

A STUDY ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN TAMIL NADU

G. Soundararajan

Department of Commerce , Dharamapuram Adhineem Arts College, Dharamapuram,
Mayiladuthurai , Affiliated to Bharathidasan University Tiruchirappalli

Abstract:

The role of business women in economic development is inevitable. Now days women enter not only in selected professions but also in profession like trade, industry and engineering. Women are also willing to take up business and contribute to the Nation's growth. For this purpose both the Government and Non-Government agencies have to play a vital role. With the change in time women are coming out of the four walls to participate in all sorts of activities. They are growing as successful in different areas and playing vital role in the socio economic development of the country. Business owned by women is highly increasing in all the countries. The hidden entrepreneurial potentials of women have gradually been changing with the growing sensitivity to their role and economic status in the society. Skill, Knowledge and adaptability in business are the main reasons for women to venture upon business.

KEYWORDS:

Women, Entrepreneurs, Women Entrepreneurs .

INTRODUCTION

Traditionally, Tamil Nadu is one of the well-developed States in terms of industrial development. In the post-liberalization era, Tamil Nadu has emerged as one of the front-runners, by attracting a large number of investment proposals. It has been ranked as the third largest economy in India. But the government's efforts came only from 1970 onwards for the promotion of self-employment among women.

In Tamil Nadu each city has its own set of products that are manufactured by women entrepreneurs using indigenous skills. Most of these products are made with locally available materials and the skills available in production are seldom found in other cities. Though traditional activities like production and sale of domestic items such as garments have been taken up by women since long, entrepreneurship on the modern lines has been found in industry and trade and service concerns only for the last one decade or so.

WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

The characteristics of men and women entrepreneurs are generally very similar. The differences are found only in the age, personality, motivation and type of business started. Women entrepreneurs may be defined as a "women or a group of women who initiate, organize and run a business enterprises". Government of India has defined women entrepreneurs based on women participation in equity and employment in equity and employment of a business enterprises.

WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN TAMIL NADU

The modern Tamil Nadu woman is different from the housewife of the past, to whom selling or

Please cite this Article as : T. Thileepan and K. Soundararajan , "REVIEWS ON CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS OF SELF HELP GROUP IN INDIA" : Tactful Management Research Journal (April ; 2014)

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running a business carried a stigma which she found difficult to shake off. Women entrepreneurs in Tamil Nadu possess organizational abilities, marketing skills, entrepreneurial skills and efficiency and novel ideas. Many women have vaulted the barriers of conditioning and reaped the rewards of a globalizing economy. According to Lakshmi V. Venkatesan, Founder Trustee of Bharatiya Yuva Shakthi Trust (BYST), 'Women in Tamil Nadu are the best entrepreneurs in the county; they have shown that they could make excellent entrepreneurs if they get support by way of finance and guidance'.

However, the manager of Indian Overseas Bank, (SSI Branch), Guindy, Chennai is of the opinion that most of the women enterprenerus prefer to start business in the service sector with minimum risk and efforts.

According to Laxmi Narasimhan, Regional Manager, Indian Overseas Bank, Madurai, urban women have good ideas about business; the success rate is very high, whereas the success rate of individual woman in semi-urban areas is much les, i.e., 20 to 30 per cent. In rural areas, the relative percentage is only 10. In rural areas, individual woman is not successful, since she does not have any idea about the business. Women are successful when they undertake group activities like Self Help Group (SHG), since they get very good awareness from it about the Government agencies, financial inistitutios, their schemes and opportunity to utilize these facilities. Family support is the main criterion for running business. Otherwise, women can run business only at micro finance level.

EVOLUTION OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN TAMIL NADU

In most parts of Tamil Nadu, women occupied a very low status in medieval and early modern society in the Madras Presidency. Lack of educational facilities, child marriages, prohibition of widow remarriages, prevalence of Devadasi system, etc., were some of the social factors responsible for the low status and misery of women who were reduced to the position of glorified slaves. Social barriers, imposition of taboos and female ignorance reigned supreme. The heavy industrialization and urbanization in the State made significant development in the areas of women empowerment and social development.

In Tamil Nadu women were engaged more in agriculture than in manufacturing or services. In the manufacturing sector, women worked as beedy workers and as manual labour for cotton textiles, fish and food processing and match industry.

A few were involved in the manufacturing of electronic and electrical goods. In a traditionally conservative society like Tamil Nadu, risk-aversion was common.

