An Exploratory Study on Challenges and Adversities Encountered by Women Entrepreneurs in Madhya Pradesh

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ABSTRACT
The development of women entrepreneurs in India is quite slow because of several reasons. There are several factors which are responsible for the slow development. Right from the time of start-up to the time of running a venture Women Entrepreneurs have to face a lot of challenges. Some of the adversities include infrastructure, political instability and non-conductive business environment. The present study tries to examine the issues and challenges faced by Women Entrepreneurs in Madhya Pradesh. The major focus of this study is to identify the obstacles and give the suggestions to overcome them.

I. INTRODUCTION
Entrepreneurs are the people who mould the economic destiny of a nation by generating employment and creating wealth. Entrepreneurs are those creative and innovative people who turn ideas into economic opportunities which are presumed to be major source of competitiveness in an increasingly globalizing world economy. The one who becomes economically independent and meets her personal needs by accepting a challenging role is known as a Women entrepreneur. There are a number of women entrepreneurs who have contributed in family businesses but in many cases their efforts are underestimated. The total population of India is around 1.22 billion and nearly 45% of this population has been occupied by women. The level of literacy and education among women has been increased considerably in past few decades.

The scenario in India is getting changed day by day, the results of which we can also see among women entrepreneurs. Now women in India not only enter into some specific professions but they are also making their presence feel in industry, trade and engineering. Though in India Entrepreneurship among women is a phenomenon which is of a recent origin. There are a number of programs in India to improve the status on Women. Despite the shared characteristics, gender-based differences have been found to influence both business start-up and performance (e.g. Greene et al., 2003; Loscocco and Leicht1993; Lerner and Almor 2002). Despite so many obstacles women in India are able to attain leadership and prominent positions such as police officers, airline pilots, scientists, industrialists, engineering, trade and industry etc. Women in India have skills and potential to achieve heights but due to the lack of resource they are not able to establish themselves.

Finance is a very crucial problem for the women entrepreneurs. According to a report by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), "despite evidence that woman’s loan repayment rates are higher than men’s, women still face more difficulties in obtaining credit," often due to discriminatory attitudes of banks and informal lending groups (UNIDO, 1995). It is one of the major obstacles faced by women entrepreneurs at start-up phase. Besides this there are several other issues related to society and family.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE
The problems of women entrepreneur are listed as, Stiff competition from male entrepreneurs, High price of raw materials required, Financial constraints, Managerial constraints, Technical difficulties, Low ability to bear risks, Low level of favorable family background, Lack of entrepreneurial initiative. [1] Soundarpandian, (1999) suggested that for entrepreneurship development in India, there was a greater need to emphasize on research relating to process and enhancement of entrepreneurship.

The Government of India had ushered in the new millennium by declaring the year 2001 as ‘Women’s Empowerment Year’ to focus on a vision ‘where women are equal partners like men’. The most common explanation of ‘women’s empowerment’ is the ability to
exercise full control over one’s actions. The last decades have witnessed some basic changes in the status and role of women in our society. [2] Yadav, while studying women entrepreneurs of Saurashtra region in 1999 found that 50% women entrepreneurs were managing their business successfully. None of them utilized 100% production capacity. It was found that education, religion, age and marital status had significant impact on entrepreneurship. 90% of the women responded that it was very difficult to start and manage the business venture as a woman independently. Other problems reported by them were related to financing and marketing. Lack of training was also one of the major constraints and the respondents suggested setting up of mobile training centers.

[3] Rao, 2002 researched on problems of the women entrepreneurs. They classified the problems into personal, social and economic categories. Lack of experience, lack of business exposure, and conservative attitude towards risk were reported to be personal problems. Among social problems was male domination, unwritten rules of society and family responsibilities. Lack of economic power, no right over property, dependence on male members on banking and such others were the economic problems faced by women entrepreneurs.

Problems of women entrepreneurs were studied by [4] Chhichhia; in 2004. The information was collected by questionnaire from 40 women entrepreneurs who had invested Rs 2 to 15 lakhs in their enterprises. It was found that all entrepreneurs had some or the other problem. 91% said that there was lack of training, 79% entrepreneurs reported that they had family responsibilities and financial pressure, 54% said that time spent did not give worthy outcome. 35% said that there was a need of modification from time to time. 72% reported that they had to struggle more to survive in the market. 93% entrepreneur did not use internet in their enterprise, 3% had complete organized computer set up in their enterprises.

[5] Tambunan, (2009), made a study on recent developments of women entrepreneurs in Asian developing countries. The study focused mainly on women entrepreneurs in small and medium enterprises based on data analysis and review of recent key literature. This study found that in Asian developing countries SMEs are gaining overwhelming importance; more than 95% of all firms in all sectors on average per country.

As Indians, most of the women are very serious about family obligations but they do not equally focus on career obligations [6] (Cf. Mathur 2011; Singh N.P. 1986). Indian women devote their lives to take care of their family members but they are not concerned with their self-development. According to [7] Ghani et al. (2011) mobility is one of the important problems in women entrepreneurial development. They are not ready to leave their place for business activities and prefer staying only in their residential areas. These traits are important as entrepreneurs tend to start their businesses in their current local area and are thus disproportionately found in their region of birth [8] (Dahl and Sorensen 2007). A strong mental outlook and an optimistic attitude amongst women create a fear of committing mistakes while doing their work [9] (Cf. Goyal and Parkash 2011).

