



A STUDY ON THE PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN THIRUVANANTHAPURAM DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

An entrepreneur is a person who has an entrepreneurial quality, an eye for opportunities, and an uncanny vision. They are also someone who is prepared to take risks due to their intrepid nature, and this is true of both men and women. The goal of the current research is to examine the idea of women entrepreneurs and the difficulties they encounter. The results of this study shows that they have lack of a healthy work-life balance, socio cultural barriers, a male-dominated society, illiteracy or low levels of education, a lack of financial aid, a lack of technical expertise, a lack of marketing and entrepreneurial skills, a lack of self-confidence, and mobility restrictions are among the problems. There have been some recommendations made to address these issues. Additionally, as more women pursue higher education, more of them are aware of the benefits of working for themselves, and over time, the status of women in society is changing.

Keywords: women entrepreneur, problems

INTRODUCTION

The act of starting a new firm or revitalising an old one in order to take advantage of fresh prospects is referred to as entrepreneurship. An adult who owns and manages a business, particularly one that is commercial, frequently at personal financial risk, is referred to as a woman entrepreneur. According to the International Liberation Organisation, a women's enterprise is a small business in which one or more female owners possess at least 50% of the company's financial assets. Women business owners encounter a number of issues from the outset till the company is operating. A woman entrepreneur faces a number of challenges simply by virtue of her gender. Women carry out all the tasks necessary to start a business, including becoming an entrepreneur. These include concept development and idea screening, setting project goals, product analysis, project preparation, deciding on company organisation structures, completing promotional requirements, raising money, hiring employees, buying equipment, and running the firm. Since the beginning of time, men have governed society, but in modern times, women are bucking the pattern and emerging from the shadows as all-powerful avatars. Women from all over the world are dispelling the unfavourable stereotypes that society has about them.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Winn, (2004) focuses at some of the socio-personal limitations and deciding variables that influence women entrepreneurs globally. Despite today's greater workplace gender equity, few women hold senior management roles in significant organisations. In order to effectively advise those who select business leadership roles, policymakers and educators who are interested in expanding the number of women in executive positions need to comprehend the relationship between family and career objectives. One



cannot eliminate the obstacles that women confront in their job pursuits unless they can put the business/family interaction into perspective.

Kumbhar & Kumbhar (2011) examine a number of issues that women business owners confront, including start-up funding, access to technology, management, and lack of confidence and marketing expertise. Additionally, they talk on the function of groups that support female entrepreneurs, such as SHG, WIT, and SEWA. Finally, they offer advice on how to encourage women to start their own businesses, which will enable them to support themselves financially. This would improve not only the health, education, and skills of women but also their living conditions since they will be able to use cleaner fuel, better housing, better sanitation, and other services and infrastructure.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Women business owners struggle greatly to raise and meet the company's financial needs. Due to their lower credit worthiness and higher risk of business failure, creditors and financial institutions are reluctant to offer financial assistance to women borrowers. They also deal with financial difficulty brought on by a blockage of finances in raw materials, work-in-progress finished goods, and late client payments. In this study the researcher studies about the problems faced by women entrepreneurs in

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To analyse the problems faced by women entrepreneurs.
2. To identify the opportunities contributing to become entrepreneurs.
3. To provide feasible solution based on my findings.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Data was collected through primary and secondary sources. Primary data is collected by issuing questionnaire. Secondary data is collected from journals, website etc. Percentage analysis, mean score and Likert's five point scale were done to analyze data. The sample size for this study is comprised of 100 women entrepreneurs in Thiruvananthapuram district.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1
Demographic Profile of Respondents

Category	Subgroups	Count	%
Age	Upto 30	25	25
	31-40	46	46
	Above 40	29	29
Location of business	Rural Area	50	50
	Urban Area	50	50
Type of Business	Pharmaceuticals	15	15
	Textile Shops	45	45
	Stationery	25	25
	Others	15	15

Period of running business	Upto 5 years	40	40
	6- 10 years	45	45
	Above 10 years	15	15
Level of problems facing	High	39	39
	Neutral	36	36
	Low	25	25

Table 1 represents demographic profile of respondents selected from the study region. 46 percent of respondents are having age from 31 to 40 years. 50 percent of women entrepreneurs each have their business in rural and urban area. 45 percent of respondents are having textile shops. 45 percent of women entrepreneurs running their business from 6 to 10 years. It is clear from the table that 25 percent of women entrepreneurs are facing high level of problems.

