

Development, Challenges and Remedies of Women Entrepreneurship with Special Emphasis on Assistance Availed by Women Entrepreneurs in Jammu and Kashmir State

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Abstract – The role of women within the entrepreneurial environment is of significant importance. The women entrepreneurship has to be studied separately for two reasons. The first being that women entrepreneurs have emerged as an untapped source of economic growth during the last decade. They not only create jobs for themselves and others but also provide society with different solutions to management, organisation and business problems as well as to the exploitation of entrepreneurial opportunities. Women Community though equal men in population, it is the subject of concern to note that, yet in this modern sophisticated world, she is treated as the second citizen or subordinate to men. Though various efforts are being made to improve the status of women, women folk have not taken their maximum use and remain still backward. In almost all countries, the Governments are providing special provisions for women's development and efforts are being made to extract maximum use of women's talent. Women folk have not taken the proper use of the special provisions and facilities available for them in the business field. We find lack of efficient women entrepreneurs. It is the time now to awake the ladies community towards the opportunities available for them to get their talent useful and serve the society, which can be a cause for more rapid growth of the nation. As now, in this modern world everywhere the cost of living has increased, it becomes necessary for women to undertake economic activity and support their families. Now the attitude of the society has also changed and working women is not seen with suspicious eyes like earlier. She is more liberated now and the modern woman leads a very happy and peaceful family life with her husband

and family's support in her economic activity. In the present paper an attempt has been made to study role, Trends, Problems faced by women entrepreneurs and also the position of women Entrepreneurs in Jammu and Kashmir. Further it deals with assistance provided to women entrepreneurs. Remedies have also been discussed.

Keywords: Economy, Uncertainty, Risk, Supervision, Jammu and Kashmir

I. INTRODUCTION

There is a growing interest in nurturing entrepreneurial activities because of the rising problems of unemployment in various countries around the world. Entrepreneurs not only change their employment status from unemployed to employ but also provide employment opportunities to hundreds of unemployed youth. In today's societies, women have come out of the four walls of the houses to contribute their might in all sorts of activities including the economic one also. Women, who till recently, confined their activities to selected professions such as education, nursing, office work, medical etc. are now entering in professions like business, Industry, Trade, Agriculture, Horticulture, Sericulture, Animal Husbandry, Fisheries, Agarbati-making, Tailoring, Garment Industry, Pottery, Doll-making, fancy items, bee keeping, Beauty Parlour etc. Thus women entrepreneurs can take a lead in both unorganized and organized sectors.

Women entrepreneur is relatively a new concept. Conceptually, whether men entrepreneur or women, these are not two drastically different concepts from each other.

II. OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

The main purpose or objective of study of women entrepreneurship is as follows:

- a) To study the role of Women Entrepreneur;
- b) To identify the problems faced by Women Entrepreneurs;
- c) To suggest strategies for better women Entrepreneurship development;
- d) To know about the entrepreneurship development programmes in J& K.

III. ROLE OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEUR

1. Exploration of the possibilities of starting a new enterprise.
2. Selecting proper and suitable site of work.
3. Providing leadership and supervision.
4. Undertake calculated risks and handle financial uncertainty.
5. Procure appropriate man, material, money and resources to run the enterprise.
6. Coordination of various activities within and outside the enterprise.
7. Introduction of innovations and adapting good practices from similar enterprises after due evaluation.
8. Providing leadership and supervision.

The above roles and functions are independent as well as correlated with each other. Each and every function has its own unique significance in relation to one or other aspects of the enterprise.

IV. CHANGING TRENDS IN WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Any understanding of Indian women entrepreneurs, of their identity and especially of their roles will be incomplete without going in to the Indian history where women have paused, lived and internalized various role models. During 1950's, women entrepreneurs took to

creating and managing entrepreneurial activities because of the fact that there was no Income generating male in the family. In 1960's there was a spread of women education. This was the period in which the women started to venture into small one women enterprise at home and from home. The women of 1970's started not only developing their aspirations but also ambitions to do and earn something for their families. Women wanted to be independent and wanted their voices to be heard in family as well as in the society. The decade of 80 witnessed a dramatic shift in this area. The women entrepreneurs of 50's,60's & 70's had accepted both their social and occupational roles and tried to maintain a balance between the two. But in 80's women made personal choices, stood up for their convictions and had the courage to make up new beginnings. During 90's the women were considered to be capable, competent, self reliant and assertive. During this century, number of women took up the challenge of initiating an enterprise, developing it and nurturing it to grow. In the present century, women are emerging as a force to reckon with. Many of the telecom, Information Technology (IT) and Finance industries are headed and controlled by women.

