

Aspects of Women Entrepreneurship

Abstract

Theorists designed entrepreneurship as a bunch of high order abilities like intelligence, firmness, broadmindedness, skillful, practical, foresightedness, motivation etc. If woman becomes entrepreneur she will be no more a backward class of society. More-over it will improve the socio-economic conditions of their children who are many times neglected by due to poverty and socio-cultural beliefs. Thus development of women entrepreneurship is a whole some need based strategy for poverty alleviation and removal of unemployment. It will need to achieve equity in the long run. The post-independence programmes of Indian government for self –employment of women has improved literacy. Now they are capable to understand and utilize government assistance for their betterment. According to the third all India census of small scale industries conducted in 2001-02 10% of the Micro and Small scale enterprises are owned by women while 9-46% of MSE's are managed by women Thus women entrepreneurship is of growing importance now- a-days.

Keywords: Women Entrepreneurship, Extraordinary Capabilities, Motivation, Development, Credit Facility, Training, Aptitude.

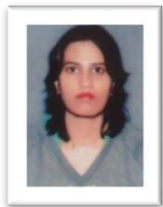
Introduction

The essence of entrepreneurship has been recognized as an engine for all economic and commercial activities. Economists like Schumpeter have propogated the important role of an entrepreneur in the growth and development of a nation. According to him, in the growth theory an entrepreneur is one of extraordinary capabilities who through his/her intelligence, skills and technological know-how creates environment of positive change which leads to a new development in national income and the economy. Clark and Taussig contended this view. Economists like F.B. Knight and F.B. Hawley have added more abilities to entrepreneurship. According to them an entrepreneur is brave enough to take risks at various stages of business activities as well as he /she owes the ability to work under uncertain market conditions. He has the ability to work under imperfect market conditions. He dignifies the decisions to be taken under unfavourable conditions. Thus theorists designed entrepreneurship as a bunch of high order abilities like intelligence , firmness, broadmindedness, skillful, practical, foresightedness , motivation etc.,.

It is considered that generally man owes these abilities because he has been placed free in the society to grow and develop. On the contrary, women are consider to be gripped by many social and cultural restrictions. They are not consider suitable to pursue business activities like man. However historical evidences prove that women work equally to men when they are inspired to participate in economic activities. In mountain areas, we witness women as more active than their counterparts. They sought simple solutions for their day-today resource-based problems. In older days women engage in activities like weaving, spinning, painting, decorative works and preparations, home based medicines. The post-independence programmes of Indian government for self –employment of women has improved literacy. Now they are capable to understand and utilize government assistance for their betterment. According to the third all India census of small scale industries conducted in 2001-02 10% of the Micro and Small scale enterprises are owned by women while 9-46% of MSE's are managed by women Thus women entrepreneurship is of growing importance now- a-days.

Aim of the Study

The paper highlights the importance of woman as entrepreneur and accounts for the problems she faces as an entrepreneur. It enumerates the various programmes started by govt. of India for her.



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Women Entrepreneurship: A Need Based Strategy for Poverty Alleviation

According to our former Prime Minister Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru, if we teach a man only one man becomes literate but if we teach women the whole family becomes literate. This shows the influence of women on her family. Besides, a woman is more patient and keen in her work. Some attributes are attached to women like prudent, efficient, social, presentable, firm, decision – maker, good manager etc. These attributes are essential for entrepreneur. If woman becomes entrepreneur she will be no more a backward class of society. More-over it will improve the socio-economic conditions of their children who are many times neglected by due to poverty and socio-cultural beliefs. A widespread view about woman is that she is more concerned about her families. If a woman become self employed she will pave the way for future entrepreneurs because her children can learn from her. This shall solve the problem of un-employment among youth and curtail the undue government expenditure on unemployment wages. Thus development of women entrepreneurship is a whole some need based strategy for poverty alleviation and removal of unemployment. It will need to achieve equity in the long run. This may help to attain socio-economic welfare at one hand and national growth on the other. Thus women entrepreneurship is a profitable package for economic development. How far this view supports theory is evident from the fig. 1

