**RURAL WOMAN ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN INDIA**

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**ABSTRACT**

Rural Entrepreneurship is emerging entrepreneurship in villages Rural women are coming out of their home to achieve their dreams. It is not easy for women to step out and walk along with men. They have to face many challenges to chase their goals. This research paper talks about challenges and opportunities women are facing in India

**Keywords: Rural women, Entrepreneurship, Rural Entrepreneurship**

**INTRODUCTION**

In 1947 India attained independence, but the division of urban-rural and rich-poor are still there in India. 68.84 % of the Indian population lives in villages. There are total 6, 40,867 villages in India. According to census 2011, the population of rural women who are educated are 58.8 per cent. (Census, 2011) According to the “2007 Revision of World Urbanization Prospects “by the United Nations, India would continue to have the greatest rural population in the world until 2050. (Hindustan Times,28.2.2008) In India, entrepreneurship is considered as the best way of improving economic and social development. According to the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, 8.9women are engaged in entrepreneurship across the world and India is on the second position among the 22 countries where 14.1% of women have ventured into entrepreneurship. In the developed countries in the globe, A major part of the Indian economy still lies in the rural areas and villages of the country. Though a huge number of people are constantly moving to the urban areas, development of the villages cannot be neglected. With their excellent managerial and entrepreneurial skills, few Indian women have taken up the duty to raise the standard of living in Indian villages and have been really successful at it.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The study is based on secondary data which is collected from the published reports of RBI, Census Surveys, newspapers, journals, websites, etc

**OBJECTIVES**

. The study was planned with the following objectives

1. To study the factors responsible for encouraging women to become entrepreneurs.

2. Tocritically examine the challenges and opportunities for rural women.

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

Problems faced by women entrepreneurs in villages was studied and found that majority of the women entrepreneurs were ranked as lack of strong leadership. Their leadership quality was not up to the mark as required for being a successful entrepreneur. There were many women entrepreneurs who faced problems related to finance. Problems being faced by women entrepreneurs in villages was being studied and found that most of the woman entrepreneurs were ranked as lack of strong leadership. Their leadership quality was not as good as required for being a successful entrepreneur. There were many women entrepreneurs who faced many problems related to finance. Second rank was financial deficit. The third rank was lack of proper planning and working, followed by various health related problems, nonawareness of government schemes and non-repayment of loan by the members, leaders misusing the group's money, other problems and lack of Education. (Pharm, and Sritharan, 2013).

Self-Help Groups (SHGs) is growing day by day, which is a proof that women are coming out of their shelter and getting their citizenship in the city. Women Self Help Groups is being studied and found that the role of women entrepreneurs is increasing drastically every year. The participation of women has been raised from 22.3% in 1990-1991 to 31.6% in the year 2010-2011. This is a source from the World Bank report 2010-2011 & WAWE conference report. 71.5% of the women SHGs formed in 2009 and 2010. In the year 2010-2011, this ratio stood at 74.08%. Out of the whole figure of Self Help Groups formed, 70% belongs to women. (Rajasekaran1 and Sindhu, 2013) Impact of women entrepreneurship development on families was being studied and found that majority of the respondents (75.2%) was married. Socio-cultural and religious beliefs dictate that the marriage of both sons and daughters is a sacred duty to be performed by parents but in the case of daughters especially parents feel far more pressured to marry them off as soon as possible. It has been found that decision making is very essential entrepreneurial quality and found that per most of the respondents felt that they could deal with problems “only felt that they could not deal with problems. The value of assets possessed by a family is an important indicator of a secure condition of the family. The assets in the present study have been categorized in terms of fixed assets like house, jeweler, other household gadgets and savings. It was found that in case of (66%) of respondents, assets (in terms of value) had increased while (32%) there was no substantial change and very negligible percent decrease (1.6%). (MS. Rashmi Gopinathan, 2010)

Twenty Years of Rural Entrepreneurship: A Bibliometric Survey is being studied and it was reviewed that rural entrepreneurship has drawn increasing attention from researchers in the last twenty years. Nevertheless, the evolution of the relative weight of articles on rural entrepreneurship has lagged behind that of articles on entrepreneurship. The finding of this study suggests us that rural entrepreneurship literature has been losing momentum. Rural entrepreneurship is often viewed as a strategy of development; this trend can be detrimental for the future of rural areas. When we look at the other side, contrary to entrepreneurship in general, where most of the authors are affiliated to schools or universities in the USA (Teixeira, 2011), it is apparent from our bibliometric analysis that rural entrepreneurship is a ‘European concern’. Thus, it was found that European countries were among the most studied countries in rural entrepreneurship. The USA also figures at the top in the ranking of the most studied countries in rural entrepreneurship, the UK, Spain, Finland and Greece, all high-income countries, are the most frequently studied economies. The focus on these European countries may be explained by the fact that rural entrepreneurship has been considered in such economies as a path for endogenous development (CE, 2012; Dinis, 2006a). However, Portugal, having similar characteristics, concerns and constraints at this level, it has been somewhat overlooked in the analysis on rural entrepreneurship. (Pato Lucia and Teixeira A.C, 2013).

**ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

The origin of the basic word Entrepreneurship is from a French word - “Entreprende”, which means in old French “to undertake”. Entrepreneurship is an act of setting up a new business or reviving an existing business so as to take advantage from new opportunities. Thus, entrepreneurs shape the economy by creating new wealth, new jobs and by inventing new products and services. However, a depth study reveals that it is not about earning money, having innovative ideas, knowing the best sales pitch and applying the best marketing strategy. It is in reality an attitude to create something new and an activity which creates value in the entire social ecosystem. It is the psyche makeup of a person. It is a state of mind, which develops naturally, based on his/ her surrounding and experiences, which makes him/ her think about life and career in a given way. The women have achieved immense Development in their state of mind. As the dependency on service sector has been increased, many entrepreneurial opportunities especially for women have been increased where they can use their skills with maintaining balance in their life. Accordingly, during the last two decades, increasing number of Indian women have entered the field of entrepreneurship and also they are gradually changing the face of business of today, both literally and figuratively. But still they have not capitalized their potential in India the way it should be.

**WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

A woman entrepreneur is an adult who owns and runs an organization, especially a commercial one, often at personal financial risk. The ILO defined the women‘s enterprise as a small unit where one or more women entrepreneurs have not less than 50 percent financial holdings. The concept of women entrepreneurship is becoming a world-wide phenomenon playing an important role in the business community. In India, women have entered comparatively late into business scenario mainly due to the orthodox and traditional socio-cultural environment. Though women face many issues in the process of establishing, developing and running their enterprise, nevertheless, their scope of development is very high in India, especially in rural areas with more women making development oriented program viz. Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA) which was launched in 1982-83. In what follows, an attempt is made to analyze the success of such a scheme in terms of its survival, growth and development of women entrepreneurs and identify the problems faced by the women entrepreneurs.

**CONCEPT OF RURAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

Rural entrepreneurship can be called as entrepreneurship emerging in villages. Rural entrepreneurship means industrialization in rural area. Industries fall under the purview of KVIC are treated as rural industries. Rural industrialization means encouraging location of large and small scale units away from cities or planned shifting of units from urban areas to rural areas. Rural entrepreneurship can stop the growing migration towards cities as it provides wide range of employment opportunities to the village people.

**RURAL WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

The development of women is necessary for the development of society and nation. In India the emergence of rural women entrepreneurs and their contribution to the national economy is quite visible. Women entrepreneurship has been recognized during the last one decade as an important untapped source of economic growth. According to statistics of women in India 2010, proportion of female main workers to total population in percentage is 16.65 in rural areas and 9.42 in urban areas, this shows overall less contribution of women in work but more percentage of women workers in rural areas. Women entrepreneurs has been largely neglected both in society and in the social sciences. Entrepreneurship participation rate of women is low than men but they generally tend to start and manage firms in different industries than men like to do. Entrepreneurship development among rural women helps to enhance their personal capabilities and increase decision making status in the family and society as a whole. (Sharma, et.al. 2012)

**LIFE OF RURAL WOMAN**

entrepreneurs and corporate head sin urban India, women in villages still continue to face exploitation. If women get proper education, they can make a great impact on improving the productivity of the economy.

**RURAL ENTREPRENEURS**

**Ela Bhatt**

Ela Bhatt, the founder of the Self Employed Women’s Association (SEWA) and she was SEWA’s first general-secretary. Based in Ahmedabad, SEWA is the biggest single trade union in the country with a membership of 687,000 females. Vegetable sellers, garment vendors, paper pickers, Bidi rollers, agricultural workers are members of SEWA group. All of the mare from country’s "unorganized sector" and organize for their just dues and rights. 96% of all women workers in the country are in this sector. The SEWA Bank was established in 1974 by4,000 women each contributing ten rupees. (source : Interview of Ela Bhatt, August 31, 2003 by Nice Paget-Clarke for In Motion Magazine in Ahmedabad.)

