



## **Growth of Women Entrepreneurs**

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### **Introduction**

Women constitute around half of the total World Population. They are, therefore, regarded as the better half of the society. In traditional societies, they were confined to the four walls of houses performing household activities. In modern societies, they have come out of the four walls to participate in all sorts of activities.

Women represent half of the resources and half of the potential in all the societies' efforts to promote greater equality between women and men can also contribute to the overall development of human society.

In the new millennium, in the process of preparation of vision 2020 a massive women's awareness programme on women's rights, measures to prevent abuse of their rights, educating women on their privileges, ensuring themselves of protection against forces which are likely to take undue advantages of their vulnerability is needed.

The contribution of women entrepreneurs is substantial to output and value added in manufacturing sectors, though it remains partly invisible in official statistics. Women's entrepreneurial activities are not only a means of economic survival but also have positive social repercussions for the women themselves and their social environment.

Human resources, both men and women of working age, constitute the main strength of the economic development of a nation. Women form an important segment of the labour force and the economic role played by them cannot be isolated from the frame work of development as the role and the degree of integration of women is always an indicator of women's economic independence and social status. The government is, therefore, making planned efforts to inculcate the spirit of enterprise among women through many incentives and development programmes. These efforts are expected to gain good results with many more women taking to entrepreneurship.

Though the word 'entrepreneur' has taken its root in a common man's vocabulary, the phrase 'a woman entrepreneur' causes a raise in a few eyebrows in the male dominated society. Women entrepreneurs may be woman or a group of women who initiate, organize and operate a business enterprise. The government of India has defined a women entrepreneurs as "an enterprise owned and controlled by a women having a minimum capital interest of 51 percent of the capitali.

Women entrepreneurs today have their own opinion that they are self – assured able to withstand all risks and are efficient managers. They must have a certain self-confidence. Inherent qualities of patience and perseverance of women help them developing with labour and hence labour troubles are rare in enterprise managed by women. A women entrepreneur has to be aware of new trends in business. She must be alert, adaptive and dynamic to keep the concern going. Women entrepreneurs should make a success of their enterprises and help economic progress of a nation.

What motivates women to aspire for career in business is an interesting thing to explore and for analysis. Motivation is a critical factor that leads one towards entrepreneurship. The challenge and adventure to do something new, liking for business and wanting to have independent occupation are some of the attractive leverage for women. Motivation for starting a business is based on the need to achieve. The desire to be independent, the need for job satisfaction and economic necessity are the basic factors that induce women to become entrepreneursii.

The objective of this paper is to analyse the growth of women entrepreneurs and to find out the struggles they face in business with suitable ways out.

### **Growth of Women Entrepreneurship**

The small scale industrial sector covers a broad spectrum of industries. 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. They are much of low literacy rate 40 per cent, low work participation rate 28 percent and low urban population share 10 percent of women as compared to 60 percent, 52 percent and 18 percent respectively of their male counterparts. Well confirm their disadvantageous position in the society. C.B. Gupta and B.S. Khanka point out that a dismally low level of women 5.2 percent in total self – employed persons in the country.

Vasant Dessai, in his book, point out those women entrepreneurs in India accounted for 9.01 percent of the total 1.70 million entrepreneurs during 1988-89, where as the share of women owned enterprises in the United States has risen from 7.1 percent in 1977 to 32 percent in 1990. It is likely to reach to 50 percent by the turn of the present century.

In India, women entry into business is a new phenomenon. Women entry into business, or say, entrepreneurship is traced out as an extension of their kitchen activities mainly to 3 Ps, Viz, Pickles, Powder and Pappad. Now, with growing awareness about business and spread of education among women over the period, women have started shifting from 3 Ps to engrows to 3 modern ES, Viz; Engineering, Electronics and Energy.

Women entrepreneurs manufacturing solar cookers in Gujarat, small foundries in Maharashtra and T.V. Capacitors in Orissa have proved beyond doubt that given the opportunities, they can excel their male counterparts. Smt. Sumati Morarji (Shipping Corporation), Smt. Yamutai Kirloskar (Mahila Udyog Limited), Smt. Neena Malhotra (Exports)

and Smt. Shahnaz Hussain (Beauty Clinic) are the successful and accomplished women entrepreneurs in our country.

In India, Kerala is a State with highest literacy (including women literacy) reflecting a congenial atmosphere for the emergence and development of women entrepreneurship in the State.

According to a Study, the number of women industrial units in Kerala was 358 in 1981 which rose to 782 in march 1984, these 782 units included 592 proprietary concerns, 43 partnership firms, 42 charitable institutions, 3 joint stock companies and 102 co-operative societies covering a wide range of activities.

