

AN INSIGHT IN TO THE NATURE OF FIRST GENERATION WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

Ambiga S.¹, Ramasamy M.²

¹Research Scholar, Department of Science and Humanities, Sathyabama University, Chennai, India.

²Dean, Department of Electrical and Electronics Engineering, Bharat University, Chennai, India.

Email : ¹ ambigasundar@gmail.com

Abstract

Women constitute nearly half of the total population in India. Women were confounded to the four walls of the houses and doing household work. But with the change of time, women started realizing their own strengths and demanded participation in various walks of life. Women have started taking up careers not only in professions like Education, Nursing, etc., but also in industrial set up. This study advocates the need for development of entrepreneurial skills among women. This study conducted among 50 Women Entrepreneurs of Thiruvallur district, Tamilnadu. The researcher investigates their socio economic status before and after they started the enterprise, obstacles and problems faced by them to start and run the enterprises. The role of Governmental and Non Governmental Institutions towards development of Women Entrepreneurship also discussed.

Key words: Women Entrepreneurial Development, Women Empowerment, Socio Economic status, Governmental and Non governmental agencies, Training.

I. INTRODUCTION

Women are playing a significant role in the progress and development of the economy not only in their home but also in the outside world. Because of growing industrialization, urbanization, higher education along with the spread of awareness, women entrepreneurship is emerging and playing greater role in the economy.

Now a days, women are using their creativity, ability and their strength of hard work to prove their capabilities. Women entrepreneurs in their enterprise, undertaking risks, innovating new products, coordinate administration and providing effective leadership in all aspect of their business. Though, they are working very effectively to flourish their business, they have many obstacles to start and run their business like lack of capital, family problem, exploration to market, social and customs etc.,

II. OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

A. Objectives

- To Highlight the socio-economic status of women entrepreneurs.
- To Examine the facilities needed for them.
- To Sketch on the governmental and non governmental involvement in their development.

B. Methodology

The researcher contacted the local women entrepreneurs association and local NGO's. With the information provided by these institutions, researcher was able to prepare a list of women entrepreneurs. The enterprises that had been running for four years and employed at least two workers were taken for the study.

The data were collected through personal interview. A questionnaire was used for the data collection with open ended questions. The sample consists of 50 women entrepreneurs. The questions focused on their entrepreneurial activities, socio-economic status, facilities needed and involvement of governmental and non governmental agencies in their development.

III. CONCEPTS AND DEFENITIONS

“An enterprise owned and controlled by a women having a minimum financial interest of 51% of capital and giving at least 51% of the employment generated by the enterprise to women.”

- Government of India

According to **Kamala Singh**, “A women entrepreneur is a confident, innovative and creative woman capable of achieving economic independence individually or in collaboration generates employment

opportunities for others through initiating establishing and running an enterprise by keeping pace with her personal, family and social life”.

According to **Medha Dubhanshi Vinze**, “ A women entrepreneur is a person who is an enterprising individual with an eye for opportunities and an uncanny vision, Commercial acumen, with tremendous perseverance and above all a person who is willing to take risk with the unknown because of the adventures spirit she possesses.”

IV. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

N.V. Poovendhiran (2010), in his study on the problems and prospects of Entrepreneurs in SSI highlighted that the major requirements to start SSI are experience, industrial knowledge and financial background.

R.M. Nagammai (2009) in his study on Women and business observed that commitment and dedication to the enterprise were considered major strengths by women entrepreneurs followed by planned and systematic approach and family support.

R. Vidhya (2010) analysed the women's upliftment in Tamil Nadu and brings to light that the Tamil Nadu government has taken serious steps to improve the women's development through Mahalir thittam. It makes the women to think independently and helps to enrich their knowledge in each and every social upliftment.

Veena singh (2009) highlighted in his study on Women Entrepreneurship- A way to women empowerment shows that Entrepreneurial leadership among the women is progressing with the active support of the promotional agencies, banks and entrepreneurial unions, a favorable entrepreneurial environment for the entire women community has been generated all over the country.

Murugan and Begum (2008) examined the predominant barriers to women entrepreneurs. The study was based on the primary data collected from 100 women entrepreneurs of Chennai city. The study highlighted that social and cultural barriers are prominent formidable block for the development of women entrepreneurs. The study also concluded that entrepreneurs with ability to plan and run a business, deliver quality and products.

