

Rural Women Entrepreneurship

Sonia

M.com (NET) M.D. University, Rohtak

ABSTRACT

Entrepreneurship has gained greater significance at global level under changing economic scenario. The entrepreneurial skills are needed to improve the quality of life for individuals, families and communities and to sustain a healthy economy and environment. After independence, several entrepreneurship development programs have been started to develop the skill, knowledge, and competence among the entrepreneur. Women contribute significantly to the running of family businesses mostly in the form of unpaid effort and skills. Women entrepreneurs may do things differently. A rural woman encounters many constraints in the transformation process. Gender issues tend to regard the rural areas tend to be more traditional and is a stronger hindrance to potential female entrepreneurs than urban areas. Self-esteem and managerial skills being lower, access to external financial resources more difficult than in urban areas, assistance to technical and financial constraints should be developed to meet the needs of rural women. Programs meant to reach women entrepreneurs can succeed only if they take note of this paradox as well as of the familial and social conditioning that increases the confidence, independence and mobility of women. Therefore, instead of just schemes (financial and developmental) as the carrot for entrepreneurship development an intensive training needs to be provided to the women and create an entrepreneurship training system as per integrated rural development program. This study is an attempt to create an awareness of the necessities of rural women entrepreneurs and overcome the barriers to uplift entrepreneurial activities in rural areas. The methodology employed is based on secondary data. The researcher is in the view to have more suggestion which would result beneficial to the rural women entrepreneurs in expanding their business also boost new entrepreneurship.

Keywords: Women, entrepreneurship, Rural area and entrepreneurial growth.

INTRODUCTION

The most appropriate definition of entrepreneurship that would fit into the rural development context is the one which defines entrepreneurship as: "a force that mobilizes other resources to meet unmet market demand", "the ability to create and build something from practically nothing", "The process of creating value by pulling together a unique package of resources to exploit an opportunity". However, the existing generation of entrepreneurship also is passing through the transition period. They experience financial resource limitation to promote or to develop a venture and there is also look of research and innovation to meet with marketing challenges. Entrepreneurship needs nothing new from a global perspective. The adoption of new forms of business, technologies and goods not previously available at a location is considered to be a prime mover in development of nations, regions and communities by providing identity to the women promoting entrepreneurship development. This study attempts to know the possibilities of rural entrepreneurship to women who seek to take a stand for their existence and also create awareness to those sectors where women entrepreneurship is taken as misguidance by male dominance. The researcher further steps to put forward suggestion for the benefit of rural women entrepreneurs and boost the womankind to uplift their existence than sharing dominance. Many women entered the world of business, of trade commerce and they have become successful entrepreneurs in various business activities. However, the rate of participation or rate of their inclusion in the business world is very low, in spite of its increase during the last ten years. This growth rate of women's participation in economic activities is much lower than the expected rate. If we look at the developed countries we see that women are actively participative in the business and trade activities, including agriculture, without any social or other restrictions. But in Rural areas, there are still many social and cultural restrictions on women. Hence, women participation in entrepreneurial activities is less than the requirement of the fast growth of India.

Objectives

A study is been conducted and the objectives of the study are:

- 1) To study the necessity of entrepreneurship in rural area for women.
- 2) To study the current position of women entrepreneurs in Rural India.
- 3) To study the challenges faced by rural women entrepreneurs.
- 4) To study the ways of overcoming the barriers of rural entrepreneurship for women

METHODOLOGY

The methodologies employed in determining the data are based on secondary data. Secondary data is based on journals, magazines, newspapers and web& Books.

The necessity of Entrepreneurship in Rural Area for Women

Women are naturally endowed with the qualities of entrepreneurship."Women Entrepreneur "is a person who accepts challenging role to meet her personal needs and become economically independent. A strong desire to do something positive is an inbuilt quality of entrepreneurial women, who is capable of contributing values in both family and social life. Entrepreneurship amongst women has been a recent concern in today's world. Women have become aware of their existence their rights and their work situation. Thus women entrepreneurship can bring about women empowerment. In India, though women have played a key role in the society, their entrepreneurial ability has not been properly tapped due to the lower status of women in the society. Entrepreneurship plays an important role in the economic growth and development of nation. It is a purposeful activity includes in initiation, promotion and distribution of wealth and service. Entrepreneurial development among rural women helps to enhance their person capabilities but also decision making status in the family and society as a whole. According to Schumpeter "The entrepreneurship is essentially a creative activity or it is an innovative function". Entrepreneurship is regarded as a factor of production together with land, labour, natural resources, and capital. It promotes human security by supporting entrepreneurship to enable disadvantaged population groups to seize economic opportunities based on market mechanisms and entrepreneurial initiatives. All this describe the importance of women entrepreneurship and progress of women entrepreneurs in rural India.

