

A Study on Gender Issues of Women Entrepreneurs in Kanchipuram District of Tamil Nadu

R. Arumugam¹

Abstract: We have few women entrepreneurs in India. The women entrepreneurs when encouraged and motivated can successfully contribute to the value addition of the economy in a number of ways. With the advent of liberalization and move towards globalization Indian economic environment offers immense opportunity to entrepreneurs. An entrepreneur is a dynamic agent of change. Who is instrumental in transforming physical, natural and human resource into value added products and services. For the entrepreneur to be successful the environment must be conducive and the individual must have an interesting initiative and drive in grasping the essential facts. About 5 percent of total population constitutes women, but women workers constitute only 16 percent, 80 percent remain engaged in unorganized sectors entrepreneurship among women is a recent phenomenon. Entrepreneurship calls for all these personal abilities and characteristics which could be developed in women folk.

1. DEFINITION AND REVIEW OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEUR

Women entrepreneurs may be defined as a women or group of women who initiate organize and run a business enterprise. In terms of Schumpeterian concept of innovative entrepreneurs, women who innovate initiate or adopt a business activity are called “women entrepreneurs”. The government of India has defined women entrepreneurs based on women participation in equity and employment of a business enterprise. Accordingly a women entrepreneur its defined as “an enterprise owned and controlled by a women having a minimum financial interest of 51 percent of the capital and giving at least 51 percent of the employment generated in the enterprise to women”. However this definition is subject to criticism mainly on the condition of employing more than 80 percent women workers in the enterprise owned and run by the women.

2. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- To study the socio-economic condition of the women entrepreneur in Kanchipuram District.
- To identify the various problem faced by the entrepreneur women in Kanchipuram District.
- To suggest suitable measures for the entrepreneur women in Kanchipuram District.

3. GROWTH OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Women in India constitute around half of the country's population. Hence, they are regarded as the better half of the society. In the official proclamation, they are at par with men. But, in real life, the truth prevails otherwise our society is still male-dominated and women are not treated as equal partners both inside and outside four walls of the house. In fact, they are treated as able i.e... weak and dependent on men. As such the Indian women enjoy a disadvantageous status, in the society. Let some facts be given. The much low literacy rate (40%) low work participation rate (28%) and low urban population share (10%) of women as compared to 60%, 52% and 18% respectively of their male counterparts well confirm their disadvantageous position in the society our age old socio-cultural traditions and taboos arresting and women within four walls of their houses also make their conditions more disadvantageous. These factors combined serve as non-conductive condition for the emergence and development of women entrepreneurship in the country. Given these unfavourable conditions, the development of women entrepreneurship in expectedly low in the country. This is well indicated a dismally low level of women (5.2%) in total self-employment persons on the country. Further women entrepreneurs in India accounted for 9.01% of the total 1.70 million entrepreneurs.

4. COMMITMENT

The women entrepreneurs needs ability to sticks to her goal through thick and thin and should not get disheartened by get-backs. Burden in a women entrepreneur is greater as she also has to bear the load of her household. Entrepreneur should be highly sensitive to change. She should have the ability to plan and anticipate changes in economy. Accordingly she has to steer the course to her business.

Majority of women who entered the field of entrepreneurship admit that face problems like managing workers, marketing, recovery of dues, fear of loss in finance social and personal life, preparation of project report, machine purchase for getting infrastructural facilities, raw materials procurement, obtaining credit, arranging collaterals for starting industry lack of training skills, collecting subsidies, seeking exemption from electricity duties, sales tax, Income tax etc...

5. PROBLEMS OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

Women entrepreneurs encounter too sets of problems viz., general problem of entrepreneurs and problems specific to women entrepreneurs. These are discussed follows.

5.1. Problems 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 the counts. Firstly, women do not generally have property on their names to use them as collateral for obtaining funds from external sources. Women entrepreneurs are bound to rely on their own savings.

5.2. Scarcity of Raw Material

Most of the women enterprises are plagued by the scarcity of raw material and necessary inputs. Added to this is the high price of raw materials on the one hand and getting raw material at the minimum of discount. 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.

5.3. Stiff Competition

Women entrepreneurs do not have organizational set-up 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 counter parts such a competition ultimately results in the liquidation of women enterprises.

5.4. 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. Cumbersome exercise involved in starting as enterprise coupled with the officials humiliating attitude towards women compels them to give up idea of starting an enterprise.

