

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT: SKILLS ENHANCEMENT THROUGH ENCOURAGING ENTREPRENEURSHIP

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Abstract : In current scenario due to modernization, urbanization, globalization and upliftment of educational facilities, with increasing awareness women are now seeking gainful employment in several fields. Women are entering into Entrepreneurship even while facing socio-cultural, economic, technical, financial and managerial difficulties. Women entrepreneurship movement can gain momentum by providing encouragement, appropriate, awareness, training, environment and support. This would definitely enhance their socioeconomic status, a pre-requisite of women's empowerment.

During the various survey conducted by researchers it is revealed that the female entrepreneurs from India are generating more wealth than the women in any part of the world. The basic qualities required for entrepreneurs and the basic characters of Indian women, reveal that, much potential is available among the Indian women on their entrepreneurial ability.

This paper elaborates women empowerment, skills enhancement through entrepreneurship opportunities, broadly women entrepreneurship in Indian context.

Key words: Skills enhancement, women empowerment, encouraging entrepreneurship

INTRODUCTION

To be a woman – a wife, a mother, and individual in India means many things. It means that you are the storehouse of tradition and culture and in contrast a volcano of seething energy, of strength and power that can motivate a whole generations to change its values, its aspirations, its very concept of civilized life .” (Ref - Femina magazine, vol. 14 no. 17, (August, 17, 1973) p.5)

Women Entrepreneurs may be defined as the women or a group of women who initiate, organize and operate a business enterprise. Government of India has defined women entrepreneurs as an enterprise owned and controlled by a women having a minimum financial interest of 51% of the capital and giving at least 51% of employment generated in the enterprise to women. Like a male entrepreneurs a women entrepreneur has many functions. They should explore the prospects of starting new enterprise; undertake risks, introduction of new innovations, coordination administration and control of business and providing effective leadership in all aspects of business.

A large number of women around the world have set up and managed their own businesses. It was not easy for these women to succeed in business. They had to face a lot of difficulties and overcome a number of barriers to become successful in their ventures. They had to deal with discrimination and withstand the skepticism of society, and also put in more effort than men to prove their credibility to others.

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN INDIA:

Empowerment is a multi-faceted, multi-dimensional and multi-layered concept. Women's empowerment is a process in which women gain greater share of control over resources - material, human

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and intellectual like knowledge, information, ideas and financial resources like money - and access to money and control over decision-making in the home, community, society and nation, and to gain 'power'. According to the Country Report of Government of India, "Empowerment means moving from a position of enforced powerlessness to one of power".

The economic empowerment based approach to improving women's control over economic resources and strengthening the economic security of women.

WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN INDIA:

The educated women do not want to limit their lives in the four walls of the house. They demand equal respect from their partners. However, Indian women have to go a long way to achieve equal rights and position because traditions are deep rooted in Indian society. India being a male-dominated society, very few women is in the large entrepreneurial field. They constitute only 10% of the total. To help women entrepreneurs, government has taken many steps and various program of training and incentives have been started to develop entrepreneurial ability. Women in India constitute 48 per cent of the total population. But their participation in economic activities is only 38 per cent. The development of women as entrepreneurs will generate multifaceted socio-economic benefit to the country.

2) DEFINING PROBLEM

Innovation nurtures entrepreneurship its give opportunity to explore new idea for commercialization and growth which brings empowerment through skills development. This paper explores the women empowerment by virtue of skills enhancement through entrepreneurship. Following are some of the basic problems a highlighted by various research studies undertaken by women entrepreneurs is:

- ◆ Lack of information
- ◆ Gender Inequality
- ◆ Lack of Micro Financing Scheme
- ◆ Lack of Skill Development
- ◆ Lack of Entrepreneurship/Business Skills
- ◆ Lack of Marketing Facilities
- ◆ Lack of Networking and Trust Building
- ◆ Non-Conducive Working Environment

Here research intended to study the role of skills development via entrepreneurship which finally results in empowering women so as to become a successful entrepreneur.

3) OBJECTIVES OF STUDY:-

The objectives of study are as follows.

- 1) To study the role of skills enhancement for women entrepreneurship and empowerment.
- 2) To study the present status of women empowerment in India
- 3) To analyze the traits of women entrepreneurs in Indian scenario.
- 4) To study various aspects of encouraging women for Entrepreneurship.
- 5) To know the current scenario of women empowerment in India.