Vasanthakumari (2008) in his study on the role of micro enterprises in empowering women in Kerala

revealed that the micro enterprises helped in empowering rural women economically, socially and individually. The study suggested giving priority to commercial viability of enterprises.

Ganapathi and Sannasi (2008) highlighted in the factors influencing the women entrepreneurs that women must be motivated to establish business in the interest of the family income in particular and the national income in general.

Sankaran (2009) analyse the trends and problems of rural women entrepreneurs in India. The study brings to light the a conceptual aspects of trends and problems of rural women entrepreneurs in India. He concluded that women have creative ability, easy adaptability and ability to cope with setback.

A. Major constraints faced by women in starting and running an enterprise

Women are facing variety of constraints from physical to social, while beginning entrepreneurial activity.

Social Attitude and Support

The society plays a prominent role in entrepreneurial venture and success. The most common problem which a woman faced is the no-cooperation from her husband / family members. Besides, these family related hurdles, dual responsibility, risk bearing ability etc., the women has to flourish in her business.

Marketing

Most Women entrepreneurs are selling their products for under value due to lack of knowledge about the pricing and marketing. The middle man exploits them. Women needs proper knowledge on market, updating of market, other exposures etc., Government can provide trainings on these field and connect networks for them.

Finance

Finance is a critical resource for venture creation. It is very important that women entrepreneurs have adequate knowledge and information of the various financial institutions which are rendering financial incentives. They have to depend on own saving as the lending practices of banks and government funding agencies are believed to be restrictive and unfriendly to women.

Operational

When coming in to the production stage, the women entrepreneur struggle to find raw material at optimum cost and un interrupted supply of them and they lack in necessary technical skills and knowledge about infrastructure facilities etc.,

Mobility Constraints

Since our society is a conservative , the mobility of women was limited and depends on either father or husband. For security reasons, the women’s movement is always encircles in depend with any of male member.

Multiple Responsibilities

Women have to manage multiple responsibilities starting from being a daughter to becoming a grand mother. They have to take care their children, their older parents or grant parents. As she is doing multiple works, beyond all these, she has to undertake her business too, which will be the challenge for her.

Unawareness of the Supports And Incentives

Our government enact number of laws to protect women entrepreneurs and announced numerous incentive schemes, training programmes towards their development.. NGO’s have strong role in propagating these schemes as they are the bridge between government and public. The women entrepreneur can make use of these programmes and develop the business. But the awareness on these field is less to women entrepreneur.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

A. Age and Education Status of Respondents

It is vital to know the demographic information before analyze the empowerment of Entrepreneurs. Here two factors namely Age and Education are taken for analysis. Table 1 furnish the details about age, while Table 2 gave information about Education.

Table 1. Age wise classification of Respondents

Age of the Respondents	No. of Respondents	Percentage
20-30	12	24
30-40	22	44
40-50	9	18
Above 50	7	14

Source: Field Survey

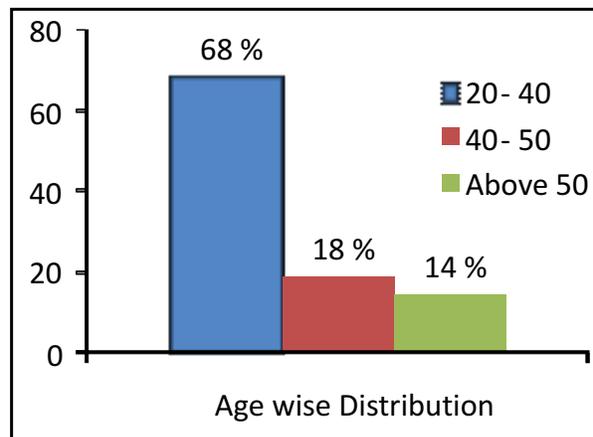


Fig. 1. Age wise Classification of Respondents

Table 2. Education Status of Respondents

Education	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Primary Education	3	6
ESLC	10	20
SSLC	20	40
HSC	12	24
Diploma	2	4
Graduate	3	6

