

The Contribution of Entrepreneurship in the Socio Economic Empowerment of Women in Kannur District

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ABSTRACT

The theme of the paper was to discover the contribution of women's entrepreneurship in the socio-economic empowerment of women in Kannur district of Kerala. This paper sought to answer the question, 'How do the female entrepreneurs give meaning to their practices of social and economic empowerment?' It aims to understand, interpret and analyse the meaning of female entrepreneurs attributed to the practice of social and economic empowerment; specifically to identify the concepts of entrepreneurship held by a group of women and to identify some of the socio-economic aspects which relate to the entrepreneurial practices of these women. The paper used the survey method. Results of the paper concluded that besides an increased income, the women gained the social advantages of more autonomy, respect from their families and society and acquired the right to participate in family issues within social and governmental forums.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, entrepreneurs, enterprises and empowerment.

INTRODUCTION:

Entrepreneurial women are currently writing a new chapter in the history of entrepreneurship. This was the main inspiration behind this work, which title "The Contribution of Entrepreneurship in the Socio economic Empowerment of Women." The paper attempts to answer the following problem: How can entrepreneurship help women to achieve social and economic empowerment? Thus, the paper aims to "Analyze how can entrepreneurship help women to achieve social and economic empowerment."

Concept of Entrepreneurship:

Entrepreneurship is purely an economic activity, conducted personally or by a group of individuals. Entrepreneurship is the process of planning, beginning and running a new business, which is always a small business at the initial stage. Schumpeter depicted entrepreneurship as a process and entrepreneurs as innovators who utilize the process to break the existing system of production and organisation through new blends of resources and new methods of production and trade.

However, the concept of entrepreneurship has undergone constant changes. Today, entrepreneurship, according to the definition presented by Sarkar (2010) is "pursuing an opportunity without look at who controls the resources." In other words, the entrepreneur identifies and realizes it, even though it does not have sufficient resources. (Sarkar, 2010) Thus, the individual who continues to pursue possible business opportunities and to make decisions innovation will continue to play an entrepreneurial role.

Entrepreneurship involves not only the pursuit of an idea or opportunity for survival but also the issue of innovation, that is, the ability to create something new in society, but also the ability to create an opportunity, even at the risk of those who want to undertake. According to A.H. Cole, "Entrepreneurship is the purposeful activity of an individual or a group of associated individuals, undertaken to initiate, maintain or organize, a

profit oriented business unit for the production or distribution of economic goods and services”.

Entrepreneurial activity requires certain characteristics that mark the person in his / her daily life such as: the entrepreneurs in general manifest needs for achievement. Entrepreneurs are people willing to take risks; and the entrepreneur is a self-confident person. Therefore, being an entrepreneur means having the desire for fulfillment in life, the need to accomplish things new ideas, put into practice their own ideas built and matured over time, characteristics of personality and behavior that is not always easy to find.

In this perspective, being an entrepreneur requires the will to reach a standard of living above the person meets. Studies reveals that the entrepreneur assumes several risks when starting his own enterprises like financial risks of own money Investment, family risks involving in engaging the enterprises, psychological aspects of risks taking etc.

Concept of Women Entrepreneurship:

Women entrepreneurship is the procedure where women undertake risks and organize all the factors of production, consumption and provide employment to others. A woman entrepreneur is always conscious for opportunities. Therefore a woman entrepreneur is one who is generally mindful of chances who begins business and oversees it autonomously and strategically, takes all the risks, faces the difficulties with intensity.

The effective empowerment of women starts from a reformulation and deconstruction of current political and social schemes, through active participation in movements, awareness in society, acting in governmental instances and also with the creation of welfare oriented associations. These aspects correspond to the alternatives of survival of several entrepreneurs and their families, especially those of low income. The effective contribution of women in income earning activities is not only a part of family welfare, but it is also a way of achieving power in decision making. It is noticed that women have been assuming a role of entrepreneurs and heads of family, mainly because they hold the purchasing power in their hands and contribute effectively to the household budget.

