



## A STUDY ON CHALLENGES OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

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### ABSTRACT

Entrepreneurs play a most important role in an economy. They promote private sector development and drive economic growth through innovation and job creation. By creating a conducive ecosystem for entrepreneurship the growth of women entrepreneurs will increase. Women entrepreneurship has been recognized as an important, untapped source of economic growth during the last decade. With the spread of education and awareness, Indian women have shifted from the extended kitchen, handicrafts, and traditional cottage industries to non-traditional, higher level of activities. In the new industrial policy, the government has laid special emphasis on the need of conducting special entrepreneurial training programs for women to enable them to start their own ventures. Financial banks and institutions have also set up special cells to assist women entrepreneurs. This has helped the women a lot in taking up the entrepreneurial activity in India. The study explains the concept of women entrepreneurs and the diverse challenges faced by them.

**Key words:** Women Entrepreneurs, Challenges.

### INTRODUCTION

A women entrepreneur is any woman who organizes and manages any enterprise, especially a business usually with considerable initiative and risk. However, the term 'women' owned business is often used relative to government contracting. In this instance, the entrepreneur(women) owns (more than 50%), controls and runs the enterprise. There are many problems faced by women entrepreneurs at various stages while running enterprise. "A women entrepreneur can be defined as confident, innovative and creative women capable of achieving self-economic independence individually or in collaboration, generating employment opportunities for others through initiating, establishing and running the enterprise by keeping pace with her personal, family and social life. Women entrepreneurship is largely skewed towards smaller sized firms, as almost 98% of women-owned business are micro-enterprises. Economically empowered women are also major catalysts for development. There is a greater recognition of the positive relationship between increased economic activity by women and improved social outcomes. Women often reinvest their income in their children's education, health and nutrition. This has a positive impact on the potential for economic growth. A positive set up by Government in enhancing women entrepreneurship has been the establishment of BharatiyaMahila Bank. After the initial announcement that the BharatiyaMahila Bank would participate in the mega merger of state Bank of India and its subsidiaries, thus help the women entrepreneurs for their growth.

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

**1. Sarfaraz. Faghieh and Majd (2014)** have shown a statistical relationship between women entrepreneurship and gender equality. They have used a correlation analysis to investigate how gender-related economic development and women entrepreneurial activities are related.



**Goyal M & Parkash (2011)** highlights the Indian problems and prospects falling upon the lower section thereby affecting women entrepreneurship. Their paper endeavours to study the concept of women entrepreneurs, reasons why women become entrepreneurs, reasons for their slow progress, suggestions for the growth of women, schemes for the promotion & development of women entrepreneurship in India.

**Garcia P & Capitán (2016)** deals with elements that contribute to boost female entrepreneurship through a prospective analysis. Their work aims to identify what environmental modulators elements favour and contribute to enhance female entrepreneurship from a gender perspective.

**Tambunan T (2009)** has done case studies on Asian women entrepreneurs in the developing countries. It has focused on their development and main constraints. The author's study is based on data analysis and a review of recent key literature. This paper focuses only on women entrepreneurs in small and medium enterprises. Through the findings of this study, the author has also come up with three main important facts as shared respectively.

**Akehurst, Simarre & Mas-Tur (2012)** have done research on women entrepreneurship in small service firms thereby having made a report on motivations, barriers and performance. Their research was undertaken using a relatively small sample of firms in one region of Spain. The paper contributes to a better understanding of business creation by women and the factors which are instrumental in their success.

**Moses & Amalu (2010)** have brought about entrepreneurial motivations as determinants of women entrepreneurship challenges. They have examined the relationship between motivations and women entrepreneurial challenges which tend to provide some useful insights into some theoretical issues on one hand and on the other hand, it raises some practical implications for policy makers. They have also received a positive outcome through their correlation analysis.

