

# EMPOWERING WOMEN THROUGH ENTREPRENEURSHIP- A STUDY ON WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN INDIA

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**Abstract:**

Women form an important segment of the labour force and the economic role-played by them cannot be isolated from the frame work of development. The role of women as business owners is gradually increasing all over the world. Women entrepreneurship development is the instrument of women empowerment. Empowerment leads to self-fulfilment and women become aware of where they are going, what their position is in the society, their status; existence and rights; and women are becoming more empowered, personally and economically through business ownership. Thus, the present study is initiated on empowering women through entrepreneurship development (ED) in emerging economies. The research is conceptual one to understand the present status of women entrepreneurship in India. The present study also tries to contribute to this literature by empowering women through ED in emerging economies.

**Key words:** Women, Entrepreneurship, Empowerment and Employment.

**Introduction:**

One of the key factors in determining the success of development is the status and position of women in the society. This means that the neglect of women in the development process of any country constitutes a human resource waste. In this premise, it will be a disservice for any country to ignore its women population in its development efforts. The task before any government, therefore, should be that of moving steadily and firmly in the direction of economic development by involving women. Faley (1999) stated that women's development is not nearly about reducing poverty by increasing productivity, but also about women's liberation and empowerment. True development means the development in the three categories of a woman. These are: (1) Individual; (2) Social; and (3) Economic development (Rodney, 1972). Individual development means increased skills and capability, greater freedom, creativity, self-discipline, responsibility and material well being. Increasing capacity connects social development, while economic development is determined by the increased capacity of the members of a society in dealing with their environment. This emphasis means that development at the individual stage includes both the social and economic categories of development. Development is dynamic and therefore assumes a continuous transformation process and a movement towards better and improved conditions, locally and internationally. Globally, women's empowerment has recently gained considerable importance as an area for policy and policy interventions in most of the organizations of the world. They have recognized the benefits of the empowerment, which can be achieved through effective participation of women. Since 1970's a global concern for amelioration of the working women and raising their standard of living been expressed in many ways.

In 1995, Fourth World Conference on 'Empowerment of Women' held in Beijing focused on the following areas :(1) Political; (2) Economical; (3) Legal empowerment of women. In the traditional society, women's role was naturally limited to the family. Many factors like urbanization. Women's education, technical progress etc. have profoundly changed this traditional society. During the last two decades employment opportunities gradually shrank and it became increasingly hard for men and women especially for less educated women to get acceptable jobs. Sooner or later, therefore, their entry into self-business leads to economic empowerment.

**Objectives:**

The study has the following objectives

- To understand the philosophy and concept of women empowerment and Entrepreneurship Development.
- To study the Benefits and Problems of Women employment and Entrepreneurship in emerging economies.
- To know the present status and government initiatives taken for women Entrepreneurship in India.

**Research methodology**

Research methodology used for this study is descriptive method. The study is conceptual one to understand the basics of women employment and entrepreneurship.

## Data collection method

This study is majorly based on secondary data. Data is collected from text books, national and international journals which focused on women entrepreneurship.

## Women Employment:

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the world is brisk, enthusiastically progressing and taking up the women partake in uplifting the society and economy of the world. The topic is a universally accepted phenomenon but for the women, it was a hard nut to crack for their equal rights in the society.

Women, both married and unmarried, today are independent and earn for their survival. The number of working women is escalating drastically. Today, the society is very open to accepting new challenges and women have stout volition. Though there is fair involvement of women in society, some pedantic minds still consider women as home makers and born-to-cook beings.

Incidents about misbehaving, eve teasing and molestation with working women is common these days. In spite all this, women have vindicated their strengths and capabilities which can be witnessed by their participation in every field from education to sports to business and defence to science. There are many examples like **Tania Sachdev, Dipika Pallikal Karthik, Pooja Thakur, Shakuntala Devi, Bhakti Sharma, P V Sindhu, Saina Nehwal** and much more. There are successful business women who run successful companies viz. **Indra Nooyi, Chanda Kochar, Vandana Luthra**, the list is infinite.

## Women entrepreneurship:

Women entrepreneur may be defined as a woman or group of women who initiate, organize, and run a business enterprise. In terms of Schumpeterian concept of innovative entrepreneurs, women who innovate, imitate or adopt a business activity are called “women entrepreneurs”.

Kamal Singh who is a woman entrepreneur from Rajasthan, has defined woman entrepreneur as “a confident, innovative and creative woman capable of achieving self-economic independence individually or in collaboration, generates employment opportunities for others through initiating, establishing and running the enterprise by keeping pace with her personal, family and social life.”