Position of Women Entrepreneurs in Rural India

Empirical evidence shows that women contribute significantly to the running of family businesses mostly in the form of unpaid effort and skills. The value of this effort is underestimated both by the families that take it for granted and in academic studies. On the other hand, many of the enterprises defined as being run by women (that is, enterprises in which women hold the controlling share) are in fact run in their names by men who control operations and decision-making. Promoting entrepreneurship for women will require an even greater reversal of traditional attitudes than the mere creation of jobs for women would. This does not mean that we should wait for societal change to take place first. But it does imply that the programme should go beyond subsidies and credit allocation to attitudinal changes, group formation, training and other support services.

Problems Being Faced By Women Entrepreneurs in Rural Areas

Several studies around the world have been carried out which throw light on the challenges faced by women entrepreneurs. Though the three major stages in the entrepreneurial process – of creating, nurturing and nourishing – are the same for men and women, there are however, in practice, problems faced by women, which are of different dimensions and magnitudes, owing to social and cultural reasons. The gender discrimination that often prevails at all levels in many societies impact the sphere of women in industry too, and a cumulative effect of psychological, social, economic and educational factors act as impediments to women entrepreneurs entering the mainstream. Some of the important barriers faced by women are discussed below:

A. Access To Finance

Access to finance is a key issue for women. Accessing credit, particularly for starting an enterprise, is one of the major constraints faced by women entrepreneurs. Women often have fewer opportunities than men to gain access to credit for various reasons, including lack of collateral, an unwillingness to accept household assets as collateral and negative perceptions of female entrepreneurs by loan officers. In addition to this, women entrepreneurs in developing countries continue to suffer from poor overall assets, poor enforcement of financial rights and the existence of unequal inheritance

rights and consequently poor access to community and social resources. Gender-based obstacles – conventional thinking, cultural and social values, lack of collateral – all aggravate the difficulties faced by women.

B. Access To Markets

The ability to tap into new markets requires expertise, knowledge and contacts. Women often lack access to training and experience in on how to participate in the market place and are therefore unable to market goods and services strategically. Thus, women-owned SMEs are often unable to take on both the production and marketing of their goods. In addition, they have often not been exposed to the international market, and therefore lack knowledge about what is internationally acceptable. The high cost of developing new business contacts and relationships in a new country or market is a big deterrent and obstacle for many SMEs, in particular women-owned businesses. Women may also fear or face prejudice or sexual harassment, and may be restricted in their ability to travel to make contacts.

C. Access To Training

Women have limited access to vocational and technical training in South Asia. In fact, women on average have less access to education than men, and technical and vocational skills can only be developed on a strong foundation of basic primary and secondary education. South Asia is characterized by low enrolment among women in education, high drop out rates and poor quality of education. When training is available, women may be unable to access it because it is held at a time when they are meeting family responsibilities, or the content and method of delivery may not be appropriate. Besides, most technical trainings that are offered to girls at the post-school levels, in the women polytechnic for instance are limited to traditional careers, such as secretarial practice, dress designing, etc. Thus, the exclusivity of training acts as limiting factor itself.

D. Access To Networks

Women have fewer business contacts, less knowledge of how to deal with the governmental bureaucracy and less bargaining power, all of which further limit their growth. Since most women entrepreneurs operate on a small scale, and are generally not members of professional organizations or part of other networks, they often find it difficult to access information. Most existing networks are male dominated and sometimes not particularly welcoming to women but prefer to be exclusive. There are hardly any women-only or women-majority networks where a woman could enter, gain confidence and move further. Lack of networks also deprives women of awareness and exposure to good role models. Few women are invited to join trade missions or delegations, due to the combined invisibility of women-dominated sectors or sub sectors and of women as individuals within any given sector.

E. Access To Policymaker

Most women have little access to policymakers or representation on policymaking bodies. Large companies and men can more easily influence policy and have access to policymakers, who are seen more as their peers. Women tend not to belong to, and even less reach leadership positions in, mainstream business organizations, limiting their input into policymaking through lobbying. Women's lack of access to information also limits their knowledgeable input into policymaking.

