

A STUDY ON THE PROBLEMS FACED BY WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN INDIA

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Abstract

Women entrepreneurs are playing very vital role and they have become important part of the global business environment and it's really important for the sustained economic development and social progress. Women entrepreneurs' responsibility towards family and workplace. The attitude of society towards her and the constraints in which she has to live and work are hostile. With joint families breaking up many women simply don't have the support of elders. However, in rural India joint families are still the order of the day. Women have to face resistance not only from men but also from elderly woman who are ingrained with this attitude of inequality. This attitude of reservation creates difficulties and problems at all levels, i.e., family support, banking, marketing, training, licensing etc.

Key words: *Women entrepreneurs, family, society, responsibility.*



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INTRODUCTION

Women entrepreneur may be defined as a women or a group of women who innovates imitates for adopts an economic activity. In other words, any women or a group of women who initiate organize and operate a business enterprise. According to the Government of India, a woman entrepreneur is defined as, an enterprise owned and controlled by a woman and enterprise owned and controlled by a woman and having a minimum financial interest of 51% of the employment generated in the enterprises to women. A strong desire to do enormous positive is an integral quality of entrepreneurial women, who is competent of contributing values in both family and social life. With the introduction of media, women are conscious of their own qualities, rights and also the work situations.

“An enterprise owned and controlled by a women having a minimum financial interest of 51 per cent of the capital and giving at least 51 per cent of the employment generated by the enterprise to women.” — Government of India

“A woman entrepreneur can be defined 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.” —Kamal Singh

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To find out the factors analysis of women entrepreneurs
2. To study the support given by the government to women entrepreneurs.
3. To examine the obstacles faced by women entrepreneurs.
4. To draw conclusions and offer suggestions.

Some of the problems faced by women entrepreneurs are as follows:

1. Problem of Finance:

Finance is regarded as “life-blood” for any enterprise, be it big or small. However, women entrepreneurs suffer from shortage of finance on two counts. Firstly, women do not generally have property on their names to use them as collateral for obtaining funds from external sources. Thus, their access to the external sources of funds is limited.

Secondly, the banks also consider women less credit-worthy and discourage women borrowers on the belief that they can at any time leave their business. Given such situation, women entrepreneurs are bound to rely on their own savings, if any and loans from friends and relatives who are expectedly meager and negligible. Thus, women enterprises fail due to the shortage of finance.

2. Scarcity of Raw Material:

Most of the women enterprises are plagued by the scarcity of raw material and necessary inputs. Added to this are the high prices of raw material, on the one hand, and getting raw material at the minimum of discount, on the other. The failure of many women co-operatives in 1971 engaged in basket-making is an example how the scarcity of raw material sounds the death-knell of enterprises run by women (Gupta and Srinivasan 2009).

3. Stiff Competition:

Women entrepreneurs do not have organizational set-up to pump in a lot of money for canvassing and advertisement. Thus, they have to face a stiff competition for marketing their products with both organized sector and their male counterparts. Such a competition ultimately results in the liquidation of women enterprises.

4. Limited Mobility:

Unlike men, women mobility in India is highly limited due to various reasons. A single woman asking for room is still looked upon suspicion. Cumbersome exercise involved in starting an enterprise coupled with the officials humiliating attitude towards women compels them to give up idea of starting an enterprise.

5. Family Ties:

In India, it is mainly a women's duty to look after the children and other members of the family. Man plays a secondary role only. In case of married women, she has to strike a fine balance between her business and family. Her total involvement in family leaves little or no energy and time to devote for business.

Support and approval of husbands seem necessary condition for women's entry into business. Accordingly, the educational level and family background of husbands positively influence women's entry into business activities.

6. Lack of Education:

In India, around three-fifths (60%) of women are still illiterate. Illiteracy is the root cause of socio-economic problems. Due to the lack of education and that too qualitative education, women are not aware of business, technology and market knowledge. Also, lack of education causes low achievement motivation among women. Thus, lack of education creates one type or other problems for women in the setting up and running of business enterprises.

7. Male-Dominated Society:

Male chauvinism is still the order of the day in India. The Constitution of India speaks of equality between sexes. But, in practice, women are looked upon as abla, i.e. weak in all respects. Women suffer from male reservations about a women's role, ability and capacity and are treated accordingly. In nutshell, in the male-dominated Indian society, women are not treated equal to men. This, in turn, serves as a barrier to women entry into business.

8. Low Risk-Bearing Ability:

Women in India lead a protected life. They are less educated and economically not self-dependent. All these reduce their ability to bear risk involved in running an enterprise. Risk-bearing is an essential requisite of a successful entrepreneur. In addition to above problems, inadequate infrastructural facilities, shortage of power, high cost of production, social attitude, low need for achievement and socioeconomic constraints also hold the women back from entering into business.