## Benefits of Women employment and Entrepreneurship:

When it comes to accomplishing goals or building a solid workplace relationship, the feminine touch and skills like empathy, intuition and optimism of women work towards the benefit of the company.

### 1. Flexibility at the workplace:

Increased number of women at the workplace not only has brought several positive changes but it also has made organizations look more closely at the problems of employees. These positive changes enable employers to address unique issues like helping workers balance professional and family life etc. With more and more women coming to the workplace, the attitude and mindset of employers have been changed. With the coming of women to the workforce, the management has to bring several new programs and changes that benefit both males and females.

### 2. Healthy work-life balance:

When it comes to create and maintain a healthy balance between work and life, women outshine men. From taking care of kids and family to giving excellent performance in office, women master the art of balancing job and family pretty well.

Whether single or married, women understand the value of participating in non-work-related activities. They understand work is not everything, to be productive and happy at the workplace some non-work related activities should be introduced or organized.

### 3. Effective communication for collaborative work effort:

According to experts, women are great communicators as they respond more effectively to visual, verbal, and emotional factors than men.

Women are endowed with strong communication and networking skills using which they can encourage any collaborative or group work efforts. Usually, who feels discomfort handling emotions prefer to give

directives and share competitive stories with team members. On the contrary, women listen to team members carefully, share ideas, and give the advice to encourage teamwork, while maintaining professionalism.

#### **4. Well rounded workforce:**

When it comes to sensitivity and intuition, women outrun men. Their sensitivity, intuition and emotional intelligence help to create a well-rounded workforce. While men lack in understanding one's unspoken words or emotions, women decode verbal cues and body language easily and this quality makes them a very effective problem solver. Even a few decades back, women were perceived as irrational, sensitive and emotional creatures who are totally unfit for working outside the home.

But now women are doing better as team leaders than men due to their sensitive nature, which helps them to understand unspoken words or emotions. With this quality, women are able to address and resolve any workplace problems or tension before they crop up.

#### **5. Diversity and multidimensional interest at the workplace:**

Women introduce multidimensional and diverse interests at the workplace. While for men after work, socialization only means playing pool or smoking cigar with friends.

Women prefer to do diverse things from painting, watching sports, playing instruments, cooking to playing pool and smoking cigars they do everything with the same enthusiasm. Because of their multidimensional interests, women bring a new topic to discuss in office, enabling others to share their views on that. Apart from influencing her employer's approach towards the benefit of employees, women bring several skills to the office that makes the interaction between people easier.

#### **Problems of Women employment and Entrepreneurship:**

##### **1. Sexual Harassment:**

The #MeToo movement brought out numerous cases of women facing sexual and non-sexual harassment in the workplace. These cases ranged from unwelcome verbal, visual, non-verbal or physical harassment. The Women in the Workplace report found that 35% of women in full time corporate sector jobs have experienced sexual harassment. Another study by estimates that 75% of women who are subject to such hostile situations will not report their harassment. And especially when the abuser is someone in senior positions.

People often ask "why did the victim not report?" The primary reason for this is for the fear of being fired. The same research by EEOC found that "75% of harassment victims experienced retaliation when they reported it."

##### **2. Unemployment Penalty:**

During child rearing years, the unemployment penalty for women is longer. What this means is that when women take longer leaves, they have a much harder time to get rehired. This ultimately reflects in the gender pay gap making it harder for women to hold senior level positions.

##### **3. Balancing Work-Family Life:**

No matter how high their position or designation is in the office, women in India are still viewed as the family manager back home. They are expected to return home at a certain time, cook, clean and take care of family affairs.

In fact, men who help out around their house are often the butt of jokes by their male friends. This makes life extremely stressful for women who have little help around the house and have to do it all.

##### **4. Travelling for Work is Not Acceptable:**

One of the problems faced by married working women is that they cannot travel or go on tours without having to answer uncomfortable questions by most of their friends and family. This is especially true for married women, who also have a flourishing career. Their professional obligations often depend on the support and understanding of family members.

A married man can go on long official tours outside his home city, without raising eyebrows and questions from his family members and peers, but his equally-successful wife would face disapproval. As a result, women often have to opt out of jobs than involve travel or settle for not being promoted as a result.

## 5. Unequal Pay

One of the raging topics of discussion in the context of problems faced by working women (not only in India, but also in many other nations) is that of equal pay. Legally, a woman is entitled to get the same salary as their male colleagues for the same kind of work done by them. However, gender discrimination is rampant as many companies still do not adhere to these guidelines and pay women less than their male colleagues.

