

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

As the smooth functioning of a hand is dependent on the smooth functioning of all the fingers. In the same manner the development and growth of a nation is also dependent on the development and growth of both men and women equally. In India the growth and empowerment of women had been overlooked for many years. . It is only from the last few decades we consider the issue of women empowerment as an issue of utmost importance. Government of India and various other federations and associations are showing great interest and giving various supports for the promotion of women empowerment in India. But still there are some hindrances which restrict their way to move forward. This paper discusses the need, Obstacles, Various measures taken and the strategies to be adopted for the achievement of the objective of women empowerment.

Keywords- Women Empowerment, Work Participation, Obstacles, Equality and Competitive

Introduction

The growth of a nation is dependent on the growth and development of its natives i.e. both men and women. Due to this prerequisite the empowerment of women cannot be overlooked. A sorry fact in our country is that we haven't paid any attention towards this objective from years. It is only from the last few decades we consider the issue of women empowerment as an issue of utmost importance. There are many reasons which are responsible for this increased need.

Need of Women Empowerment

From the last few decades we consider the issue of women empowerment as an issue of utmost importance. There are many reasons which are responsible for this increased need. This increased need of women empowerment can be very much felt with the UN Women's

theme for International Women's Day. "Equality for women is progress for all", this theme clearly suggests that a world with better women will be better for everyone.

In the words of Former President **APJ Abdul Kalam** "Empowering women is a prerequisite for creating a good nation, when women are empowered, society with stability is assured. Empowerment of women is essential as their thoughts and their value systems lead to the development of a good family, good society and ultimately a good nation."

Booz & Company issued a research report "Empowering the Third Billion: Women and the World of Work" in the year 2012 clearly indicates that women constitute an emerging workforce of 1 billion. The report also highlights that women constitutes the population of third billion and must get attention. The Harvard Business Review Magazine, April, 2013 article "Vision Statement: Women and the Economics of Equality" clearly states that, if women were employed at the same rates as men, in the United States, Japan, and Egypt then the GDPs of these countries would be higher by 5%, 9%, and 34% respectively.

Pandit Jawaharlal Lal Nehru has remarked "When women move forward, the family moves, the village moves and the Nation moves." The development of a nation depends upon the development of its natives. Women who constitute the 50 % of world's population must be developed to make a developed nation. This can be easily interpreted by comparing the women workers participation in India and other countries .As can be seen in the table that in UK and USA the participation of women workers are more than India .Bothe the countries are regarded as developed while the percentage of women participation in India is still less which is one of the reason of it being a developing nation. So, we can say that increased women work participation is the need of the hour to promote a country.

Initiatives by Indian Government for Women Empowerment

Government of India and various other federations and associations are showing great interest and giving various supports for the promotion of women empowerment in India. These supportive measures can be broadly divided into the following headings

1. Direct & Indirect Financial Support

- Nationalized banks
- State Finance Corporation
- State industrial development corporation

- District industries centers
- Differential rate schemes
- Mahila Udyog Nidhi scheme
- Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI)
- State Small Industrial Development Corporations (SSIDCs)

2. Yojna Schemes and Programme

- Nehru Rojgar Yojna
- Jacamar Rojgar Yojna
- TRYSEM
- DWACRA

3. Technological Training and Awards

- Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India
- Trade Related Entrepreneurship Assistance and Development (TREAD)
- National Institute of Small Business Extension Training (NSIBET)
- Stree Shakti Package by SBI

4. Federations and Associations

- National Alliance of Young Entrepreneurs (NAYE)
- India Council of Women Entrepreneurs, New Delhi
- Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA)
- Association of Women Entrepreneurs of Karnataka (AWEK)
- World Association of Women Entrepreneurs (WAWE)
- Associated Country Women of the World (ACWW)

Obstacles in Women Empowerment in India

In spite of the various initiatives and support shown by the Government the position of Indian women work participation is still not very satisfactory as shown in the Table1.

Table1: Women Work Participation

Country	Percentage
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India (1970-1971)	14.2
India (1980-1981)	19.7
India (1990-1991)	22.3
India (2000-2001)	31.6
USA	45
UK	43
Indonesia	40
Sri Lanka	35
Brazil	35

Source: World Bank Report 2010-11 and WAVE Conference Report 2009-10

The women feel helpless in their growth and development because of the presence of the following obstacles:

Role Conflict A women have to play multiple roles at the same time and in this role conflict she doesn't become able to decide that which role is to be justified first. She has to struggle hard to make an appropriate balance between the work and home. A recent statement given by Pepsi CEO Indra Nooyi: 'I Don't Think Women Can Have It All' Seamless though it may seem, striking this balance has been a lifelong conflict" is also proving this fact.

Lack of financial resources To become successful in any type of business the financial resources are an essential requirement. Lack of adequate finance is a major barrier in the development of women entrepreneurship. The reason for this is that generally women don't have property in their names to put it as collateral for loan. Women entrepreneurs face the problems of shortage of finance on two important bases. Thus their access to external sources is very limited .Secondly, obtaining the support of bankers, managing the working capital, lack of credit resources are the problems which still remain in the male's domain.

