

Problems of Women Entrepreneurship in India: A Critical Analysis

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Abstract

Women entrepreneurship is considered as an important means of economic progress of any country. Women entrepreneurs not only make themselves self-sufficient, but also increase employment opportunities for others. To promote women entrepreneurship in Indian society, there is a need to bring changes on social, family and economic fronts. From the Economic Survey 2019-20, it is known that at the beginning of this year, the share of companies with at least one female director was 43 percent in the start up companies of the country. The paper tries to analyse about the problems and solutions of women entrepreneurs in India.

Key-words: *Women entrepreneur; Problems; Measures; Suggestions; Tips.*

Introduction

The term "women entrepreneur" refers to the segment of the female population that ventures into industrial activities i.e. manufacturing, assembling, job work, repair / servicing and other occupations. Women entrepreneurs can be defined as women or groups of women who start, organize and operate a business venture. Women are expected to be called women entrepreneurs to innovate, emulate or adopt an economic activity.

In modern era, more and more women are taking up entrepreneurial activities especially in medium and small scale enterprises. Women-owned businesses are highly increasing in the economies of almost all countries. The entrepreneurial potentials of women have gradually been changing with the growing sensitivity to their role and economic status in the society. Skill, knowledge and adaptability in business are the main reasons for women to emerge into business ventures. Indian Government recognises the need for women to be part of mainstream economic development. Women entrepreneurship is seen as an effective strategy to solve the problems of rural and urban poverty.

Overall, more women entrepreneurs account for improved economic growth and stability within a country. Women entrepreneurs inspire other women to start businesses. This leads to more job creation for women which ultimately helps in reducing the gender gap in the workforce. Women entrepreneurship can make a particularly strong family and communities, poverty reduction and women empowerment, the contribution to the Millennium Development Goals.

The Indian government has treated women in a different criterion-level of women in the equity and employment conditions of the enterprise. Such as "Women entrepreneurs are defined as an enterprise which is owned and controlled by a woman with a minimum financial interest of 51 percent of the capital and women with at least 51 percent generated in the venture employs." Thus, on the basis of the above definitions, we can say that women entrepreneurs are entrepreneurs who have taken initiative in promoting and running an enterprise with a controlling interest in that particular enterprise.

It is to be noted that as per the instructions of SEBI, all listed companies are required to appoint at least one woman on their board of directors. This has certainly increased their numbers, but it cannot be seen to be linked to their business participation. India ranks 52nd among 57 countries of the 2019 Women Entrepreneur Index. Financial help is not enough to bring women entrepreneurs forward.

Increasing education figures also have not brought much change in this situation. According to the National Sample Survey, only 14 percent of India's commercial establishments are run by women. Most of these enterprises are self-funded and small scale.

Problems for Women Entrepreneurs

Female entrepreneurs, unlike male entrepreneurs, face some specific problems in their business.

These problems are as follows:

1) Low risk appetite:

Women lead protected lives in our country. They are less educated and financially more dependent on others. In other words, they are not financially independent. Therefore, these factors reduce their ability to take risks involved in the business. Risk taking is an essential requirement for a successful entrepreneurship. But women entrepreneurs have less ability to bear economic and other risks. Inferiority, low education, unplanned but protected development, lack of infrastructure, etc. are the main factors of their low ability to mitigate or bear the risks.

2) Lack of confidence:

Women entrepreneurs usually lack confidence in doing anything independently, especially in India. They hesitate to take risks. They are conservative in their approach. The public generally looks at women entrepreneurs with suspicion and does not support or encourage them.

3) Lack of entrepreneurial qualification:

Women usually lack entrepreneurship. They lack any entrepreneurial mind as well as entrepreneurial creativity, motivation, behavior etc.

4) Lack of mobility:

Women, especially in India, lack mobility. In other words, their mobility is highly limited due to various reasons. Women cannot travel alone and safely alone nor can they deal boldly with men or male officers who always try to humiliate women for any official or professional work. Travel is not possible and possible even for women entrepreneurs. Thus the mobility of women entrepreneurs is very limited, especially in India.

5) Domestic problem:

In India, it is primarily the duty of a woman to look after her children and other elderly or older members of the family. Women and women will have to use time and energy to take care of their family affairs. Therefore, his involvement in family matters leaves very little time and energy for the business. Therefore, married women entrepreneurs have to strike a satisfactory balance between family burden and business burden.

Her success in this regard depends on the willing support of her husband and other family members. Because without the consent and full support of her husband and without the support and encouragement of other members of her family, no female entrepreneur can expect to succeed in her business. Otherwise, there is a conflict role for women entrepreneurs in their professional lives. Such conflicts prevent them from making quick and sound decisions in their business.

Despite modernization, the women's movement has slowed down due to traditions and family responsibilities. In addition, the business background of families, and the educational level of husbands will have a great impact on the development of female entrepreneurship.

