

A STUDY ON PROSPECTS AND PROBLEMS OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN KERALA”

SALINI C.A

Research scholar, J.J College of Arts and Science, Bharathidasan University, Thiruchirappally

Abstract

This study has been undertaken to investigate the prospects and problems of women entrepreneurs in Kerala. The primary data were collected by distributing 268 women entrepreneurs .the very purpose of this research is done by applying statistical tools like percentage analysis, mean, standard deviation etc. The result reveals that even though the women faced the problem of shortage of working capital, they are highly satisfied with their current position and well confident to take any type of risk.

Key Words

Entrepreneurship, self sufficiency, working capital

1. Introduction

During the last two decades, Indian women have entered the field of entrepreneurship in greatly increasing numbers. With the emergence and growth of their businesses, they have contributed to the global economy and to their surrounding communities. Women entrepreneurs have been making a considerable impact in more than 25% of all kinds of business. In modern society they have moved out of four wall of house and are taking part in all areas of life. Today the entrepreneurial world is open to the women folk. In simple words women entrepreneurs means are those women who think of business enterprises, initiate it, organize it, operate it, and undertake risk and uncertainty involved in business. There are many future opportunities opened to women. So that women are significant contributors of growing economy. The government of India has defined women entrepreneurs as an enterprise owned and controlled by women having a minimum financial interest of 51% of capital and giving at least 51% of employment generated in the enterprise to women. Entrepreneurship among women is an important avenue through which women can overcome their subordination within the family and the society as a whole. Therefore, development of entrepreneurship among women has received social attention of the policy makers. In this direction, a special character in the seventh plan has converted into the integration of women in the economic development.

Objectives of the study

- To examine the problems faced by women entrepreneurs.
- To evaluate the level of overall satisfaction of women entrepreneurs.
- To analyze the factors influencing them to become an entrepreneur.

2. Literature Review

According to **PILLAI AND ANNA, 1990** in India, economic development has brought about changes in women's lives in many ways, because of advancement in medicine, availability and access to birth control devices, modern household appliances reducing the time and drudgery of house hold work. But with the rising cost of living, the middle class family finds it very difficult today to manage with the husband's income alone. At this critical position, self employment also changes the position of women from being job-seekers to job givers.

DAS, 2000 performed a study on women entrepreneurs of SMEs in two states of India, via, Tamil nadu and Kerala. The initial problems faced by women entrepreneurs are quite similar to those faced by women in western countries. However, Indian women entrepreneurs faced lower level of work family conflict and are also found to differ from their counterparts in western countries on the basis of reasons for starting and succeeding in business. Similar trends are also found in other Asian countries such as Indonesia and Singapore. Again the statistics showed that the proportion of business setup and operated by women is much lower than the figures found in western countries.

SINGH, 2008, identifies the reasons & influencing factors behind entry of women in entrepreneurship. He explained the characteristics of their businesses in Indian context and also obstacles & challenges. He mentioned the obstacles in the growth of women entrepreneurship are mainly lack of interaction with successful entrepreneurs, social un acceptance as women

entrepreneurs, family responsibility, gender discrimination, missing network, low priority given by bankers to provide loan to women entrepreneurs. He suggested the remedial measures like promoting micro enterprises, unlocking institutional framework, projecting & pulling to grow & support the winners etc. The study advocates for ensuring synergy among women related ministry, economic ministry & social & welfare development ministry of the Government of India.

SINGH & SENGUPTA 2 study revealed that educationally more qualified women perceived entrepreneurship as a challenge, ambition, and for doing something fruitful, whereas those educationally less qualified entrepreneurs perceived the EDP training as only a tool for earning quick money. The majority of the potential entrepreneurs had clarity about their projects but needed moral support from males and other family members for setting up their enterprise. Women entrepreneurs preferred to combine their need for excellence with emotional dependency. They had an inner uncertainty of their own capabilities and needed a male support to pave their way rather with money, business knowhow or moral support.

LALL & SAHAI (2008), conduct a comparative assessment of multi-dimensional issues & challenges of women entrepreneurship, & family business. The study identified Psychographic variables like, degree of commitment, entrepreneurial challenges & future plan for expansion, based on demographic variables. The study identified business owner's characteristics as self perceptions self esteem, entrepreneurial intensity & operational problem for future plans for growth & expansion. The study suggested that, there has been considerable growth in number of women opting to work in family owned business but they still have lower status and face more operational challenges in running business.

3. Research Methodology

Descriptive Research design is used for the study. In this research primary data is collected using questionnaires from 268 respondents and secondary data is from various standard text books, journals, research articles, magazine and websites. The sample is collected by using convenience sampling method. The statistical tool like percentage, ranking, mean score, standard deviation used for analyzing the data collected from the respondents. Five point scale is used for measuring the satisfaction level with various factors. Statistical population of this research includes women entrepreneurs for various areas.

4. Data analysis and interpretation

Table 1: Benefits Acquired As an Entrepreneur

Sl no	Benefits	mean	Standard deviation
1	Self dependent	13.2	2.26
2	Social status	13.06	3.36
3	Increased earnings	12.8	2.45
4	Increased standard of living	11.73	1.87

Self dependency is one of the important benefits acquired by the women entrepreneurs because it shows highest mean. Besides these social status, increased earnings, increased standard of living also acquired by them.