5.5. Family Ties

In India, it is mainly a women's duty to look after the children and other members of the family. 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. Accordingly, the educational level and family background of husbands positively influence women's entry into business activities.

5.6. Lack of Education

In India, around three – fifths (60%) of women are still illiterate. Illiteracy is the no of cause of socio-economic problems, due to lack of education and that to qualitative education. Women are not aware of business, technology and market knowledge.

5.7. 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 able i.e., weak in all respects. Women suffer from male reservation about a women's role ability and capacity and the treated equal to men. This is turn, serves of a barrier to women entry into business.

5.8. Low Risk

Bearing ability, women in India lead a protected life. They are less educated and eco-

nomically not self-dependent. All these reduce their ability to bear risk involved in running on enterprise. Risk bearing is an essential requisite of a successful entrepreneur.

6. ENTREPRENEUR'S RECENT TRENDS

Days are gone when women in India remained confined to within four walls of their homes and their immense strength and potential remained unrecognized and an account for, now, they are increasingly participating in all spheres of activities. The fact remains that in academic, politics, administration, business and industry are no longer the prerogatives of men in India. The general consensus that is emerging in all discussion relating to the development of women.

The Government of India has been assigning importance to the development of women entrepreneurs in the country in recent years. The sixth five year plan, for example, proposed for promoting female employment in women owned industries. The Government moved or step forward in the seventh five year plan by including a special chapter on integration of women in developments.

- To treat women as specific target groups in all development programmes.
- To devise and diversity vocational training facilities for women to said their varied needs and skills.
- To promote appropriate technologies to improve their efficiency and productivity.
- To provide assistance for marketing their products: and
- To involve women in decision – making process.

7. METHOD FOR THE STUDY

Mass poverty and widespread unemployment are the two most pervasive problem faced by the third world countries. India is no exception from this India is a land of villages with 76.7percent of her population living in villages and that carries the bulk of the poor. The causes of poverty are many and well known, however some of the important reasons can be identified as uneven distribution of production of resources; high rate of population growth low productivity in agriculture and allied sectors; high dependence on agriculture and high rate of illiteracy. The culmination of all these factors is reflected through low income and large unemployment. Self-employment is the only way to solve the problem of unemployment that disguised unemployment lives ours. Self-employment can be only being achieved through the promotion of entrepreneurship and that women entrepreneurship because majority of the women living in the rural areas are illiterate mal nourished and unemployed. Keeping this basic idea in mind, the present study tries to investigate the growth and development of women entrepreneurs in rural and urban areas of Dindigul District.

8. MAJOR FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

1. Place of entrepreneurial activity; all most all hotel units, petty shop units and 90% of the tailoring shop in the area. 62% of the vegetable owners and 80% of the beauty parlour units.
2. Previous employment details of the respondents; The 60% of the respondents in petty shop unit have previous employment experience like they have work in sweet stalls, tea shops, and tailoring units etc.. Mainly majority of the respondents have no previous experience and they are newly emerged entrepreneurs.
3. Type of training required by the respondents: The 50% of the respondents in all the categories desired to have training in all the fields. Namely training in administration, production management, sales and marketing.

8.1. Sources of finance

The majority of the respondents in all the categories have started their business unit with their part savings. In few cases like tailoring unit, hotel unit vegetable unit, and beauty parlour unit, they have approached the money lenders for finance and in only two cases namely petty shop unit and tailoring unit the respondents have met to comparative banks for their finance.

8.2. Manufacturing Improvement

The 60% of the respondents in tailoring unit and 70% have registered and improved growth in production and sales.

8.3 Loss

Since the unit selected for the study are micro enterprises and household units the family members also contribute to the family income. So the women entrepreneurs are managing their units without only loss with the full support of their family members.

8.4 Problem if Any

Due to good management of the unit by the women entrepreneurs till date no respondent has experienced any problem. But some general problem is experienced by all the respondents in the study area that is competition from the neighbouring.

9. CONCLUSION

Women have the potential and will to establish and manage enterprise of their own. What they need in encouragement and support from the family members. Government society male counter parts etc. with the right assistance from varied groups mentioned above. They can join the main stream of national economy and thereby contribute to the economic programme.

10. REFERENCES

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*¹Ph.D Scholar in Management Studies, Bharathiar University, Coimbatore.
E-mail: crarumugam@gmail.com*