



21ST Century Female: Some Critical Issues of Female Entrepreneurship in Rural India

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Abstract:

The purpose of this study is to shed light on the problems related to female entrepreneurship in rural India. This document is based on secondary data and some personal observations. For the identification of these topics, the author has examined several articles and research reports. The results of this study reveal the various issues which are root cause of the problems faced by female entrepreneurship. No doubt that we are now in 21st century and we claim that we are now very much advanced and female gets equal rights but the scenario of 21st century is little bit different, there are still various factors which hinders the growth and development of female entrepreneurship.

Key Words: Female entrepreneurship, rural area, growth, development.

Introduction

If we see the trend of the last ten years of the Indian economy it is very much clear that the ownership structure in the industrial sector, in agriculture, in commerce and in trade has changed. Many female entered the business world, commerce and became successful entrepreneurs in various commercial activities. However, the participation rate or the rate of inclusion in the business world is very low, despite its increasing trend over the last ten years. This rate of growth of female participation in economic activities is much lower than the expected rate. If we look at the developed countries, we see that female participate actively in commerce and commercial activities, including agriculture, without social or other restrictions. But in India, there are still many social and cultural restrictions on female. Therefore, female participation in entrepreneurial activities is lower than India's rapid growth requirement.

Objectives

One of the main objectives of this document was to identify the critical problems of female entrepreneurship in India and to discuss these problems.

Data collection

1. This article is based exclusively on secondary data collected through the bibliographic survey.
2. All the facts and problems discussed in this article are the opinions of the respective authors.
3. However, the present author criticizes some of these opinions and makes analysis based on observations and experiences on female entrepreneurship in India.

Problems of Female Entrepreneurship in India

Definitely, there are a number of problems regarding female entrepreneurship in India, researchers having identified issues relating to social aspects, economic life, skill problems, problems of family support, courage etc.

1) Lack of Balance between Career and Family Obligations

Most female in India are very serious about family obligations, but do not focus fairly on professional obligations³. Indian female are very much fond of their family and devote their lives to taking care of their families, but they do not care about their personal development. Many female have excellent

entrepreneurial skills, but they are not using their skills to create additional sources of income for their families, which would go hand in hand with increasing their self-sufficiency.

2) **Absence of Definite Agenda of Life**

The educated woman does not want to limit her life in the four walls of the house². Educated female demand equal opportunities and greater respect from their partners and society, and fight for equal opportunities and respect for their partners and Indian society. However, in rural India, most female are illiterate or semi-literate and have no adequate idea of self-esteem and self respect. Therefore, the question that arises immediately is how they can try to get respect for themselves and have a defined program to gain good positions in society.

3) **Low Degree of Financial Freedom**

The degree of financial freedom for female is very poor in Indian households, especially in families with lower levels of education and in rural households. In these families, female cannot make any commercial and important decision without considering family members, as well as considering ethics and social traditions. Because of financial dependence, a woman cannot start a business or economic activity to become independent. Therefore, this has become a crucial factor for low growth of female in India.

4) **No Direct Ownership of the Property**

The right to property is granted as a legal provision in India, but the question about female's right to property is very important. As male member is treated as the heir of the family and female are treated as second-class citizens. There are very few female who have property rights on paper because, in the first place, they do not know this right. They only realize when problems are created in their families due to family disputes.

5) **Lack of Knowledge and Awareness about Capacities**

An increasing level of education should increase awareness of an individual's abilities. But, unfortunately, our educational system failed to raise awareness on female's skills and their hidden powers to manage economic activities. In India the level of education of female and greater social awareness of the role that female play in society has developed but is very much limited to urban areas. However, in the rural area this type of attitude has not yet developed.

6) **Low Ability to Bear Risk**

In India usually we see that a woman is taught to depend on the male members of her family from birth. She is not allowed to take any kind of risk, even if she is willing to take it and has the capacity to bear it. However, this is not entirely true because many female have been shown to have the ability to bear and attitude to take risks in commercial activities. They have become aware of their rights and potential situations and have therefore entered different sectors of activity⁴. However, most female do not do business because they do not have the right skills. Therefore, such female should be made aware about their risk capabilities.

7) **Negligence by Financial Institutions**

Banks and financial institutions are important financiers of entrepreneurs in developing countries because small and medium-sized economic operators do not borrow from the capital market. But these banks and financial institutions are not willing to give credit to female entrepreneurs because of their traditional mentality. They think this can become a cause of non-performing assets in the future. However, according to a report by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), "despite evidence that female's loan repayment rates are higher than those of men, female still face greater difficulties in obtaining credit".

8) **Lack of Professional Education**

The level of education and professional skills also influence female participation in the company field. No doubt that education is being provided to female but not professional education specially in rural India. If we look at professional schools, we find that there are very few female. If we analyze the rural-urban relationship of female enrolled in vocational education, we realize that there are very few rural

female who have enrolled in this type of education. Even parents are not ready to send their daughters to undergo vocational education. However, sometimes it happens that many female who follow the training who attends the business development program do not have a business inclination.

9) Lack of Interaction with Successful Entrepreneurs

Lack of interaction with successful entrepreneurs is also one of the problems of female entrepreneurship in India¹. Successful entrepreneurs always play the role of model in society for female who have the ability to conduct business activities and carry out economic activities to demonstrate their capacity. Unfortunately, there is not a sufficient provision of this type of interaction to instil knowledge and offer experiences of successful entrepreneurs. Many economists argue that this is a major obstacle to the growth of female entrepreneurship.

10) Mobility Constraints

Mobility is one of the important problems in the development of female's business. Generally female do not prefer to travel and that too alone. They are not ready to leave their place for business and prefer to stay alone in their residential areas. Therefore female entrepreneurs have less scope for development due to their mobility constraints.

Conclusion

Female are an important human resource of the nation and each nation should try to develop this resource if they want to achieve their goal of economic growth and development. The promotion of female entrepreneurship is one of the ways to achieve this goal. But unfortunately we see that the traditional mentality of society and the negligence of the state and their respective authorities are important obstacles in the development of female entrepreneurship in India. Therefore, there is a need for a continuous effort to inspire, encourage, motivate and cooperate with female entrepreneurs; awareness programs should be conducted on a large scale with the intention of sensitizing female on the various areas to be implemented in business.

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