### Government schemes and other plans related to women entrepreneurship:

In India, women position not so good. That's why development of women is the major objective of government. In 80s, this approach again changed into multidisciplinary approach with an emphasis on three major areas of health, education and employment. Government as well as non-government bodies focused on women's economic contribution by self employment and industrial ventures. In present scenario, many EDP- Entrepreneurship development programs are running by Micro Small and Medium Enterprises, Government, NGO's etc to increase the potential in women for entrepreneurship. The office of MSME has also ruined Women Cell for solving the problems, which are facing by them. There are also several programs and scheme provided by Government as well as non-government for needy women to make them economically independent. Small Industries Development Bank of India has also contributed in these programs. They have been implementing special schemes for women entrepreneurs. Government schemes for MSMEs provide special incentives and concessions for women entrepreneurs to helping them for promoting their business. Other than this, Prime Minister Rozgar Yojana is very beneficiary for women. Another scheme like MSE Cluster Development Program by Ministry of MSME varies 30-80% of the total project but in the case of cluster which is owned and managed by women, then this contribution could be up to 90%. Another scheme like Credit Guarantee Fund Scheme for MSEs, guarantee is generally available 75% of the loan extended, but in the case of women entrepreneurs, this guarantee could be up to 80%. Some of the special schemes for women entrepreneurs has also ruined by the Government as well as other local bodies. In present time, Indian Government has operated over 27 schemes for women by different departments and ministries. These are given below:

- IRDP- Integrated Rural Development Program
- KVIC-Khadi and Village Industries Commission
- TRYSEM- Training of Rural Youth for Self-Employment
- PMRY- Prime Minister Rojgar Yojana
- EDPs- Entrepreneurial Development program
- MDP- Management Development programs
- WDCs-Women's Development Corporations
- MAHIMA- Marketing of Non-Farm Products of Rural Women
- ARWIND- Assistance to Rural Women in Non-Farm Development schemes
- TREAD- Trade Related Entrepreneurship Assistance and Development
- Working Women's Forum
- IMY- Indira Mahila Yojana
- IMK- Indira Mahila Kendra
- MSY-Mahila Samiti Yojana
- MVN-Mahila Vikas Nidhi
- MCS- Micro Credit Scheme
- RMK-Rashtriya Mahila Kosh
- SIDBI's Mahila Udyam Nidhi
- SBI's Stree Shakti Scheme
- NGO's Credit Schemes
- MSE-CDP- Micro & Small Enterprises Cluster Development Programs .
- NABARD'S SCHEME- National Banks for Agriculture and Rural Development Schemes

- Rajiv Gandhi Mahila Vikas Pariyojana
- Priyadarshini Project ( A programme for Rural Women Empowerment and Livelihood in Mid Gangetic Plains)
- NABARD- SEWA Bank project
- MSE'S Exhibitions (Exhibitions for women, under promotional package for Micro & Small enterprises approved by CCEA under marketing support.)

#### **Women entrepreneur associations:**

Government and other agencies are playing equally important role in facilitating women empowerment. In India, there is various women association running. List of these various associations are given below:

- FIWE- Federation of Indian Women Entrepreneurs
- CWEL- Consortium of Women Entrepreneurs
- ALEA- Association of Lady Entrepreneurs of Andhra Pradesh
- AWEK Association of Women Entrepreneurs of Karnataka
- SEWA- Self-Employed Women's Association
- WEPA- Women Entrepreneurs Promotion Association
- MOOWE- The Marketing Organization of Women Enterprises
- BMUS- Bihar Mahila Udyog Sangh
- MAWE-Mahakaushal Association of Woman Entrepreneurs
- SAARC Chamber Women Entrepreneurship Council
- WEAT- Women Entrepreneurs Association of Tamil Nadu
- TSS- Tie Stree Shakti
- WEC- Women Empowerment Corporation

#### **Step taken by government of India in five year plans:**

We cannot imagine the world without women. So like that women entrepreneurial development also needed support because entrepreneurial development is not possible without participation of women. Some brief explanation of these programs is given below:

**1. Seventh Five-Year Plan:** Government has introduced a special chapter on "Integration of women in development" in seventh five year plan. Some suggestions are also given in this chapter. Following as:

- Specific target group: Women treated as specific target group in all development programs.
- Arranging training facilities: Some vocational training facilities provided to women according to their needs.
- Developing new equipments: Government should to focus on increasing their efficiency by technologies and equipment etc.
- Marketing assistance: They should be provided the marketing assistance to women entrepreneur for their helps in promotion and suggestions for the product produced by them.

