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Women Entrepreneurship and Their Soft Skills: A Study with Reference to Women Entrepreneurs at Weekly Bazaar

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Abstract

Women in India are aware of their rights, positions and work situations. However women of middle class are not too eager to alter their role in fear of social and religious backlash. Social and economic development of women is necessary for overall economic development of any society. Entrepreneurship is the state of mind which every woman has in her but has not been capitalized in India in way in which it should be. This article also intended to find out the Challenges and Opportunities of women entrepreneur when they ventured in the competitive world of business environment with special reference to shanivara santhe in Mangaluru. The global evidences prove that women have been performing exceedingly well in different spheres of activities. Women Entrepreneurs encounter two sets of problems; they are general problems of women entrepreneurs and problems specific to women entrepreneurs. The various efforts like better educational facilities, financial schemes, making provision of marketing and sales can be taken into account for effective development of women entrepreneurs.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Women Challenge, Marketing.

1. Introduction

Women in India are aware of their rights, positions and work situations. However women of middle class are not too eager to alter their role in fear of social and religious backlash. Social and economic development of women is necessary for overall economic development of any society. Entrepreneurship is the state of mind which every woman has in her but has not been capitalized in India in way in which it should be. Due to change in environment, women's are more comfortable to accept leading role of entrepreneurship in our society. This paper focuses on hard truth leadership qualities of women entrepreneur, understanding of rural women and especially of their role taking and breaking new paths. This article also intended to find out the Challenges and Opportunities of women entrepreneur when they ventured in the competitive world of business environment with special reference to shanivara santhe in Mangalore.

Women constitute around half of the total world population, so is in India also. They are therefore regarded as the better half of the society. In traditional societies, they were confined to the four walls of houses performing household activities. In modern societies they have come out of the four walls to participate in all sorts of activities. The global evidences prove that women have been performing exceedingly well in different spheres of activities. Women Entrepreneurs encounter two sets of problems; they are general problems of

women entrepreneurs and problems specific to women entrepreneurs. The various efforts like better educational facilities, financial schemes, making provision of marketing and sales can be taken into account for effective development of women entrepreneurs.

2. Objectives

- To understand the leadership qualities of rural women entrepreneurs
- To analyze the potentialities of women entrepreneurs
- To study the problems faced by women entrepreneurs
- To suggest certain remedial measures to solve the problems of Women Entrepreneurship

3. Methodology

A preliminary study in the form of informal interviews with 24 weekly bazaar women sellers in shanivara santhe in Mangalore was conducted and information collected from few weekly bazaar market segments. Secondary data taken from the reputed Published Sources like Economic Survey, various books and websites.

4. Over View of Weekly Bazaar

Weekly Bazaars popularly called as varada Santhe are set up in almost every place in India on different days of the week. In addition to fresh vegetables and fruit, clothing, decorative

accessories, antiques, stationery and many other articles are sold at very reasonable prices. The Bazaars are open from morning till late evening. It is observed that women entrepreneurs play a major role in weekly bazaar. Women sellers from different parts of the state having different articles move to weekly bazaar place and do their business. Through their leadership qualities they make sales and look after family or will become part of the family earning member. Shops in weekly market are of traditional in nature. Green grocers are confined to a major portion of the weekly bazaar. Various items will be packed in advance and therefore the merchants usually do not need scales to measure or weigh them.

A weekly market is common both in villages and cities. Things of day-to-day necessity are sold in a weekly market. People from the adjoining area visit the market and buy things of their need and choice. There are different types of shops in a weekly market, ranging from green grocers to the shops of home furnishing. The shops are temporary. They sell in utensils, footwear, milk products, snacks and sweetmeats. Besides these shops, there are hawkers who sell different items of daily needs. Weekly market offers them too a good opportunity to have a great business.

Weekly markets are very useful for the people both for the traders and the customers. The customers find things of their need in their neighborhood. They do not have to spend much time for this purpose. The shopkeepers have the advantages of selling their wares and enjoying good business within a short span of time. Such markets are especially useful for those who live in far off places. They can buy their essential items at a reasonable rate here in a weekly market. People from all walks of life visit a weekly market. This also gives them an opportunity for enjoyment. Undoubtedly, such markets are great revelers for society.

5. Soft Skills and Leadership Qualities of women Entrepreneurs

Female-run business is steadily growing all over the world especially in India, contributing to household incomes and to the growth of national income. The female entrepreneurs have the competitive advantage over soft skill and leadership qualities possessed by them, which is the hard truth of growing women enterprise.

They are;

- i). **Customer Care and Negotiation Skills:** Customer care and negotiation soft skills are the basic requirements of any business to run their business smoothly. These types of qualities are mostly found with female entrepreneurs.
- ii). **Life Skills:** Life skills like management of family, relations and self-confidence make women to keep their businesses running all the time. Business challenges within the home otherwise hinder business growth.
- iii). **Social Networking:** Social contact or Networking helps women entrepreneur to gain an advantage through labor pooling, bulk purchase of raw materials and joint access to finance.
- iv). **Take Calculated Risks:** Women entrepreneurs don't take irrational and foolish risks, but they do take risks after appropriate thinking. By taking a "calculated risk," they believe they can take a right decision.
- v). **Savings Habit:** Savings habit of women entrepreneurs is the basic qualities to improve financial position of business and family. Need based spending habit of women make them financially strong and create reserve for the future.