Table 2: purpose of spending earnings

Sl no	Purpose	Rank
1	Family expenses	I
2	Personal savings	II
3	Re Investment purpose	III
4	Social Purpose	IV
5	Others	V

Women entrepreneurs mainly spend their earnings for meeting family expenses. Then they concentrated on personal savings and re-investment purpose and social services.

Table 3: self sufficiency problem

Sl no	problem	mean	Standard deviation
1	Burden of work	8.06	2.47
2	Health problem	8.13	2.28
3	Lack of leisure time	8.26	2.14
4	Tension	11.26	2.5
5	Poor risk taking ability	6.26	2.64

The main self sufficiency problem faced by women entrepreneurs is Tension. They never feel the problem of poor risk taking ability, burden of work, health problems and lack of leisure time.

Table 4: Social Problems

Sl no	Social problems	mean	Standard deviation
1	Male dominance	7.2	2.91
2	Lack of motivation	6.26	2.85
3	education	5.93	3.11
4	insecurity	5.26	3.5
5	Lack of self confidence	5.06	2.58

The main social problem faced by the women entrepreneurs is male dominance and lack of motivation. Majority has not faced the problem of insecurity, education, lack of self confidence, etc.

Table 5: Financial Problems

Sl no	Financial problems	Mean	Standard deviation
1	Shortage of capital	9.31	2.53
2	High interest rate	7.46	2.85
3	Limited working capital	8.93	1.86
4	Lack of collateral security	6.13	2.74
5	others	4.86	3.96

The main problem faced by the women entrepreneurs were shortage of capital and limited working capital. They are not much facing the problem of interest rate and lack of collateral security.

Table 6: Economic Problems

Sl no	Economic problems	mean	Standard deviation
1	Non availability of raw materials	5.53	3.36
2	Competition	11	3.11
3	Lack of technical know how	6.93	2.33
4	Marketing	7.26	2.11
5	Credit facility	8.6	2.39

The main economic problems faced by the women entrepreneurs are tough competition and problems in availability of credit facilities. Some of them face the problem of marketing the products and lack of technical knowhow.

5. Findings of the study

Majority women members are sole traders and least of them are cooperative. They could earn more than Rs 25000 per month from their business. The opinion of the respondents reveals that family support is the most prominent influencing factor to start the business. Majority respondents use personal loan as their source of finance. The respondents are not much aware about the various schemes introduced by the government to support woman entrepreneurs. Unfortunately majority women entrepreneurs

would not enjoy the financial assistance from the government. Self dependency is one of the important benefits acquired by them. They mainly spend their earnings for meeting family expenses and then give priority to personal savings.

They faced lot of problems from different zone. The main self sufficiency problem faced by the women entrepreneurs is mental tension. Male dominance is the main social problem faced by them. Beside these they faced shortage of working capital as financial problem and tough competition as economic problem.

Moreover the surprising good thing is that majority women entrepreneurs have a plan of future expansion for their business and they are highly satisfied with their business. This is a good indication for their improvement.

6. Recommendations

There should be continuous attempt to inspire, encourage, motivate and co-operate women entrepreneurs. An awareness programme should be conducted on mass scale with the intention of creating awareness among women about the various schemes provided by the government for supporting them. Women entrepreneurs should be offered soft loan and subsidized loan for encouraging them in to industrial and other activities. The financial institutions should provide more assistance to them for their smooth running of business. In short the system of microfinance should be promoted more.

7. Conclusion

Nowadays we are in a better position in the field of women entrepreneurship. Efforts are being taken at the economy as brought promise of equal opportunity in all spheres to the Indian women. But unfortunately, the government sponsored development activities have benefited only a small section of women. Indian Government provides number of schemes to promote the women entrepreneurship. Women entrepreneurs mainly face the problem of shortage of working capital. But they are highly satisfied with their current position of business. The attitude of women entrepreneurs are changing than before, they are well confident and ready to take any type of risk.

References

Books:

- ARORA, R. and SOOD S.K. (2005), -Fundamentals of entrepreneurship and small business
- BAPORIKAR. N. (2007) Entrepreneurship Development & Project Management- Himalaya Publication House
- DHAMEJA S.K (2002), Women Entrepreneurship: Opportunities, Performance And Problems, Deep Publisher (P) Ltd., New Delhi. GORDEN E. & NATARAJAN K. (2007) Entrepreneurship Development-Himalaya Publication House, Second Revised Edition.
- BRUSH.C, (1997). TAORI, Dr. KAMAL- Entrepreneurship In The Decentralized Sector Women-Owned Businesses : Obstacles And Opportunities, Journal Of Developmental Entrepreneurship.
- DESAI.V. (1996) Dynamics Of Entrepreneurial & Development & Management Himalaya Publishing House-Fourth Edition , Reprint.

websites

- www.scribd.com
- <http://www.Kudumbashree.org>
- <http://www.sjsry.kudumbashree.org>
- Shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in
- iosjournals.org
- www.edx.org
- <http://ndl.iitkgp.ac.in>