III. OBJECTIVES

1) To study the challenges and problems faced by Women entrepreneurs in Madhya Pradesh
2) To examine the obstacles and prescribe their solutions.

IV. METHODOLOGY

The present study was conducted among women entrepreneurs in Madhya Pradesh state. The enterprise included from both urban and rural areas. Information was gathered from 189 enterprises. For selection of enterprise different divisions (mandals) are considered. Madhya Pradesh has Ten divisions which are divided into 51 districts. The Ten divisions consist of Indore, Ujjain, Gwalior, Chambal, Rewa, Shehdol, Sagar, Bhopal, Hoshangabad, Jabalpur. Four divisions namely, Indore, Ujjain, Bhopal, Jabalpur were selected for the survey as these divisions constitute maximum number of MSM. Between 2006-07 to 2011-12, the total number of enterprises under the sector grew to 447.73 lakh units, providing employment to 1,012.59 lakh people, while the market value of the fixed assets grew to Rs 11,76,939.36 Crore.

A sample comprising of 385 respondents from almost all areas of these four divisions were approached by using the “Purposive and snowball” sampling techniques. The responses of the respondents from various divisions of Madhya Pradesh were analysed using percentage method.

V. DATA ANALYSIS TOOLS

For analyzing the problems faced by women entrepreneurs the researcher has made a questionnaire. The questionnaire deals with obstacles and adversities at the time of start-up the enterprise. The respondents were asked to mark their views on a five point likert scale. The data collected has been analyzed using percentages test.

In the first question the respondents were being asked about start-up capital. Of all the respondents 15.8% women strongly disagreed and said that it is not easy to get a start-up capital. While 12.5% women said that it is easy to get start-up capital. 27% women do not agree to the point that there is an ease in getting start-up capital. The conclusion from this point can be drawn that maximum numbers of women find it difficult to get start-up capital. Thus, startup capital is a obstacle for women entrepreneurs.
1. Is it easy for a women entrepreneur to get start-up capital

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<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
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The second question which was asked from women entrepreneurs is that whether they find it difficult to get credit facilities from financial institutions. 18.2% respondents said that it is not difficult while 16.6% respondents said that it is difficult. 27% respondents were having neutral view regarding this question. It can be concluded that the response towards this question is providing a neutral view. Some women entrepreneurs find financial institutions reluctant while others do not find it reluctant.

2. Do you think that financial institutions are reluctant in providing credit facilities to women entrepreneurs

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When respondents were asked about the awareness regarding governmental schemes for women entrepreneurs 16.6% were not aware about the schemes while 14.8% respondents were aware about the schemes. Whereas 26% respondents said that they are partially aware about the schemes. So it can be concluded that awareness about the schemes is there and it is not a hurdle for women entrepreneurs.

3. Are you aware about the schemes of government for development of women entrepreneurs

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When respondents were asked about the implementation of governmental schemes for women entrepreneurs 8.3% disagreed while as much as 16.1% agreed to this point. A maximum number of 31.7% respondents partially agreed to this. Overall it can be concluded that maximum number of respondents feel that schemes are not implemented properly and it is becoming a hurdle for women entrepreneurs.

4. Do you feel that schemes of government for women entrepreneurs are not implemented properly?

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When asked a question about lack of collateral security and margin money to secure the money borrowed 23.6% feel that it is a hurdle in the path of a women entrepreneur. 17.7% respondents feel that it is not a hurdle. 24.2% respondents had a neutral view about this question. Though the results suggest that this is a hurdle in the path of women entrepreneurs.
5. Lack of collateral security and margin money to secure the money borrowed is not a hurdle faced by Women Entrepreneurs.

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When respondents were asked about the traditional attitudes and mindset of people in society as a factor crucial in development of women entrepreneur, 20.8% respondents disagree to it. 13.3% respondents think that it is a obstacle in the development of women entrepreneurs. It can be concluded that traditional attitudes and mindset of people in society is not a obstacle in the development of women entrepreneurs.

6. Traditional attitudes and mindsets of people in society affect the development of women entrepreneurs.

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As far as training programs for women entrepreneurs is concerned 12.5% respondents feel that it is not a obstacle whereas 12.7% respondents feel that it is a obstacle. 34.8% respondents are of the opinion that somehow it is an obstacle and there is a lack of training in India for the development of women entrepreneurs.

7. There is a lack of training regarding women entrepreneurship in India.

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VI. CONCLUSION

After the studies a number of factors have been identified which are an obstacle in the path of women entrepreneur. The first and foremost problem is getting a start-up capital. It has also been found that people are aware about the schemes of government for the development of women entrepreneur but they feel that the schemes have not been implemented properly. The non-implementation of governmental schemes is also a problem for women entrepreneurs. Another challenge which has been identified is the lack of training for women entrepreneurs in India. Thus it can be concluded that government should take necessary steps to implement the schemes for women entrepreneurs properly. Several measures should also be taken to impart training among women entrepreneurs so as to enhance their skills and abilities.

REFERENCES

Communication, Faculty of Home Science, M. S. University, Vadodara


