

Specific Non-Business Problems of Women Entrepreneurs Hinder Development

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Abstract: Women initiating and running either a manufacturing or a service enterprise are profusely called women entrepreneurs. Women have a unique role to raise children in a way facilitating them to become functional citizens of a nation. Running a business in the competitive world requires immense attention of women entrepreneurs like any. A successful business woman has to balance both roles as an entrepreneur and as a homemaker which needs some extra-ordinary qualities. This paper brings to light some specific problems of women entrepreneurs that the researchers and policy makers should consider while finding suggestions to frame policies exclusively for women.

KEYWORDS - Risk Taking Ability, Low Mobility, Internal Locus of Control, Wider Contact, Lack of Physical Fitness.

INTRODUCTION

Vast proportion of human resources remains untapped which has tremendous potential to ensure the growth of any country. Women constitute nearly 50 per cent of the voting population in India and are a segment of importance for all politicians in their respective constituencies (N.K.Shinghal, 1993). Unemployment among women has been increasing at a much higher rate than among men in developing countries (Gulab Singh Azad, 1988) 70 per cent of the worlds poorest people are women, with a staggering 130 million women around the world. These women earn less than one dollar a day. Women's share of the world's income is only 10 per cent and only one per cent of the world's women can be called well-off (Vidhaben Shah, 1995). Gender equality needs to be a part of every country's strategy to eradicating poverty (UNDP, 1997). The women should be empowered to participate fully in the economic and social development of the country or its problems of unemployment and poverty can never be solved. To address this unemployment problem and to give half the human race, the equality it deserves, women must be brought into the main stream of productive gainful employment.

Several studies were made on the women entrepreneurs in order to identify the potentialities and problems. Women entrepreneurs are not on point in finance and business planning (Robert D.Hisrich and Candida G.Brush, 1986). Entrepreneurs who are more committed to their businesses than to their spouses have a tendency to get divorced (Russel R.Taylor, 1988). Women's unemployment is either low or in the decline that needs the attention of the policy makers (Shanta Kohi Chandra, 1991). Indian women entrepreneurs have low-self esteem and relatively low sense of personal efficacy (Bhavani and Jothi, 1991). Fear of failure among women is very high and therefore they want to limit the risk to the minimum to ensure their success (Madhura M.Chatrapathy,1989). Women are much more likely to prefer the service sector than manufacturing sector (Ellen A. Fagenson and Eric C. Marcus, 1991). Information and knowledge of women as business owners have been limited, (Lois A Stevenson, 1991). Entrepreneurial commitment and technological initiatives are found to be very low level among women trailing behind men by a large extent (Regina Papa, 1993). Agencies and organizations oriented towards women's economic development have placed much of the strategies without understanding women's practical needs (Rhona Howarth, 1993). Mental blocks make the women entrepreneurs reject chances of success, independence, power and most of all the opportunity of finding out exactly what they are, capable of and how much they could accomplish (Amrita Sharma, 1996).

NON-BUSINESS PROBLEMS

Woman entrepreneurs have to face both internal and external environment and adjust to the changes prevailing in the environment. Women have to face the External environment which influence their internal environment in the business and helps them to prepare their inner abilities to tackle both the environments.

The following are the specific problems identified to be important which needs to be addressed for the betterment of the entrepreneurship among women.

a. Low Risk Taking Ability

Risk taking ability is needed to be steadfast in the competitive world. In the recent days, businesses often face fluctuations in demand that need mental calculations to face risks and uncertainties. Studies reveal that women entrepreneurs hesitate to take decisions when uncertainty arises which prevents them from solving business problems and taking decisions.

b. Relay on Externals than Internality

Innovation is needed in business to create new things and change the existing things. Entrepreneurs having internality are creating more and are capable to make decisions on their own without any influence from the factors. Studies reveal that women are mostly influenced externally either by chance or others that affects business decision and inculcating the quality of depending on others.

c. Dual Role Leads to Low Mobility

Women have prime role as a mother, house manager and additionally has to perform entrepreneurial activities to lead a business in a successful way. Subject to the prime role, woman move further more for the economic activities that need support of the family. Anyway, the work burden from both the roles creates stress among women who need some coping mechanism and skill to manage the roles in a successful way.

d. Lack of Wider Contact

Women entrepreneurs have to run their businesses in a knowledge era. Fullest knowledge about the suppliers, customers, competitors, updating the policies and procedures relating to the business which are very important to improve business. In general, women entrepreneurs focus on the information which is very relevant and are uninterested in gathering information and keeping in touch with people.

e. Lack of Physical Fitness

Entrepreneurial activities need mental alertness, problem solving ability and active performance. Physical fitness is very important as sound thinking comes from a sound body. Naturally, women have to raise their children in addition to entrepreneurial activities and need extra-ordinary fitness that is lacking among women entrepreneurs that hinder their development to some extent.

SUGGESTIONS

1. Government and others involving in women entrepreneurial development consider the specific challenges that a woman has to face and develop packages to come up in their life. The training programme should include sensitivity training, developing communication skill, inter-personal skill and time management.
2. There is a need for proper counseling. This can be done by forming a committee consisting of psychologist, sociologist and a few successful entrepreneurs and non-official government agents and social workers with whom a periodical meeting at least once in three months will help to sort out the problems.
3. An exclusive Industrial Estate for women entrepreneurs may be established with assured power, water and other infrastructural facilities which may be available at a concessional rate. In a sprawling area other than school, crèches, market place and park a strong police contingent and a women police booth for watch and ward would develop women entrepreneurs to a great extent.

CONCLUSION

Women entrepreneurs are the contributors of the economic development of a nation. Contribution of women entrepreneurs for solving unemployment and national economic development attract the attention of the government and policy makers. Helping women entrepreneurs to face the challenges will be useful to the nation as a whole to maintain a healthy environment.

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