4) METHODOLOGY OF STUDY:-

The research is major based on secondary data. During Research an extensive literature review of secondary data from various sources as mentioned in references have been taken. The research drafting and analysis is based on the outcome of various researchers whose research has been considered as a spring board for preparing the present research work.

5) TRAITS OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS:-

Women are ambitious

A successful woman entrepreneur is dreadfully strong-minded one, has an inner urge or drives change contemplation into realism. Knowledge from her previous occupancy as an employee, relying on

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educational qualifications or lessons learnt from inborn business, she is ready to grab opportunities, sets goal, possess clear vision, steps confidently forward and is ambitious to be successful.

Women are confident

A successful woman entrepreneur is confident in her ability. She is ready to learn from others, search for help from experts if it means adding value to her goals. She is positive in nature and is keener to take risks.

Women is open and willing to learn

A successful woman entrepreneur keeps side by side of changes, as she is fully conscious of the importance of evolving changes. She is ahead of her competitors and thrives on changes. She adapts her business to changes in technology or service prospect of her patrons. She is inquisitive, concerned to learn and accommodative to innovations.

Women are cost conscious

A successful woman entrepreneur prepares pragmatic budget estimates. She provides cost effective quality services to her clients. With minimized cost of operations, she is able to force her team to capitalize on profits and gather its benefits.

Women values cooperation and allegiance

A woman has the ability to work with all levels of populace. She is keen on maintaining associations and communicates evidently and efficiently. This helps her to negotiate even responsive issues without difficulty. She is sympathetic to people around her and have good networking skills that help her to get better contacts and utilize opportunities.

Women can balance home and work

A successful woman entrepreneur is good at balancing varied aspects of life. Her multitasking aptitude combined with support from spouse and relatives enables her to bring together business priorities with domestic responsibilities competently and efficiently.

Women are aware of her legal responsibility to the social order

A successful woman entrepreneur is eager to share her achievement with the society. She is dedicated to assist others and enjoys her liability.

Women focus on their Plans

Women Entrepreneur's plan their work and work with plan. Set long-term and short-term goals and take consistent action in moving toward them.

Women are Resourceful

Women entrepreneurs take advantage effectively coordinating the available factors and resources such as mentoring, training and coaching and build a strong base of education, training and experience which can help lead to success.

6) ENCOURAGING WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

1. ERADICATION OF TRADITIONAL BELIEFS

(a) Change in traditional mentality:

In the present scenario there are various measures taken by government and institutions for providing equal status to women in society but it has not being achieved wholly because of the practice of traditional mentality in our society. Due to which today also women are not allowed to step outside their houses and their role is limited to their family. For encouraging women entrepreneur there is a need to change the traditional mentality of society.

(b) Family Support:

Family support is the most important factor in order to encourage women entrepreneur. Women have to handle both her family and her work. And if family supports in performing her dual role smoothly she can handle her work more effectively and a sense of confidence built in her.

2. FOSTERING AN ENTREPRENEURIAL CULTURE FOR WOMEN

(a) Foster awareness and a positive image of entrepreneurship among women:

Efforts should be made to foster a greater awareness of the benefits of entrepreneurship among women. Governments should promote an entrepreneurial and risk-taking spirit, and eliminate the stigmas attached to failure. To this end, strong, positive female role models should be showcased to build self-confidence and encourage other women to consider becoming entrepreneurs.

(b) Improve the conditions for women's entrepreneurship:

Institutions should work to improve the status of women in business and remove gender-related obstacles to entrepreneurship. They should work to improve their access to support services and seek measures which can lighten the double burden of professional and household responsibilities for women, in order to allow them to undertake entrepreneurial activities under conditions more similar to those confronting men, e.g., as regards inheritance and ownership and as well as access to finance.

(c) Encourage entrepreneurship through the educational system:

The educational system should be mobilized as a vehicle to introduce boys and girls to entrepreneurial challenges and offer them equal opportunities to learn and cultivate their skills from an early age.

