

Women Entrepreneurship and Economic Development: Synergistic Association

Vishu Jain

Alumnus of Department of Commerce MDU Rohtak 124001

ABSTRACT

Women constitute around half of the total world, so is in India also. They are, therefore, regarded as better half of the society. In ancient times, they were confined to the four walls of houses occupied in their household activities. In modern times, they have come out of the four walls to take part in all sorts of activities. The global evidences buttress that women have been performing very well in different spheres of activities like academics, politics, administration, social work and so on. Now, they have started entering in industry too and running their enterprises successfully. Therefore, while discussing on entrepreneurial development, it seems in the fitness of the context to study about the development of women entrepreneurs also in our country. Traditionally, women in India have been generally found in low sectors such as agriculture and household activities. The emergence of women entrepreneurs and their contribution in national economy is quite visible and dynamic in India. The changes are taking place at a very rapid speed in metro cities especially. They now constitute around 10.4% of the total number of entrepreneurs with a rapidly increasing trend. The growing trend is recognizing that the women possess unique talents qualities which could be used for the purpose of development, and for creating employment opportunities in every sector. The transformation from homemaker to sophisticated business woman was not at all easy. But the trend is changing. Indian women are showing an interest to be economically independent and self sufficient. Women are entering to the business arena with the idea of starting a small and medium enterprises. The myth that women cannot engage in productive avenues needs to be rectified. They can be encouraged to set up small and medium scale industries on their own initiative. Entrepreneurship development for women is a very important factor in economic development of India. This paper is made with an attempt to highlight the synergistical association between women entrepreneurship and economic development of India.

Keywords: economic development, Women entrepreneurship, self help groups (SHGs).

INTRODUCTION

Women entrepreneurship refers to the act of setting up a new business or sustaining an existing business so as to avail benefits from new opportunities available in the competitive environment. An entrepreneur is a person who starts an enterprise by himself with his own resources and efforts. He/she brings in his/her mind innovative ideas, changes and responds to it positively or creatively. Thus, entrepreneurship is not merely confined to minting money or making profits. Rather, it is a pursuit to develop something innovative creative and performing an act which adds value in the whole social eco-system.

A, V. and S, J (2013) in their research paper concluded that women being the vital gender of the overall population have great capacity and potential to be the contributor in the overall economic development of any nation. Therefore programs and policies should be framed and implemented in such a mode so that these can boost entrepreneurial zeal among the youngsters.

Media can also play a crucial role in entrepreneurial development by creating and highlighting all such platforms which can bring out the creativity and innovation among the women and men to grow entrepreneurial culture in the society. They recommended that there is a dire need to encourage women entrepreneurial as women workforce is promptly available to exploit the unexplored dimensions of business and market challenges. It is very unfortunate that the government sponsored development activities have benefited only a tiny chunk of women in India. Majority of them are still unaffected by the change and development activities. They are of the opinion that women entrepreneurs in India are required to be molded with entrepreneurial traits and skills to meet changing trends and challenging global markets and also be competent enough to sustain and strive in the local economic arena.

[1] Bhardwaj, G.N. et al. (2012) investigated that there is a dire need of bringing attitudinal change in the mindsets of the person of the society, launching various type of programs be it entrepreneurial skill development, finance granting, structural skill programs to train, motivate and assist the women entrepreneurs in achieving their ultimate goals.

[2] Mahajan, S. (2013) in her work recommended that there is a dire need to bring attitudinal change in the mindsets of people in society rather than being limited to only creation of opportunities for women. Thus, there is a need to design programmes that will address to attitudinal changes, training, supportive services.

- The most essential requirement in development of women entrepreneurship is to make her aware regarding her identity, existence and about her part in the pace of economic development.

However efforts should be made to develop infrastructure, personality development attempts, SHGs, business development training programs and access to finance programs.

[3] Yadav and Unni (2016) in their study found that there is a need to be inclusive of diverse voices and consider constructionist approaches to explore traditional as well as non-traditional questions.

There is a need to use the lens of feminist theories to capture heterogeneity in women entrepreneurial research and extend existing entrepreneurial theories. There is a need to build research as well as practice networks across transactional borders. [4]

Research Methodology: This paper is conceptual in nature. Descriptive methodology is being adopted to complete it. Various papers, magazines and internet references have been used. This paper is secondary information based.

Objectives of the study :

1. To list out the main points, what can be done further to improve the status of the women entrepreneurs in India?
2. To have an insight about the women entrepreneurship in India and to know about their contribution in economic development.

Entrepreneurship in India [5]

- According to a survey, only 39.3 percent in India think entrepreneurship as a good career choice.
- Major constraints for entrepreneurship development in India include lack of funds, government regulation and complex tax structures, entrepreneurship education at primary and secondary school levels and culture and social norms.
- Poor infrastructure and basic services are the biggest barrier to entrepreneurship.
- However Indian entrepreneurs have progressed in areas such as IT, media and entertainment, and health-care and life sciences.

Although, there is significant potential to harness the untapped potential of women's entrepreneurship in India.