V. PROBLEMS AND CONSTRAINTS FACED BY WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

In India women entrepreneurship is facing so many problems. The major ones are:

A. Family Discouragement

As women in India have to work amidst social taboos, restrictions etc., they are not supported much to undertake entrepreneurship by their family members.

B. Social Barriers

Women entrepreneurs in India are always seen with suspicious eyes, particularly in rural areas, they face more social problems.

C. Caste and Religion

Though India is a secular country, in practice, so many castes and religion dominate with one another and it hinders women entrepreneurs.

D. Lack of self-confidence and Risk Bearing Capacity

Women lack self confidence and always feel that they may not be successful and hence hesitate to take risks. Their risk bearing capacity is always less.

E. Psychological Factors

Always women feel that she is 'Women' and less efficient than man and hesitates to take risks. As she has to play a dual role if she is employed or engaged in work. She has to strive hard to balance her family life with care and hence feels better to be house wife.

F. Lack of Practical Knowledge

Though women may be educated and have qualified knowledge, she lacks practical knowledge and hence hesitates to establish her own venture.

G. Problem of Finance

Women entrepreneurs lack property in their own name and hence banks and financial institutions may hesitate to render finance.

H. Problem of Marketing

As generally women entrepreneurs will have small scale business they have to strive hard to sell their products in the modern competitive world. Their marketing knowledge will be less and lack marketing skills as compared to men.

I. Problems of Middlemen

Women entrepreneurs have to face the problems of middlemen more, as they generally depend, more on them. Their margin of profit will be more and hence cause for higher selling price which affects consumer's attraction towards women's products.

VI. WOMEN ENTREPRENEUR ASSOCIATIONS IN INDIA

Women entrepreneurs wing of National Alliance of Young Entrepreneurs(NAYE).

- (i) Consortium of women entrepreneurs of India.
- (ii) Indian council of Women Entrepreneurs
- (iii) Self Employment women's Association (SEWA), Ahmadabad.
- (iv) Associations of women Entrepreneurs of Karnataka.
- (v) Association of Lady Entrepreneurs of Andhra Pradesh (ALEAP).

VII. SELECTION OF INDUSTRY BY WOMEN INTREPRENEURS

Success of an enterprise depends on its proper selection. It also very well applies to the selection of Industry. Good preparation is at least half guarantee for its success. Therefore, it is essential that while selecting an enterprise various aspects should be kept in mind. Some of these aspects are:

- (i) Family background.
- (ii) Educational qualifications.
- (iii) Aptitude, interests and attitudes.
- (iv) Training.
- (v) Knowledge about the local market.
- (vi) Personality factors such as risk taking positive self, social, extrovertness, problem solving ability, innovativeness etc.

VIII. ASSISTANCE TO WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

Entrepreneurship does not differentiate the sex. Certain additional facilities are offered to women entrepreneurs to motivate them and to bring them in the mainstream of Industrial development.

A. Small Industrial Development Organisation (SIDO)

The SIDO through a network of Small Industries Service Institutes throughout the country conduct the Entrepreneurial Development Programmes exclusively for women entrepreneurs. These programmes aim at developing entrepreneurial traits and qualities among women and enable them to identify entrepreneurial opportunities, acquire basic knowledge and skills on enterprise building and the procedures of taking up small scale industries.

B. The National Small Industries Corporation Ltd.(NSIC)

The NSIC, Which is a Government of India undertaking, has greatly been responsible for development of the SSI sector. The Hire Purchase scheme of NSIC provides preferential treatment to women entrepreneurs.