Lack of Self Confidence To become successful in any area self confidence and strong willpower is an essential requisite. Unless you are confident about yourself you cannot achieve anything. Women generally lack self confidence to become an entrepreneur due to the stiff competition, inadequate family support, high capital investment and also the high risk.

Stiff Competition Women entrepreneurs have to face a stiff cut-throat competition from the organized sector. Marketing and Advertising plays an important role in making the brand image of any entrepreneur. Male entrepreneurs easily involve in the promotion and development area and carry out easy marketing of their products with both the organized

sector and their male counterparts. Such a competition ultimately results in the insolvency of women entrepreneurs.

Inadequate Knowledge and experience Illiteracy is the root cause of in development of women in India. Approximately 40% of the women are still illiterate in India. In spite of the fact that Government and other institutions are taking initiatives for providing adequate training to them they are still reluctant and unaware about it. Lack of proper training, know-how and experience did not allow the women to prove themselves in the field of entrepreneurs to become successful.

Difficulty in Marketing To market their products women entrepreneurs have to remain at the mercy of the middlemen. As this area is majorly dealt by males even women with adequate experience have to face the problems in this area.

Less showcasing of accomplishments A research study conducted in 2011 by Zenger and Folkman reported that women rarely speak about their accomplishments which are a very important factor for growth in an organizational hierarchy. This also works as an obstacle in their growth since men always showcase their accomplishments in order to be recognized and women lack behind.

Strategies for becoming competitive in this business world

Keep one updated

Updating is the need of the hour .If anybody wants to get success in this world then it is a necessary fact that he/she should remain updated. There are various modes through which the women keep themselves updated .The remain as updated through continuous learning of Magazines, Journals and books. Internet is one of the good options that can be used easily like for e.g. various social sites and various online journals can be used, various business sites like moneycontrol.com proves to be very useful in this field.

Doing Short Term Online Courses

Some of the colleges also provide short term courses and webinars for providing help to the learners to develop new skills and development.

Taking Guest Lectures and Writing Articles

Once you become adhere to a practical work your inbuilt skills on the particular area get developed automatically .Now if this practical skills can be used in the form of providing lectures at various educational and official places through providing small lectures and

presentations then it will provide an automatic device in the hands of the non working women to keep themselves updated and remain competitive in this business world.

Creating own blogs

Women can make their own blogs on the internet and can answer the queries asked by different people. It will help them to make their own place in this business world.

Set the Targets

Women will definitely achieve their targets in this business world when they are clearly target focussed. Once they decide in which field they want to grow they must concentrate on that.

Recognized Business Roles played by Indian Women

Women as Leaders

The New Companies Act, 2013 heralds a new era for women leadership in India. The Act mandates Woman Directors on the boards of certain specified classes of essentially large companies and listed entities. This is an emphatic acceptance of the need for a gender diversity perspective in organisations and recognition of the need to create more opportunities for women leaders.

Women as Chartered Accountants

The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India have set up the “Women Members Empowerment Committee” for the year 2014-15 to give due importance to the women in this area. The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India have around 2.25 lakh Chartered Accountants, with women members comprising about 21%.

Women as Entrepreneur

Government of India defined the women entrepreneur as “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.”

Table2: Status of Women Entrepreneur in India

States	No of Units Registered	No. of Women Entrepreneurs	Percentage
Tamil Nadu	9618	2930	30.36
Uttar Pradesh	7980	3180	39.84

Kerala	5487	2135	38.91
Punjab	4791	1618	33.77
Maharastra	4339	1394	32.12
Gujrat	3872	1538	39.72
Karnatka	3822	1026	26.84
Madhya Pradesh	2967	842	28.38
Other States & UTS	14576	4185	28.71
Total	57,452	18,848	32.82

Source: CIMEReport2011 Out of the total registered units 32.82% are owned by women entrepreneurs in India.

Women owned businesses are highly increasing in the economies of almost all countries. The hidden entrepreneurial potentials of women have gradually been changing with the growing sensitivity to the role and economic status in the society. Skill, knowledge and adaptability in business are the main reasons for women to emerge into business ventures.

‘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. With the advent of media, women are aware of their own traits, rights and also the work situations. The glass ceilings are shattered and women are found indulged in every line of business from pappad to power cables. The challenges and opportunities provided to the women of digital era are growing rapidly that the job seekers are turning into job creators. They are flourishing as designers, interior decorators, exporters, publishers, garment manufacturers and still exploring new avenues of economic participation. In India, although women constitute the majority of the total population, the entrepreneurial world is still a male dominated one. Women in advanced nations are recognized and are more prominent in the business world.

Women owned 6.5 million businesses that generated \$950.6 billion in revenues, employed 7.2 million workers, and had \$179.6 billion in payroll in 2002.

In addition, another 2.7 million firms are owned equally by both women and men; these firms add another \$731.1 billion in revenues and employ another 5.7 million workers.

Conclusion With this we can conclude that women empowerment is essential for the growth and development of a country. Presently various initiatives are taken from the side of

the government and various other agencies in this regard but still there are many obstacles which are present to restrict this growth. These obstacles can be overcome by adopting the above mentioned strategies which will be beneficial to go a long way.

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