Status of Women Entrepreneur in India [5]

- There is increase in women business owners and operators over the past several years but various studies have shown that women entrepreneurs in the country are among the most disadvantaged in the world.
- A recent study by the NSSO found that only 14 percent of Indian business establishments are run by females.
- Most of the women run businesses – 79 percent – were self financed.
- In the 2017 Index of Women Entrepreneurs by MasterCard, India ranked 49 out of 54 countries.
- Women entrepreneurs have no role models and have had no coaching on how to start, run and build a business.
- Study estimates that closing the gender entrepreneurship gap worldwide could grow global GDP by as much as 2%.
- Women need the 3C's Confidence, Capabilities, access to Capital. Men need to understand that women are their equals.

Initiatives Promoting Women Entrepreneurship in India[6]

- ❖ **Stand-up India scheme** provides loans from Rs. 10 lakh to Rs. 1 crore to women entrepreneurs from SC/ST.
- ❖ **SETU (Self- Employment and Talent Utilization)** – which will strengthen all prospects of startups and other self – employment initiatives.

- ❖ World Bank has launched a Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative (We – Fi) to provide venture capital support to women.
- ❖ **Mahila Udyam Nidhi Scheme** is launched by PNB and aims at supporting the women entrepreneurs involved in the small scale industries. Orient Mahila Vikas Yojana Scheme offered by oriental bank of commerce to those women who hold a 51% share capital individually or jointly in a proprietary concern.
- ❖ **Annapurna scheme** offered by the State Bank of Mysore for those entrepreneurs who are setting up food catering industry in order to sell packed meals, snacks etc.
- ❖ **Stree shakti package** for women entrepreneurs offered by most of the SBI branches to women who have 50% share in the ownership of a firm or business and have taken part in the state agencies run by the Entrepreneurship Development Programmes (EDP).
- ❖ **Bharatiya Mahila Bank Business Loan** is a support system for budding women entrepreneurs looking to start new ventures in the fields of the retail sector, loan against property, MICRO loans and SME loans.
- ❖ **Cent Kalyani Scheme** is offered by the Central Bank of India with the main objective of supporting women in starting a new venture or expanding or modifying an existing business.
- ❖ **MUDRA Scheme** – to provide easy finance to entrepreneurs. ‘Make in India’ initiative to facilitate investment, foster innovation, enhance skill development, and build best in class manufacturing infrastructure.
- ❖ PMKVY (Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana) – to develop employability skills among the youth. Various labor reforms to boost job creation and entrepreneurship.
- ❖ **Udyogini Scheme** is offered by Punjab and Sind Bank so as to provide women entrepreneurs involved in agriculture, retail and small business enterprises.

Need of the hour:

- There is a need to do much more in India in order to put Indian women entrepreneurs first. Public and private sectors must collaborate to develop a comprehensive and integrated approach to “harness the untapped potential” of women entrepreneurs.
- Educate and empower women to become entrepreneurs. Ensure adequate financial resources to support their entrepreneurship ventures. Provide mentoring to promote success in entrepreneurship.
- In U.S.A. there is a non-profit organization called Service Core of Retired Executives (SCORE) that provides free mentoring services to business owners. INDIA could establish a programme similar to SCORE dedicated to women entrepreneurs. It could recruit both retired and active professionals from business, government, academic, non-profit organization – to be mentors in the programme. Stressing not only “Book-Learning” but also providing the hands-on skills and abilities required to run a business.
- Women should enter fields in which there are too few female business owners today, such as IT, Manufacturing and Engineering.
- India should tie into and develop a programme to replicate World Bank Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative (We – Fi). We need a policy that supports the modern working family.
- Improve efficiency in public expenditure and increase investments in infrastructure. If INDIAN Women Entrepreneurs are put first, they will dramatically accelerate the country’s economic development in a manner that will benefit all and put India first.

Successful Women Entrepreneurs of India: A Glimpse [7]

- **Indu Jain** is the current chairperson of India’s largest media group, Bennett, Coleman & Co. Ltd., which owns the Times of India and other large newspapers.
- Kiran Mazumdar Shaw is the founder Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of Biocon Limited.
- Naina Lal Kidwai Country Head and Group General Manager HSBC Group India. Kidwai has also held other eminent positions such as that of Global Advisor, Harvard Business School, non-executive director at Nestle SA and as a member of Governing Board NCAER, Auditor General of India and several other positions.
- Chanda Kochhar MD & CEO of India’s largest private bank ICICI Bank.
- Ekta Kapoor is the woman who single-handedly founded and made Balaji Telefilms the household name it is today. Richa Kar is the founder of online lingerie store Zivame.

These shining women entrepreneurs of India are imparting employment to a number of people of India and hence raising their standard of living. They are creating employment opportunities in INDIA contributing in national income, GDP and production positively.

CONCLUSION

At the base of conclusion I would like to say that women entrepreneurship in India is at its nascent stage. They need to nurture; government of India is taking all possible steps in this direction.

Although there is a long way to go. We need an attitudinal change in the mindset of the people of India towards women entrepreneurs. Economic development means the process which improves the economic, political and social well – being of its people, however women entrepreneurs in India performing the same task for the upliftment of the society.

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