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WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN INDIA AND PROBLEMS FACED BY WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN INDIA

Smt. B.D.Patil

Associate Professor, Dept. of Economics

Arts, Science and Commerce College, Ozar Mig, Nashik, Maharashtra, India.

Introduction :

Women entrepreneurs are key players in any developing country, particularly in terms of their contribution to economic development. In recent years, even among the developed countries like USA and Canada, Women's role in terms of their share in small business has been increasing. Entrepreneurs play a key role in the economic development of a country. Entrepreneurship may be regarded as powerful tool for economic development of a predominantly agricultural country like India.

Men and women both are two wheels of society and contribution of both is essential for building healthy nation. Even after 65 years of independence women in India are struggling for entrepreneurial freedom. She has to seek permission from her family members. She has to face various socio-economic problems even after getting permission from family. That is why woman as entrepreneurial resource have not been widely recognized in India. There has been increasing trend in number of women owned enterprises in India but despite Government efforts substantial growth could not be achieved. Everywhere you look there is an Indian woman in the pursuit of the entrepreneurial dream. Women have always been involved in small, usually home-based businesses but this is different. We are more visible, we are more ambitious and we hear more women talking about building businesses, not just earning an income.

This paper attempts to evaluate the development of women entrepreneur and highlights the need and importance for women entrepreneurship. It also examines problems faced by women entrepreneurs.

Objectives of the Study :

The study sets the following objectives:

1. To study the status of women in India.
2. To study the need and importance for women entrepreneurship.
3. To understand the importance of finance and family support for motivating women entrepreneurship.
4. To study the problems faced by women entrepreneurs in India.

Research Methodology :

The present study is totally based on the secondary data and literature. The secondary data collected from various reference books, magazines, recently published journals, news-papers. The search for this paper has been done using the online databases; online journal and material available on various websites have been scanned. All the views and relationships expressed in this paper are through the review of paper, article and the reports.

Status of Women in India:

Women have equal status and rights with men. Women constitute about 50 per cent of the India's total population and play a most important role both as housewives and also in the development of the country. The years 1975 was declared International year for women. It is strongly believed that women play a very important role in bringing a healthy living and happiness to the family and the community. Because they are the main partners in working and earning, cooking and cleaning the house, caring and maintaining of the family and household and raising, training of the children and youth for their future life. Unfortunately, most of the women in developing countries including India are living in poor conditions due to poor earning and poor working conditions, poor education and training, poor calories intake and ill health and exploited by others, the socio-economic vicious circle. Therefore, they need more help from all institutions, especially strong co-operative organizations.

Traditionally it seems the Indian women were not recognized to be independent. On the contrary, it was advocated that they should play only a supportive role in recent years only, partly because of spread of literacy and education. The work of social workers like mahatma Phule, Maharshi Karve and partly because of the involvement, under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi the attitude to women underwent a major change, process of women development

since then is steadily progressive. Contributing to educating, assisting and awakening of women at all levels and at all places-rural and urban, lower, middle and even rich class, employed and unemployed, artisans, laborers, farmers, widows and deserted women, adivasi women and women belonging to special trade. But still the achievement is very negligible and much has remained to be done in the area.

The status, of women in Independent India occupies an important role and all efforts are being made to establish the significant place that she can play in the upliftment of her own self and the society at large. The preamble to the constitution of India resolved to secure to all its citizens "Social, economic and political justice, liberty of thought expression, belief, faith and worship, equality of status and opportunities, dignity of the individual and the unity of the nation." Indian women are entitled to these rights just as men are. Some of the specific directive principles are free and compulsory education for all children up to the age of fourteen, rights to an adequate means of livelihood, equal pay for equal work maternity relief etc.

It is well known that women have been playing a vital role in the households since ages. They have worked as one of the wheels of family bullock cart and tried to put household's economy on the sound footing. Normally they are engaged in a wide range of activities in addition to their routine domestic work. Various jobs done by women are not recognized as productive work and, therefore, they are engaged in a wide range of activities in addition to their routine domestic work. The status of women in a society is the true index of its cultural, social, religious and spiritual levels.

During the decade for women several Governmental and voluntary organizations carried out many studies, seminars, workshops, conferences, symposia etc. and discussed the problems faced by the women. They work longer hours and bear nearly total responsibility for child care and household. In this connection the constitution of India and the laws enacted from time to time grant equal rights in all the spheres to the women and laws guaranteeing for their equal status of participation in the political process and as well as in the employment. But they constitute to suffer from disabilities and social prejudices due to a variety of factors hidden in the absolute social, cultural and religious traditions. After independence many organizations and institutions, both Government and voluntary organizations have been active in improving the socio-economic condition of women. In this research the researcher has tried to show the significance role of women towards the country's socio-economic development.