- vi). **A Leader by Birth:** Women entrepreneurs not only lead themselves through self-motivation but they are also skilled at leading others. They know the importance of teamwork, and they understand the need to appreciate others, support them, and reward them accordingly because women are a leader by birth who shoulders the responsibility of family.
- vii). **Ethical Entrepreneurship:** Even though ethics present a complex challenge for entrepreneurial women entrepreneurs are considered as more ethical in business as compare to men.
- viii). **Work Life Balance:** Our lives revolve around family and friends, health, wealth and spirituality. These areas must be balanced to lead a fulfilled life. A balanced life allows thinking clearly with imagination and definite goal.
- ix). **Leader as Well as Teacher:** Great woman is a great teacher. Women entrepreneurs not only lead business of her own, but also she teach others to do business in the same way.
- x). **Hard Working:** A distinguishing feature of a woman entrepreneur is the willingness to work hard. She will follow the principle of "Hard-work is the key to success".

6. Understanding the Potential strength of women entrepreneurs through Analysis of the study

In this study all the 24 women weekly Bazaar vendors were interviewed out of total 54 weekly Bazaar vendors at Mangalore famously known as Shanivara Santhe. Women entrepreneurs of this weekly Bazaar have shown their leadership qualities through small scale business and doing business in weekly bazaar. These business qualities of women have made them to improve their standard of living. Normally the weekly bazaar shopkeepers have a good business in a weekly market. With the increase in the number of women getting educated, there is increase in the awareness among women to be self-employed and gradually the role and standard of living of women is changing in the society. Vegetables, flowers, fruits, fish, ornaments, mud pots, pooja related items, dry fish, bakery items, cloths, foot wares, grocery items, decorative accessories, antiques, stationery, homemade pickles and many other articles are sold at very reasonable prices by women entrepreneurs in weekly Bazaar. The artisans also bring their artifacts to these markets to earn their livelihood. It is observed that women entrepreneurs play a major role in weekly bazaar. Women sellers from different parts of the state having different articles move to weekly bazaar place and do their business. The analysis of the study is as follows.

Table 1: Respondents' Age

Response	No. of Respondents	% of Respondents
Less than 25 years	5	20.84
26-35 years	6	25
36-50 years	10	41.66
51 years and above	3	12.5
Total	24	100

In this study of women entrepreneur in weekly bazaar, 20.84% having age group of less than 25 years, 25% having the age group of 26-35 years and 41.66% with age group 36-50 years. This information shows that women are active entrepreneurs irrespective of their age.

Table 2: Respondents Education Level

Response	No. of Respondents	% of Respondents
Less than Vth Std.	2	8.33
Til I VII Std.	16	66.67
Till X Std.	5	20.83
Till XII Std.	1	4.17
Total	24	100

The above data reveals the respondent educational background. It is evident that the majority of the respondents are having the education between V – VII and they have the potentialities of doing business. The education of the respondents is not a barrier to do business, because leadership qualities and firm determination makes women a dedicated entrepreneur.

Table 3: Respondents' Monthly Income

Response	No. of Respondents	% of Respondents
Less than Rs 15000	4	16.67
15001-25000	9	37.5
25001-30000	6	25
30001 and above	5	20.83
Total	24	100

It is found that monthly income of the respondents ranging from Rs. 15000 to above Rs. 30000 and 37.5% of respondents are having the monthly income between 15001 to 25000 which shows the women entrepreneur's potentialities of earning through self employment. This information reveals that women can earn and get good income by doing small business and can live better life.

Table 4: Reason for opting weekly bazaar business

Response	No. of Respondents	% of Respondents
Self-Employment and Self-reliance	14	58.34
Economic Necessity	5	20.83
Under education	3	12.50
Family Occupation	2	8.33
Total	24	100

The analysis of the study shows that major reason for women entering business or women entrepreneurship is Self-Employment and Self-reliance with 58.34%, Economic Necessity with 20.83%, under education with 12.50 and Family Occupation with 8.33%. It is evident that basic reason for women entrepreneurship is Self-Employment and Self-reliance, which makes them self-sufficiency in their life.

Table 5: Potential qualities for Entrepreneurship

Response	No. of Respondents	% of Respondents
Self-reliance, Freedom to take decision, Belief on definite result	11	45.83
Customer friendly, Ethical business, Social Networking	4	16.67
Earning Capacity, Hard working Wealth maximisation	4	16.67
Passionate of business, Optimistic in life, Family Leadership	5	20.83
Total	24	100

The major potential qualities of women entrepreneurship with 45.83% is Self-reliance, Freedom to take decision and Belief on definite result, 16.67% with Customer friendly, Ethical business and Social Networking, 16.67% with Earning Capacity, Hardworking and Wealth maximization and 20.83% with Passionate of business, Optimistic in life and Family Leadership quality. In spite of social, cultural and economic hurdles, women are equally competent in running business, but deprived of opportunities, information and proper education. Women's are doing aggressive but ethical business as compared to other entrepreneurs. Women's are taking leading role in their weekly bazaar business as compared to their husbands.

7. Suggestions to Develop Women Entrepreneurs

Right efforts from all areas are required for the development of women entrepreneurs. The following efforts can be taken into account for effective development of women entrepreneur.

- i). Govt. or NGO's should consider women as specific target group for all developmental programmes.
- ii). Better educational training and special schemes should be extended to women from government.
- iii). Encourage women's participation in small scale business entrepreneurship.
- iv). Financial institutions should extend all possible support to women entrepreneurs.

8. Conclusion

Growing women entrepreneurship is welcome sign for the development of women's status, standard of living and inclusive development of the nation. Encouragement and support for women entrepreneurship is one of the ways for the development of feminine entrepreneurship. The only urgent need is to create a favorable atmosphere to increase self-employment for women and over all developments of the women community. In spite of social, cultural and economic hurdles, women are equally competent in running business, but deprived of opportunities, information and proper education. In reality women's are doing aggressive but ethical business as compared to other entrepreneurs.

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