F. Traditional Views On The Role of Women in The Society

One characteristic that clearly distinguishes most businesswomen from their male counterparts is the added responsibility society often puts upon them in their roles as mothers and wives. The time taken up and the emotional burden created by these dual role responsibilities often interfere directly with the conduct of business for women in ways that do not apply to the majority of men in South Asia. The often-prevailing attitude that the women's place is at home and that her first priority is to look after the home and family constrain many married women from venturing into entrepreneurship. Because of this patriarchal bias and role prescriptions, ambition, self-confidence, innovativeness, achievement motivation and risk-taking ability, which are essential for an entrepreneurial career, are inhibited. Women entrepreneurs

Steps Taken By Government to Improve Position of Women Entrepreneurs

Keeping in view the contribution of small business to employment generation, balanced regional development of the country, and promotion of exports, the Government of India's policy thrust has been on establishing, promoting and developing the small business sector, particularly the rural industries and the cottage and village industries in backward areas. Governments both at the central and state level have been actively participating in promoting self-employment

opportunities in rural areas by providing assistance in respect of infrastructure, finance, technology, training, raw materials, and marketing. Some of the support measures and programmes meant for the promotion of small and rural industries are discussed below:

National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)

NABARD was set up in 1982 to promote integrated rural development. Since then, it has been adopting a multi-pronged, multi-purpose strategy for the promotion of rural business enterprises in the country. Apart from agriculture, it supports small industries, cottage and village industries and rural artisans using credit and non-credit approaches. It offers counseling and consultancy services and organizes training and development programmes for rural entrepreneurs.

The Rural Small Business Development Centre (RSBDC)

It is the first of its kind set up by the world association for small and medium enterprises and is sponsored by NABARD. It works for the benefit of socially and economically disadvantaged individuals and groups. It aims at providing management and technical support to current and prospective micro and small entrepreneurs in rural areas. Since its inception, RSBDC has organized several programmes on rural entrepreneurship, skill up gradation workshops, mobile clinics and trainers training programmes, awareness and counseling camps in various villages

National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC)

This was set up in 1955 with a view to promote aid and foster the growth of small business units in the country. This focuses on the commercial aspects of these functions.

- Supply indigenous and imported machines on easy hire-purchase terms.
- Procure, supply and distribute indigenous and imported raw materials.
- Export the products of small business units and develop export-worthiness.
- Mentoring and advisory services.
- Serve as technology business incubators.
- Creating awareness on technological up gradation.
- Developing software technology parks and technology transfer centers.

A new scheme of „performance and credit rating“ of small businesses is implemented through National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC) with the twin objectives of (i) sensitizing the small industries about the need for credit rating and (ii) encouraging the small business units to maintain good financial track record.

Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI)

This has been set up as an apex bank to provide direct/indirect financial assistance under different schemes, to meet credit needs of small business organizations. It coordinates the functions of other institutions in similar activities; recommend measures considered necessary for improving the productivity of small enterprises in the informal sector; generate more employment opportunities on a sustainable basis, particularly in the rural areas and enhance the competitiveness of the sector in the emerging global environment

Rural and Women Entrepreneurship Development (RWED)

The Rural and Women Entrepreneurship Development programme aims at promoting a conducive business environment and at building institutional and human capacities that will encourage and support the entrepreneurial initiatives of rural people and women. RWE provides the following services:

- Creating a business environment that encourages initiatives of rural and women entrepreneurs.
- Enhancing the human and institutional capacities required to foster entrepreneurial dynamism and enhance productivity.
- Providing training manuals for women entrepreneurs and training them.
- Rendering any other advisory services.

World Association for Small and Medium Enterprises (WASME)

It is the only International Nongovernmental Organization of micro, small and medium enterprises based in India, which set up an International Committee for Rural Industrialization. Its aim is to develop an action plan model for sustained growth of rural enterprises.

Apart from these, there are several schemes to promote the non-farm sector, mostly initiated by the Government of India. For instance, there are schemes for entrepreneurship through subsidized loans like Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), Prime Minister Rojgar Yojana (PMRY), schemes to provide skills like Training of Rural Youth for Self Employment (TRYSEM), and schemes to strengthen the gender component like Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA).

Scheme of Fund for Regeneration of Traditional Industries (SFURTI)

To make the traditional industries more productive and competitive and to facilitate their sustainable development, the Central Government set up this fund with Rs. 100 crores allocation to begin within the year 2005. This has to be implemented by the Ministry of Agro and Rural Industries in collaboration with State Governments. The main objectives of the scheme are as follows:

1. To develop clusters of traditional industries in various parts of the country;
2. To build innovative and traditional skills, improve technologies and encourage public-private partnerships, develop market intelligence etc., to make them competitive, profitable and sustainable; and to create sustained employment opportunities in traditional industries.

