

A Study on the Issues Related to Women Entrepreneurs in Andhra Pradesh in Establishing and Managing the Enterprises

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Abstract

The views of women entrepreneurs on 12 issues pertaining to establishing and managing the enterprises have been sought on a five point scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The data are analysed based on Chi-square analysis. The $(\chi^2)_{obs} < (\chi^2)_{tab}$ for all the issues except for the issue 'women join entrepreneurial career out of compulsion' for which the opinion evenly distributed among the response categories. The women entrepreneurs strongly disagree with the statement 'right place for women is home' indicating that they are determined to active outside the house. Majority of the women entrepreneurs favour the statement 'incase of dire economic need, job is more suitable for women than an entrepreneurial career'. The statement 'being a woman is a boon for becoming an entrepreneur' did not find much favour. The statements 'supervision and control of labour are easy for women entrepreneurs' and 'marketing of products poses no difficulty for women entrepreneurs' received mixed favour. Majority of the women entrepreneurs agree with the statements 'availing of financial assistance from support agencies is a problem for women entrepreneurs', 'acquiring technical know-how is a problem to women entrepreneurs', 'management training is a must for women entrepreneurs', 'it is difficult for a woman to survive as an entrepreneur if there is no help from husband/guardian' and 'woman's success in entrepreneurial career results in neglect of family and home'. Higher percentage of women agrees with the statement 'women entrepreneurs can compete with men entrepreneurs' which indicates the determination and confidence of the women entrepreneurs about their abilities. The observations are analysed and discussed in the light of the conditions and environment under which women entrepreneurs are managing the enterprises.

Introduction

Women now a day prove their mettle in myriad professions such as media, management, astronomy, administration, politics, defence, sports and business and have

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occupied coveted positions across a wide spectrum of occupations. Today women are more assertive, much more determined and more tactful in handling crises, both managerial and professional. Women are entering in large numbers into the field of entrepreneurship because of changing business scenario in India due to liberalization, privatization and globalization.

Unlike men, women have more responsibilities, which they have to fulfill simultaneously in discharging their role as entrepreneurs. The dual role as house wives and as career women imposes a great strain on them. Schreier ¹ in his study conducted in developing countries found that women entrepreneurs were in no way different from men who have started business on their own. But, the research conducted by Fenney ² on professional women showed that there is almost always a man who helps to pave the way for a woman desiring to enter a male dominated field. In establishing and managing the enterprises successfully, women entrepreneurs face a number of hurdles. Devi ³ listed several difficulties faced by women entrepreneurs that include lack of adequate finance and technical know-how, non-availability of raw materials, inadequate marketing facilities and also non-availability of factory accommodation etc. Thus, in discharging the role of an entrepreneur woman undergoes a lot of stress.

Small-scale industrial sector plays a great role in the Indian economy in terms of creating additional employment with low capital investment and maintaining self-sustainability in various sectors of economy. The small-scale industry sector may be classified into traditional and modern ⁴. The traditional small-scale industries include khadi and handloom village industries, handicrafts, sericulture, coir etc., and modern small-scale industries provide a wide range of goods such as television sets, electronic control systems and various engineering goods. Small-scale industries now contribute forty percent of National Gross Domestic Product, which is very large compared to 1950s ⁵. More than 35% of the exports from our country take place from this sector. The small-scale industry sector has been characterized as the seabed of an economic system, a vital place of new products, new technologies and new entrepreneurial talent ⁶. Small-scale industries in our country are the budding ground for entrepreneurs. There are various factors that are responsible in building successful entrepreneurs. Some of these factors are change from present life style, childhood family environment, education, personal values, age, work history, role models and support systems like moral support network and professional support network. According to Cooper ⁷, three factors influence entrepreneurship namely (1) antecedent influences, which include background factors such as family influences and genetic factors that affect motivation, skills and knowledge, (2) the incubator organization, where the entrepreneur was employed prior to establishing the enterprise and the skills acquired there and (3) environmental factors which include economic conditions, access to venture capital, support services and role models.

In the present day dynamic world, there exists a highly competitive environment to every entrepreneur irrespective of whether male or female. Those who can successfully face this challenge and find an opportunity through the problem can excel in business. It is not only the entrepreneurial skill but also other factors like family background, personal characteristics, entrepreneurial support and social recognition and risk taking ability that are essential in building a successful entrepreneur. Socio-economic features like caste, parental background, location advantage and easy access to market are also found to be having a strong correlation with entrepreneur's success⁸. Attributes like risk taking, innovations, need for achievement and managerial competence are important enabling qualities for entrepreneurship.