The development of kindergartens, day-time nurseries, and crèches and family planning and, most important, the desire for a larger income and higher standard of living, helps female entrepreneurs to some extent advance their businesses without affecting social prestige. Her husband.

6) *Male dominated society:*

We are a male dominated society. Our constitution speaks of equality between men and women, but in reality women are not considered equal to men. Women are seen as weak and incompetent in all cases. Women suffer from male reservations about their role, ability and ability. Such an attitude of men towards women acts as a major obstacle for women to enter the trade.

7) *Social outlook:*

The biggest problem facing women entrepreneurs is the problem of social attitudes towards women and the barriers in which women entrepreneurs live and work. Despite constitutional equality, there is a major discrimination against women. In our society, which is bound by customs and traditions, women suffer from many reservations imposed by men on their role and ability.

This is especially true in rural India. In rural areas, women face resistance not only from male members but also from older female members who do not accept the principle of equality. The excessive presence of elders in the family prevents young girls from moving out.

Although rural women have the potential to become entrepreneurs, they are not properly trained and empowered. It is believed that the skills given to a girl are lost at the time of marriage. Therefore, girls, despite being enterprising talents, remain helpless in rural handicrafts and small scale industries and small industries and hence do not become entrepreneurs.

8) *Lack of education:*

In India, women are less educated and therefore do not know about commercial technology and market. About 48 percent of women in India are still illiterate as per 2001 census. Lack of education in women leads to low achievement motivation.

Therefore, there is a lack of problems for education creators for women in setting up and running business ventures. Lack of education leads to lack of information and experience among women, the inability to deal with outsiders causes still more problems for women in their occupation.

9) *High cost of production:*

Another problem facing women entrepreneurs is the high cost of production, which reduces efficiency and restricts the development of entrepreneurship among women. Assistance given in the form of grants and subsidies by the government and other agencies may enable them to cope with this difficulty, but to ensure their ultimate success and survival, it is necessary to increase their efficiency and reduce productive efficiency. it happens. But even then, women entrepreneurs still face some problems such as labor problems, human resources, infrastructure, legal formalities, lack of family support, etc.

10) *Less requirement for achievement:*

Success in entrepreneurship requires high achievement, independence, autonomy and independence. But by nature, women like to grow up under some sure shelter and glory of their parents, husbands, brothers, sons, etc. She has received some preconceived notions about her role in life and this attitude of women hinders her achievements.

There should be an eagerness for achievement in women, but it is true that achievement cannot be expected in women from all women, but it is true that such urge cannot be expected from all women. Only women who have received such extraordinary urges for achievement and freedom are the most likely to succeed in their business.

Measures to solve the problems of women entrepreneurs:

The following steps can be taken to solve the problems of women entrepreneurs:

1) Finance Cell:

Special finance cells should be opened in various financial institutions and banks to provide easy finance to women entrepreneurs. Such finance cells should be managed by women officers and clerks. Finance Cells should provide women entrepreneurs with low interest rates and easy repayment basis.

2) Marketing Cooperatives:

Women entrepreneurs should be encouraged to set up marketing cooperatives. The government and semi-government bodies should give top priority to marketing cooperatives of such women while doing their shopping. Such cooperatives would be able to eliminate middlemen by purchasing inputs and selling their products at remunerative prices.

3) Supply of raw materials and other inputs:

The government should make necessary arrangements for the supply of scarce and imported raw materials and other inputs by women entrepreneurs. The government should also provide subsidies to women entrepreneurs to make their products competitive and sell them at competitive prices.

4) Education and awareness:

Intensive educational and awareness programs should be arranged to change the negative or unfavourable attitudes towards women. The attitude of the elderly, in particular, elderly women whether they are mothers or in-laws, should be aware of the ability of girls and their proper role in society. The social outlook of these people should be made positive so that women entrepreneurs can achieve progress in their enterprise.

5) Training facilities:

Training and skill development is very important for the development of entrepreneurs. Special training schemes should be designed to suit women entrepreneurs so that they can be confident about their entrepreneurial success. Since family members will not be allowed to go very far for training, mobile training centers should be arranged.

Similarly, part-time training facilities should also be provided during weekends and holidays. In addition, stipends, good hygienic creches, transport facilities and other such facilities should also be provided to attract more women-entrepreneurs to the training centers.

Women problems entrepreneurs - with suggestions to promote women entrepreneurship

Women entrepreneurs are facing the following problems:

(i) Banks and financial institutions do not have confidence in women entrepreneurship capabilities, hence they consider women applicants as more risky than men. They look for men behind female applicants.

(ii) They do not have the capacity to bear economic risk, social risk, technical and environmental risk.

