



CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN INDIA

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Entrepreneur plays an important role in the growth of any Nation. Development of any entrepreneurship culture and qualitative business development services are the major requirements for industrial growth. Entrepreneurship emerges from an individual's creative spirit into long-term business ownership, employment creation, Capital formation and economic security. Entrepreneurship skills are necessary for industrialization.

As technology speeds up lives, women are emerging economic core of the country. The world's modern democratic economics depends on the participation of both sexes. Irene Natividad has observed that, Global markets and women are not often used in the same sentence, but increasingly statistics show that women have economic clout-most visibly as entrepreneurs and most powerfully as consumers. In some regions of the world, transformation to market economy, women entrepreneurship is a growing trend. However in India, the actual participation of women in income generating activities is quite unsatisfactory. The Specific role of women in the economic effort has not yet been clearly defined but the need for integration of women into development is being particularly felt by women themselves.

With the increase in the number of women getting educated, there is considerable awareness among women to be self-employed, and gradually the role of women is changing in the society. Women make the second largest target group for identification of potential entrepreneurs being slightly less than 50% of the total population.

In India women have to face many constraints in carrying out economic activities or undertaking any enterprenual work. Women have to face various socioeconomic and other problems as entrepreneurs as they are not treated at same level with men due to social and cultural traditions.

Definition of Women Entrepreneur :-

1. "Women Entrepreneur may be defined as a woman or a group of women, who initiate, organize and run a business enterprise.
2. Government of India has defined, women Entrepreneur as owning and controlling an enterprise with a women having a minimum financial interest of 51% of Capital and giving at least 51% of employment generated in the enterprise to women.
3. J. Schumpeter :- Women who innovate, initiate, or adopt business actively are called women Entrepreneur.

In short women Entrepreneur is one who starts business and manages it independently ,tactfully and takes all risks. She faces the challenges boldly, with an iron will to succeed.

Women Entrepreneurship in India represents a group of women who have broken away from the beaten track and exploring new vistas of economic participation. Women in India entered business due to pull and push factors. Their task has been full of challenges. In spite of family opposition many women have proved themselves as successful entrepreneurs. The emergence of women entrepreneur and women owned firms and their significant contribution to the economy are visible in India.

Qualities of Women Entrepreneur :-

1. Women entrepreneur must accept challenges.
2. She must be ambitious.
3. Hardworking
4. She must have patience in her.
5. Adventurous.
6. Open style of Problem solving
7. Ability to motivate people
8. Knowing how to win and lose gracefully.

Objectives of the Study :-

1. To indentify the reasons for women for involving themselves in enterprenual activities.
2. To identify the challenges of women entrepreneurs.
3. To identify oppourtunities available for women entrepreneurs.
4. To discuss the measures needed to improve the State of women entrepreneurs.

Review of Literature :

Mallika Das (2012), studied Women entrepreneurs who own and manage small to medium sized enterprises in two states in Southern India Tamilnadu and Kerla. She examined the Problems these women faced during the setting up and continued operation of their businesses, and the work family conflicts that these women faced. It also looked at their reasons for starting a business and the self reported reasons for their success. The initial problems faced by these women

seem similar to those faced by women in western countries. However Indian women entrepreneurs faced lower levels of work family conflicts and seem to differ in their reasons for starting and succeeding in business.

Tambunan (2009) made a study on recent development of women Entrepreneurs in Asian developing countries. The study focused mainly on women entrepreneurs in small and medium enterprises based on data analysis and review of recent key literature. This study found that in Asian developing countries SMEs are gaining overwhelming importance, more that 95% of all firms in all sectors on average per country. The study also depicted the fact that representation of women entrepreneurs in this region is relatively low due to factors like low level of education, lack of capital and cultural or religious constraints. However the study revealed that most of the women entrepreneurs in SMEs are from the category of Sourced entrepreneurs seeking for better family incomes .

Singh (2008) conducted a study to identify the reasons and factors that influence entry of women in entrepreneurship and also explained the obstacles in the growth of women entrepreneurship. The factors identified were lack of interaction with successful entrepreneurs, social un acceptance as women entrepreneurs, family responsibility, gender discrimination, lack of social networking, low family and financial support.

Methodology :-

This paper is descriptive in Nature. The secondary data and information have been analyzed for the preparation of this paper. The secondary information is gathered from different books, journals, articles, conference papers and websites.

Why do women take up Entrepreneurship :-

Factors affecting women entrepreneurship are as follows :-

1. Push Factors –
 - a. Death of Bread winner
 - b. Sudden fall in family income
 - c. Permanent inadequacy in income of family.
2. Pull Factors :-
 - a. Women's desire to evaluate their talent
 - b. To utilize their free time or education
 - c. Need and perception of women's liberation, equity.
 - d. To gain recognition, importance and social status.

- e. To get economic independence.