Analysis and data interpretation:

Table No-1: Social Economic Profile

Gender	No. Of Respondents	Percentage
Male	Nil	Nil
Female	120	100
Total	120	100
Age	No. Of Respondents	Percentage
Below 25 years	10	8.33
26 years-30 years	48	40.00
31 years -35 years	46	38.33
Above 35 years	16	13.34
Total	120	100
Income Level (per annum)	No. Of Respondents	Percentage
Below Rs.25,000	10	8.33
Rs.25,000-Rs.50,000	65	54.17
Rs.50,000-Rs.1,00,000	29	24.16
Above Rs.1,00,000	16	13.34
Total	120	100
Qualification	No. Of Respondents	Percentage
SSLC	25	20.83
HSC	28	23.33
Degree	55	45.84
Others	12	10
Total	120	100
Problems faced	No. Of Respondents	Percentage
Shortage of Finance	33	27.5
Marketing problems	15	12.5
Family Conflicts	27	22.50
Travelling	29	24.17
Managerial ability	16	13.33
Total	120	100

Source: Primary Data

Table No-1, shows that out of 120 respondents, 69.17 percentage of the respondents are male, 39.16 percentage of the respondents are between the age group of 26 years – 30 years, 57.50 percentage of the respondents are earning income between Rs.25000 – Rs.50000 p.a., 45.84 percentage of the respondents are qualified with SSLC.

Relationship between Income and Area of Land:

In order to understand the relationship between age and problems faced by women entrepreneurs, it is proposed to utilize the tool “ χ^2 ” test.

H₀: There is no significant relationship between age of the respondents and problems faced by women entrepreneurs.

Table No – 2: Relationship between Age and Problems faced by women entrepreneurs

Problems Age	Shortage of Finance	Marketing problems	Family Conflicts	Travelling	Managerial ability	Total
Below 25 years	2	2	2	2	2	10
26 years-30 years	11	6	11	12	8	48
31 years -35 years	17	4	11	11	3	46
Above 35 years	3	3	3	4	3	16
Total	33	15	27	29	16	120

Age and Problems faced by Women Entrepreneurs	Calculated value	Table value
	8.3975	21.03

Source: Primary Data

Result: Significant at 5% level.

Inference:

The calculated “ χ^2 ” value is lower than the table value at 5 percent level. Therefore the null hypothesis is accepted.

The analysis leads to the conclusion that there is no relationship between age of the respondents and problems faced by women entrepreneurs.

Remedies to Solve the Problems of Women Entrepreneurs:

The following steps may be adopted to solve the problems of the women entrepreneurs:

1) Finance Cells:

In various financial institutions and banks, special finance cells should be opened for providing easy finance to women entrepreneurs. Such finance cells should be managed by women officers and clerks. The finance cells should provide to women entrepreneurs at low rates of interest and on easy repayment basis.

2) Marketing Co-Operatives:

Women entrepreneurs should be encouraged and given all assistance for setting up marketing cooperatives. The Government and semi-government bodies should give highest preference to such women’s marketing cooperatives while making their purchases. Such cooperatives

will be able to eliminate the middlemen while making their purchases of 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 required by the women entrepreneurs. The government should also give subsidy to the women entrepreneurs to make their products cost- competitive and sell them at competitive prices.

4) Education and Awareness:

Intensive educational and awareness programmes should be arranged so as to change the negative or unfavorable attitudes towards women. The attitude of the elders, particularly, the elderly women whether mothers or mother-in-laws, should be made aware of the potential of the girls and their due role in the society. The social attitudes of these people should be made positive so as to enable the women entrepreneurs to achieve progress in their venture.

5) Training Facilities:

Training and skill development are quite essential for development of entrepreneurs. Special training schemes should be designed so as to suit the women entrepreneurs so as to create self-confidence in their mind about the success of their entrepreneurship. Since family members will not be permitted to go too far distant places for training, mobile training centres should be arranged. Similarly, part-time training facilities should also be provided during week-ends and holidays. In addition, stipend, good hygienic creches, transport facilities, and such other facilities should also be provided to attract more and more women-entrepreneurs to the training centres.

At present, the Government of India has over 10 schemes for women. Some of these are:

1. Assistance to Rural Women in Non-Farm Development (ARWIND) schemes
2. Entrepreneurial Development programme (EDPs)
3. Indira Mahila Yojana
4. Indira Mahila Kendra
5. Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP)
6. Khadi And Village Industries Commission (KVIC)
7. Management Development programmes
8. Women's Development Corporations (WDCs)
9. Marketing of Non-Farm Products of Rural Women (MAHIMA)

10. Mahila Vikas Nidhi

Conclusion

Empowering women entrepreneurs is crucial for achieving the goals of sustainable development and the bottlenecks hindering their growth must be reduced to enable full participation in the business. Apart from training programs Newsletters, mentoring, trade fairs and exhibitions also can be a source for entrepreneurial development. As a result, the desired outcomes of the business are quickly achieved and more of remunerative business opportunities are found. Therefore promoting entrepreneurship among Indian women is certainly a short-cut to rapid economic growth and development. Let us try to eradicate all kinds of gender bias and thus allow 'women' to be a great entrepreneur at par with men.

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