- (iii) She has a peculiar problem in domestic matters like husband and child care etc.
- (iv) She has a low level of family background in the fields of family support, education, business and entrepreneurship.
- (v) Women have led protected lives. Therefore, they are handicapped by inability to travel from one place to another due to commercial reasons.
- (vi) They lack high achievement motivation. They have made assumptions about their role in life and this impedes achievement and independence.

Tips to promote women entrepreneurship:

- (i) Women entrepreneurs should form a separate target group for all entrepreneur development programs.
- (ii) Vocational training facilities are to be developed by the government for women. This is the first phase in developing female entrepreneurship.
- (iii) Institutional support system should be designed to suit the needs of women entrepreneurs.
- (iv) Appropriate technology, equipment and practice should be encouraged so that they can reduce their addictions and increase their efficiency and productivity.
- (v) The government should try to involve women entrepreneurs in the decision making process for entrepreneurship development.

Thus, more and more potential female candidates should be motivated to engage in entrepreneurial activities. For this purpose, an effective entrepreneurship development program tailored to their needs is necessary.

It is seen that most of the women entrepreneurs from the North Eastern Region are mainly engaged in conventional enterprises like handloom and handicraft, jam/jelly, pickle making, beauty parlours and bakery units. Exposure is necessary for our women entrepreneurs to other sectors as well so that they can cross barriers and open their minds towards different business ideas apart from the sectors traditionally believed to be for women. There is need now for women to go beyond the conventional sectors and look out for opportunities based on resources and skills available in the state.

While there are a large number of schemes for promoting women entrepreneurship, the schemes have to be sensitive to the factors that play an important role in shaping the needs of women entrepreneurs. The size and scale of a women- led enterprise is often micro, many may not be highly educated and access to market is often one of the major challenge. Of the several policies and schemes, more than few have broad objectives, which are often vague. The schemes need more clarity and focus. Moreover, the support rendered with policies and schemes spread across different departments and domains, often make it difficult for women to access them. Many policies and schemes tend to focus on only one aspect of problem faced by women.

In spite of various initiatives by the government, women entrepreneurs have limited access to bank loans; most women entrepreneurs first and foremost rely on self-finance. In the context where majority of women lack networks, expand their business, market access can be a key ingredient in propelling growth.

Remedial measures:

In India, a large number of training and promotional activities are being organized to develop entrepreneurial skills among women. Some of these programs are specifically for women, while others lead women with male entrepreneurs.

Some of the measures taken to improve women entrepreneurs in India are given below:

1. Creating awareness - Steps should be taken to make women available for financial and technical assistance under government and non-government schemes.
2. Concessions - Women entrepreneurs should be offered concessions, subsidies and incentives as supporting elements to promote entrepreneurial activities.
3. Simple legal formalities - Legal and administrative procedures and formalities should be made more simple and flexible. This motivates them for entrepreneurial activities. The application form, assessment standard and other procedural formalities to finance women should be simplified.
4. Cooperation with agencies - The government and its agencies should collaborate with women entrepreneurs to make the environment more friendly and polite.
5. Financial Assistance - Loans and advances should be made available to women entrepreneurs by public sector banks and private banks at concessional or low interest rates. In addition, women entrepreneurs should be advised to form self-help groups (cooperative groups) or cooperatives.
6. Training and Development Program - For inexperienced women, special type of training and development programs should be arranged for them to develop entrepreneurial knowledge and skills. In addition, every female entrepreneur needs prior knowledge and skills before undertaking the venture.
7. Women's cell - To provide information, advice or guidance to women entrepreneurs and other credit related information, women cell should be set up in the Directorate of Industries and District Industries Center (DIC). These female cells should be preferably controlled by female officers or employees.
8. Single Window Approach - Single window approach will be helpful to promote women entrepreneurs. A separate cell should be established under DIC.

Conclusion

Entrepreneurship is presently the most discussed and encouraged concept all over the world to overcome economic challenges. Women being the vital gender of the overall population have great capacity and potential to be the contributors in the overall economic development of any nation. Therefore, programmes and policies need to be customised to not just encourage entrepreneurship but also implement strategies which can help support entrepreneurial culture among youth.

Indian women have traditionally been involved in earning a livelihood. But largely his work remained limited or ignored at a small level. From making household items like papad and pickles to sewing, knitting and embroidery, to direct selling (for companies like Amway and Tupperware), to giving tuition at home and even catering to smaller programs. Women always find a way in the industry. In recent times, due to increased channels of technology, education and funding and marketing, these women want to become entrepreneurs and start their own businesses.

These efforts have problems at many levels and in many ways. One major reason in this is not to give importance. Less knowledge of funding resources and lack of knowledge about schemes that help their businesses is also a reason. Not having a supportive family is the biggest obstacle. Most important,

our social outlook is also a reason to choose a male startup over a woman's startup. Awareness, an encouraging approach and a need for ground change in the value system are being felt. It is very important to change the discrimination against women entrepreneurs.

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