**Neeta Tanwade**

Neeta Tanwade is 33 years old lady from Sawargaon village of Osman bad district. She counsels’ her village women to opt for clean energy stove (run on biomass) instead of traditional fire woodstove. Neeta is not that much qualified,she is SSC pass out. Neeta has sold hundreds of clean stoves, solar lumps, water filters and green toilets in the last two years. Many women came forward to sell prod- ucts. More than 1000 Urja sakh is have sold more than one lakh solar lamps and stoves. These are the women who never stepped out of home but now confidently giving presentations at the national and international conferences.

**DISCUSSION**

Need and Importance of Rural Women Entrepreneurs: Rural entrepreneurs play a very important role in the overall economic development of the country. The growth and development of rural organizations facilitate self-employment, results in wider dispersal of economic and industrial activities and helps in the optimum utilization of locally available raw materials and labor.

**PROPER UTILIZATION OF LOCAL RESOURCES:**

Rural industries help in the proper utilization of local resources for productive purposes and thus improves productivity. They can also mobilize rural savings which may help in increase of funds

**EMPLOYMENT GENERATION:**

Rural industries generate large-scale employment opportunities for the village people. The basic issue of large-scale unemployment of rural India can be effectively tackled through rural industrialization.

**PREVENT RURAL EXODUS**

Lack of employment opportunities, huge population pressure and poverty forced the village people to move to urban areas for livelihood. It creates rural urban imbalance. Under these circumstances, rural industries help in reducing disparities in income between rural and urban people and acts as a potential source of gainful employment. This prevents rural people to migrate to urban areas.

**FOSTERS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Rural industrialization improves economic development of villages. This curbs rural urban migration on the one hand and also on the other hand reduces disproportionate growth of towns and cities, growth of slums, social tensions and environmental pollutions etc.

**EARNINGS OS FOREIGN EXCHANGE**

Rural industries play an important role in increasing the foreign exchange earnings of the country through export of their produce.

**PRODUCES GOODS OF CONSUMER’S CHOICE**

Rural industries including village and cottage industries produce goods of individual consumers' choice and taste. Jewellery, sarees, artistic products are produced to cater to the needs of different consumers according to their taste, design and choice.

**ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT**

Rural industries promote entrepreneurial development in the village. It encourages young and promising entrepreneurs to develop and carry out entrepreneurial activities in the village which finally facilitate the development of the rural areas.

**IMPORTANT FACTORS INFLUENCING RURAL WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS**

The following are the major factors influencing the women entrepreneurs.

• Economic independence

• Establishing their own creative idea

• Establishing their own identity

• Achievement of excellence

• Building Confidence

• Developing Risk-taking Ability

• Motivation

• Equal Status in Society

• Greater freedom and mobility

The concept of development of a rural women entrepreneurship lays emphasis on the productive utilization of rural women labor force. The program for developing female entrepreneur would help to remove the poverty from country. The 6th Five Year Plan for the first time highlighted the problem of women integration in economic development in country and emphasized the need to expand women employment in the household sector by providing adequate support in the areas of technology up gradation, training, credit, raw material requirements and development of financing loans. For this, a huge effort has been taken under different plans, policies, and programs for the development of women entrepreneurship since 1990s. The DWCRA groups (also known as SHGs) are considered as a viable organization ofthe rural poor particularly women for delivering micro credit in order to undertake entrepreneurial activities. Some of the studies on these groups particularly those managed by women successfully demonstrated how to mobilize and manage thrift activities, appraise credit needs, enforce financial discipline, maintain credit linkages with banks and effectively undertake income generating activities etc. These studies also showed that the poor as a group are quite creditworthy and repayment of loan is quite satisfactory.

**CHALLENGES FACED BY RURAL WOMAN ENTREPRENEURS**

**FOLLOWING ARE THE CHALLENGES FACED BY WOMAN ENTREPRENEURS**

**1. FAMILY TIES**

Women in India are very emotionally attached to their families. They are supposed to do all the household work, to look after their children and other members in the family. They are overburdened with family responsibilities like taking care of children, attention to husband, and in laws which requires a lot of their time and energy. In such conditions, it is very difficult for women to concentrate and run an organization successfully.

**2. LACK OF EDUCATION**

In this present era, still women are lagging far behind in the area of education. Many of women in villages are not educated. Women who are getting education, are provided with inadequate education than their male counterparts partly due to poverty, early marriages, and low socioeconomic status. Due to lack of education women are in dark and they don’t know about latest technologies, new methods of production, marketing and other governmental support which will encourage them to flourish.

**3. LACK OF RAW MATERIALS**

Due to poor connectivity and transportation, it is very much difficult to make availability of raw materials.

**4. MALE DOMINATED SOCIETY**

In our constitution, there are equal rights for males and females but in reality, equality does not exist in villages. Women are always neglected in many spheres of life. Women don’t get equal treatment like male. As far as villages are concerned, people have a set of attitudes that women are only for household work. For their business needs, they need approval from head of the family. Entrepreneurship has traditionally been seen as male dominated. All these leads to a break in the growth of women entrepreneurs.

**5. PROBLEM OF FINANCE**

Bankers, creditors and financial institutes don’t want to take risk to provide financial assistance to women borrowers on the ground of their less credit worthiness and more chances of business failure. They also face financial problems due to blockage of funds in many areas.

**6. TOUGH COMPETITIONS**

In this era of technology, women entrepreneurs face a lot of problems and challenges. In a market where the competition is very high, they have to fight hard to survive in the market against the organized sector and their male counterpart who have high experience and capacity to adopt advanced technology in managing organizations.

**7. HIGH COST OF PRODUCTION**

Several factors such as inefficient management contribute to the high cost of production which stands as a stumbling block for rural women entrepreneurs.

**8. LOW RISK BEARING ABILITY**

An entrepreneur must have risk bearing ability for being successful entrepreneur. But due to soft and emotional attribute of women, sometimes they fail to bear the amount risk which is essential for running any organization. Lack of proper education, training and financial support from outsides also reduce their ability to bear the risk involved in an enterprises.

**9. LIMITED MOBILITY**

In our country, mainly in rural area, women mobility is very less and is a problem due to traditional values and inability to drive vehicles. Moving alone and asking for a place to stay out in the night for business purposes are still not acceptable in our society.

**10. LACK OF ENTREPRENEURIAL**

Aptitude Lack of entrepreneurial aptitude is the biggest concern for rural women entrepreneurs. They have no entrepreneurial bent of mind. Sometimes even after attending various training programs on entrepreneurship, women entrepreneurs fail to tide over the risks and troubles that may come up in an organizational working.

**11. LIMITED MANAGERIAL ABILITY DUE TO INSUFFICIENT EDUCATION**

women entrepreneurs are not efficient in managerial functions like planning, organizing, controlling, coordinating, staffing, directing, motivating etc. of an enterprise. Therefore, less and limited managerial ability of women has become a problem for them to run an organization successfully.

**12. LEGAL FORMALITIES**

Because of the corrupt practices in government offices and procedural delays for various licenses, electricity, water and shed allotments. In such situations rural women entrepreneurs find it very difficult to concentrate on the smooth working of the enterprise.

**13. EXPLOITATION BY MIDDLE MEN**

Since it is very difficult for women to do marketing, distribution and money collection; they have to depend on middle men for the above activities. Middle men tend to exploit them in the guise of helping. They add their own profit margin which results in less sales and lesser profit.

**14. LACK OF MOTIVATION**

Motivation plays a very vital role for running an organization. Rural women entrepreneurs, sometimes feel very less confident which is essentially a motivating factor in running an enterprise successfully. They have to strive hard to strike a balance between managing a family and managing an enterprise.

**OPPORTUNITIES FOR RURAL ENTREPRENEURS**

1. Integrated Rural development Program:

The objective of this program is to increase income generating power of family who are below poverty line to alleviate the poverty. Some of the major employment and anti-poverty programs are:

**a. IRDP (Integrated Rural Development Program)**

-TRYSEM (Training Rural Youth for self-Employment) -DWCRA (Development of Women and Children in Rural Area)

1.It is wage employment programme.

2. Regional Rural Development Centers

3. Technology for Banks

4. Fund for Rural Innovation

5. Social Rural Entrepreneurship

6. Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India

**CONCLUSION**

Though agriculture is main source of income to rural communities, rural development is increasingly related to enterprise development. It is quite clear that rural entrepreneurship cannot be possible without significant training. Therefore, instead of just schemes and policies (financial and development) as the correct measure for entrepreneurship development an intensive training needs to be provided to the youth in rural India. To handle agricultural domain and distinct projects in villages, rural entrepreneurs should apply entirely different management concepts. Otherwise, we would only create island of apparent prosperity in the ocean of rural poverty. Rural entrepreneurship is the remedy to remove rural poverty in India. Therefore, there should be more focus on integrated rural development

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