Women Entrepreneurship in India:

Democracy is complete only when gender justice is considered as a developmental issue. Indian women have traditionally been participating in earning livelihood. But her work was largely limited to a small level or she was neglected. From making domestic items like papad and pickles to sewing, cloth weaving and embroidery, direct selling, tuition at home and catering to small programs, women in the industry always take some paths. In recent times, due to increased channels of technology, education, funding and marketing, these women want to become entrepreneurs and want to start their own business. These efforts face many problems in different ways. The important one is the unawareness about funding resources and information about schemes that help their enterprises and unsupportive family background. The most important constraint is that our social viewpoint is also male dominated one. There is a need for ground awareness, encouraging approach and value system for the upliftment of women in the main stream of economic development.

The biggest reason behind changing the dream of women to enter entrepreneurship in reality is the growing period of education and professional training among them. But instead of many more socio-economic reasons, more and more women are increasing their participation in different enterprises like beauty parlor, garments units, candle making, debt collection companies, herbal products, food products etc. At present, there is a change in the traditional structure of families who are giving freedom to women; Apart from this, the gender gap between men and women is declining, due to which women are standing on their feet and recognizing abilities; They are truly amused with the confidence necessary to become a successful entrepreneur in the country; And besides, they are successful in networking, investing and getting directions in a better way than before.

According to the Global Gender Gap Report of the World Economic Forum (WEF) 2016, women constitute more than one-third of the total number of employees in India, due to their contribution to increase GDP and their ability to create employment opportunities. In year 2015, the Global Entrepreneurship and Development Institute (GEDI) has released a report of women entrepreneurship index ranking by ranking the countries in terms of conditions for promoting women entrepreneurship. India's place in the list of 77 countries remained at the bottom of the list, which is 70th place.

Women Entrepreneurship in Kerala:

Kerala has better status than any other states, including the sex ratio (1000: 1084). Kerala woman has been able to reach literacy, infant mortality and maternal mortality rates among developed countries. The Renaissance process and progressive politics of Kerala are the reason behind this. But Kerala's contradiction is that the statistical figures mentioned above did not help in ensuring gender justice. The important reason for the Kerala model being criticized is the embalming of the women. As per the economic review report, in Kerala 75-80% of

girls are studying in higher education level but the work participation of women is only 22%. (Economic review 2014) Even though the membership in Kudumbasree is 40 lakhs, it is only 5% women who earn income from self employment.

The woman's domestic work is totally disappearing in the census figures. Employing women in the family does not even come into policy and policy making. Unemployment of educated women and low employment participation is the main developmental issue of Kerala. There is a need to increase the employment opportunities for women in Kerala. The above problem can be solved by creating opportunities for training. Women's work participation can be improved by providing localised training. Training skills and education should be linked.

The Kudumbashree movement, which has been proudly celebrated for over 16 years by Kerala women, has attracted international innovations with innovative models of women empowerment through economic and social change. Kudumbashree introduced various ways to realise the socio-economic empowerment of women in the society to enable the major objective of poverty alleviation.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

Nadkarni (1982), in her investigation "Social and Economic Study of Women Entrepreneurs with Reference to Pune", has exhibited her discoveries on issues and challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in various enterprises. She has divided the industries into two groups : (i) producer goods industries, and (ii) consumer goods industries. The following observations are worth specifying: (a) 57% of the respondents agree with the statement that women are more apt for desk work than manual work. (b) A change is happening in the attitude of the society however the pace of change is rather slow. (c) Educated family will probably receive moderately liberal approach towards women entrepreneurs as compared to non-educated.

Resia Beegam. (1993) made an observation concerning the problems of women entrepreneurs in Kerala. It was discovered that regardless of adequate support that they get from family members and government, a large number of them are running at a loss. She found that more state assistance is needed for the advancement of their conditions.