C. The Industrial Development Bank of India(IDBI)

IDBI has introduced special schemes for women entrepreneurs. Some of them are:

1. Mahila Udyam Nidhi (MUN) Scheme

The IDBI has set up a special fund 'Mahila Udyam Nidhi' (MUN) with a corpus of Rs. 5 crores to provide seed capital assistance to new women entrepreneurs in the SSI sector. Women entrepreneurs with a minimum financial stake of 51 percent of the equity are eligible under the scheme. All new projects in the small scale sector set up by women entrepreneurs, preferably trained under an Entrepreneurship Development Programme, are eligible for assistance provided the cost of the project does not exceed Rs.10 lakhs. The operating institutions are the state Financial Corporations (SFCs) or State Industrial Development Corporations (SIDCs) who act as an agent of IDBI for sanction, disbursement and recovery of soft seed capital assistance. Under the scheme SFCs/SIDCs will sanction seed capital assistance simultaneously term loan assistance for the project after satisfying its viability and the need for seed capital assistance. The credit risk in respect of soft seed capital assistance is borne by IDBI Mahila Udyam Nidhi.

2. IDBI scheme of Training and Extension Service for Women Entrepreneurs

The programmes of training and extension services for women entrepreneurs are organized by IDBI through designated agencies independently and/or an association with other development agencies like Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India, Technical Consultancy Organisations (TCOs); Central/State Social Welfare Boards etc.

IX. COMMERCIAL BANKS

In tune with the national priorities, a number of commercial banks have evolved their own schemes of financial assistance to women entrepreneurs. Mention may be made of the 'Stree Shakti Package Scheme' of the State Bank of India which aims at providing a package of assistance to women entrepreneurs. The consultancy wing of the state bank of India gives guidance on project identification and project viability. Training of entrepreneurs including women is being impacted by the bank at different locations whom assistance for finance is provided.

The programme of financial assistance includes a wide spectrum. Apart from setting up industrial units, a host of activities are included in the programme of assistance such as repair and servicing, photocopying, dry cleaning, retail trade, business enterprises, dairying, poultry farming, tailoring and embroidery etc. The women entrepreneurs will do well to contact the nearest commercial banks to know different schemes and to take advantage of their programmes of assistance.

X. SCENARIO IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR

There is a lot of unemployment in Jammu and Kashmir. Many people are starting their own ventures. In Jammu and Kashmir, gone are the days when women remained confined to their four walls. Local Government is doing a lot for these Entrepreneurs but still a lot needs to be done. Some of the agencies which are helping in the Women Entrepreneurship development in the state are illustrated as under:

J&K State Women's Development Corporation (JKWDC)

Jammu & Kashmir State Women's Development Corporation was incorporated in the year 1991 under the Companies Act 1956 but started functioning in 1994. The JKWDC is implementing a number of Developmental Schemes for Socio-Economic Upliftment of Women with a special focus on the families living Below Poverty Line (BPL) & Women belonging to Minorities, Backward & Other Classes.

Objectives

1. Identification & promotion of women entrepreneurs.
2. Conducting awareness camps and identifying women for various activities by which they can be empowered.
3. Identification of Activities, Trades for skill up gradation training and subsequent framing of Self Help Groups amongst them for providing micro credit.
4. Strengthening and institutionalizing the saving habits among rural women and the control over economic resources.

5. Creation of confidence and awareness among members of SHGs regarding women's status, health, education, sanitation, hygiene, legal rights, economic upliftment and other socio- economic as well as political issues.
6. To make the women self reliant by helping them to establish income generating units by providing soft loans at a very low rate of interest.

The above objectives are fulfilled with the help of following centrally sponsored schemes which are operational at present with the Women's Development Corporation.

National Minorities Development & Finance Corporation

Women belonging to Minority Community viz. Muslims, Buddhists, Sikhs, Christians and Zoroastrians are being financed under this scheme at a nominal rate of interest 6% p.a simple to be liquidated within a period of 5 years. Maximum loan amount for an individual beneficiary is Rs. 1.00 lakh.

National Backward Classes Finance & Development Corporation

Women belonging to backward & other classes as prescribed under State SRO 126 are being financed under this scheme at a very low rate of interest 4% p.a up to Rs.. 50,000/- & 6% p.a up to Rs.1.00 lakhs for which the repayment period is 5 years.

National Handicapped Finance & Development Corporation

Handicapped women with 40% disability are being financed under this scheme at a very low rate of interest 3% up to Rs. 50,000/- and 4% p.a up to Rs. 1.00 lakh which is to be liquidated within a period of 7 years.

Educational Loan

Education loan is also provided to the women beneficiaries under each of the above mentioned schemes for professional/technical trainings.