The present paper deals with the study of the various issues pertaining to women entrepreneurs in Andhra Pradesh in initiating, establishing and managing the enterprises successfully.

Objective:

The main objective of the study is to elicit the opinion of the women entrepreneurs on the various issues pertaining to establishing and managing the enterprises and hence understand the status of women entrepreneurship in Andhra Pradesh.

Hypothesis:

There is no significant trend of agreement or disagreement among the women entrepreneurs with regards to the various issues related to the women entrepreneurs in establishing and managing the enterprises

Instrument:

The instrument used to obtain the information is a questionnaire consisting 12 items related to the various issues faced by the women entrepreneurs in establishing and managing the enterprises. The opinion of women entrepreneurs regarding variation issues related to women entrepreneurship was sought on a five point scale namely Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (UD), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). **Methodology:**

Stratified random sampling method was employed for sample collection. The addresses of women entrepreneurs were collected from District Industries Centres of all districts of Andhra Pradesh, ALEAP, Hyderabad and Andhra Pradesh State Finance Corporation, Hyderabad. The questionnaires were dispatched by post along with self addressed stamped envelopes to 1053 women entrepreneurs distributed throughout the state of Andhra Pradesh. The authors could meet as many as 50 women entrepreneurs personally. The authors also contacted the women entrepreneurs by phone and through e-mail and during these contacts the authors clarified the doubts in answering the questionnaire. As many as 265 filled in

questionnaires have been received. Out of these 15 were rejected in view of incomplete response to the questionnaire. The sample size taken for analysis is 250 spread over all districts of Andhra Pradesh.

Data Analysis:

The data were analyzed using Chi-square technique. The one-way Chi-square analysis shows differences in response categories of an item across the five response categories.

The data obtained in terms of percentages of respondents responding to the five response categories are presented in **Table 1**. The χ^2 values given in Table 1 are based on equal probability.

Results

and

Discussion

An examination of the data presented in Table 1 indicates that $(\chi^2)_{obs} < (\chi^2)_{tab}$ for all the issues except for the issue women join entrepreneurial career out of compulsion, for which $(\chi^2)_{obs}$ is 16.76 where as $(\chi^2)_{tab} = 18.465$. The opinion of the women entrepreneurs is evenly distributed among the response categories while the percentage of women strongly disagreeing with the statement (28.0%) is greater than that of the respondents strongly agreeing with the statement (17.2%). This only shows that women take up entrepreneurship quite willingly and also out of necessity because the income of the husband is insufficient to meet both ends which is usually the case of middle income group or low income groups. Some women also take up entrepreneurship as their profession due to dissatisfaction with their jobs already doing or to satisfy their ego.

The women entrepreneurs strongly disagree with the statement 'right place for a woman is home'. The χ^2 values for this statement are very large indicating the highly decisive opinion of the women entrepreneurs. These women entrepreneurs while indicating that they should not neglect home, they are of the view that they should take up career paths justifying the education they have received. They feel that they should not just sit idle and there is ample time available in view of family size being small. Now a days young couple is not interested to have more than two children and more families do have only one child. So child care is not taking their time. As such they are thinking of entering into the field of entrepreneurship suitable to the education they have received, expert skills and avenues available.

Majority of the respondents favour the statement 'in the case of dire economic need, job is more suitable for a woman than an entrepreneurial career'. Since entrepreneurial career involves risk and investment of money, poor women who cannot easily obtain capital feel job is more secure and returns are immediate. There is an assured income with which they can meet their dire economic needs. This opinion indicates the pulse of women who hesitate to venture into the field of uncertainly, that is, entrepreneurial career.

The statement that 'being a women is a boon for becoming an entrepreneur' did not find much favour and majority of the respondents put together (57.2%) opted the response categories 'Disagree' and 'Strongly Disagree' while 39.6% of the respondents put together opted the response categories 'Strongly Agree' and 'Agree'. This indicates that the women entrepreneurs face numerous problems. There are also problems associated with labour because women are generally not harsh in extracting work. Some times the subordinate staff and workers may take the women entrepreneur lightly.

The statement 'supervision and control of labour are easy for women entrepreneurs' received a mixed feeling by the women entrepreneurs, even though there is a tilt towards accepting this statement. This type of distributed opinion is justifiable in view of the fact that the entrepreneurs responded coming from different backgrounds namely rural back ground, urban background and nuclear family and joint family. Women coming from joint family and urban background may have tenacity and support to control the labour and get the work done according to the schedule.