Aruna, Sitiesh (2007), in the "emerging trends of women at work", Portrayal of Working Women in Indian Popular Literature-Changing Scenario, she has concluded that the women work for different reasons including as (a) who work to help themselves and their families (b) who work because they want to feel more than breeders and caretakers (c) who work to supplement spouse's salary and raise monetary status of the family (d) who work since they need to feel more than reproducers and overseers (e) who work for understanding their vision.

Auti (2010) has done research regarding the matter: "Socio Economic Study of Women Entrepreneurship in the Development of Maharashtra with Special Reference to Pune District". The objectives of the research are to: (I) Study the social, educational, technical and financial foundation of women entrepreneurs ; (ii) Evaluate the economic impact of the entrepreneur's advancement; (iii) Study the impact of globalization on women entrepreneurs and survey the challenges faced by them to develop their units. The hypothesis of this study is: 'Women entrepreneurs influence positively on women employment'. The author has concluded that women prefer to select entrepreneurship as a career after their marriage. Very few women are aware about training schemes. Women run their enterprises utilizing private sources of capital. This is because of the reason that they are unaware of the government schemes.

Singh and Gupta (2013), observed in the research work 'empowerment of rural women through micro entrepreneurship development in India', the Self Help Groups (SHGs) have given monetary help for rural women entrepreneurs; the individuals from Self Help Groups are engaged in micro entrepreneurship. Rural women are independently and economically providing job opportunities for others. Thus empowerment of women is essential in the rural area. The paper suggested that micro entrepreneurship is enhancing the decision making power of women. The major finding of the research is that micro enterprises are effective tool for rural women.

Akshatha and Manjushree (2015), proved the institutional financial support to rural women entrepreneurship development. Women entrepreneurs create new jobs for themselves and others and also by being different the study identified the institutions are FIWE, SMEs, SIDO, CWEI, WIT, SEWA, SHGs, FIWE, NABARD. Government of India took many initiatives to develop and improve the position of women and thereby promoting their entrepreneurial skills and capabilities like adequate training programmes, management skills. These encourage women participation in decision making. The paper concluded that the Indian women entrepreneurs are interested to do the business and are eager to do income generating activities. Entrepreneurship is the way for women empowerment. The establishment of many institutions and centers for supporting women entrepreneurship are the need of the hour.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To examine the socio-economic empowerment of women through entrepreneurship in Kannur district of Kerala.
2. To analysis the barriers faced by women entrepreneurs in Kannur district.

METHODOLOGY:

To make the present study more realistic and purposeful both primary and secondary data are to be used. Primary data are collected from sampling method and conducting interview through questionnaire, obtaining information from observation, workshops, meeting with women entrepreneurs, unit visit and so on. The secondary data are from the information from Census reports, Economic Reviews, periodicals, journals, website, magazines, news papers etc.

Area of study:

Kannur has been taken as a research area for this study, which is located in northern part of Kerala, consisting of rural and semi urban area. The respondent units are selecting from various taluks of kannur district who had started the enterprises and running successfully. The research paper is on the basis of purposive sampling from both micro enterprises and small scale units.

Statistical tools used:

The information gathered was tabulated and analyzed by using average, percentage and graphical representations.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION:

Kannur has secured it's on unique position in the developmental history of Kerala as a rapidly developing economy. The realization of kannur International airport and other social, economic and cultural progress which add for this development has its echoes reflecting up on the industrial domination in the district all over Kerala. Female population in the District is about 53.17% of the total population as per the 2011 census report.

The paper intends with the profile to know the age group, problems faced by women to start the enterprises and socio-economic empowerment of women before and after starting the enterprises.

Age Group:

Age group is one of the most important factors that determine the entrepreneurship. The age is considered as a motivating factor to the development of entrepreneurship.

Table 1: Age group of the women entrepreneurs

Sl No.	Age Group	No Of Respondents	Percentage
1	21- 30	4	16
2	31 - 40	10	40
3	41 -50	9	36
4	Above 50	2	8

Source: Survey data

The results showed that of the 25 surveyed that corresponds to 100%, the age group more productive to the entrepreneurship is between 31 and 40 years of age. The survey reveals that the 40% of the respondents belongs to this age group. The following age group is the one that varies between 41 and 50 years of age with 35%, then it is the age range that ranges from 21 to 30 years of age with 15% and lastly we have the age groups above 50 years of age in a percentage of 10 respectively.