(d) Teach entrepreneurship to women:

Management and technical training for women entrepreneurs should be easily accessible, inexpensive, and available on flexible terms, maximizing the opportunities offered by e-learning and new technologies for skill building. Public/private partnerships (i.e., government/universities/firms/NGOs, etc.) in this regard should be encouraged.

(e) Foster Marketing confidence among women:

A major area of difficulty for women entrepreneurs is marketing. The long term strategy should in any case be to inculcate marketing skills in women entrepreneurs to enable them to produce for the market.

(f) Foster entrepreneurial networks:

There should be improvement in the conditions and infrastructure for well-functioning business networks aimed at both men and women, including through cooperation with regional and international organizations.

3. FACILITATING THE AVAILABILITY OF FINANCE FOR WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

(a) Disseminate financial information to women:

Encourage women entrepreneurs to learn about the full range of financial instruments, through the education system, targeted informational campaigns, and well-functioning business networks. Innovations should be carried out to overcome the constraints to women's access to formal credit through simplified forms and procedures.

(b) Encourage financial intermediaries to take a leading role:

Banks and other financial intermediaries should be encouraged to undertake research to learn more about the characteristics, financial needs and performance of women-owned businesses, and to share this information with other financial institutions. They should also be encouraged to work towards equitable treatment of women business clients, through comprehensive gender awareness training for staff at all levels, and better representation of women in high-level and decision-making positions.

(c) Take women's needs into account in program design:

When designing targeted program, governments should consider the following characteristics and carry out periodic evaluation to ensure that program remain pertinent: provision of finance on more flexible terms; mentoring/advisory services in conjunction with loans and monitoring of firm performance afterwards; assistance to entrepreneurs in establishing contacts with the business community and public authorities.

(d) Improve women's asset position:

Amendment in laws to ensure women's financial rights, particularly their rights to property, wages

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or inheritances, and work to improve basic social services for women and their families.

(e) Promote micro- and equity finance:

Self-sustaining micro finance institutions should be promoted as an effective source of finance for women entrepreneurs with low capital requirements; best practices in this area should be shared, particularly between developing and developed countries, and replicated when appropriate. Governments should consider introducing legislation to create and regulate microfinance institutions

4. INCREASING THE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND THE GLOBAL ECONOMY

(a) Disseminate information on international trade opportunities:

Associations with significant female membership should assist women entrepreneurs in gaining a better understanding of the global, knowledge-based economy; work together to promote education and training programs about the international trading system and the opportunities it offers; encourage participation in traditional and virtual trade missions and trade shows; and foster trade networks. Governments should also strengthen partnerships with relevant organizations to disseminate information and educate SMEs and women entrepreneurs about trade programs, including trade finance initiatives.

(b) Fostering public/private partnerships to globalize women-owned enterprises:

Government agencies should support efforts by the private sector to promote and develop trade capability, and strengthen women entrepreneurs' trade knowledge and networks. Governments can play a catalytic role in identifying and disseminating public and private sector trade best practices that are relevant for women entrepreneurs. Government agencies and large corporations should also work co-operatively to promote equal access to public and private sector procurement contracts for women-owned businesses, and to encourage their expanded participation in e-commerce and the supply chain.

5. IMPROVING AWARENESS ABOUT WOMEN'S ENTREPRENEURSHIP

(a) Engender SME statistics:

Information about women entrepreneurs should be increased by gathering more SME-level statistics with a gender component.

(b) Standardize SME research methodologies:

SME research coverage and methodologies should be standardized to increase national and international comparability. International cooperation should strive towards consensus and continuity concerning methodological issues and the timing of information-gathering efforts. Clarity and consistency in research should be encouraged regarding the definition of what constitutes a woman-owned business (e.g., percentages of ownership by women, management by women, or some combination of ownership and management).

7) CONCLUSION

Empowerment of women has considerable hurdles; In spite of them women empowerment in India took a stagnant shape. The women trait plays a major role on overcoming various kinds of obstacles in their empowerment. The encouragement of women entrepreneurship has been carried out on various levels as well as from various from platforms. Moreover the positive change in traditional mentality of so called Indian society has been observed. The little skill enhancement efforts as well as moral boosting attitude of family hikes the performance of women by miles. The skills enhancement through encouraging entrepreneurship results in empowerment of women which is prime need of our Nation.

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