Trends in Women Entrepreneurship in India

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Objective of this paper
To analyze the trends in the growth of Women entrepreneurs in India
To identify the factors of hindrance for women entrepreneurs

INTRODUCTION
Text: Overall 40 to 50 percent of all businesses are owned by women in the developing countries. Women entrepreneurs have evidently more to acquire than their male counterparts, but the socio-cultural environment in which women are born and raised hinders them. In India Entrepreneurship is very limited amongst women especially in the formal sector, which is less than 5% of business during the last two decades. According to online studies conducted earlier this year for rankings on the best places for female entrepreneurship, India went up on the list compared to its position in 2013. India’s female entrepreneurship environment exposes statistics of improvement with respect to women finding opportunities to start ventures (60%), validation with respect to skills (52%) and do not feel the impending doom of failure for their startup (57%)

Concept of Women Entrepreneur
A woman entrepreneur is a woman who starts and owns an enterprise by investing at least 51% in an enterprise

Categories of Women entrepreneurs
1. Women in organized and unorganized sector
2. Women in traditional and modern industries
3. Women in urban and rural areas
4. Women in large scale and small scale industries
5. Single woman and joint venture

Categories of women entrepreneurs in practice in India
1st category
1. Established in big cities
2. Having higher level technical and professional qualifications
3. Non traditional items
4. Sound financial position

2nd Category
1. Established in cities and towns
2. Having sufficient education
3. Both traditional and non traditional items
4. Undertaking women services – kindergarten, crèches, beauty parlours, health clinic

3rd Category
1. Illiterate women
2. Financially weak
3. Involved in family business such as agriculture, horticulture, animal husbandry, dairy, fisheries, agro forestry, handloom, powerloom etc.

Research Methodology
Secondary data has been contributed to write this paper. Various articles, books, group of people were consulted prior to writing this paper.
Highlighting the trends over period of years in women entrepreneurship is the focus of this paper. The paper also highlights the various obstacles faced by women entrepreneurs.

Limitations: This paper is based on secondary research conducted on the subject and provides a limited view.

Trends in Women entrepreneurship in the last few decades
In the area of women entrepreneurship, government policies and promotion strategies have been giving new opportunities to women, few have come forward. According to the same MSME annual report 2011-2012, only 13.72 percent of enterprises in the registered MSME sector were enterprises managed by women representing about 2.15 lakh across the country.

Ownership by gender of owner
The proportion of women-managed enterprises is slightly higher in rural areas than in urban areas.

Table 2: Percentage Distribution of Enterprises by Gender of Owner in Rural and Urban Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>15.27</td>
<td>84.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>12.45</td>
<td>87.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>13.72</td>
<td>86.28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: MSME annual report 2011-12, Ministry of MSME, Government of India

Existing research on Women entrepreneurship
A report published by ESCAP in 2005 titled “Developing Women Entrepreneurs in South Asia” pointed out that in India, a majority of women entrepreneurs in SMEs fall within the age group 25-40 years.

The states of Gujarat, Maharashtra and Karnataka count a greater proportion of entrepreneurs, mostly women from families which are already in business or have service-related backgrounds.

The Indian society has evolved as a traditionally male-dominated one. Women tend to be considered as the weaker sex and socio-economically depended on men throughout their life. Women mostly occupy subordinate positions and execute decisions generally made by other male members of the family. Despite an equal population, very few women were self-employed and the majority of them were engaged in the informal sector like agriculture, agro-based industries, handicrafts, handloom and cottage-based industries.

- Sixty-five per cent of the population in India live in villages; Self Help Groups (SHGs) have paved the way for economic independence of rural women involved in micro entrepreneurship.

Major Hindrances
Support and approval of the husbands seem to be a necessary condition for women’s entry into business. Lack of such family approvals make for a considerable hindrance for women.

When family members are not in favour of supporting their ladies to take up the business, naturally they do not support with the finances required for starting a new business unit. Banking and financial sector feel the same way and often refuse finance on the bases of gender bias.

Many women led business enterprises have imperfect organizational set ups as compared to men.

KEY CHANGES IN WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN LAST FIVE DECADES

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1. WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS OF THE FIFTIES:
Compulsive factors led to the creation of women entrepreneurs.

2. WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS OF THE SIXTIES:
Women began to aspire but also accepted the social cultural traditions.

3. WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS OF THE SEVENTIES:
The women in this decade opened up new frontier. They had not only aspiration but ambition.

4. WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS OF THE EIGHTIES:
Women were educated in highly sophisticated, technological and professional education. They became equally contributing partners.

5. WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS OF THE NINETIES:
This was the first time when the concept of best rather than male heir was talked about.

6. WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS OF THE 21st Century:
“Jill of all trade

Role of women as an entrepreneur
Considering the flow of women entrepreneurs in the traditional industries, it is often criticized that the women entrepreneurship is engaged only in handloom and handicraft and in the non-traditional term,
Now, their aspects have broadened into new line like hotel line, Xeroxing, Beauty Parlor business, incense stick making, candle making etc. In the last decade, there has been a remarkable shift it emphasizes from the traditional industry to non-traditional industry and services. Based on this concept, some important opportunities are being identified, considering the socio-economic, cultural and educational status and motivational level of women entrepreneurs, particularly projects with low investment, low technical know-how and assured market are suggested for them such as production of soaps, detergents, ready-made instant food products including pickles, spices, papad, manufacturing of wooden goods, beauty parlor business, typing centre, job contracts for packaging of goods and distribution and household provision etc.

Shri Mahila Griha Udyog Lijjat papad– Started by seven Gujarthi women from Bombay (now Mumbai) in 1959

At present Role of women as an entrepreneur
Herbal Heritage– Ms. Shahnaz Hussain – prominent Indian female entrepreneur, who is best known for her herbal cosmetics.
(Shahnaz Husain group has over 400 franchise clinics across the world covering over 138 countries)
Balaji films- promoted by Ekta Kapoor and Shobha Kapoor
Kiram Mazumdar Shaw – is an Indian entrepreneur. She is the chairman and managing director of Biocon Ltd, a biotechnology company based in Bangalore. She is on the financial times top 50 women in business list. As of 2014 she is listed as 92th most powerful woman in the world by forbes.
Zia Mody – Indian legal consultant. She started her own practice in Mumbai in 1984, which she merged twice with other firms to form AZB & Partners one of India's largest law firms, where she is the managing partner

Successful Leading Business Women in India
1. Akhila Srinivasan, Managing Director, Shriram Investments Ltd
2. Chanda Kocchar, Executive Director, ICICI Bank
3. Ekta Kapoor, Creative Director, Balaji Telefilms
4. Jyoit Naik, President, Lijjat Papad
5. Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, Chairman and Managing Director, Biocon
6. Lalita D Gupte, Joint Managing Director, ICICI Bank
7. Naina Lal Kidwai, Deputy CEO, HSBC
8. Preetha Reddy, Managing Director, Apollo Hospitals
9. Priya Paul, Chairman, Apeejay Park Hotels
10. Rajshree Pathy, Chairman, Rajshree Sugars and Chemicals Ltd
11. Ranjana Kumar, Chairman, NABARD
12. Ravina Raj Kohli, Media personality and ex-President, STAR News
13. Renuka Ramnath, CEO, ICICI Ventures
14. Ritu Kumar, Fashion Designer
15. Ritu Nanda, CEO, Escolife
16. Shahnaz Hussain, CEO, Shahnaz Herbals
17. Sharan Apparao, Proprietor, Apparao Galleries
18. Simone Tata, Chairman, Trent Ltd
19. Sulajja Firodia Motwani, Joint MD, Kinetic Engineering
20. Tarjani Vakil, former Chairman and Managing Director, EXIM Bank
21. Zia Mody, Senior Partner, AZB & Partners

Conclusion:
Women entrepreneurs make a significant contribution to the Indian economy. There are nearly three million micro, small and medium enterprises with full or partial female ownership.

Today’s women entrepreneur represents a group of women who have started exploring new possibilities of economic participation.

Self Confidence, self esteem, educational level and knowledge make women handle different tasks in life.

Women entrepreneurs not only require motivation in the form of financial assistance, government permissions, they may require support from family members and life partners.

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