

Women Empowerment Through Entrepreneurship

Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to show empowerment of women through SHGs (Self-Help Group).

Keywords: Women Empowerment, Entrepreneurship

Introduction

India has great entrepreneurial potential. Entrepreneurships enhance financial independence and self esteem of women. Among the states Gujarat, Maharashtra and Karnataka have more women entrepreneurs. Amphora (2004) in her book has examined how women entrepreneurs affect the global economy, why women start business, how women's business associations promote entrepreneurs, and to what extent women contribute to international trade. It explores potential of micro finance programmes for empowering and employing women and also discusses the opportunities and challenges of using micro finance to tackle the feminization of poverty. According to her, the micro finance programmes are aimed to increase women's income levels and control over income leading to greater levels of economics independence. They enable women's access to networks and markets access to information and possibilities for development of other social and political role. They also enhance perceptions of women's contribution to household income and family welfare, increasing women's participation in household decisions about expenditure and other issues leading to greater expenditure on women's welfare. The objective of the study to emerging need to promote women empowerment among the rural women for eradication of rural poverty. Rural women with low income and take of knowledge of available banking facilities can do little for growth of banking habits on their own.

Concept of Self-Help Group

The International Network for Mutual Help Centres has developed this working Definition :

Self help of mutual support is a process where in people who share common experience, situations of problems can offer each other a unique perspective that is not available from those who have not shared these experience. Self-help groups are run by and for group's members. A group of people, who meet regularly for discuss common issues and to look at solution for the same. But, as on date the members of the SHGs understood the importance of the savings though participation. In general, self-help groups are based on principles of empowerment, inclusion, nonhierarchical decision making, shared responsibility, and a holistic approach to people's cultural, economics, and social needs. Their values include cooperative self-organization, non bureaucratic mutual helping methods, social support, and free services

Woment's Empowerment Principles

1. Establish high-level corporate leadership for gender equality.
2. Treat all women and men fairly at work—respect and support human rights and nondiscrimination.
3. Ensure the health, safety and well-being of all women and men Workers.
4. Promote education, training and professional development for women.
5. Implement enterprise development, supply chain and marketing practices that empower women
6. Promote equality through community initiatives and advocacy
7. Measure and publicly report on progress to achieve gender equality



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Objectives of the Study**Women's Empowerment**

Skill Enhancement, Building Cooperatives, Women's Entrepreneurship, Awareness and Training Programs, Capacity Building, Education, Reproductive Health Care and Rights, Career Counseling.

1. Promote reproductive health and target HIV/AIDS transmission among marginalized sections of society
2. Provide basic healthcare in rural and urban areas and promote community health by awareness-raising and community health programs targeting women, children, and addressing common health scourges like malaria and TB
3. Provide education and prevent child labor in rural areas through informal education programs
4. Empower women and promote economic independence through Self-Help Groups and vocational training
5. Address domestic conflict and abuse through family counseling and gender sensitization programs
6. Reduce sex-based feticide and gender selection practices through awareness-raising programs and village-based rallies
7. Protect and rehabilitate women and girls suffering from economic distress and exploitation through the provision of shelter and counseling
8. Promote sustainable agriculture practices and provide food security in rural areas through trainings and technical support
9. Encourage inclusion of all sectors of society in village planning and participation through the establishment of Village Development Committees, Village Old People's Associations, and women's Self-Help Groups, and Dalit village-level committees

Women Empowerment Through Entrepreneurship

"You can tell the condition of a nation by looking at the status of its women"

Jawaharlal Nehru.

Development alone cannot bring peace and prosperity unless social justice and gender equality are ensured. It has been well accepted that various development programmes have bypassed women who constitute about half of the population of the country. International conventions and conferences, legal enactments, constitutional provisions etc. highlighted the imperative need for gender equality and women empowerment. The rural poor, with the intermediation of voluntary organizations join together for self help to secure better economic growth. This has resulted in the formation of a large number of self help groups in the country, which mobilize savings and recycle the resources generated among the members. SHG's are necessary to overcome exploitation, create confidence for the economic self-reliance of the rural poor, particularly among women who are mostly invisible in the social structure. These groups enable them to come together for a common objective and gain strength from each other to deal with exploitation, which they are facing, in several forms. A group becomes the basis for action and

change. Significantly, credit is a major factor in boosting economic development if it is effectively utilized. The government's recent initiatives to streamline credit operations and delivery system through micro-finance movement and strengthening and expansion of credit institutions (SHGs) can definitely help in the revival of rural economy and empowerment of the rural poor. Micro Finance as a tool of poverty alleviation and women empowerment has gained acceptance in development dialogue the world over. There is an acute need among the poor for credit, both for consumption and production, which often forms the declining line between survival and succumbing to poverty. It has been found that besides food, credit is also needed for health, housing education. These needs are also critical for survival (Zeller, 2000). The success of SHGs as a development tool depends on the availability of Micro Finance.

