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FACTORS INFLUENCING WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN THENI DISTRICT

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Abstract

In the present global competitive business and industrial situation, women entrepreneurs can play a greater role and emerge as the dominant players from the local to the global. Women entrepreneurs are not only generating employment for themselves in the unorganized sector, they are also providing employment for others. Though women entrepreneurs can play a creative, positive and challenging role in nation building, it is imperative to note that there are few factors that influence women entrepreneurs. This paper focuses on three main factors which are motivational, compulsory and facilitating factors and provides few suggestions.

Keywords: *Women Entrepreneurs, Motivational, Compulsory and Facilitating factors.*

1. Introduction

The number of self-employed women increased in developed countries after Second World War. In India participation of women as industrial entrepreneurs is comparatively a recent phenomenon commencing from 1970s onwards. They have long stories to share of trials and hardships; their task has been full of challenges. They have even encountered public discrimination and criticism. Family opposition and social constraints had to be overcome before establishing themselves as independent entrepreneurs. There is considerable entrepreneurial talent among women. Women's domestic skills such as people and time management and household budgeting are directly transferable in business context. Women have the ability to balance different tasks and

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priorities, to find satisfaction and success in building relationships with customers and employees and to have control of their own destiny and doing something that they consider worthwhile. They have the potential and will to establish and manage enterprises of their own. Creating and developing small business among women is a difficult task. Even though women's contribution to business is one of the major components of economic growth, too often, women do not have access to basic business education, commercial credit and marketing opportunities. Maintenance of proper quantitative balance among various economic activities is one of the principal functions of the economic system, which should operate to give equal freedom of choice to men and women.

The process of economic development would be incomplete and lopsided, unless women are fully involved in it. The orientation of a society as a whole, regarding desirability that women should play an equal part in the country's development, is very important precondition for the advancement not only of women but the country as a whole. The highest national priority must be for the unleashing of woman power which is the single most important source of societal energy. Women entrepreneurs should be regarded as individuals who take up role in which they would like to adjust their family and society, economic performance and personal requirements. Emancipation of women is an essential prerequisite for economic development and social progress of the nations.

Women especially rural women the vital developmental agents, can play a significant role in the economic development of a nation, but they should have an equal access to productive resources, opportunities and public services. It has also been realised in the last few years that the widespread poverty and stunted economic growth can be overcome only by gainful and sustainable economic participation of women. National development will be sluggish, if the economic engine operates only at half power. Women enterprise building has emerged as an agenda for policy makers, researchers and trainers as well as for associations and organizations involved in women development. If women acquire skills, they can carve a niche for themselves in the outside world too. Despite several developmental measures and constitutional guarantees, women are still lagging

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behind in almost all sectors. Thus, the study aims at analyzing the factors influencing women entrepreneurs to start the enterprises.

2. Objective

To analyze the factors influencing women entrepreneurship in the district.

3. Methodology

This study is mainly based on primary data. The primary data has been collected through personal interview schedule from the respondents. For deciding the interview schedule, a comprehensive review of the literature directly and indirectly connected to the topic was made. The variables to be studied were identified with the help of the official records of District Industries Centre in Theni district, Theni.

4. Sampling Design

As per the official records of MSME (Micro Small and Medium Enterprises) and DIC (District Industrial Centre) in Theni district, during the financial year of 2014-15, there were 7780 registered entrepreneurs. Among these 997 were registered by Women entrepreneurs. 20 per cent of the registered women entrepreneurs have been targeted as sample size and hence 200 respondents have been fixed as sample size for this study. Because of convenient, accessibility and proximity, convenience sampling method has been adopted for primary data collection.

5. Factors Influencing Women Entrepreneur to Start an Enterprise

There are number of factors that influence entrepreneurship among women to start an enterprise. In this paper, the researcher deals with the major factors.

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5.1. Motivational Factors Influencing Women Entrepreneurs

The motivating factors like education and training, occupational experience, desire to work independently, government incentives and concession, financial assistance, availability of raw material and technology, are essential to continue the family business of the entrepreneur. These factors generate an inclination to adopt entrepreneurial activity. Table 1 shows the motivational factors that help to start the enterprise.

Table 1

Motivational Factors Influencing Women Entrepreneurs

S. No.	Motivating Factors	Garrett Rank Score	Rank
1	Economic Independence	54.10	II
2	Unemployment	51.04	V
3	Seeking Challenge	47.05	VII
4	Self Interest	53.28	III
5	Traditional or Heréditary	47.36	VI
6	Technical Knowledge	57.69	I
7	Encouragements from Family Members	46.06	VIII
8	Market Potentials	52.03	IV
9	Family Background	45.02	X
10	Family Members Interest	45.81	IX

Source: Computed from primary data

Table 1 reveals that technical knowledge has been ranked as first by the respondents among the ten motivating factors. It is also been found that economic independence, self interest, market potentials, unemployment and traditional or hereditary have been ranked as second, third, fourth, fifth and sixth respectively. Among the motivational factors, seeking challenge, encouragements from the family members, family members' interest has been

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ranked as seventh, eighth and ninth respectively. Among the motivational factors, family members' interest has been ranked as tenth by the respondents.

5.2. Compulsory Factors Influencing Women Entrepreneurs

Many times, it is the compulsion rather than the ambition that leads the man to successes. Sometimes the initial ambition and the opportunities may clash with each other. In such case, compulsion of the situation determines the density. It is appropriate to examine the reasons that might have compelled the entrepreneurs to pursue entrepreneurship. Making use of technical and professional skills was found to be the most important compulsion that has driven most of the respondents to entrepreneurship. Dissatisfaction in the job and occupation pursued was the second important compulsion and other compelling factors were insignificant. It may be inferred that the entrepreneurs wanted to capitalise their skills for themselves than working for others. They felt that their abilities were certainly more than what the job required and their aspirations exceeded what normally the job provided. Table 2 shows the compulsory factors that are needed to start the enterprise.

Table 2

Compulsory Factors Influencing Women Entrepreneurs

SI. No	Factors	Garrett Rank Score	Rank
1	To make money	53.7	II
2	To gain social status	50.7	IV
3	Desire to do something creative	54.05	I
4	Provide employment to others	43.65	V
5	Economic compulsion	50.8	III
6	Dissatisfaction with the job	39.65	VI

Source: Computed from primary data

Table 2 shows that desire to do something creative has been ranked first by the respondents among the six compulsory factors. It is also been found that to make money, economic compulsion and to gain social status have

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ranked as second, third and fourth respectively. Provide employment, dissatisfaction with the job has been ranked as fifth and sixth respectively by the respondents.

5.3. Facilitating Factors Influencing Women Entrepreneurs

For starting a business, industry requires various resources and facilities. Small scale industries given their small resources, find it difficult to have their own. Finance has been an important resource to start and run an industry because it facilitates the entrepreneur to procure land, labour, material, machine and so on from different parties to run his industry. Government through its financial institutions and nationalized banks had come forward to help small entrepreneurs and provide those funds. In order to start any economic activity, a minimum level of prior built – up infrastructure facilities is needed. In view of this, central and state government institutions help small entrepreneurs in this regard by providing them various support and facilities. Table 3 shows the facilitating factors that help to start the enterprise.

Table 3

Facilitating Factors Influencing Women Entrepreneurs

S. No.	Facilitating Factors	Garrett Rank Score	Rank
1	Sufficient financial background	50.50	IV
2	Availability of Labour	57.00	I
3	Apprentices or some training got it	56.60	II
4	Success stories of entrepreneurs	46.70	VI
5	Experience in the same or other line of activity	50.05	V
6	Property inherited	38.50	VIII
7	Easy availability of raw material	50.95	III
8	Easy availability of marketing	42.70	VII

Source: Computed from primary data

Table 3 shows that availability of labour has been ranked as first by the respondents among the eighth facilitating factors. It has also been found that

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apprentices or some training got it, easy availability of raw material, sufficient financial background have been ranked as second, third and fourth respectively. Experience in the same or other line of activity, success stories of entrepreneur's facilitating factor have been ranked as fifth and sixth respectively. Among the facilitating factors, Easy availability of marketing has been ranked as seventh by the respondents. Property inherited has been ranked as eighth.

6. Suggestions

- As opined by the respondents in the study area, there should be a continuous attempt to inspire, encourage, motivate and co-operate women entrepreneurs in Theni District.
- As business scope is wide for women entrepreneurs in Theni district, it is suggested that awareness programmes should be conducted on a mass scale with the intention of creating awareness among women about the various unknown areas to start and run a business.
- Organisation of training programmes to develop professional competencies in managerial, leadership, marketing, financial, production process, profit planning, maintaining books of accounts and other skills, will encourage women to undertake business.
- Women in business should be offered soft loans and subsidies as encouragement for them in industrial activities. The financial institutions should provide more working capital assistance both for small scale venture and large scale ventures.

7. Conclusion

The emergence of women entrepreneurs and their contribution to the national economy is quite visible in India. The glass ceilings are shattered and women are found to be indulging in every line of business from pappad to power cables. It is concluded from the study "Factors influencing Women Entrepreneurship in Theni District", that even though there are successful women entrepreneurs in Theni district, in a male dominated culture, there are many challenges to be faced by women entrepreneurs both from family and society. It is important to

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provide an opportunity in a conductive atmosphere free from gender differences. Therefore, encouragement of the growing intensity of motivation amongst educated young women for coming into the entrepreneurial stream and extending support with scientifically designed package of the technical and financial assistance is the need of the hour.

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