



WOMEN EMPOWERMENT THROUGH ENTREPRENEURSHIP

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ABSTRACT

Women Empowerment refers to the creation of an environment for women where they can make decisions of their own for their personal benefits as well as for the society. Women entrepreneurship development is the instrument of women empowerment. Empowerment leads to self-fulfillment 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. Economic development can be fostered only when women entrepreneurs in the nation is empowered. It is clear that women are the powerful drivers of development. Developing entrepreneurial skills among women will be a good approach for women empowerment and this would elevate social status of women. If she feels that she is reasonably strong, women entrepreneurs will be able to compete in all respect. The entrepreneurship of women is considered to be an effective instrument to the economic development and empowerment of women. Women are regarded as better half of the society. In traditional Indian societies, they were confined to four walls. In modern society, they come out of four walls to participate in all types of activities including entrepreneurship. Women's entrepreneurship contributes to the economic well-being of the family and communities and also reduces poverty. It ensures country's economic growth and development. The empowerment of women to a large extent depends on taking part in some development activities. Therefore the promotion of micro and small scale enterprises has been recognized as an important strategy for advancing the economic empowerment of women. At the household level, women's microenterprises and small scale businesses play an important role in ensuring the survival of poor household and in building up women's confidence, skills and socio economic status. However it is seen that women are the most deprived category in the society specifically in developing countries.

Keywords: Empowerment, Entrepreneurship, Development

INTRODUCTION

“When you empower a man, you empower an

individual; when you empower a woman, you empower a nation.”



‘Empowerment’ may be described as a process which helps people to assert their control over the factors which affect their lives. Empowerment of women means developing them as more aware individuals, who are politically active, economically productive and independent and are able to make intelligent discussion in matters that affect them.

It is fact that, when there is development of women, family develops, the society develops and the country develops. They are the catalyst of development and with them we prosper, but without them we are poor. Time went out when Indian women are confined to four walls of their homes with their immense strength and potential. The women entrepreneurs need not to be highly educated. It is sufficient that they possess basic knowledge of language and entrepreneurial skills. As women have to fulfill dual roles, entrepreneurship is a more suitable profession than regular employment either in public or private sector. Women

entrepreneurship is the process where women take, lead and organize a business or industry and provide employment opportunities to other. Women are venturing in all kind of enterprises. Women entrepreneurs are considered to be most important economic agents for economic augmentation of the country. They are the owners, producers, co-coordinators, sellers, decision makers, risk takers, innovators etc. They also generate employment opportunities and contribute in improving family’s living standard. Today’s women must supplement the family income using their potential and skills that they possess. Her skills and competencies may be sharpened and turned by way of training. Thus, women in India, no longer need to wait for employment outside home. They can successfully start their enterprise and earn their livelihood.

Now women are also interested to establish their own business as professionally both in the urban and rural areas due to



overcome poverty, generate family income and increasing Standard of living. In this regard Faley (1999) argued that women's development is not nearly about reducing poverty by increasing productivity, but also about women's liberation and empowerment.

Women's entrepreneurship needs to be studied separately for two main reasons. The first reason is that women's entrepreneurship has been recognized during the last decade as an important untapped source of economic growth. Women entrepreneurs create new jobs for themselves and others and also by being different. They also provide the society with different solutions to management, organisation and business problems as well as to the exploitation of entrepreneurial opportunities. The second reason is that the topic of women in entrepreneurship has been largely neglected both in society in general and in the social sciences.

Importance of the Study

Now a day's women entrepreneurship become an

important tool for women empowerment. Women entrepreneurs also enhance living standard of their family which in turn help in development of the country. Entrepreneurs are regarded as backbone of any economy.

Why Women Empowerment is Important?

