



ज्ञान-विज्ञान विमुक्तये

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Involvement of IT in the Economic Emergence of Women in India

Dr. Barjesh Kochar¹, Rajni Sharma², Tanisha Madan³

Director¹, MVSIT, Sonapat

Assistant Professor², Department of Computer Science, MVSIT, Sonapat

Assistant Professor³, Department of Computer Science, MVSIT, Sonapat

Abstract

Entrepreneurship is increasingly gaining importance in the development of Indian economy and it has a striking feature of the augmented share of women entrepreneurs. Though the situation of female entrepreneurs has improved in recent times, yet a lot more needs to be done and sorted out. This paper attempts to look at the current scenario of women entrepreneurs in India and recognizes the problems faced by them along with the possible solutions. It delves into the detailed analysis of the distribution of women entrepreneurs in various industries and ways in which their participation can be increased for better business environment.

Keywords: entrepreneur, technology, patriarchy, challenges

1. INTRODUCTION

The economic emergence of women in India has been quite noticeable since 1990s. This has been made possible through observable expansion in the investment base and technology advancement. Women owned businesses have taken the Indian economy by storm. However such kind of an emergence is still not at its full potential level due to the intrinsic challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in India. These challenges can be overcome by taking up measures to promote women entrepreneurship and encouraging healthy competition.

The paper begins with a summary of recent work done in section 2 regarding the present scenario of women entrepreneurship in India and looks at the main challenges faced by Indian women entrepreneurs. Section 3 presents the major industries that attract women entrepreneurs. Section 4 presents the steps to encourage women participation in business. Section 5 explains the strategies for empowering women entrepreneurs. Section 6 concludes the paper followed by references.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Women entrepreneurship is vital for the development of human resources and this kind of phenomenon is happening quite rapidly ever since women have become more aware regarding their rights and position in the society. The immediate need of Indian society in particular is the prolific



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development of innovation and women entrepreneurship per se just like the sudden development of management (1). However, women do not really prefer to venture into their own businesses unless they have had entrepreneurial fathers of their own and they had a desire to go forward with further managerial skills. Ample amount of studies regarding Indian women entrepreneurs clearly point at the low confidence levels and rather high and uninvited societal pressure as the reasons for the unwillingness of women to take up entrepreneurial ideas (2). Women entrepreneurs contribute a lot to national competitiveness and economic health of the country because they help in bringing up increased assets out in the market, hence improving efficiency by widening the choice basket (5). The level of women businesses depends directly on the education level and risk taking attribute of the sector along with the entrepreneur's motivation to go forward with the idea. Studies comparing women education levels in the past and present point at the better situation with more number of girls enrolled in school (6) With the coming in of economic revolution and Indian women realizing their positions in the society, more number of them try and balance their home and entrepreneurial ideas simultaneously (3). According to a study, the growth of small and medium enterprises in India is tremendously high and at present nearly 95 percent of the firms are SMEs where women are working just for better economic payoffs(9). On the other hand, this kind of development is plagued by many hurdles some of which are minimal interaction with others of their kind, societal pressures, lack of networks, gender discrimination and non-availability of loans to women entrepreneurs (8). Other challenges can be deprivation of economic rights, low mobility, absence of motivation/achievements and huge amount of social atrocities by their families of their own and in-laws'. Figure 1 depicts the major and minor problems faced by women entrepreneurs and the maximum reason cited is lack of funds for their business.

Table 1- Women entrepreneurship in India, Source: Economic Survey, 2008-09

States	Number of units registered	Number 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
Maharashtra	4339	1394	32.12



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s. no.	Industry	% of women corporates
1	Manufacturing	13.3
2	Wholesale trade	14
3	Mining, oil extraction	13.5
4	Transportation and warehousing	15.1
5	Agriculture, fishing, hunting	14.6

Karnataka	3822	1026	26.34
Gujarat	3872	1538	39.72

Table 1 reports the percentage of women owned businesses out of total enterprises and the amount is quite low, owing to lack of funds for starting up their own enterprise because a majority of Indian women do not have any land in their name which causes lack of collateral against the loans they wanted. Within the limited women enterprises, the maximum are related to transportation and warehousing services as depicted in Table 2.

Table 2- Industry- wise corporates managed by women entrepreneurs, Source: Economic Survey 2008-09



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6	Company management	12.4
7	Rental and leasing services	11.8



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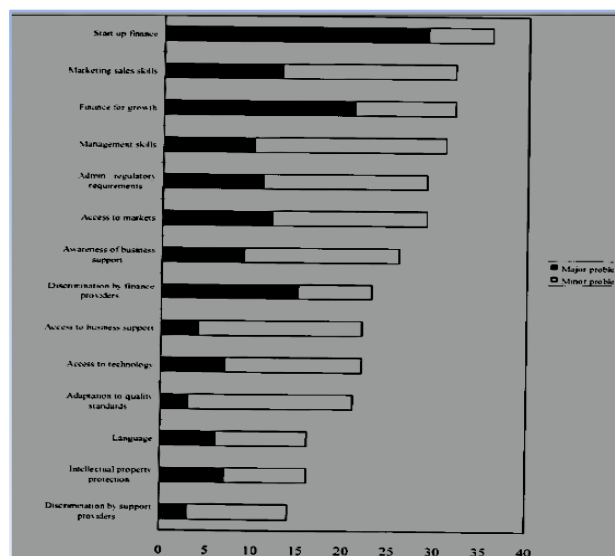


Figure 1- problems faced by women entrepreneurs; Source: CEEDR, Middlesex University, Final report. It shows some of the major and minor hurdles faced by female entrepreneurs like lack of startup funds, awareness of business support, access to technology, discrimination etc. Among all of them, lack of funds received the highest responses.