Micro Credit Loan

Micro Credit facilities are also provided to Self Help Groups (SHGs) at the rate of 5% for which repayment period is 3 years.

Sher-I-Kashmir Employment and Welfare Programme

The Corporation is also implementing a J&K government scheme entitled "Empowering Skilled Young Women, 2009" scheme taking a lead role in the implementation of Sher- I-Kashmir Employment and Welfare Programme (SKEWP) envisaged by the Government to create self-employment avenues for educated unemployed youth. The nominal interest of 6% charged on the credit being provided to prospective entrepreneurs is well taken by the unemployed youth women and in fact the Corporation is getting encouraging response in all parts of the state.

Jammu and Kashmir Entrepreneur Development Institute

JKEDI was established by the Government of J&K in March 1997 as a society of the Government of Jammu & Kashmir to help the Government in conceptualizing, formulating and implementing strategies for creating an enabling environment for entrepreneurship development in the state. The Institute was given the mandate to help, train and mentor aspiring and practicing entrepreneurs through awareness, education, training, consultancy and research.

The Institute started its regular activities from February, 2004 and has since been playing a significant role in creating a pro-entrepreneurial environment to foster the progress and prosperity of the State. The Institute is established in three regional centres at Srinagar, Jammu and Leh.

The Institute in its short period of existence has been able to position itself as a learning centre par excellence having state of art infrastructure in all its campuses. The Institute currently functions out of three campuses; one each in the provinces of Kashmir, Jammu and Ladakh.

XI. REMEDIES TO SOLVE THE PROBLEMS OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

To promote women entrepreneurs in India, certain measures are already initiated. But these measures need to be re-looked again and some viable remedies are to be placed in to deal with the problems of women entrepreneurs. Some of the measures which may be adopted are:

- a) Provision of separate finance cells for women: In various financial and public sector organizations that are providing subsidiaries and loans for industries,

there should be a provision of separate finance cells to deal with financial problems of women entrepreneurs. These cells should be taken care by women only.

- b) Creating Social awareness through education: India is regarded as a country of its rich traditional values and ethos and women is still considered as a human being whose major role is to keep herself busy in providing food and upbringing family. In the changed socio-cultural scenario throughout the world, it is necessary to bring positive change in this direction. Efforts should be directed towards increasing the education level of the adult and young female.
- c) Providing Training Facilities: Developing right kind of personality, attitude and skill is one of the important and essential aspects for the success of an enterprise. If provided proper kind of training, women can become good entrepreneur. Some of the training strategies could be:
 - (i) Organizing part time training.
 - (ii) Conducting training in the area of personality and attitudes.
 - (iii) Organizing training in different areas of Industries.
- d) Supply of raw materials: Quality, quantity and availability of raw material affect the performance of enterprise. To concentrate fully on the development and production of the product, it is necessary to ensure availability of raw material in right quality and quantity to the women entrepreneurs. Government should promote and help in ensuring the availability of good quality raw material as per the requirement.

XII. CONCLUSION

It can be said that today we are in a better position wherein women participation in the field of entrepreneurship is increasing at a considerable rate, efforts are being taken at the economy as well as global level to enhance woman's involvement in the enterprise sector. This is mainly because of attitude change, diverted conservative mindset of society to modern one, daring and risk-taking abilities of women, support and cooperation by society members, and relaxations in government policies, granting various up-

liftment schemes to women entrepreneurs etc. Thus, what else is required is to continue with the above changed trend, emphasizing on educating women strata of population, spreading awareness and consciousness amongst women to outshine in the enterprise field, making them realize their strengths, and important position in the society and the great contribution they can make for their industry as well as the entire economy. For this many NGO's should also come forward to extend their support services in the form of pooling financial resources for helping them and spreading education amongst various category of people of the society to encourage woman's in their families to represent themselves in the entrepreneurship sector and earn a good name, reputation, financial status, and goodwill in the field of industry, trade and commerce. If every citizen works with such an attitude towards respecting the important position occupied by women in society and understanding their vital role in the modern business field too, then very soon we can pre-estimate our chances of out beating our own conservative and rigid thought process which is the biggest barrier in our country's development process. We can promise ourselves and make a sincere commitment of contributing to the field of women entrepreneurship at individual level which un-doubtedly bring drastic positive change in growth and development of women entrepreneurship at country and even at a global level.

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