**2. Eight Five-Year Plans:** Indian government has introduced some special program for rural women to increase employment. Government also wanted to increase income generating activities for women in rural areas. During eight five-year plan, government launched some plans, which is given below:

- To develop entrepreneurial ability in rural women, government was launched PMRY and EDP programs.
- Agriculture's scheme has also introduced for women farmers. By this scheme training, women having small and marginal captures in agriculture as well as allied activity.
- To create more employment opportunities for remote area's women, government introduced KVIC scheme in the form of special measures in remote area.
- Government has introduced some women co-operative schemes and also fully financial support to help those women, who are worked in agro-based industries like dairy farming, animal husbandries, horticulture and poultry etc.

**3- Ninth Five-Year Plan:** Everyone knows that without women development, economic development is not possible because economic development means long term, all rounds and everyone's development.

- Trade Related Entrepreneurship Assistance and Development - Ministry of small industry was introduced this scheme for women entrepreneurs to develop entrepreneurial quality in them, basically rural, semi-urban and urban area's women.
  - Marketing assistance- Government has adopted a special strategy to provide assistance to women entrepreneurs.
  - Swarna Jyanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana and Swarna Jayanti Sehkari Rozgar Yojana - These schemes are provided reservation for women entrepreneurs. By these schemes government wanted to encourage them to start their enterprise.
  - Women Development Corporations - For the purpose of arranging credit and marketing facilities, government has introduced new scheme named Women Development Corporation for women entrepreneurs.
  - SIDBI has also contributed in this objective. For women entrepreneurs, they launched some schemes like: 1- Mahila Udyam Nidhi, 2- Micro Credit Scheme for women, 3- Mahila Vikas Nidhi, 4- Women Entrepreneurial Development Programs, and 5- Marketing Development Fund for Women.
- 4- Consortium of Women entrepreneurs of India provides a platform to assist the women entrepreneurs to develop new, creative and innovative techniques of production, finance and marketing. There are different bodies such as NGOs, voluntary organizations, Self-help groups, institutions and individual enterprises from rural and urban areas which collectively help the women entrepreneurs in their activities.

**5- Training programs:** Government is introduced following schemes for the women to be self employment:

- STEP-Support for Training and Employment Program of Women
- DWCRA-Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas
- SISI- Small Industry Service Institutes
- SFC- State Financial Corporations
- NSIC- National Small Industries Corporations

**6- Mahila Vikas Nidhi:** This scheme has introduced by SIDBI especially for rural area's women. In this scheme, women can take loan for their enterprise like spinning, block printing, weaving, embroidery products, knitting, bamboo products, handlooms, handicraft etc.

**7- Rashtriya Mahila Kosh:** This fund launched in 1993 for poor women, who wants to start venture but they have not enough capital. In this scheme, they can take grant at reasonable rates of interest with very low transaction costs and simple procedure.

#### **Some successful women entrepreneurs in India:**

- 1- AkhilaSrinivasan, Managing Director, Shriram Investment Ltd.
- 2- ChandaKochhar, Executive Director, ICICI Bank.
- 3- Ektakapoor, Creative Director, Balaji Telefilms Ltd.
- 4- JyotiNaik, President, Lijjat Papad.
- 5- KiranMazumdar Shaw, Chairman and Managing director, Biocon Ltd.
- 6- Lalita D. Gupta, JMD, ICICI Bank.
- 7- Naina lalkidwar, Deputy CEO, HBSE.
- 8- Preetha Reddy, Apollo Hospital, Managing Director.
- 9- Priya Paul, Apeejay park hotel, Chairman.
- 10- Rajshree Pathy, Rajshree Sugar and Chemical Ltd, Chairman.
- 11- Ranjana Kumar, NABARD, Chairman

#### **Conclusion.**

Empowerment is about being able to grow. As women grow their management skills they also must embrace areas of strategic planning and develop visions of growth. Empowerment of women leads to economic independence, the opportunity to have control over their lives self-reliance, self-determination, and a way to achieve for themselves. Empowerment through self-employment is also related to women's ability to gain control over economic resources and to participate more fully in the process of building

wealth. As their business grow, one of the biggest challenges for women entrepreneurs is learning to “let go” internal business operations – to move from “doing to managing” and from “management to leadership”. Women are becoming more personally and economically empowered through business ownership or entrepreneurship development.

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