Women Entrepreneurs

SHG has really helped to increase the skills and awareness of women. The objectives of Entrepreneurship Development programme (EDP) is to promote economic activities among the members of Self-help Group through skill training, Entrepreneurship Development, credit linkage and market support. The year 2001 was announced as the year of women Empowerment. The Indian women are under the control of the male in family womb to tomb. When she is a child, she is under the control of her father. At her later age after her marriage she is controlled by her husband and at the old age controlled by her son. This reduced her self-confidence and will to make independent initiative. They were not even made aware of the utility of education.

Growth of Women Entrepreneurship in India

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 papad. Women in India plugged into business for both pull and push factors. Pull factors imply the factors, which encourage women to start an occupation or venture with an urge to do something independently. Push factors refer to those factors, which compel to take up their own business to tide over their economic difficulties and responsibilities. With growing awareness about business and spread of education among women over the period, women have started shifting from 3 Ps to engross to 3 modern E's, viz. Engineering, Electronics and Energy. They have excelled in these activities. 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. Yumutai Kirloskar (Mahila Udyog Limited), Smt. Neena Malhotra (Exports) and Smt. Shahnaz Hussain (Beauty Clinic) are some exemplary names of successful and accomplished women entrepreneurs in our country. There are several additional emerging

sectors where women can exploit their hidden talent these are:

1. Eco-friendly technology
2. Bio-technology
3. IT enabled enterprises
4. Event Management
5. Tourism industry
6. Telecommunication
7. Plastic materials
8. Vermiculture
9. Mineral water
10. Sericulture
11. Floriculture
12. Herbal & health care
13. Food, fruits & vegetable processing

Top 10 Women Entrepreneurs and Leaders of India

The Indian women are no longer treated as show pieces to be kept at home. They are also enjoying the impact of globalization and making an influence not only on domestic but also on international sphere. Women are doing a wonderful job striking a balance between their house and career. Here are a few:

1. Indra Nooyi, CEO, Pepsi Co., Indra Nooyi has been ranked No. 4 in the survey of 100 most powerful women in the world carried out by Forbes. She grew up in Chennai. She did her BSc. in Chemistry from Madras Christian College followed by a Master's Degree in Finance and Marketing from IIM, Calcutta. Nooyi then attended Yale University, USA for a Master's degree in Public and Private Management. She started her career at Boston Consulting Group in 1980 and then held crucial positions at Motorola and Asea Brown Boveri. She then joined Pepsi Co. in 1994. She tailored the company with her risk taking. Pepsi acquired Tropicana in 1998 and she became the President of Pepsi Co in 2001
2. Dr. Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, Chairman & Managing Director of Biocon Ltd., who became India's richest woman in 2004, was educated at the Bishop Cotton Girls School and Mount Carmel College in Bangalore. She founded Biocon India with a capital of Rs.10, 000 in her garage in 1978 – the initial operation was to extract an enzyme from papaya. Her application for loans was turned down by banks then on three counts – biotechnology was then a new word, the company lacked assets, women entrepreneurs were still a rarity. Today, her company is the biggest biopharmaceutical firm in the country.
3. Chanda Kochchar, Managing Director and CEO, ICICI Bank Ltd., A member of the Institute of Cost and Works Accountants in India, Chanda Kochchar first joined ICICI Bank as a trainee in 1984. And thereafter, she has continuously climbed up the ladder, heading almost all the major sections of the institution. She has been awarded with Padma Bhushan in 2011 and has been consistently ranked in the list of 'The most powerful women in the World' by the Forbes magazine

4. Ekta Kapoor, creative head of Balaji Telefilms, is the daughter of Jeetendra and sister of Tushar Kapoor. She has been synonymous with the rage of soap operas in Indian TV, after her most famous venture 'Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi' which was aired in 2000 on Star plus. Ekta dominates Indian Television. At the 6th Indian Tele Awards 2006; she bagged the Hall of Fame award for her contributions.
5. Neelam Dhawan, Managing Director, Microsoft India, leads Microsoft India. She is a graduate from St. Stephens College in 1980, and also passed out from Delhi University's Faculty of Management studies in 1982 Then she was keen on joining FMCG majors like Hindustan Lever and Asian Paints, both companies rejected Dhawan, as they did not wish to appoint women for marketing and sales.
6. Naina Lal Kidwai was the first Indian woman to graduate from Harvard Business School. Fortune magazine listed Kidwai among the world's top 50 Corporate Women from 2000 to 2003. According to the Economic times, she is the first woman to head the operations of a foreign bank in India. (HSBC)
7. Indu Jain, the multi-faceted lady used to be the Chairman of the Times Group-The most Powerful and largest Media house India has known. Indu Jain is known by many different identities such as that of spiritualist, humanist, entrepreneur, an educationalist but most prominently she played the role of the Chairman of Times Group. Indu Jain is the perfect picture of the successful Indian Woman entrepreneur.
8. Simone Tata has been instrumental in changing a small subsidiary of Tata Oil Mills into the largest cosmetic brand in India – LAKME, synonymous today with Indian Fashion. She became a part of Lakme during 1961 and has been responsible for turning the company into one of the biggest brands of fashion in India. At present she is the Chairperson of Trent Limited, a subsidiary of Tata Group.
9. Mallika Srinivasan, currently the Director of TAFE-Tractors and Farm Equipment, India was honored with the title of Businesswoman of the Year during 2006 by the Economic Times. She joined the company in 1986 and has since been responsible for accelerating turnover from 85 crores to 2900 crores within a span of 2 decades.
10. Preetha Reddy, Managing Director of Apollo Hospitals, Chennai, one of the largest healthcare conglomerates of India, is one of the pioneer businesswomen of India in the segment of Health Care Industry. Women like these are an inspiration for all other women who strive to achieve great heights in their lives. Taking them as our role models each one of us can be there where they are right now. All we need have is faith in ourselves, confidence and above all a fixed aim that we need work towards