Social and economic situation before starting enterprises:

After searching the profile of the target group, the following was socio-economic status of those surveyed before starting the business. For this part the monthly income of the family, the difficulties they encountered and the family's economic sustainability is analysed.

Monthly income:

The results showed that in the total of 25 entrepreneurs 20% earned between 10000 and 15000 rupees per month. The data also show that 50% earned monthly income varying between 5000 and 10000 rupees, While 20% earned below or up to 5000 rupees per month.

Table 2: Monthly Income before starting enterprises

Sl. No.	Monthly Income	No Of Respondents	Percentage
1	10000 - 15000	5	20
2	5000 - 10000	13	52
3	Bellow 5000	7	28

Source: Survey data

In social and economic life, they had faced many difficulties before opening the enterprises. The data show that of the 25 entrepreneurs surveyed, 10% had no economic and social difficulties before opening their enterprises. By establishing a link with the profile of these respondents, it can be assumed that they are already graduates, since they are in the income range of 10,000 to 15,000 rupees.

However, 90% stated that they had many economic difficulties and social issues before they open the business. In the set of economic difficulties, the lack of money to pay the children and themselves, lack of financial independence, debt and bank loans, poor family backgrounds etc.

The reasons that led to opening of enterprises:

The results brought a diversity of reasons that dictated the entrepreneurs into business. Of the 25 entrepreneurs surveyed 32% say they entered the business world because they want to gain more experience and income. At the same time acquire the freedom to decision making. However 42% say that the great motivation that led them to the entrepreneurial world is that the monthly income they earn is not enough to cover the expenses of their daily life and financial independence. And 18% belongs to the groups of unemployed.

Social and economic situation after starting enterprises:

The data shows that the largest number of entrepreneurs who entered the world of entrepreneurship affirmed that their family income rose significantly. 90% of entrepreneurs stated that the family income rose and 10% say that income remains the same, that is, there were no change. The money management that comes from the business depends on the needs of each of the entrepreneurs.

Women entrepreneurs claim that the entrepreneurship helped them a lot to have a quality education for their children, and for themselves. Entrepreneurship for them is everything. If on the one hand the women recognize that with the entrepreneurship they can cover the expenses of the house in terms of the education and health of the children; on the other hand some of these entrepreneurs complain that they cannot possibly make some savings because they not only have to pay the expenses as well as repayment of the credit granted.

80% of the entrepreneurs consider that after entering the entrepreneurship has gained more consideration in the family as well as in the society in which they live. Therefore, these entrepreneurs consider themselves happy because they have already gained a certain social status as a result of the economic empowerment they have conquered. Another part of entrepreneurs that is 20% of the entrepreneurs says that they were little considered in their families.

The data obtained from the interview show that the entrepreneurs interviewed recognize that entrepreneurship changed their lives. The entrepreneurship gives them possibility of self-management, autonomy, and exemption from having to ask favors from anyone to have the money. The women entrepreneurs want to be an equal footing with man; intend to work with man as a development partner and progress social and economic development. On the other hand it should be noted that the entrepreneurship also helped to create a woman's ability to define her own decisions, recognizing and respecting the rights of others, in a process of seeking better living conditions.

CONCLUSIONS:

The paper had as objective to analyze how the entrepreneurship can help the woman to reach the social and economic empowerment. The results showed that this is possible since, the greater the part of the entrepreneurs surveyed stated that they find great satisfaction with the development of entrepreneurship. Thus, it is believed

that the encouragement of cooperative initiatives that integrate the work of women, with the support of the government can help to develop decent and sustainable employment, increase family savings and investments, improve well-being economic and social cohesion, taking into account the need to eliminate all forms of discrimination and contribute to sustainable human development.

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