A SYNOPTIC VIEW ON PROBLEMS FACED BY WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

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ABSTRACT

Women Entrepreneurs accepts challenging roles to meet her personal needs and become economically independent. Many women have this quality but they never got a platform to showcase their talents. Women in India have to take responsibilities like bringing up children, maintaining home and caring for elder people. A strong desire to do something positive is an inbuilt quality of entrepreneurial women, who is capable of contributing values in both family and social life. But, balancing both the jobs simultaneously is a greater task in addition to that they have to overcome obstacles in the lane of entrepreneurship career to develop their enterprises towards a successful one. The present paper tries to explore the various types of problems faced by the women entrepreneurs and gives some suggestions to overcome them. The present study is purely based on the secondary data. The secondary data were collected from books, articles, reports journals, magazines and surfing on the Net.

Key Words: Entrepreneur, Women entrepreneurship, Problems of Women Entrepreneurs, Personal, Finance

1. INTRODUCTION

Societal set up in India has been traditionally a male dominated one. Women are considered as weaker sex and always depend on men folk to sustain. Development of entrepreneurship culture is the major requirements for the growth of nation. The traditional roles of housewives are gradually changing into women entrepreneurs. Some of the factors responsible for these changes are better education, changing socio cultural values and need for supplementary income. Now women have taken up entrepreneurial role in order to create a meaning for themselves. Women entrepreneurs may be defined as the women or a group of women who initiate, organize and operate a business enterprise. The Government of India has defined a woman entrepreneur as "an enterprise owned and controlled by a woman having a minimum financial interest of 51% of the capital and giving at least 51% of the employment generated in the enterprise to women".

Women entrepreneurs are a major force in innovation and job creation. In modern era, when women are showing their capabilities in various walks of life, the entrepreneurial classes of women are playing an increasingly prominent role in various sectors of industrial growth and economic development. In India, women constitute around 48 percent of the population but their participation in the economic activities is only 34 percent even many schemes supporting for their entrepreneurship development. Still in the developed era also women are facing problems and dominated by men everywhere. They have been encountering many problems with regard to their enterprise management and development.

3. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

P.M. SirumalarRajam and Dr. K. V. Soundararaja (2016) in their study focused on the problems faced by women entrepreneurs. They have come out of the four walls to participate in all sorts of activities. Women have been facing various problems in their entrepreneurial activities. The role of women entrepreneurs in promoting industrial development should be recognized and steps have to be taken by government to promote women entrepreneurship.

Adinath Kuchnur (2014) in his study Women Entrepreneurs: Classification, Problems and Remedies laid emphasis on the problems faced by women entrepreneurs and suggested the remedies to overcome them. In order to develop and boost entrepreneurship Government of India has initiated the Entrepreneurship Development Programs across the country. But, the participation of women in such programmes is minimum. Male entrepreneurs have dominated the Indian economy as compared to women entrepreneurs.

G. Palaniappan, C. S. Ramanigopal and A. Mani (2012) made a study on problems and prospects of women entrepreneurs in Erode district of Tamilnadu. Women owned businesses are highly increasing in the economies of almost all countries. The hidden entrepreneurial potentials of women have gradually been changing with the growing sensitivity to the role and economic status in the society. The state of Tamilnadu is the industrially developing area in which some of the entrepreneurs excel in small scale industry. Even though the government organizes women by various associations, they are not ready to undertake the business.
compared to men, women are less motivated to start business units due to some unwanted fear, lack of motivation and kind of activities.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY
The following are the objectives set for the present study
i. to study the problems faced by women entrepreneurs in different respects of their enterprise management
ii. to draw conclusions and find out suggestions to solve the problems faced by women entrepreneurs

4. DATA BASE
The present is formed on the base of secondary data gathered from books, articles, reports journals, magazines and surfing on the Net.

5. PROBLEMS FACED BY WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS
There are a number of problems faced by women with related to their entrepreneurship development like social aspects, economic life, skill problems, lack of family support, courage and the like. The problems experienced by women entrepreneurs have resulted in restricting them to enter into entrepreneurship era. Problems faced by women from various dimensions are broadly categorized as follows.