Challenges faced by women Entrepreneurs

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There are many problems faced by women Entrepreneurs at various stages. Problems of women entrepreneurs are as follows-

1. **Competition :-**
Women Entrepreneurs have to face tough competition not only from industry but also from their male counterparts. Surviving this cut throat competition and achieving the aim of producing quality product at competitive price is not an easy task for the women Entrepreneurs.
2. **Limited Mobility :-**
Unlike men, women mobility in India is highly limited due to various reasons. Due to primary household responsibilities towards her family, her time gets divided. She has restricted timings for the work due to which, she is not in a position to travel frequently and be away for longer periods. Thus her mobility is restricted. This also has an implication on business.
3. **Socio-cultural Barriers :-**
Women has to perform multiple roles. In India, more importance is being given to male as compared to female. This mindset results in lack of schooling and necessary training for women. As a result this impediments the progress of women and handicap then in the world of work.
4. **Male dominated Society :-**
A women is dominated by men in her family as well as business often she has to obtain permission from men for almost everything. They are not treated as equals. Her freedom is restricted. She always has to consult and get approval of men.
5. **Lack of Confidence :-**
As women are accepting a subordinate status, as a result they lack confidence of their own capabilities. Even at home, family members do not have much faith in women possessing the abilities of decision making.
6. **Technology :-**
Access to technology and problems with intellectual property protection were regarded as problems for women entrepreneurs. The lack of computer knowledge of employees is a major problem.
7. **Lack Focus on career Obligation :-**

Indian women do not focus on their career obligation in the same manner as they do on their family and personal life. Despite having excellent enterprenual obligations. Their lack of focus towards their career crates a problem in promoting women entrepreneurship.

8. **Low Level of Literacy :-**

Education is the root cause of socioeconomic biasedness in the society and that does not let women achieve economic independency. Due to lack of knowledge of latest technology and proper education, it becomes difficult for women to set up their own business.

9. **Marketing Problems :-**

Women Entrepreneurs face problems in marketing of their products as this area is mainly dominate by males. Women entrepreneur also find it difficult to capture the market and make their products popular and they often take the help of middleman in marketing their product who often charge high commission from them.

10. **Lack of self Confidence :-**

A Strong mental outlook and an optimistic attitude amongst women are required to be an entrepreneur. But it has been noticed that women lack these qualities required in setting up their own enterprise. Thus not having the required confidence that is needed by today's women to make ahead crates resistance in their being a god entrepreneur.

Opportunities of Women Entrepreneurs

Now days the number of women entrepreneurs in India are increasing. Women participates in all spheres of a financial activities women must be treated as specific target groups in all development programs.

In India women's participation in economic activity is common from ancient times. The role of women has gone through several transitions. It took centuries for women's roles to move in the present direction. Women Entrepreneurship in India become popular in the late 1970's and now more and more women are emerging as entrepreneurs in all kind of economic activities.

The status of Women have been changing since 21st Century as a result of growing industrialization and urbanization. More and more women are going for higer education as well as technical and professional education. Women have shifted from kitchen

handicrafts to nontraditional higher levels of activities. Financial Institutions like banks have also setup special cells to assist women Entrepreneurs.

Organizations promoting women Entrepreneurship in India.

1. National Resource Centre for Women
2. Women's India Trust
3. Women Development Corporation
4. Working Women's Forum
5. Association of Women Entrepreneurs of Small Scale Industries.
6. Aid the Weaker Trust.
7. Self Employed women's Association.
8. Women Entrepreneurship of Maharashtra.
9. Self Help Group
10. The National Resource Centre for Women.
11. Women Development Cell.

Measures to Improve Women Entrepreneurship :-

Women Entrepreneurship in India faces many challenges and requires a radical Change in Attitudes and mindset of society. Therefore programs should be designed to address Changes in attitude and mindset of the people. Women of the present time should be made aware regarding her unique identity and her contribution towards the economic growth and the development of the country. Course Curriculum should be designed in a manner that will impart basic theoretical knowledge along with its practical implication and help impart skills required to be an entrepreneur.

It is not easy to develop women entrepreneurship in India as it requires elimination of various obstacles that includes changing the traditional attitude and mindset of people in society towards women to provide opportunities of women entrepreneurship in India one needs to make aware the women regarding her Position towards the value she an add towards economic growth and development of country.

Education can play a crucial role in promoting women entrepreneurship and promotion of women entrepreneurship can be achieved by designing course curriculum that will impart the basic knowledge along with its practical implication regarding setting up of own enterprise Vocational training can also help by training, motivating and assisting the upcoming women entrepreneurs in setting up and managing of a new enterprise. Proper education not only helps in acquisition of required knowledge but also imparts

knowledge about the different opportunities available in different sectors.

Also women entrepreneur who have successfully setup their enterprise can act as advisors for the upcoming women entrepreneurs.

Conclusion :-

Women being almost 50% population of India, have a pivotal role to play as a economic development of country is concerned.

The Indian Society is shifting from conservative attitude to progressive attitude. So Women are getting more opportunities not only in enterprenual worn but also in other domains of human life.

Women should be encouraged to take the benefits of policy measures introduced by the government ot promote the status and level of women entrepreneurship in India.

Women Entrepreneurs require support from their family and support. If they get support then new Censures will be open for women entrepreneurs.

If the problems of women entrepreneurs are addressed properly they can emerge as very successful entrepreneurs.

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