Some of the possible solutions for such kind of problems can be increased provision of micro credit finances and synchronizing the women related ministry and welfare development ministry. Coming up of self- help groups also increases awareness and cognizance regarding economic progress among the poor women (10).

3. INDUSTRIES ATTRACTING FEMALE ENTREPRENEURS

Study was conducted in a paper by Ghani et al (2012) regarding the female entrepreneurship in the unorganized service and manufacturing sectors to look at the gender of the new entrants and existing incumbents.



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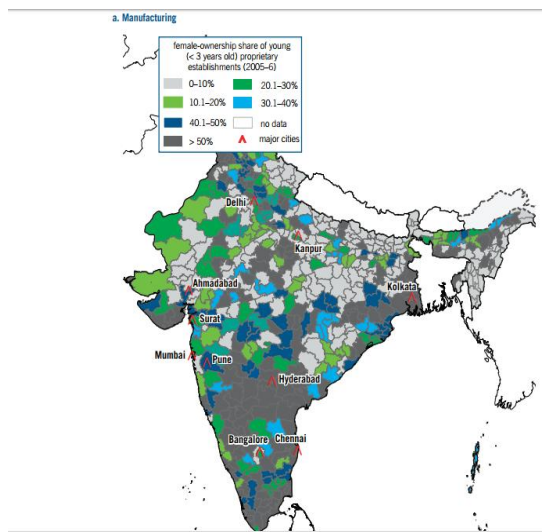


Figure 2- manufacturing sector and female entrepreneurship: Source: Ghani et al, 2012. The above figure clearly indicates that Kerala, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu have the highest share of women entrepreneurs (>45%). Haryana, Gujarat and Bihar have the lowest female participation in manufacturing business.

“The average female business ownership share increased from 26 percent in 2000 to 37 percent in 2005”(4). In the manufacturing sector, female ownership shares are the highest and go as high as 50 percent in industries related to chemical products. Figure 2 shows the manufacturing sector in terms of women entrepreneurs.

Figure 3 depicts the women businesses in the unorganized services sector. Among service industries, female ownership shares exceed 30 percent in industries related to sanitation and education. Industries related to research and development, water and land transport have the lowest female ownership rates at around 1 percent.



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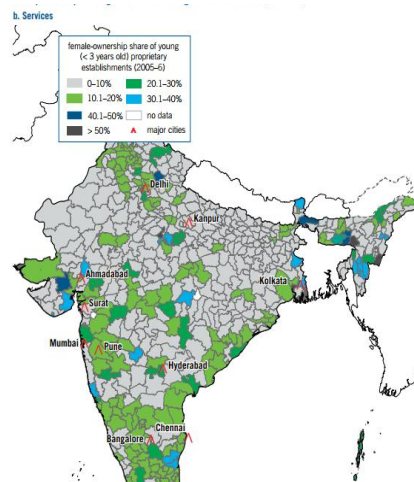


Figure 3- service sector and female entrepreneurship: Source: Ghani et al, 2012. The figure indicates that highest share of female service sector business is in Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh (>12%). Lowest is in Bihar, Orissa, Rajasthan.

4. PROMOTION OF WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN INDUSTRIES

Women suffer a lot due to poor infrastructure facilities and lack of proper education. Unavailability of proper roads and transportation is a major reason of safety issues. Hence, investments in transport facilities will alleviate the major issues faced by women entrepreneurs in particular and women in general. Another striking point is the presence of “Agglomeration economies”(13)in the manufacturing and services sector that is the sectors where already there is the presence of female owned businesses, the entry rate of new ones is higher, even if the industry or sector conditions are unsuitable.

The presence of stringent labor regulations also has a probable positive effect on the promotion of women entrepreneurs in industries because the regulations shift the women into the industries that they can be more involved in and which they can manage along with their family duties, hence stabilizing the gender balance.

5. STRATEGY FOR WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

The strategy to be used for empowering women may be in the form of

- Extension of new ways to measure women’s work correctly that is-- by investing in public organizations, it can be ensured that women’s economic activities are represented correctly in information used by different government departments.



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- Influencing ways in which large international agencies mix gender reflections into their work can engender international practices that can enhance the way the small dependent economies measure the work which women do and thereby inform the framework models to improve the economic position of women.
- Just the data appraised technical study is not enough to empower women economically. It is an urgent need to couple investments in technology and research development with support from big organizations that are capable of executing vital policy plans.

6. Conclusion

Though women in India have emerged economically and socially in the last few years but a lot needs to be done for their better involvement in entrepreneurial activities. Solutions presented are increased cooperation and interaction between women entrepreneurs, provision of training and awareness programs, micro-credit financing, coming in of self-help groups for rural women and government initiatives to encourage the appraising of women in the sectors of trade, commerce and transportation etc. Women being the vital gender of the overall population have great potential to be the contributor in the overall economic development of any nation. Media can play the most important role in innovation and development by creating all such platforms which can bring out the creativity among the women to grow business culture in society. Developing countries like India are definitely in urgent need to encourage women entrepreneurship as women workforce is currently available to exploit the unseen dimensions of business options.

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