ABSTRACT

The plight of women in India is a sad reflection on our society. The dominant nature of the male in our society is one of the major factors to be sublimated to the spirit of equality. As on 31.3.2012 the women population accounts for 48.46 percent. In India, women have come a long way from being out of favour from the society in the ancient times to joining the armed forces, corporate sectors and probably all professions that the male members of the society are eligible to undertake. Women entrepreneurship is gaining importance in India in the wake of economic liberalization and globalization. In the society, the role of women is getting bigger. Women are doing man’s work and sometimes women do it better. The most common explanation of ‘women’s empowerment’ is the ability to exercise full control over one’s actions. Entrepreneur is a person who promotes the business idea, undertakes financial risk to run the business. Women are leaving the jobs and emerging as entrepreneurs. Not to be a homemaker, but as job-making entrepreneurs. The increasing presence of women in the business field as entrepreneurs has changed the demographic characteristics of business and economic growth of the country. There are number of problems being faced by the women and the govt. and the society at large is expected to address these problems in its right earnest.

Keywords: Women Empowerment; Self Help Groups; Women Entrepreneurs; Male Domination

INTRODUCTION

The plight of women in India is a sad reflection on our society. By overlooking the injustices meted out to them at the social, political and economic levels, the state becomes party to the discrimination being faced by the women in this “man’s world”. The dominant nature of the male in our society is one of the major factors to be sublimated to the spirit of equality.

During the British Rule, many social reformists tried to empower the status of women by their efforts and initiatives selflessly and ardently. Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Pt. Ishwar Chandra Vidya Sagar and many others played a pivotal role in empowering the status of women by working tirelessly against traditionally accepted evil societal norms, cultures and practices that were detrimental to the development of the women folk.

According to the below given population highlights of 2012, the women population accounts for 48.46 percent and according to 2011 Indian census literacy rate of women 53.7 percent in urban sector and 46.1 percent in rural sector. The 21st century women have established their status in the society equal to that of men and slowly the male dominated patriarchal society is transforming into a society where both men and women are treated at parity. In India, women have come a long way from being out of favour from the society in the ancient times to joining the armed forces, corporate sectors and probably all professions that the male members of the society are eligible to undertake.
Highlights Of India's Population 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Population of India in 2012</th>
<th>1,220,200,000 (1.22 billion)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Male Population in India</td>
<td>628,800,000 (628.8 million)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Female Population in India</td>
<td>591,400,000 (591.4 million)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sex Ratio</td>
<td>940 females per 1,000 males</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Age structure

<table>
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<th>0 to 25 years</th>
<th>50% of India's current population</th>
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Currently, there are about 51 births in India in a minute.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>India's Population in 2011</th>
<th>1.21 billion</th>
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<tr>
<td>India's Population in 2001</td>
<td>1.02 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population of India in 1947</td>
<td>350 million</td>
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As we enter the 21st century we find that women are by no means less competent than men and this can be evidenced by the X and XII results of the board examinations across the country where women have been surging ahead by far every year. However when we look at the sex ratio in the country we feel disgraced and embarrassed the 2011 census shows that for every 1000 male members there are 940 females.

Globalization Scenario

The Indian government adopted the policy of globalization, liberalization and privatization in the year 1991 when the WTO was formed. After the globalization the Indian economy was opened up and that the flow of foreign direct investment started coming to India. Number of Multinational companies came to India and the employment opportunities recorded an increase. This globalization policy favourably affected the chances of women entrepreneurs starting number of small units in the SSI sector.

Changing Role of Indian Women

Women entrepreneurship is gaining importance in India in the wake of economic liberalization and globalization. In the society, the role of women is getting bigger. Women are doing man’s work and sometimes women do it better. It may be because women are more patient and more intelligent. The concept of earlier days was that only man can work, because society thought that cleaning the house and taking care of the children were the only things women were able to do. Women are striving to be independent on the equal level of men. The Indian society is now proud of outstanding women achievers like Kalpana Chawla, Sania Mirza, Barkha Dutt, Shabana Azmi and many more. It is a well known fact that most of the women are good at multi-tasking. It’s no wonder that women are succeeding and will succeed in professional life too.

Women Empowerment

Empowerment means to inspire women with the courage to break free from the chains of limiting beliefs, patterns and societal or religious conditions that have traditionally kept women suppressed and unable to realize their true beauty and power.

The most common explanation of 'women's empowerment' is the ability to exercise full control over one's actions. The last decades have witnessed some basic changes in the status and role of women in our society. There has been shift in policy approaches from the concept of 'welfare' in the seventies to 'development' in the eighties and now to 'empowerment' in the nineties. This process has been further
accelerated with some sections of women becoming increasingly self-conscious of their discrimination in several areas of family and public life.

Empowerment would become more relevant if women are educated, better informed and can take rational decisions. A woman needs to be physically healthy so that she is able to take challenges of equality.

Most of the women work in agricultural sector either as workers, in household farms or as wageworkers. Yet it is precisely livelihood in agriculture that has tended to become more volatile and insecure in recent years and women cultivators have therefore been negatively affected. They are exploited at various levels. They should be provided with proper wages and work at par with men so that their status can be elevated in society.

The empowerment of women refers to providing the necessary rights and responsibilities to women in order to make them self-reliant. Empowerment is the process of building capacities of women, creating an atmosphere which will enable people to fully utilize their creative potentials.