The District Industries Centers (DICS)

The District Industries Centers Programme was launched on May 1, 1978, with a view to providing an integrated administrative framework at the district level, which would look at the problems of industrialization in the district, in a composite manner. In other words, District Industries Centers is the institution at the district level which provides all the services and support facilities to the entrepreneurs for setting up small and village industries.

Some Other Ways of Overcoming the Barriers of Rural For Women

Steps can be taken to overcome the barriers of rural entrepreneurship for women are:

1. Creating a business environment that encourages initiatives of rural and women entrepreneurs.
2. Enhancing the human and institutional capacities required to foster entrepreneurial dynamism and enhance productivity.
3. Providing training manuals for women entrepreneurs and training them.
4. Rendering any other advisory services.
5. Interaction with Successful Entrepreneurs
6. Providing adequate financial assistance
7. Providing freedom in decision making

Profile of a Rural Women Entrepreneur

- a. She should not be an individualist.
- b. She should have a group orientation.
- c. She should consider the rural society not as his market but as his own large family.
- d. She should practice a management style where the concern for people is the highest.
- e. She should have a strong commitment for rural development.
- f. She won't be interested in usual perks and entertainment allowance.

Need For Sowing the Dream in the Minds Of Rural Youth

"Youths in the rural areas have little options", this is what they are given to believe. This is the reason that many of them either work at farm or migrate to urban land. The need is to plant other options in the minds of rural youth.

Entrepreneurship could be the best option. If planted and nurtured in the minds of rural women and youth, it could result in revolutionizing the Indian economy. It should be emphasized that the projects undertaken by these entrepreneurs should not be constrained by its location in rural area. It should enjoy all the advantages of the location. Following are the advantages of rural industrial projects:

- a. Tax holidays and other tax advantages given to rural projects.
- b. Abundance of cheap labour.
- c. Advantage of local and regional resources in case the unit uses them as a raw material.
- d. Prestige and respect among the local community.
- e. Live example for local youth for taking up entrepreneurial project.
- f. Support and motivation from local people.
- g. Competitive advantage over the big business due to the proximity to the raw material and labour.
- h. Employment generation for local people.

Training for Rural Entrepreneurship

The training for development of rural entrepreneurship has to be different from the entrepreneurship development training in urban areas. This is the reason that government initiated the integrated rural development programs. In Integrated rural development programs, apart from providing the training to potential rural entrepreneur, an “industrial area potential survey” is undertaken to estimate the kind of industries that could be set up in that particular rural region. Industrial area potential survey has all the details about the cost of the project, availability of technology, gestation period and return on investment for the projects that could be set up in that region. The District Industrial Centre conducts these area potential surveys for usage of potential entrepreneurs.

CONCLUSION

It is quite clear that rural entrepreneurship cannot be developed without significant training. Therefore, instead of just schemes (financial and developmental) as the carrot for entrepreneurship development an intensive training needs to be provided to the youth in rural India. What’s required is to create a devoted team to take up rural entrepreneurship training as per integrated rural development program.

To manage agricultural sector and non-enclave projects in rural areas, rural entrepreneurs need to apply entirely different management and administrative concepts. Otherwise, we shall be only creating islands of apparent prosperity in the ocean of rural poverty. Rural entrepreneurship is the answer to removal of rural poverty in India. Therefore, there should be more stress on integrated rural development programs. The problem is that most of the rural youth do not think of entrepreneurship as the career option. Therefore, the rural youth need to be motivated to take up entrepreneurship as a career, with training and sustaining support systems providing all necessary assistance.

REFERENCES

- [1]. Charumathi, B., 1998. “Women entrepreneur’s challenges and prospects”, in C. Swarajya Lakshmi, ed., Development of Women Entrepreneurship in India: Problems and Prospects (New Delhi, Discovery Publishing House).
- [2]. Dhameja, S.K., B.S. Bhatia and J.S. Saini, 2002. “Problems and constraints of women entrepreneurship”, in D.D. Sharma and S.K. Dhameja, eds., Women and Rural Entrepreneurship (Chandigarh, Abhishek Publications).
- [3]. Entrepreneurship Challenges and Opportunities: Indian Scenario: Dr. **Vineet Chouhan**, Lecturer, Sir PadampatSinghania University, Udaipur: Dr. **M. L. Vasita**, Assistant Professor, Jai Narayan Vyas University, Jodhpur and Mr. **Dinesh Kumar Vyas**, Research Scholar, University of Kota, Kota.
- [4]. Problems of Women Entrepreneurs in India, MBA India Forum.
- [5]. www.indianblogger.com
- [6]. www.abhinavjournal.com
- [7]. www.tarj.in
- [8]. www.iosrjournal.org
- [9]. www.euacadmic.org