Problems of Women Entrepreneurship in India

Women entrepreneurs encounter two sets of problems, viz, general problems of entrepreneurs and

problems specific to women entrepreneurs. These are discussed as follows:

Problem 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 two counts. Firstly, women do not generally have property on their names to use them as collateral for obtaining funds from external sources. Thus, their access to the external sources of funds is limited. Secondly, the banks also consider women less credit-worthy and discourage women borrowers on the belief that they can at any time leave their business. Given such situation, women entrepreneurs are bound to rely on their own savings, if any and loans from friends and relatives who are expectedly meager and negligible. Thus, women enterprises fail due to the shortage of finance.

Scarcity of Raw Material

Most of the women enterprises are plagued by the scarcity of raw material and necessary inputs. Added to this are the high prices of raw material, on the other. 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.

Stiff Competition

Women entrepreneurs do not have organization set-up to 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 counterparts. Such a competition ultimately results in the liquidation of women enterprises. Limited Mobility: Unlike men, women mobility in India is highly limited due to various reasons. A single woman asking for room is still upon suspicion. Cumbersome exercise involved in starting an enterprise coupled with the officials humiliating attitude towards women compels them to give up an idea of starting an enterprise.

Family Ties

In India, it is mainly a woman's duty to look after the children and other members of the family. Man plays a secondary role only. In case of married woman, 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. Support and approval of husbands seem necessary condition or women's entry in to business. Accordingly, the educational level and family background of husbands positively influence women's entry into business activities.

Lack of Education

In India, around three-fifths (60%) of women are still illiterate illiteracy is the root cause of socio-economic problems. Due to the lack of education and that too qualitative education, women are not aware of business, technology and market knowledge. Also, lack of education causes low achievement motivation among women. Thus, lack of education creates problems for women in the setting up and running of business enterprises.

Male dominated Society

Male chauvinism is till 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 reservations about a women's role, ability and capacity and are treated accordingly. In nutshell, in the male-dominated Indian society, women are not treated equal to men.

Bearing Ability

Women in India lead a protected life. They are less educated and economically not self-dependent. All these reduce their ability to bear risk involved in running an enterprise. Risk bearing is an essential requisite of a successful entrepreneur. In addition to above problems, inadequate infra structural facilities, shortage of power, high cost of production, social attitude, low need for achievement and socio-economic constraints also hold the women back from entering into business.

Government Schemes for Women Empowerment

The government programme for women development began as early as 1954 in India but the actual participation began only in 1974. At present, the Government of India has over 27 schemes for women operated by different departments and ministries. Some of these are:

1. Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP)
2. Training of Rural Youth for Self-Employment (TRYSEM)
3. Prime Minister's Rojgar Yojana (PMRY)
4. Women's Development Corporation Scheme (WDCS)
5. Working Women's Forum
6. Indira Mahila Yojana
7. Indira Mahila Kendra
8. Mahila Samiti Yojana
9. Rashtriya Mahila Kosh
10. Khadi and Village Industries Commission
11. Indira Priyadarshini Yojana
12. SIDBI's Mahila Udyam Nidhi Mahila Vikas Nidhi
13. SBI's Sree Shakti Scheme
14. NGO's Credit Schemes
15. National Banks for Agriculture and Rural Development's Schemes

The efforts of government and its different agencies are ably supplemented by nongovernmental organizations that are playing an equally important role in facilitating women empowerment. Despite concerted efforts of governments and NGOs there are certain gaps. Of course we have come a long way in empowering women yet the future journey is difficult and demanding

Conclusion

Empowerment of women has emerged as an important issue in recent times. The economic empowerment of women is of paramount importance to political thinkers, social scientists and reformers. Women entrepreneurs faced many obstacles with respect to holding property and entering contracts, etc. But they having basic indigenous knowledge, skill, potential and resources to establish and manage enterprise. Under this juncture Self Help Groups

(SHGs) as a tool for economic independence of rural women. The members of SHGs are involved in Micro – Entrepreneurships Through that, they are becoming economically independent and providing employment opportunities to others. In total SHG not only mobilize micro finance and provide micro credit to the needed members but also it provides self employment training, awareness programme, promote the leadership qualities and confidential life to its members.

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