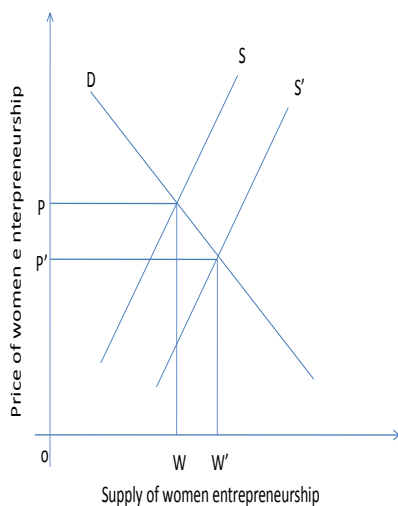


Fig 1

In the above diagram we assume women entrepreneurship as a product to be demanded and supplied in the market. Considering the single market demand curve of entrepreneur at one stage of development, if more women took this endeavour their costs will decrease leading to decrease in their supply price which is beneficial for the economy. This

is shown by shifting of S curve to S'. Vander burg (2013) women in emerging markets plough back 90 cents of every additional dollar of income into 'human resources' which includes their family education, health and nutrition. The human resource economists pro pogate this view that investment in skill development leads to increase in the supply of human resource who generate increased income for growth. According to Shah (2013) "when governments invest in the development of women entrepreneurship programme the supply of human resource increases which leads to income".

Problems of Women Entrepreneurs

Women entrepreneurs are those motivated women who by their interest or by need has undertaken the task of production. A study by Coohon, Wadhwa and Mitchell (2010) identifies factors motivating a woman to become entrepreneur. They are- the desire to build wealth, the wish to capitalize own business ideas and the appeal of start-up culture. But in reality many women entrepreneur fail to achieve their goals due to numerous problems faced by them. Firstly, they fail to break the cultural and social myths widespread about women in the society. They get afraid of future failures and think themselves weak to do such activities. Shah (1996) "across the globe the most chronic problems identified by researchers are woman's lack of confidence and difficulty in acquiring entrepreneurship skills". Secondly, suppression of women has affected her knowledge base and awareness about government policies. Thirdly, sometimes their working schedule does not match with their household responsibilities which create a big hurdle in their business. For example , weaving in India require 8 hours of operation a day to earn profit but women who has only two to four hours to spare on business activity do not feel comfortable Carr (1991).

Fourthly many women are economically weak to avail the financial facilities provided by the government for women entrepreneurship. Without proper economic background they fail to make any concrete plan for their business. Fifthly, many women fail to benefit from the training programmes provided by the government and their know –how remain poor which hampers their growth. Sixthly, better and cheap availability of raw material remain a big problem for small entrepreneurs.Lastly, these small entrepreneurs lack approachability to the market of their products. Many of them fail to reach those market due to lack of awareness or lack of funds Shah (1996) . Forced to work within a restricted eco system women entrepreneurs living in rural areas become dependent on middlemen , if markets are beyond their reach Singh (2008).The reason of inhibition of women entrepreneurship are lack of interaction with entrepreneurs , social unacceptance as women entrepreneur,family responsibility, gender discrimination, missing network , low priority given by the banks to provide loans. Fig 2 shows the development aspects of women entrepreneurship.