Need and importance for Women Entrepreneurship :

Women entrepreneurs have an important role to play in developing nations. Women entrepreneurs are the one who are engaged in the productive activities, SSI, small business, manufacturing industries such as – manufacture of detergent powders, cotton ropes, handicrafts, doll making, toys, food processing etc. several studies about women entrepreneurs have been done but still the regional level studies are to be conducted to find out the potentiality of women entrepreneurs and find the solutions for solving the problems of women entrepreneurs for encouraging them to take active part in nation building activity. Women entrepreneur are defined as the women or group of women who initiate organize and operate a business enterprise. Government of India defines a women entrepreneur as "An enterprise owned and controlled by a woman".

Women become entrepreneurs due to several factors which may be grouped under 'pull factors' and 'push factors'. Pull factors refer to the urge in women to undertake a venture with an inclination to start a business. Women entering business, driven by financial need due to family circumstances are said to be influenced by push factors. The following reasons for the women entering business :

1. Women who take entrepreneurship because of economic needs.
2. Women with a family background in some skill or trade and desire to earn extra income.
3. Women with personality characteristics such as need for achievement.
4. Women who take it up as leisure time actively.
5. On official advice and guidance.

Entrepreneurship can help women's economic independence and their improved social status. Through their economic independence automatically women gets empowerment also. Development of women entrepreneurship enables man to understand and appreciate women's abilities. This in turn can lead rationalization of domestic life and it creates an awareness about the potentiality in women through which, individual families and society at large can benefit. Women Entrepreneurship through enhancing their status with men also can lead to integration of women in economic development. Women are trying their level best to attain quality of opportunity in various ways which are different over the time and among societies. Entrepreneurship is suitable to women and it is possible to do work when she has free time. A self-employed woman is gaining better status and it enables her to take part in decision-making in their family affairs. If mother is an entrepreneur, her children may acquire better education, get clothing and medical care and also these children will be more independent having more interaction with outside world than the children of most housewives.

But now the scenario is changing fast with modernization, urbanization and development of education and business. Women are now seeking gainful employment in several fields in increasing numbers with the spread of education and new awareness women entrepreneur are spreading their wings to higher level of engineering, electronics, and energy. Women are pulling up units to manufacture solar cookers as in Gujarat, small foundries in Maharashtra, TV capacitors in the industrially backward area of Orissa and women in Kerala are skilled in traditional and self acquired crafts like embroidery, lace, toys, mat weaving etc. Even the so-called socially tabooed industrial activity of wire making and selling is being done by women entrepreneurs in Mumbai. So today, no field is unapproachable to trained and determined modern Indian women. But still it can not be said that the women entrepreneurship movement has taken of the ground and it is felt that the movement is still in a transition period. Entrepreneurship for women can be planned and developed and the need for providing appropriate awareness and environment to promote entrepreneurship is of vital importance.

Moreover, women have become an integral part of the industrial part of the industrial society. The women must supplement the income of family through whatever skill she has acquired. The present inflationary pressure warrants women to join the male member of the family for securing substantial livelihood. Educated women need not wait for employment in the organized sector. Women are expected to come out from tradition by taking up self-employment ventures.

Importance of Finance and family Support for Women Entrepreneurs:

Women Entrepreneurship depends upon their family background and support. But family members are not in favor of supporting their ladies to take up the business in which they have skills, naturally they will be unwilling to support with the finance required for starting a business unit. Men are not willing to stand as surety to the loan granted by financial agencies. Women are not in a position to start the business with own capital. External finance is not so easily coming forward, and self financing is very meager.

Indian society is male dominated and women are treated as dependent on men. Therefore family and social support is key determinant in entrepreneurial establishment. Most common problem which women face in the form of non-co-operation from her husband or close family members. Women entrepreneurs in India have to face many problems at start up as well as operating stage. The main reason of non availability of finance to women is their inability to provide collaterals as they do not have any property on their name. Women have got restricted mobility freedom and have to perform dual role one at family, another at work which hinders the entrepreneurial growth. It will be very difficult for women entrepreneurs to avail such loan facilities from financial institutions as they are unable to provide security. Although financial institutions have liberalized lending schemes, women entrepreneurs are not in a position to avail required finance, as family members in most of the cases do not support to raise heavy capital. The Nationalized banks and state finance corporations provide loans to women entrepreneurs. Commercial banks help the women entrepreneurs by providing working capital to carry on day-to-day business activities overdraft facilities, loans for machinery, market information, availability of raw materials, organizing training facilities etc.

Problems faced by Women Entrepreneur in India :

Women entrepreneurs face a series of problems right from the beginning till the enterprise functions. Being a woman itself poses various problems to a women entrepreneur. The problem of Indian women pertains to her responsibility towards family, society and lion work. The tradition, customs, socio cultural values, ethics, motherhood subordinators to ling husband and men, physically weak, hard work areas, feeling of insecurity, cannot be tough etc are some peculiar problems that the Indian women are coming across while they jump into entrepreneurship.

Problems faced by women entrepreneurs are as follows :

Family ties :

Women in India are very emotionally attached to their families. They are supposed to attend to all the domestic work, to look after the children and other members of the family. They are over burden with family responsibilities like extra attention to husband, children and in laws which take away a lots of their time and energy. In such situation, it will be very difficult to concentrate and run the enterprise successfully.

