

# Participation of Women in Innovation Systems (Women in Innovation and Entrepreneurship)

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## Abstract

This paper attempts to provide an overview of the participation of women in entrepreneurship programs and innovation systems. Women entrepreneurs are a crucial part of the business and human resource development. It also focuses on the struggles on a women entrepreneur to live in a society and the fight back they have given and will give to achieve their ambitions. The paper also focuses on the position of India on world level in terms of participation of women in innovation schemes through vivid statistical data.

**Keywords:** women, innovation, entrepreneurship, society, skill

## INTRODUCTION

A girl is unstoppable and so is brave and fierce. Since past two three years an exclusive observation could be made on tremendous usage of certain terms and phrases like science multiculturalism, feminism and women empowerment, quite frequently. Rather than something to implement in reality, it has more become a trend. Achievement and skill pointed out by women nowadays make us consider that women and men are not differing much. It is seen by leadership and roles of women in various areas. Power of being stiff, tough and accurate in making decisions are the characteristics of women which make them capable enough to innovate. Burden and responsibility of women is more than men as women have multiple roles to play. Role of women today not only has responsibilities at home as a housewife, but also out of door as a career woman.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF WOMEN

Their brains are better equipped for multitasking and creating solutions that work for a group and they are also good leaders. Female entrepreneurship are catalytic in job creation, innovation and more than tangible contribution to the GNP of the country[1]. Certain qualities of women that make them good and successful innovators are:

1. Women are better calculated risk takers.
2. They are less prone to over-confidence.
3. They are more ambitious.
4. They are more likely to take long term view.
5. They have ability to face all barriers and succeed in their life.

## PROBLEMS FACED BY WOMEN INNOVATORS

Some of the problems are:

✓ *Financial Problems:*

Finance is regarded as a root for any enterprise, be it big or small. Many women face this problem as their access to external sources of funds is limited.

✓ *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.

✓ *Lack of Education:*

In India around 60% of women are still illiterate. Illiteracy is the root cause of socio-economic problems [6]. Due to lack of qualitative education, women are a not aware about business technology and market.

✓ *Male Dominant Society*

In male dominant Indian society, women are not treated equal to men. The constitution of India speaks of equality between sexes but in practice, women are looked upon 'ablaa' i.e. helpless woman. Male members think it is a

big risk in financing the ventures run by women[5]. This serves as a barrier for women's entry into business and entrepreneurship.

✓ *Multiple roles and Family Ties*

This problem is faced by most of the talented women in India. Women's main duty in India is considered to look after children and other family members. So, a woman has to strike a fine balance between her business and family. They spend long hours in business and as a result they find it difficult to meet the requirement and demands of their family members and society as well. [3] Her total involvement in the family leaves her with no little energy with time to devote for business. Family member's support is the necessary condition for women to enter into the business.

## HINDERANCE AND CHANGE

Both sexes need to develop good communication skills and both must learn to use them in an appropriate and wise manner. Women's ability to access, benefit from, develop and influence these sectors will directly impact whether we achieve our goals of planet 5050 by 2030. If women are left out of these 21<sup>st</sup> century revolutions, we will not achieve substantive gender equality.

Women and girls themselves have to be the innovations and agents of change while also influencing others to invest in gender equality and women's empowerment in their own innovative work. However, there are enormous gender gaps particularly in the technology and innovation systems that women form playing these roles.

## A SURVEY

According index, India scored an overall 41.7 points, ranking 49<sup>th</sup> among 54 economies globally with comparatively low in Women Business Ownership percentages (WBO) [2].

The index uses 12 indicators and 25 sub-indicators in 54 economies across Asia pacific, Middle East and Africa, North America, Latin America and Europe, representing 78.6 % of the world's female labour force [2].

It said India presents lower opportunities for women to assume leadership role, participation in workforce or engagement in entrepreneurial activities- a disparity that explain the low scores for Business Ownership (BO) by Women in the country [2].

“While necessity and grit are often important to foster women entrepreneurship, strong supporting conditions are an imperative for ensuring a high business ownership by women. While India is yet to travel a long for scaling up opportunities that foster women entrepreneurship, the potential presented by the country is vast” said MasterCard advisors, Senior Vice President and Group Heads- South Asia/advisors CEO Sukanya Misra.

## THE FIGHTBACK

There was a time when women were considered as weaker gender and our society filled with pathetic ancient taboos, but now women are competing males in a perfect manner.

India has always being the land with taboos and superstitions and it is tough job for parents to encourage the girl-child to make a career as a business owner or innovator.

Despite the fact, few females are making their mark in this male dominant industry and are strong enough to break the barriers set around her and emerge as an example. “Talent and right opportunities open the first few doors but the attitude opens the rest”- said Sneha Sharma, Founder and CEO of Ittisa.

A woman who is financially independent has ability to say yes and she also has ability to say no. Women must blaze new paths and should not be restricted by outdated traditions.

### STATISTICAL DATA OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEUR IN WORLD



Country	Percentage
India (1970-1971)	14.2
India (1980-1981)	19.7
India (1990-1991)	22.3
India (2000-2011)	31.6
USA	45
UK	43
Indonesia	40
Sri Lanka	35
Brazil	35

fig-1: Statistical women data [4]

### SUGGESTIONS

- For getting the best out of women in the innovation schemes, they should be given a platform to put their ideas onto and describe and state the purpose and goal well.
- Proper mentorship and accountability if provided to women innovators, can lead to an overwhelming amount of creative ideas on the table.
- A large and successful business cannot be done alone. A large network, connections and collaborations are invaluable to run an enterprise.
- Sessions should be conducted among people not only to encourage women but also to discard negativity amongst society.
- Any enterprise needs two things to run: resource and knowledge. Knowledge based schemes for educating women must be made a mandatory point. Apart from that capital is another important factor that should be taken into consideration.

### CONCLUSIONS

Women are the important asset of the nation and have equal right to participate in the innovation system of the nation. The specific characteristic of women makes them different from men in various standards of leadership and entrepreneurship fields. The suggestions provided in this article will help women development in the various reputable fields such as educational, technological, defense, financial, marketing, medical and industrial etc. For vivid participation of women in the national innovation system, it's a turn of society to accept one more personality of women i.e. as an entrepreneur and support her as well.

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We, being in the engineering field have very near and close experience of what it is to be young and women in science and technology for 21<sup>st</sup> century. We were inspired by the women cell activities happening in our college. Additional to that our faculty mentors and road-makers helped us to reach out to some of the core problems and hurdles came across during the career journey of women. Being a woman itself was a throttling point for us to jot down some vivid logistics about the same.

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