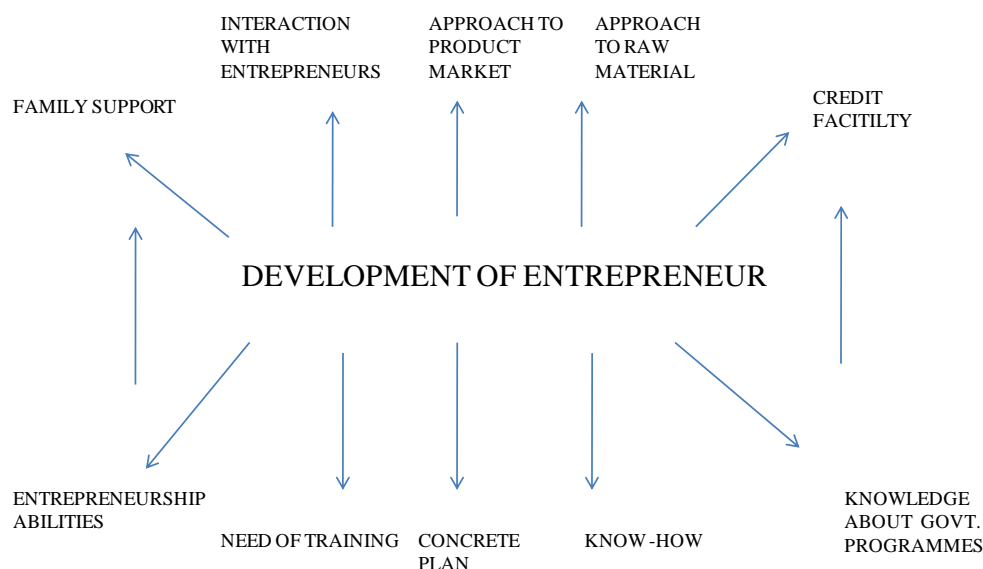


FIG.2

Measures to Solve the Problem

1. More awareness should spread about the benefits of double income in the family so that women start getting moral support from within the family.
2. More training programmes of varied schedules and nature should be started to suit the timings of all women entrepreneurs.
3. The coverage of training programmes in terms of regional coverage, class coverage should extend.
4. The training programmes in each region should emphasize on those products which can utilize local raw material and labour market. This will help to cut down costs.
5. There should be diversification of products covered under training programmes so that women entrepreneur can choose business as per their interest and aptitude.
6. It should be ensure that women entrepreneur are able to prepare a concrete plan during training programme.
7. Credit facility should be given at easy terms at easy mode.
8. Counseling of family members of women entrepreneur should be done to help them to assist women entrepreneurs. This can be done during training programmes.
9. Proper database should be constructed about conditions of raw material market and product

market. This database should be available at training centres. As per a report of United Nations Economic Centers and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific 81% of women in India use ICT for Communication and Networking.

10. Child care units should be open for children of women entrepreneurs.
11. Buisness seminars and market interaction forums should be organized periodically.
12. Advertisement of the products made by women entrepreneurs may help them to establish in the market . Government should give financial aid for this purpose.

Programmes Started by the Government of India for Entrepreneurs

Since independence government has started many programmes to literate, aware and extends economic aid to women for their upliftment. For women entrepreneurs various schemes have been started-

Training Programmes

1. Support for Training and Employment programme of Women (STEP).
2. Small Industry Service Institutes (SISI's).
3. National Small Industries Corporation.
4. Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWACRA).

5. Trade Related Entrepreneurship Assistance and Development Scheme (TREAD). This scheme develops entrepreneurial skills among women in non farm activities. Under this scheme 30% of loan is given as grant.
6. Women Component Plant.
7. MSE Cluster Development Programme to identify cluster of traditional skill and provide technological assistance.

Financing Facilities

Under the leadership of SIDBI Various schemes have started to provide finance to Small Women entrepreneurs. They are-

1. Mahila Vikas Nidhi- To provide start up financial aid to women entrepreneurs for activities like spinning , weaving , handicrafts , knitting , block printing.
2. Micro Credit Scheme for Women
3. Mahila Udhayam Nidhi
4. Women Entrepreneurial Development Programmes.
5. Marketing Development Fund for Women
6. Women Development Corporation
7. Rashtriya Mahila Kosh which was set up in 1993 to provide micro credit to women entrepreneurs.

Marketing Facilities

1. Women Development Corporation.
2. Consortium of women Entrepreneurs.
3. MDA Scheme-Under this scheme Women entrepreneurs are encouraged to participate in international exhibitions .They are provided for space in exhibition for their stalls and their travel fare is 100 % reimbursed.

Besides this, various NGO'S self help groups and other voluntary organizations for e.g. Agha Khan Foundation help women entrepreneurs at various stages.

Conclusion

The importance of woman entrepreneur is unique in the development of a nation. She influences

the productivity of family members as a care taker and at the same time she works equally like a male entrepreneur. This development can prove a way to eliminate the gender differences in the area of production leading to more female literacy and work participation in the economy. The trend may pave the way for higher self employment opportunities which can lead to widening of market, more supply at low prices and better use of local resources. Women entrepreneurship is surely a method of eradicating acute poverty from the society.

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