Source : Field Survey

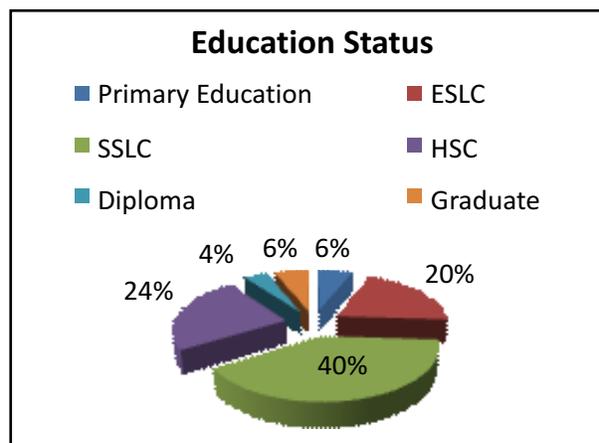


Fig. 2. Education status of Respondents

Interpretation

Table 1 shows that 68% of respondents falls in the age of 20 to 40 years. It shows the emerging participation of young house makers in enterprise making. Table 2 shows that, 74% of respondents have completed SSLC and above. Though It is an healthy improvement compared to two decades ago, it is not

enough to compete with growing competition globally. As awareness and spending towards education improving in rapid manner, we can expect this status may be improved by two folds in next decade.

B. Nature of entrepreneurial activities

The nature of entrepreneurial activities taken by our respondents listed in Table 3 , which focuses on type of business. Table 4 list the number of workers employed in their enterprises. Table 5 shows the nature of investment required for their business.

Table 3. Nature of entrepreneurial activities

Entrepreneurial activity	No.of enterprises	Percentage
Provisional stores	12	24
Manufacturers of household cooking items (like pickles, readymade mixes, powders, flours)	10	20
Beauty parlor	6	12
Garment resellers	5	10
Tailoring	4	8
Toys making	3	6
Photocopying, telephone booth	3	6
Soda, soft drinks and biscuits making	2	4
Dates packing and ayurvedic products	2	4
Milk packaging and reselling	2	4
Recycling of banyan waste	1	2

Source : Field Survey

Table 4. Number of workers

No.of workers	No.of enterprises	Percentage
2	7	14
3	24	48
4	12	24
Above 4	7	14

Source : Field Survey

Table 5. Investment per year

Investment per year in rupees	No.of enterprises	Percentage
< 1 Lakh	2	4
1 to 3 Lakhs	40	80
> 3 Lakhs	8	16

Source : Field Survey

From the Table 3, we can observe that, most of the enterprises based on the day to day needs of the people. An advantage of products like them is that not to look for availability of markets, because they can be sold locally it self. Table 4 shows that, 72% of enterprises have 3 to 4 workers. Table 5 shows that 80% of enterprises took investments of Rs.1 to 3 lakhs per annum.

C. Socio Economic status of Women Entrepreneurs

In our country, the participation of women in decision making and involvement in major affairs is very limited. Even after the improved literacy rate, the women's involvement is stagnant. Our study shows that, after becoming the entrepreneur, the women were given opportunity to participate in the decision making of family issues. They felt empowered and have ability to face challenges and risks in the family and society.

Their family status also improved substantially after becoming the entrepreneurs, which they said very much visible while attending family functions and other social events. Table 6 shows the responses of various participants about their socio economic status.

Table 6. Socio economic status

Factors	No.of respondents	Percentage
Participate in decision making activities in their family	36	72
Status of family improved among relatives and neighbours.	40	80
Felt empowered after becoming an entrepreneur	44	88

Source : Field survey

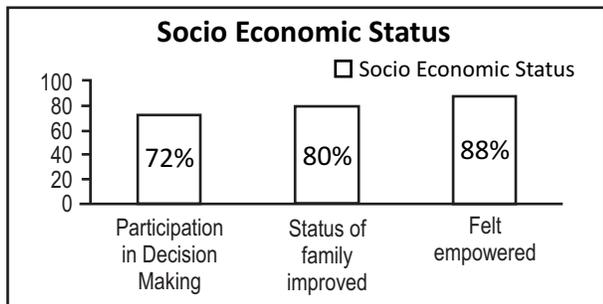


Fig 3. Graphical representation of Socio Economic Status

Of the 50 respondents, 30 were doing business between 2 to 3 years, 14 were doing business for 3 to 5 years and 6 were doing business for more than five years. From the table, we observed that their socio economic status in family level and in outside world improved a lot after becoming an entrepreneur.