1. **Social attitude and support :** Indian society is male dominated and women are treated as dependent on men. Therefore, social support is key determinant in entrepreneurial establishment. Most common problem which women may face in the form of non co-operation from her husband or close family members.
2. **Male dominated society :** Even though our constitution speaks of equality between sexes, male chauvinism is still the order of the day. Women are not treated equal to men. Their entry to business requires the approval of the head of the family. Entrepreneurship has traditionally been seen as a male preserve. All these put a break in the growth of women entrepreneurs.

3. **Lack of education** : Women in India are lagging far behind in the field of education. Most of the women are illiterate. Those who are educated are provided either less or inadequate education than their male counterpart partly due to early marriage, partly due to son's higher education and partly due to poverty. Due to lack of proper education, women entrepreneurs remain in dark about the development of new technology, new methods of production, marketing and other Governmental support which will encourage them to flourish.
4. **Social barriers** : The traditions and customs prevailed in Indian societies towards women sometimes stand as an obstacle before them to grow and prosper. Castes and religions dominate with one another and hinder women entrepreneurs too. In rural areas, they face more social barriers. They are always seen with suspicious eyes.
5. **Shortage of raw materials** : Neither the scarcity of raw materials, sometimes nor, availability of proper and adequate raw materials sounds the death-knell of the enterprises run by women entrepreneurs. Women entrepreneurs really face a tough task in getting the required raw materials and other necessary inputs for the enterprises when the prizes are very high.
6. **Problem of finance** : Women entrepreneurs suffer a lot in raising and meeting the financial needs of the business. Bankers, creditors and financial institutes are not coming forward to provide financial assistance to women borrowers on the ground of their less credit worthiness and more chances of business failure. They also face financial problem due to blockage of funds in raw materials, work-in-progress finished goods and non-receipt of payment from customers in time.
7. **Tough competition** : Usually women entrepreneurs employ low technology in the process of production. In a market where the competition is too high, they have to fight hard to survive in the market against the organized sector and their male counterpart who have vast experience and capacity to adopt advanced technology in managing enterprises.
8. **High cost of production** : Several factors including inefficient management contribute to the high cost of production which stands as a stumbling block before women entrepreneurs. Women entrepreneurs face technology obsolescence due to non-adoption or slow adoption to changing technology which is a major factor of high cost of production.
9. **Low risk-bearing capacity** : Women in India are by nature weak, shy and mild. They cannot bear the amount risk which is essential for running an enterprise. Lack of education, training and financial support from outsiders also reduce their ability to bear the risk involved in an enterprises.
10. **Limited mobility** : Women mobility in India is highly limited and has become a problem due to traditional values and inability to drive vehicles. Moving alone and asking for a room stay out in the night for business purposes are still looked upon with suspicious eyes. Sometimes, younger women feel uncomfortable in dealing with men who show extra interest in them than work related aspects.
11. **Lack of entrepreneurial attitude** : Lack of entrepreneurial attitude is a matter of concern for women entrepreneurs. They have no entrepreneurial bent of mind. Even after attending various training programs on entrepreneurship women entrepreneurs fail to tide over the risks and troubles that may come up in an organizational working.
12. **Limited managerial ability** : Management has become a specialized job which only efficient managers perform. Women entrepreneurs are not efficient in managerial functions like planning, organizing, controlling, co-coordinating, staffing, directing, motivating etc. of an enterprise. Therefore, less and limited managerial ability of women has become a problem for them to run the enterprise successfully.
13. **Lack of self confidence** : Women entrepreneurs because of their inherent nature, lack of self-confidence which is essentially a motivating factor in running an enterprise successfully. They have no strive hard to strike a balance between managing a family and managing an enterprise. Sometimes she has to sacrifice her entrepreneurial urge in order to strike a balance between two.

Conclusion :

Women entrepreneurs face specific problems in setting up in businesses that are different from those faced by male-owned businesses. Like young entrepreneurs, women may have particular problems with raising finance and may have had less chance than most men to accumulate the confidence, skills and contacts necessary to start and run a successful business. In addition, gender discrimination by finance and support providers, customers or employees may be an issue. Particular problems for women, firstly, women may be disadvantaged in their ability to raise start-up finance. Second, guarantees required for external finance may be beyond the scope of most women's personal assets and credit track record. Third, once a business is established, finance may be more difficult for female entrepreneurs to rise than their male counterparts, because of the greater difficulties that women face in penetrating informal financial

networks. Finally, the relationship between female in penetrating informal financial networks. Finally, the relationship between female entrepreneurs and bankers may suffer from sexual stereotyping and discrimination. There are needs for women coming forward to become enterpriser in this country. Women entrepreneurs would act as catalytic agency to spread a new wave of confidence among other women about their social status. Though it is true that women entrepreneurship movement has not reached a take off stage in this country, the future seems to be quit encouraging.

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