popular pageants like the Miss America, Miss USA, and Miss Teen USA competitions, have adorned Precious Formals designs. On the Cover page of many magazine there were photos of dresses too.



CONCLUSIONS

Many of us pursue higher studies in areas that we are not interested in; in fact, we simply pursue higher studies to attain high-paying jobs. We should never pursue a career for its monetary gains alone; we should pursue something that we are interested in and the benefits will surely start seeping in. This is a message to not only the youngsters but people of all ages. In addition, we should always make a contribution to the society. This way, we will see growth in the entire society. We ladies can achieve

beyond our dreams, so it's ok for us to try being an entrepreneur, to dream and make an action plan turn into reality. There is not one formula to be successful; everyone who is successful has gone through failures in the process. So, it depends upon how hard we kick that failure and learn from it and take up the challenge to be stronger to become successful.

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