D. Facilities needed for Entrepreneurs

All the entrepreneurs need some facilities at various levels to set up and run their enterprises. We listed few important facilities namely, training, subsidies in raw material, availability of loan, marketing support. Of all the respondents, more than 80% entrepreneurs needed training and financial assistance. About 60% of entrepreneurs expect marketing support and subsidies in raw material, which was shown by Table 7,

Table 7. Facilities needed for entrepreneurs

Facilities	No.of respondents	Percentage
Training	42	84
Subsidies in raw material	30	60
Availability of loan	40	80
Marketing support	34	68

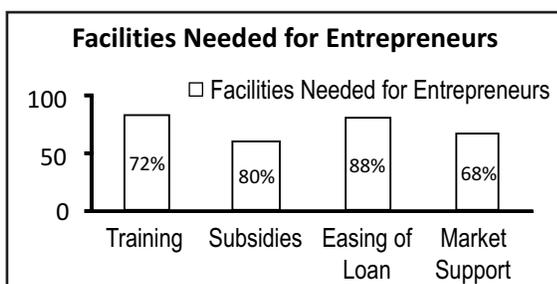


Fig 4. Graphical Representation of Facilities needed for Entrepreneurs

E. Role of Governmental and Non governmental agencies

Governmental and non-governmental agencies plays vital role in development in women entrepreneurship. Central and state government providing numerous schemes and plans to promote women entrepreneurship. From the survey, researcher found that only 36% respondents aware of the government programmes. This has to improved through various propaganda methods. While comparing the on field assistance to the entrepreneurs, there is wide gap between government and NGO. In the survey, about 64% of the entrepreneurs told that NGO's are involved in their entrepreneurial activities in one of the ways, but merely 36% entrepreneurs only benefited from government agencies. While it comes to government financial institutions, its very poor only 8% benefited from their programmes. Government financial institutions should have greater say in the direct involvement of entrepreneurial development. Government may consider to implement some of the programmes through financial agencies instead of administration agencies alone.

Table 8. Role of governmental and non governmental agencies

Factor	No.of respondents	Percentage
Awareness of government programmes.	18	36%
Benefited from government training programmes.	18	36%
Involvement of NGO's in their entrepreneurial aspirations.	32	64%
Involvement of government financial institutions to groom the entrepreneurial aspirations.	4	8%

Source : Field Survey

V. FINDINGS

- I. Most of the women entrepreneurs falls under middle age group of 20-40.

- II. Educational status of respondents are quite enough for understanding the business but needs to be improved for the growth and development of the Enterprises.
- III. After becoming the entrepreneur the women's Participation in decision making of the family matters improved.
- IV. Women felt proud, empowered and their self esteem improved after becoming an entrepreneur.
- V. As they are new to the market they expect marketing assistance from government agencies.
- VI. Most of the women entrepreneurs requires training to improve and assist their business.
- VII. 45% of Entrepreneurs benefited from UYEGP (Un employed Youth Employment Generation Programme) sponsor Training and motivation programmes.
- VIII. Difficulties in getting loans especially for first generation women entrepreneurs.
- IX. Volatility in raw material prices and middle man interference affect the profit margin of these kinds of Micro level enterprises.

VI. CONCLUSION

With the women entrepreneurship, women are participating equally with men in the economic development of the country. Next to China, India has higher ratio of workforce between the age group 20 to 45. Of them, 48% were women and among them 32% were unemployed. India's GDP can be substantially improved if this work force utilized well through these kinds of entrepreneurial activities. Though the first generation entrepreneurs facing many obstacles, they are vibrant in facing them and have high levels of motivation too. Government has to concentrate more in developing women entrepreneurship. The training

programmes needed to be wide spread than at present. The hurdles in accessing finance needs to be minimized. NGO's involvement in implementing and propagating government programmes should be encouraged. If the government and NGO coordinately take steps for the development of women entrepreneurship, it not only develops women community but also the whole nation.

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