### **Need For Women Entrepreneurship**

The case for promoting women enterpriser in our country rests primarily on the desire to honour this sacred commitment to build up a democratic society ensuring social justice, equality of opportunity, and decentralisation of economic wealth and power. Women enterprises, here, play a pivotal role by providing

- High employment opportunities at comparatively lower capital Investment;
- Scope for achieving regionally balanced economic growth;
- Geographical diffusion of trade, industry and commerce,
- Effective utilization of local resources skills and entrepreneurship
- Opportunities for development of the attitudes of professional businessmen with a sense of dedication to society, as distinct from self-seeking contrivers of deals; and
- Decentralisation of economic wealth and power

In the advanced countries like U.S.A., there has not only been a substantial increase in employment of women, but the last decade has shown the number of self employed women increased by 69 percent as compared to 13 percent increase in the number of self-employed men.

According to the U.S. Department of Labour Figures, there was a 24.9 percent increase in women owned manufacturing companies. While the amount of American made goods has been declining, there has been 24.9 percent increase in women owned manufacturing companies. The past experiences have shown that the same trends exist in India also only at a slower pace

Entrepreneurship seems to be ideal for women seeking participation in the country's economic development because of certain factors. Emergence of entrepreneurship is considered to be closely linked to social, cultural, religious and psychological variables. And these changes seem to have become acceptable norms in the context of women at work in the Indian situation today with more and more women participating in the economic development.

Women also find micro enterprise attractive because of low barriers to entry and the flexible nature of the work which makes it easy to combine gainful employment with domestic responsibilities.

### **Problems Facing Women Entrepreneurs**

Change is the spice of life, without change there would be no growth, no development and no society, would thrive or flourish. In spite of this, change can create a lot of problems, for people and organizations which do not respond to it appropriately. The entrepreneur and the organization should be adopted to accept these problems as an on-going process and strive to rectify them in the most efficient manner.

The problems may be varied and several and different from enterprise to enterprise, place to place, and from time to time. Some of these problems may be common, but others are more specific and related to the line of activity or the enterprise. Some may be due to the internal environment, while some may be the problems of the external environment.

Whatever be the problems there is no prescribed formula to deal with them. The problems have to be dealt with by the entrepreneur as otherwise they will affect the performance of the enterprise. The efficiency of the entrepreneur may be measured by her efficiency in handling problems. If the problems are internal, they can be more easily dealt with than the external problems.

In a small enterprise, it is very difficult to separate the entrepreneur from the enterprise. It is even more difficult in the case of woman enterprise to distinguish between the problem pertaining to the enterprise or the individual. In spite of this, only the problems of the enterprise are contemplated upon than the entrepreneur's personality at this stage.

The basis problem of a women entrepreneur is that she is a 'woman' this pertains to her responsibility towards family, society and work. Another special problem that a women entrepreneur faces is discrimination. People, including bankers and Government officials still find it difficult to take women seriously as entrepreneurs. The bankers still do not have enough trust on the women on repayment of the advances. But it is hard to understand, women are even more committed to repay bank loan more than man.

Opinion of Mrs. Flosie Raj President, Association of Women entrepreneurs in Tamil Nadu was that the women entrepreneurs like other men counter parts do also face the common problems of entrepreneur regarding finance, production marketing etc. she said that the members of her association are "still not happy" over their relation with banks .she also said that their association fought for one and half a year to make Small Industries Development corporation, (SIDCO) allot sheds to entrepreneur men entrepreneur find it easier to set an allotment of sheds and plots for their factory than the women.

### **Measures to Develop Women Entrepreneurs**

The First National Conference of women entrepreneurs held at New Delhi called for priority to women in the allotment of land, sheds, sanction of power, industrial licensing, etc. It also recommended the simplification of loan procedures, counselling services, centralized marketing agency and special training programmes for women entrepreneurs. International bodies have also paid attention to the economic problems of women. Several institutional arrangements have made to protect and develop women entrepreneurship. Besides, the following measures are also to be attended to. All governments should promote women's involvement in social and economic development programmes; provide necessary infrastructural support, training and marketing facilities, enact legislation to remove constraints in their way, arrange for transfer of relevant technology and financial assistance. International agencies should take steps to speedup the developmental programmes on woman entrepreneurs. Women possess a futuristic

outlook and the capacity to nurture new enterprises. What are needed are proper training, helpful attitudes, and facilities and assistance.

## **Conclusion**

Depending on various factors that determine the development of women entrepreneurs, the success of women entrepreneurs differ from states to states. The entrepreneurial movement requires follow up supports to utilize women power in the country's economic development. A co-ordinated role of Government and voluntary agencies with an integrated approach will help to develop women entrepreneurship. Re-orientation of educational system for Woman, curriculum change, career guidance, reservations, scholarships, and timely assistance are required. The growth of women entrepreneurs can be made only by the joint efforts at all levels which is a necessary condition for the development of developing country like India.

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