TABLE 2. PROBLEMS FACED BY WOMEN ENTERPRENEURS

PROBLEMS	Mean Score
Balance between family and career	3.7
Socio-cultural barriers	2.56
Male dominated society	2.35
Illiteracy or low level of Education	4.53
Dearth of financial assistance	2.33
Mobility Constraints	3.85
Lack of Self-Confidence	2.46
Lack of entrepreneurial aptitude	3.45
Lack of Marketing Skill	2.56
Lack of Technical knowhow	1.52

Table 2 shows problems faced by women entrepreneurs in Thiruvananthapuram district in terms of balance between family and career, socio-cultural barriers, male dominated society, illiteracy or low level of education, dearth of financial assistance, mobility constraints, lack of self-confidence, lack of entrepreneurial aptitude, lack of marketing skill and lack of technical knowhow. From the table it can be found that illiteracy or low level of education and mobility constraints have the highest mean score of 4.53 and 3.85 whereas lack of technical knowhow and dearth of financial assistance have highest mean score of 1.52 and 2.33 respectively.

TABLE 3. OPPORTUNITIES CONTRIBUTING TO BECOME ENTERPRENEURS

Opportunities	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Social recognition to women	46	12	13	8	21
Peer effect	56	32	12		
77					
73					
Increasing number of successful women in society					



72 68 Increasing automation of household work 81 76 Equality status of wome Peer effect 77 73 Increasing number of successful women in society 72 68 Increasing automation of household work 81 76 Equality status of wome Increasing automation of household work					
Increasing number of successful women in society	52	32	16		
Awareness of women about economic independence Awareness of women about economic independence Awareness of women about economic independence	55	31	8	6	
Equality status of women	52	16	9	9	14
Availability of educational opportunities	20	5	58	5	12

Table 3 shows various opportunities contributing to become women entrepreneurs in terms of social recognition to women, increasing automation of household work, increasing number of successful women in society, awareness of women about economic independence, equality status of women and availability of educational opportunities in various scale.

FINDINGS

- 46 percent of respondents are having age from 31 to 40 years. 50 percent of women entrepreneurs each have their business in rural and urban area. 45 percent of respondents are having textile shops. 45 percent of women entrepreneurs running their business from 6 to 10



years. It is clear from the table that 25 percent of women entrepreneurs are facing high level of problems.

- It is found that illiteracy or low level of education and mobility constraints have the highest mean score of 4.53 and 3.85 whereas lack of technical knowhow and dearth of financial assistance have highest mean score of 1.52 and 2.33 respectively.
- 46 percent of respondents strongly agree that social recognition to women is an opportunity for women for development. Majority of the respondents strongly agree that increasing automation of household work, number of successful women in the society and awareness of women about economic independence also results it. Women entrepreneurs strongly agree that they have equal status in society and contributes to development.

SUGGESTIONS

1. Women entrepreneurs should receive distinct financial assistance from the government so they won't have any problems starting their businesses.
2. Special infrastructure facilities should be made available to assist women in starting their businesses swiftly and easily.
3. Women entrepreneurs should specifically receive training programmes to improve their entrepreneurial skills and competencies that aid in day-to-day operations of their businesses.
4. In order to inspire and urge more women to pursue these jobs, it is important to recognise and honour top-ranking female entrepreneurs.
5. Better educational facilities should be made available beginning in elementary school and continuing through higher education as well as a number of occupational studies.
6. Women Entrepreneurs' Guidance Cells should be established in every city to address issues with day-to-day operations, such as production, marketing, and distribution issues.
7. In order to assist female entrepreneurs in starting their businesses and obtaining quick clearance regarding various legal procedures, a number of legal laws and regulations pertaining to the establishment of a company by women must be simplified.

CONCLUSION

Several research articles from the many were studied the difficulties experienced by female entrepreneurs have been highlighted. These include finding a work-life balance, socio-cultural hurdles, a predominance of men in society, illiteracy or low levels of education, a lack of financial aid, a lack of marketing and entrepreneurial abilities, a lack of technical expertise, a lack of self-confidence, and movement restrictions. Despite today's greater workplace gender equity, few women hold senior management roles in significant organisations.

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