- Personal Problems
- Social Problems
- Financial Problems
- Marketing and Production Problems

5.1 PERSONAL PROBLEMS
Lack of confidence, inferiority complex, poor education, less risk bearing capacity, lack of practical knowledge, long standing feelings of intimidation and fear of the outside world are some of the problems faced by the women in their personal life when they come out from the house to the society for engaging economic activities. The following the personal problems faced by women in carrying out their activities

5.1.1 Lack of education
Women in India are lagging far behind in the field of education. Most of the women are illiterate due to lack of proper education they are unaware of new technologies or inexpert in their use, and often incapable to fulfill the assigned task. Women remain in dark about the development of new technology, new methods of production, marketing and other governmental support which will encourage them to flourish. Knowledge of modern technological changes, knowhow and education level of the person are the major factors that affect business and society.

5.1.2 Lack of self confidence
Women cannot come forward from the four walls of kitchen to the outside environment due to lack of self-confidence. Lack of self-confidence is one of the important factors which pull women back from engaging economic activities. Women in India are by nature weak, shy and mild. They cannot bear the amount of risk which is essential for running an enterprise due to Low-level education which leads low-level self-confidence and self-reliance to the women to engage in business. Hence, self-confidence is an essential motivating factor in running an enterprise successfully. They have to work hard to strike a balance between managing a family and an enterprise. Sometimes they have to sacrifice their entrepreneurial urge in order to strike a balance between the two which results loss of a prospective entrepreneur.

5.1.3 Low risk bearing capacity
Women in India lead a protected life. As they are less educated and economically dependent, risk taking capacity is low in women to get into business. Investing money, maintaining the operations and ploughing back money for surplus generation requires high risk taking attitude, courage and confidence. Lack of education, training and financial support from outsiders also reduce their ability to bear the risk involved in an enterprises.

5.1.4 Lack of entrepreneurial talent
Lack of entrepreneurial aptitude is a matter of concern for women entrepreneurs. They have limited entrepreneurial abilities. Even after attending various training programmes on entrepreneurship, women entrepreneurs fail to overcome the risks and troubles that may come up in an organisational working.

5.2 SOCIAL PROBLEMS
Prejudice against women, male domination, lack of economic freedom, amidst social taboos and restrictions, poor social interaction compared to men are some of the social problems find difficult to combat the opposition from family and society to take bold decisions and risk and dare to enter into unexplored track of entrepreneurial activity. The following are the some of the social problems faced by women.

5.2.1 Family obligations
Women’s family obligations also bar them from becoming successful entrepreneurs. The interest of the family members is a determinant factor in the realization of women business aspirations. Married women have to make a fine balance between business and home. More over the business success depends on the support extended by the family members to women in the business process and management.

5.2.2 Social traditions and customs
Traditions and customs prevailing in Indian societies towards women stand as an obstacle to grow and prosper from becoming effective entrepreneurs in both developed and developing nations. Having primary responsibility for children, home and
aged dependent family members, few women can devote all their time and energies to their business. Castes and religions hinder women entrepreneurs too. In rural areas, they face more social barriers. They are always seen with suspicious eyes.

5.2.3 Gender domination

India is a male dominated traditional society where women are not supposed to be equal to men. They are treated as subordinate to husbands and men, physically weak and lesser confident. A male dominant social order is the biggest hurdle to them in their way towards business success. Even though our constitution speaks of equality between sexes, male chauvinism is still the order of the day. Their entry to business requires the approval of the head of the family. It has been seen as a male preserve. All these put a break in the growth of women entrepreneurs.

5.2.4 Mobility

Women in India have got restricted mobility due to conservative nature of the society. The confidence to travel across day and night and even different regions and states are less found in women compared to male entrepreneurs. Although, women have got some extent of freedom in terms of entrepreneurial activity but they are suppose to move out only after normal hours. Hence, the mobility problem has been solved to certain extent by the expansion of educational awareness from the various problems faced by women in entrepreneurial activity.

5.3 FINANCIAL PROBLEMS

Finance is regarded as ‘life-blood’ for any enterprise, be it big or small. A common challenge for women to establish and run a business is access and control over finance. Women have little awareness of their financing options and opportunities. The following are the various financial problems faced by women.