Women were a further step behind the average man, having to contend with gender barriers in financial institutions, discouragement in families, lower levels of education and confidence. The position of rural women in the State has remarkably changed with the formation of SHGs, whcich stated on an experimental basis in 1989 in the rural areas. It helped poor rural women to enter the entrepreneurial world and it also helped them to develop self-confidence, communication, courage, independence, mobility, management and technical skills.

Assisted by some NGOs and with a little Government support, this movement gained momentum and developed into strong local institutions. They provide legitimate avenues for social mobilization with access to inputs such as training, banking services, Government services, etc., most of them in the informal sector are now running micro enterprises or home-based production units such as basket making, lace making an the production of agarbathi, candles, garments, telephone mats, handicrafts, paper dice, ink, soaps, washing powder, snacks, fruits juices, pickles, jams squash, vattal, etc.,

PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN SSI SECTOR IN TAMIL NADU

The available data relating to participation of women in Tamil Nadu in the SSI sector show that their number has increased significantly in recent years. According to the Second All India Census (1987-88) the percentage of women in the registered SSI sector was 12.97 and it increased to 13.33 per cent in 2001-2002. R. Natarajan, Special Officer for women entrepreneurships in the Department of Industries and Commerce, Chennai, pointed to the success that women in Tamil Nadu had achieved after venturing into the world of manufacture and business.

Out of the 27 lakh registered SSIs in the State, 36000 are run by women. The data relating to district-wise women SSI units registered as on 31.03.2004 and 31.03.2005 obtained from the Department of Industires and Commerce, reveal that Cuddalore district had the maximum number of regisgered women SSI units during 2004 (7738) and 2005 (7985). Again, the number of women enterprises in the SSI sector was the highest in Kancheepuram district and the lowest in the Nilgiris district.

Similarly, the number of women-managed units in the SSI sector was the highest in Salem district

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and the lowest in the Nilgiris district. According to the Third All India Census of SSI-2004 in Tamil Nadu 14.83 per cent of the women enterprises and 13.33 per cent of women-managed units were in registered SSI sector and the corresponding percentage in unregistered sector was 16.96 and 17.48 respectively. A comparison of the percentage of women SSI units in Tamil Nadu (in the total SSI sector) with that of all India level shows that the percentage of women enterprises and women-managed units in Tamil Nadu was much above the national average.

ORGANIZATIONS PROMOTING WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN TAMIL NADU

The Integrated Women Development Institute the institute was set up in 1989 to uplift women and girl children from the distressing situations they generating programmes for deserving women to become self-employed.

The Tamil Nadu Corporation for Development of Women Ltd. The corporation was set up on December 9, 1983, under the Companies ACT, 1956 to focus on empowerment of women to encourage entrepreneurship among women, to identify trade and industries suitable for women, to undertake marketing activities for products manufactured by women to form SHGs through giving training and extending credit facilities.

Women Entrepreneurship Promotional Association (WEPA) WEPA functioning in Chennai is an association of women entrepreneurs, providing training to women entrepreneurs, providing training to women in various fields. The association also conducts exhibition for the members and assists in marketing of the products of members.

Marketing Organization of Women Entrepreneurs of Women Entrepreneurs (Regd.) (MOOWES) MOOWES provides comprehensive support to women entrepreneurs to achieve success in the business. Its main aim is to aid women in marketing their products through exhibitions and thus provide an opportunity to tour the country also.

Financial Institutions Assisting Women Entrepreneurship in Tamil Nadu.

Tamil Nadu Industrial Cooperative Bank Limited.

Tamil Nadu Industrial Investment Corporation (TIIC)

Tamil Nadu Adi Dravidar Housing Development Corporation (TAHDCO)

Regional Rural Banks, Public and Private Sector Banks, Cooperative banks, etc., provide financial assistance to women entrepreneurs. In Tamil Nadu, there are 36 specialized SSI commercial bank branches functioning in different places. Some banks (e.g. Indian Overseas Bank, Egmore, Chennai) have a Mahila Banking Branch which is meant mainly for women and managed by women.

Women entrepreneur is a person who accepts a challenging role to meet her personal needs and become economically independent. To conclude, the role of business women in economic development is inevitable. Now a days women enter not only in selected professions but also in profession like trade, industry and engineering. Women are also willing to take up business and contribute to the Nation's growth. For this purpose both the Government and Non-Government agencies have to play a vital role.

With the change in time women are coming out of the four walls to participate in all sorts of activities. They are growing as successful in different areas and playing vital role in the socio economic development of the country. Business owned by women is highly increasing in all the countries. The hidden entrepreneurial potentials of women have gradually been changing with the growing sensitivity to their role and economic status in the society. Skill, Knowledge and adaptability in business are the main reasons for women to venture upon business.