- 1. Under-employed and unemployed:** Women population constitutes around 50% of the world population. A large number of women around the world are unemployed. The world economy suffers a lot because of the unequal opportunity for women at workplaces.
- 2. Equally competent and intelligent:** Women are equally competent. Nowadays, women are even ahead of men in many socio-economic activities.
- 3. Talented:** Women are as talented as men. Previously, women were not allowed higher education like men and hence their talents were wasted. But nowadays, they are also allowed to go for higher studies



and it encourages women to show their talents which will not only benefit her individually but to the whole world at large.

4. Overall development of society:

The main advantage of Women Empowerment is that there will be an overall development of the society. The money that women earn does not only help them and or their family, but it also help develop the society.

5. Economic Benefits: Women Empowerment also leads to more economic benefits not to the individuals but to the society as well. Unlike earlier days when they stayed at home only and do only kitchen stuffs, nowadays, they roam outside and also earns money like the male members of the society. Women empowerment helps women to stand on their own legs, become independent and also to earn for their family which grows country's economy.

6. Reduction in domestic violence: Women Empowerment leads to decrease in domestic violence. Uneducated women are

at higher risk for domestic violence than educated women.

7. Reduction in corruption:

Women Empowerment is also advantageous in case of corruption. Women empowerment helps women to get educated and know their rights and duties and hence can stop corruption.

8. Reduce Poverty: Women Empowerment also reduces poverty. Sometimes, the money earned by the male member of the family is not sufficient to meet the demands of the family. The added earnings of women helps the family to come out of poverty trap.

9. National Development: Women are increasingly participating in the national development process. They are making the nation proud by their outstanding performances almost every sphere including medical science, social service, engineering, etc.

10. Irreplaceable in some sectors: Women are considered irreplaceable for certain jobs.

Empowered Women's Characteristics

1. Empowered women define their attitude, values and behaviors



in relation to their own real interest. They have autonomy because they claim their freedom from existing male hierarchies, whether they live in traditional societies or modern industrial societies.

2. Empowered women maintain equal mindedness. They act out roles that challenge male dominance. They respond as equals and co-operate to work towards the common good.
3. Empowered women use their talent to live fulfilling lives. They not only survive the harshness of their own subjugation but also transcend their subjugation.
4. Empowered women maintain their strength on the face of pressures from the religion and work and contribute towards the empowerment of all women.
5. Empowered women define their values and formulate their beliefs themselves, they do not derive their sense of being from male authorities nor do they live vicariously through men.

Empowerment of Women through Entrepreneurship

In the early 1980s the United Nations reported that globally women performed two thirds of the world's work, earned one tenths of the world's income and owned one-hundredths of the world's economic resources (Lavoice, 2000). Instrument of women empowerment is self employment or entrepreneurship. The following are the impact of Entrepreneurship Development on Empowerment.

1. Self-confidence of Women

Increased self-confidence through entrepreneurship development gave the women a prosperous future.

2. Economic Solvency

The most important changes come through increase in income, which not only upgrades the individual's life but also increases her standard of living, brining economics solvency within the family. The increase in her income is also an increase in the family income and as such it provides family members to a better life style, including education for the



children and improvement of family health.

3. Capital Building

Their (Women) economic success enables women to expand their business, procure new machinery, tools, accessories and relevant necessities. Modernization of the work-place, introduction of new technology for increase production, increase of labourers, along with the increase in purchasing power, upgrades their status both socially and economically.

4. Role of Status

Some aspects of household decision making are reported to have changed as a result of women's contribution in family income. Most of the men now consult with their wives in important family matters. Their power of decision making has increased because they have money. Since women retain control over earnings, women can easily lend small and big amounts to business and others without asking for their husbands' permission. Since women perceive

that their bargaining power within the family has increased as an indirect outcome of participating in the business. Women's status has changed in the family and society gradually.

CONCLUSION

If women gain economic strength, they gain both visibility and a voice at home, workplace and community. This has an impact on their social status in terms of increase in their literacy, education of their children and family wellbeing. Therefore, empowerment of women has a rich payoff in economic development. Women are becoming more personally and economically empowered through business ownership or entrepreneurship development.

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