5.3.1 Paucity of finance

Women entrepreneurs mostly in developing countries have no easy access to credit for their entrepreneurial activity and are the most vulnerable to poverty. Bankers, creditors and financial institutions are not coming forward to provide financial assistance to women borrowers on the ground of their less creditworthiness and more chances of failure. Hence, women entrepreneurs suffer a lot in raising and meeting the financial needs of the business due to less access to external sources of capital than men when securing finances.

5.3.2 Skepticism of financial institutions

Financial Institutions and bankers are skeptical about the entrepreneurial abilities of women due to high risk involved in women borrowers than men. The important constraints faced by the women entrepreneurs is that the time taken by the banks and financial institution to process the loan and the tight repayment schedule given by the term lending institutions.

5.3.3 Credit facilities

Though women constitute about 50 per cent of population, only less than 5 percent of women owned small scale enterprise. Women are often denied credit by bankers on the ground of lack of collateral security. Therefore, women's access to risk capital is limited. The complicated procedure of bank loans and the inordinate delay in obtaining the loans deter many women from venturing out.

5.4 MARKETING AND PRODUCTION PROBLEMS

Women are generally weak in marketing the products. Storage of product, transportation, credit sales, advertisement, insufficient market information, poor bargaining power, and poor ability to fix the price are the major hurdles faced by the women in marketing their productivity. The following are some of the marketing and production related problems faced by women.

5.4.1 Lack of knowledge about markets

Women entrepreneurs have less access about the various markets existed nationally and internationally women prefer to sell their products either in local market or through the middle man. Poor literacy and less knowledge about the markets, non availability of transportation facilities and proper distribution channels are the main reasons for not selling their products directly.

5.4.2 Middlemen

Middlemen playing key role in marketing the goods produced by women entrepreneurs as they are not able to find their customers personally due to poor access to the market. Hence, women entrepreneurs are heavily dependent on middlemen for marketing of their products who pocket large amount of profit. This middle man exploits them by offering lower price than desired even though there is sufficient demand in market.

5.4.3 Procuring raw materials

Women owned firms are plagued by the scarcity of raw material, high prices of raw material, and procuring of the raw materials at the discount prices which influence the profit margin greatly. Lack of knowledge of availability of the raw-matrices and low-level negotiation and bargaining skills are the major factors affecting women enterprises.

5.4.4 High cost of production

Several factors like inefficient management, non-adoptions or slow adoption to changing technology leads to high cost of production which stands as a stumbling block before women entrepreneurs. Poor experience and expertise management skills influence a lot to the increase in the cost of production which results decrease in profitability status of women owned enterprises.

5.4.5 Stiff competition

Competition is another factor, which develop hurdles to women entrepreneurs in the business management process. Women are not able to spend a lot of money for canvassing and advertisement in marketing their productivity due to inadequate financial resources. Thus they face stiff competition from both organized sector and male counterparts. Though women are good in keeping their service prompt and delivery in time women are facing constraints from competition due to the poor organizational skills compared to male counterparts.

SUGGESTIONS

Women are proving that they are not less than men and are constantly contributing to the development of country’s economy. Hence, there should be a few more measures to be taken by government, financial institutions to provide sufficient financial assistance and various other facilities. Apart from the external assistance, one should come out of the drawn boundaries and
explore in the various sectors of operation and contribute to economic development of a country and to create own identity and better status in the society.

1. A pertinent mechanism is essential for the identification of resource based income generating activities for women.
2. State government should introduce a special package for the promotion of women.
3. Entrepreneurship curriculum in higher education should be strengthened.
4. Educational institutes should tie up with agencies to assist for the development of women entrepreneurship and employment.
5. Educational institutes should enter into MOU’s with industrial sectors and EDIs to promote entrepreneurship among women.
6. Family support to women is the need of the hour.
7. Needs to organize and design innovative programmes to develop the professional competencies in managerial, leadership, marketing, financial, production among women.
8. Women associations’ should assume the responsibility of creating greater awareness among women.
9. Awareness programmes are to be conducted to create awareness about incentives, and concessions available for women.
10. For self-employment among women provision is to be made regarding interest rate and subsidy.

REFERENCES: