



A Study on Challenges and Opportunities of Women Entrepreneurs in Salem District of Tamil Nadu (India)

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INTRODUCTION

'Women Entrepreneur' is a person who accepts challenging role to meet her personal needs and become economically independent. A strong desire to do something positive is an inbuilt quality of entrepreneurial women, who is capable of contributing values in both family and social life. With the advent of media, women are aware of their own traits, rights and also the work situations. Women are found indulged in every line of business from pappad to power cables. The challenges and opportunities provided to the women of digital era are growing rapidly that the job seekers are turning into job creators. They are flourishing as designers, interior decorators, exporters, publishers, garment manufacturers and still exploring new avenues of economic participation.

In India, although women constitute the majority of the total population, the entrepreneurial world is still a male dominated one. Women in advanced nations are recognized and are more prominent in the business world. But the Indian women entrepreneurs are facing some major constraints like - lack of confidence, socio-cultural barriers, family and personal obligations, market-oriented risks, stiff competition in the market and lack of mobility of women make the dependence of women entrepreneurs on middleman indispensable. Many business women find it difficult to capture the market and make their products popular.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

It is essential to develop women entrepreneurship, in order to expose them to various profit generating avenues. It is a fact, that in some parts of our country, women have proved and established their talents as successful entrepreneurs. This development has taken place in the cities but not in the case of rural women, who are in the vicious circles of poverty, social traditions and customs. So, there is an immense need to bring them into the main stream of entrepreneurship. After half a century of independence,



the weaker sex has succeeded in withstanding the dominance of male. Not withstanding 100% literacy, Salem is not up to the mark as far as women entrepreneurship is concerned. All these circumstances have made the investigators to undertake this study.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The present study has been made to analyse the performance of the women entrepreneurs in Salem. It studies the reason which induces the women entrepreneurs to take up entrepreneurship and the constraints of women entrepreneur-ship.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To analyse the socio economic profile of women entrepreneurs
2. To find out the factors that help women to become entrepreneurs.
3. To highlight the obstacles and problems faced by women entrepreneurs.
4. To suggest suitable strategies that would contribute to greater success rate or promote women entrepreneurs.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is based on both primary and secondary data. The primary data has been collected from 100 respondents through interview schedule by adopting convenience sampling technique. The secondary data was collected from books, magazines, journals, encyclopedia and websites. Percentages and chi square test has been applied to analyse the primary data.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Socio Economic Profile of Women Entrepreneurs

In this study the socio economic variables such as age, education, marital status, family size, nature of the family and monthly income are taken into account. Chi square test has been applied to test whether there is relationship among the women entrepreneur or not. The Null hypothesis framed is that there is no significance relationship among women entrepreneurs. Table 1 gives details about socio economic profile of women entrepreneurs.



Table 1 Socio Economic Profile of Women Entrepreneurs

Socio Economic Variables		No. of Respondents	Percentage	Calculated value	Table value	DF	Chi square test Results
Age (in years)	Below 25	24	24	25.81	5.991	2	S
	25-35	37	37				
	Above 35	39	39				
Education	School level	52	52	30.28	5.991	2	S
	College level	41	41				
	Others	7	7				
Marital status	Married	64	64	17.52	3.84	1	S
	Unmarried	36	36				
Family size	Below 3	41	41	11.89	5.991	2	S
	3-6	31	31				
	Above 6	28	28				
Type of the family	Joint family	38	38	17.26	3.84	1	S
	Nuclear family	62	62				
Monthly income (in Rs.)	Below 5,000	22	22	42.51	5.991	2	S
	5,000- 10,000	70	70				
	Above 10,000	8	8				

Nature of the Business

Table 2 presents the details about nature of business performed by Entrepreneurs.

Table 2 Nature of the Business

Nature	No. of respondents	Percentage
Masala powder preparation	13	13
Handicrafts	25	25
Beauty Parlours	14	14
Tailoring	27	27
Home based products	21	21
Total	100	100

Source: Primary data

Out of 100 respondents 13 (13%) are engaged in masala powder preparation, 25 (25%) are doing handicrafts, 14 (14%) are running beauty parlours, 27 (27%) are in performing tailoring activities and 21 (21%) are involving in home based products.

Factors Influencing Women Entrepreneurs to Enter Into The Business



Table 3 explains the factors which influence the women entrepreneurs to enter into the business.

Table 3 Factors influencing women entrepreneurs to enter into the business

Factors	No. of respondents	Percentage
Interest / Inclination to do business	15	15
To do something constructive	23	23
Out of compulsion	10	10
Effective utilization of time	17	17
Financial liberty	16	16
Advice by Husband/Parents/ Relatives	19	19
Total	100	100

Source: Primary data

Out of 100 respondents, 15 (15%) are interested to do business, 23 (23%) are involved to do something constructive, 10 (10%) are ventured into their business because of compulsion, 17 (17%) expressed the need for effective utilization of time, 16(16%) are involved for financial liberty, 19(19%) are engaged in business due to the advice given by husband/parents/relatives.

Problems faced by women entrepreneurs

Table 4 shows the problems faced by women entrepreneurs

Table 4 Problems faced by women entrepreneurs

Factors	No. of respondents	Percentage
Gender problems	23	23
Marketing problems	17	17
Financial problems	28	28
Occupational mobility problems	20	20
Obtaining Government Assistance problems	12	12
Total	100	100

Source: Primary data

Out of 100 respondents, 23 (23%) are lacking gender problems, 17 (17%) have marketing problems, 28 (28%) are suffering from financial problems, 20 (20%) are having occupational mobility problems, and the remaining 12 (12%) are having problems relating to obtain Government Assistance problems.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The findings of the study are as follows:



1. All the socio economic variables such as age, education, marital status, family size, nature of the family and monthly income are related to women entrepreneurs. Most of the entrepreneurs are engaged in tailoring activities (27;27%)
2. 'To do something constructive' is a factor which influence the women entrepreneurs to engage in business activities (23;23%).
3. Many respondents have faced financial problems (28;28)
4. Strategies for Promoting Women Entrepreneurship
5. Some strategies are adopted to improve women entrepreneurship.
6. Education has been instrumental in increasing the participation of women in entrepreneurial activities.
7. Training centers should provide training to prospective women entrepreneurs at free of cost and entrepreneurship development programmes should be much more practical oriented.
8. Government should take steps to issue loans to the women entrepreneurs without any collateral security.
9. Banks and financial institutions should come forward to issue loans to women entrepreneurs at affordable rate of interest.

CONCLUSION

India is brimming with the success stories of women. They stand tall from the rest of the crowd and are applauded for their achievement in their respective field. Women leaders are assertive, persuasive and willing to take risks. They manage to survive and succeed in this cut throat competition with their hard work, diligence and perseverance. The overall developments of the entrepreneurship especially of women are heartening. 33% reservation in the Parliament and State Legislature will definitely be a morale booster to the upcoming women entrepreneurs and it should be implemented early.