**Definitions of Entrepreneur**

Following are the few definitions of the entrepreneur

- Entrepreneur is a person who promotes the business idea, undertakes financial risk to run the business.
- One who takes initiative in organizing the venture to grab the opportunity, he/she takes decisions as to what, how and how much of a goods to be produced or services to be provided.

The entrepreneurship is not dependent only on competence, attitude and ability to effectively compete is necessary. Several cultural factors also add to the entrepreneurial ability. The Govt. of India has established National Institute for Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development in 1993. The role of Entrepreneur in the economic development of any country is vital one.

Entrepreneurs are the pace setters of the economic growth. Through their enterprise, they create wealth, generate employment and provide goods and services to the people that, in turn, result in raising the standard of living of the masses. Entrepreneurship Development Programme (EDP) is an effective tool to develop entrepreneurs.

**OBJECTIVE OF STUDY**

The main objective of this study is to identify problems faced by Women Entrepreneurs.

**Women as Entrepreneurs**

Women are leaving the jobs and emerging as entrepreneurs. Not to be a homemaker, but as job-making entrepreneurs. The increasing presence of women in the business field as entrepreneurs has changed the demographic characteristics of business and economic growth of the country. Women-owned businesses enterprises are playing a more active role in society and the economy, inspiring academics to focus on this interesting phenomenon. This paper focuses on the problems, issues, challenges faced by women entrepreneurs, how to overcome them and to analyze policies of Indian government for and problems faced by them while pursuing their business.

Although she has to awaken to her potentialities, she still needs more awareness and alertness about her rights and duties. She has definitely a serious role to play in the 21st century. At the national front the women have also an additional role to play in the preservation and conservation of our cultural values.

**Emergence of Self Help Groups**

On the lines of the self help group movement in Bangala Desh, the government of India has also adopted the scheme for self help group. SHG is group of rural poor who have volunteered to organize
themselves into a group for eradication of poverty of the members. They agree to save regularly and convert their savings into a Common Fund known as the Group corpus. The members of the group agree to use this common fund and such other funds that they may receive as a group through a common management.

**Women Self-Help Groups (SHG)**

In rural areas of India have brought several thousands of uneducated women out of the confines of their homes and enabled them to gain not only considerable economic independence, but also an identity and collective voice. The SHG model was initiated by the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) in the early 1990s.

Empowerment of women is the need of the day, as it is the surest way of making women as "partners" in development and bringing them in the mainstream of development not only as mere "beneficiaries but also as "Contributes”

Women’s entrepreneurship needs to be studied separately for two main reasons. The first reason is that women’s entrepreneurship has been recognized during the last decade as an important untapped source of economic growth. Women entrepreneurs create new jobs for themselves and others and also by being different. They also provide the society with different solutions to management, organization and business problems as well as to the exploitation of entrepreneurial opportunities.

**Problems Faced By Women Entrepreneurs**

Although preferential treatment is to be accorded but in reality the women entrepreneurs do face some problems which have been enumerated herein below:

- **Problem of raising finance:** In India generally the property is in the name of the male member of the family. And when the banks grant sizable loan as per the requirement of the women entrepreneur they ask for collateral and women are having hardly any collateral to offer. In the process it becomes very difficult to raise loan from banks.

- **Bankers carry a belief that the women entrepreneurs leave the business half way and hence they are reluctant to finance women beneficiaries.**

- **Limited Mobility:** Women mobility is less. Traditionally women usually travel with their male partner. A single asking for a room in a hotel is looked upon with great suspicion. And hence marketing of the product becomes difficult.

- **Stiff competition:** Women entrepreneurs because of their financial fund raising limitations, find it difficult to push their products in the market. The male run units get the major market share for their products.

- **Family ties:** Traditionally women have to attend to the family requirements first. Married women are required to balance their duties at home and at the unit. This puts certain limitations on the women entrepreneurs.

- **Male dominated society:** Women suffer from male reservations about a women’s role, ability and capacity and are treated accordingly. In nutshell, in the male-dominated Indian society, women are not treated equal to men. This, in turn, serves as a barrier to women entry into business.

- **Low risk bearing ability:** Women in India lead a protected life. They are less educated and economically not self-dependent. All these reduce their ability to bear risk involved in running an enterprise. Risk-bearing is an essential requisite of a successful entrepreneur.
SUGGESTIONS

As far as finance is concerned now the Government of India, Reserve Bank of India have issued directions to give loans to the women beneficiaries on priority and that too on soft terms. Even these women beneficiaries get interest concession on their borrowing.

Women entrepreneurs faced many obstacles specifically in market their product (including family responsibilities) that have to be overcome in order to give them access to the same opportunities as men.

The rural women are having basic indigenous knowledge, skill, potential and resources to establish and manage enterprise. Now, what is the need is knowledge regarding accessibility to loans, various funding agencies procedure regarding certification, awareness on government welfare programmes, motivation, technical skill and support from family, government and other organization.

Nowadays the properties are being registered in the name of the women member in the family. They are getting certain concession in registration fees. In course of time the situation will improve on this score. Gradually the male domination in the society is slowly vanishing. Today, women are getting equal treatment in number fields. Women entrepreneurs could be trained and educated in order to make the successful with regard to access to capital, marketing of their products, creation of assets, selecting the form of enterprise and the nature of industry

CONCLUSION

Women’s entrepreneurship is both about women’s position in society and about the role of entrepreneurship in the same society. Women entrepreneurs faced many obstacles specifically in market their product (including family responsibilities) that have to be overcome in order to give them access to the same opportunities as men.

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