### **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Entrepreneurship is the most important input in the economic development of the country. Entrepreneurs act as catalyst agents in the process of industrialization and economic growth. A developing country needs entrepreneurs who are competent to perceive new opportunities and those entrepreneurs who are willing to take risk. Women's skills and knowledge, talents and abilities in business and the compelling desire of wanting to do something positive are some of the reasons for women entrepreneurs to start small scale business. Nowadays it has been realized that the enterprise has cost entrepreneurial talents which could be harnessed to convert them from the position of job seekers to job givers. Empowerment of women has emerged as an important issue in recent times. Hence, the issue of economic empowerment of women is of paramount importance to political thinkers, social scientists, and reformers. The government has realized the importance of women's entrepreneurship. So, the present study is an inquiry into the problems and challenges of the women entrepreneurs.

### **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

Our society is facing a rapid development, so that entrepreneurship has become one of the most dynamic forces in the economy. The aspects of the economy make entrepreneurship very important from a macroeconomic perspective. As the globalization of business has become more widespread, the impact of women entrepreneurship increased a lot. Entrepreneur is a person who has superior ability who pursues his or her goals by facing so many obstacles, opposition's setbacks and failure. By facing unknown challenges, risks, failures etc., the entrepreneurs will have the confidence to do all the



necessary actions for achieving the goals. It is important to study the problems faced by women because empowering women is a prerequisite for creating a good nation.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

- To study the motivational factors behind women entrepreneurs in Thiruvananthapuram District.
- To analyze the problems faced by women entrepreneurs.
- To examine the challenges faced by the women entrepreneur.

### **METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY**

The present study is both descriptive and analytical in nature based on the survey method with multiple objectives to study the problems, motivational factors, and performance of women entrepreneurs. This study is based on both primary and secondary data. The primary data was collected through an interview scheduled with selected respondents. The secondary data was collected from various published sources like Journals, Magazine Articles, Newspapers, Research Papers, Publications, Reports, Standard textbooks, and Web-related materials.

### **LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

1. The study is confined to an area in the Thiruvananthapuram district only
2. The study has been limited to 50 respondents only.
3. This study is mainly based on the survey method. Therefore, limitations of the survey method are expected to influence the outcome of the study.
4. The study was affected by time constraints.

### **The role of women entrepreneurs is explained in the following points**

An entrepreneur is a person who starts a new business and usually risks his/her own money to start a new venture. Women Entrepreneurs means women or a group of women who initiate, organize and operate a business enterprise. A women entrepreneur is, therefore, a confident, creative, and innovative woman, desiring economic independence individually and simultaneously creating employment, and opportunities for others

#### **I. Employment Generation:**

It implies that women entrepreneurs not only establish their enterprise, but provide job to others. Women entrepreneurship is about women's position in the society and their role as entrepreneurs in the same society. In this way, woman entrepreneurs have an important impact on the economy in terms of their ability to create jobs for themselves as well as for others.

#### **ii. Economic Development:**

It signifies that women entrepreneurs contribute to the gross domestic product of the country by establishing enterprises and producing goods and services. Due to their entrepreneurial activity, women entrepreneurs bring dynamism in market. In this way, they also help in increasing the national income of the country.

#### **iii. Better Utilization of Resources:**

It implies that the involvement of women in industrial development ensure the effective utilization of all available resources (labour, raw materials, capital). The issue of women in the industrialization process has been emphasized only in the last decade when the Declaration of Mexico in July 1975, the equality of womanhood and their contribution to individual development became the center of attention.

#### **iv. Improved Quality of Life:**



It implies that women entrepreneurs are now economically independent and take decisions independently. They are now capable of upbringing their children according to their wish They are providing quality education to their children and a better living standard to their family members. They not only improve their living standards, but also the living standards of others by providing them the means of earning

**EMPLOYEMENT STATUS BEFORE ENTERPRISE START UP**

SI NO.	OPTION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1	Self employed	18	32
2	Studying	12	24
3	House wife	13	26
4	Unemployed	5	10
5	Others	2	4
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Primary Data

The table indicates that 32 percentage of the respondents were self-employed before enterprise start up, 26 percentage of respondents were house wife before enterprise.

**MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS**

ITEMS	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEUTRAL	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
Economic Independence	2	4	16	22	6
	4	8	32	44	12
Dissatisfaction with current job	10	20	15	5	0
	20	40	30	10	0
Unemployment	0	10	23	14	3
	0	20	46	28	6
Use of idle funds	0	5	30	15	0
	0	10	60	30	0
Social status/to advance myself	0	7	23	20	0
	0	14	46	40	0
No other income source available	0	10	20	20	0
	0	20	40	40	0
Support from family/spouse	0	7	15	28	0
	0	14	30	56	0



Seeking challenges in business venture	0	3	27	20	0
	0	6	54	40	0
Gaining control on my life	0	5	16	29	0
	0	10	32	58	0
Being entrepreneur was a lifelong goal	0	10	16	24	0
	0	20	32	48	0
To support family financially	0	5	16	29	0
	0	10	32	58	0

Source: primary data

Table indicates that 40 percentage of respondents disagreed with dissatisfaction with current job, 30 percentage of respondents are neutral, 20 percentage of respondents strongly disagreed and 10 percentage of respondents agreed that they are dissatisfied with current job; Hence it can be concluded that the majority of the respondents disagreed with dissatisfaction with current job Hence it can be concluded that the majority of the respondents agreed with economic independence as the factor influencing motivation.

**PERSONAL CONSTRAINTS**

ITEMS	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEUTRAL	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
Poor self-image	6	13	27	4	0
	12	26	54	8	0
Lack of motivation and confidence	4	26	10	10	0
	8	52	20	20	0
Role conflict/multiple role of women	0	9	21	15	5
	0	18	42	30	10
Lack of leadership qualities	15	17	10	7	1
	30	34	20	14	2
Susceptibility about own decision	7	15	15	12	1



making abilities	14	30	30	24	1
Orthodox family background	10	21	7	11	0
	20	42	14	22	0
Lack of finance or start-up capital	2	7	14	21	6
	4	14	28	42	12
Lack of security	1	15	11	20	3
	2	30	22	40	6
Lack of support of husband and family	17	13	12	4	4
	34	26	24	8	8
Fear of failure and criticism	7	8	25	9	1
	14	16	50	18	2
Maintaining work life balance	1	10	15	22	2
	2	20	30	44	4
Change in life style	1	7	10	21	11
	2	14	20	42	22
Time management	1	6	14	26	3
	2	12	28	52	6
Maintaining stress of decision making	3	11	15	18	3
	6	22	30	36	6
Lack of fund adjusting capacity	4	9	12	19	6
	8	18	24	38	12

Table indicates that 54 percentage of respondents neutral with poor self image, 26 percentage of respondents disagrees, 12 percentage of respondents strongly disagrees, 8 percentage of respondents agrees. Hence, it can be concluded that majority of respondents are neutral with poor self image.

### SUGGESTIONS

On the basis of the findings, the study offers some suggestions for fostering women entrepreneurs, in terms of depth and breadth.

- Women Entrepreneur should establish an association among themselves on category wise. In order to enjoy normal profit, there must be co-ordination among the members of the association.



- To overcome their financial problem women entrepreneurs should raise their own endowed funds through which the needy entrepreneur can avail loans.
- Special training on time- management and stress management should be arranged for women entrepreneurs occasionally through their associations.
- Government should take initiating in solving their problems of getting financial help and getting the units registered quickly. The loan procedure by banks and other governmental organizations needs to be simplified.
- Government should make the women entrepreneurs aware about the financial schemes and initiatives introduced.
- Workshops or seminars to teach women entrepreneurs how to start and expand business.

## CONCLUSION

From the various research papers studied several challenges faced by women entrepreneurs have come into focus. These include balance between family and career, socio-cultural barriers, illiteracy or low level of education, dearth of financial assistance, lack of technical knowhow, lack of self-confidence and mobility constraints. Social and political developments in India have also been responsible for determining the role of women in a changing society. Time has come for women to come out of the burden of housework and give way to their creativity and entrepreneurship. With the increase in the number of women getting education, there is considerable awareness among women to be self-employed thus leading to change in the role of women.

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