The statement 'marketing of products poses no difficulty for women entrepreneurs' also received mixed favour from the women entrepreneurs. As can be seen from Table 1, the percentage of respondents opting the response categories SA and A put together is 48.4% and the percentage of respondents opting the response categories D and SD put together is 42.0%. It is a fact that women entrepreneurs are handicapped as compared to the male entrepreneurs because of lack of traveling mobility independently and also of the social concerns. She finds it difficult to stay overnight outside the headquarters. Hence marketing of products is really a problem for women entrepreneurs and they have to find new ways and means to over come this drawback.

Majority of the women entrepreneurs agree with the statement 'availing of financial assistance from support systems is a problem for women entrepreneurs'. This is because of the mindset of the officials who look at the women entrepreneur doubting her geniuses as a real entrepreneur and also doubting about the capabilities in establishing and managing the enterprise. Indeed, the President of Women's World Banking, Nancy Brown stated 'Most commercial bankers still think a guy in a three piece suit, regardless of his credit rating, is a better credit risk than a poor black, brown or yellow or white women', as quoted by James et al⁹.

Most of the women entrepreneurs agree with the statement 'acquiring technical know how is problem to women entrepreneurs'. It is quite necessary that the woman entrepreneur should have the technical know how of the enterprise she intends to establish and to go ahead confidently with the execution of the project. Lack of knowledge in this sphere is the reason for not many women entering into the field of entrepreneurship which are technology oriented. There is a need for imparting knowledge about the technical aspect of the enterprise when potential women entrepreneurs are given training under entrepreneurship development programmes.

The women entrepreneurs also agree with the statement 'management training is a must for women entrepreneurs' since majority of women entrepreneurs opt the response categories SA and A as can be seen from Table 1 management skills are essential for smooth and efficient managing of the enterprise once it is established. It is necessary that the women entrepreneurs be exposed to various training programs related to development of managerial skills.

Highest percentage of women entrepreneurs agree with the statement that 'it is difficult for a woman to survive as an entrepreneur if there is no help from husband / guardian'. Even though women entrepreneurs are performing well in the field of entrepreneurship, still majority of the women entrepreneurs expressing dependency on male people of the family. This reflects the age-old inhibition and dependency syndrome, a culture that exists in Indian women. It is also a fact that there is intervention of male family members in the managing of the enterprise managed by a woman. There are certain areas like meeting the officials often, supervision of labour, and marketing of goods etc., where women need the help from men in the family. But, some women entrepreneurs are also of the view that there is no need to depend on men for their survival as successful entrepreneurs.

Majority of women entrepreneurs agree with the statement that woman's success in entrepreneurial carrier results in neglect of family and home. Even though best efforts are put in to meet the requirements of family while simultaneously attending to the needs of the enterprise, the women entrepreneurs still feel that they are short of time to spare for the family. Invariably the husbands also will be busy with their job or their own businesses and the care of children has to be entrusted to others, who cannot be a substitute for the mother. Modern woman is capable off, and she is not interested to stop her growth in spite of family's requirement of her presence in the house.

Higher percentage of women entrepreneurs agrees with the statement 'women entrepreneurs can compete with the men entrepreneurs'. The response categories SA and A put together opted by women entrepreneurs is 78.8%. This shows the determination and confidence of women entrepreneur about their abilities. Even though woman entrepreneur has additional responsibility of managing the home, yet with her grit, will power and determination, she can stand in competition with her male counterpart in successfully managing the enterprise.

The women entrepreneurs are conscious of the various opportunities available to them, their abilities in managing the enterprises and the various issues connected with establishing and managing the enterprises. The present study reveals that most of the women entrepreneurs find that they have ample scope for survival as entrepreneurs. This is an encouraging note for woman to take up entrepreneurship as a career.

Testing the hypothesis

H₀: There is no significant trend of agreement or disagreement among the women entrepreneurs with regards to the various issues related to the women entrepreneurs in establishing and managing the enterprises

H₁: There is significant trend of agreement or disagreement among the women entrepreneurs with regards to the various issues related to the women entrepreneurs in establishing and managing the enterprises

Findings: As can be seen from Table 1 the $(x^2)_{obs} > (x^2)_{tab}$ for all the statement except for the statement 'women join entrepreneurial career out of compulsion' for which $(x^2)_{obs} < (x^2)_{tab}$ at 0.001 level of significance and the opinion in this case is distributive and equally agreeable or disagreeable.

Decision: H₁ is accepted.

Conclusion:

The women entrepreneurs either strongly agree or disagree with the statements pertaining to various issues related to women entrepreneurs.

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TABLE 1.

Issues Related to Women Entrepreneurs—Distribution of Sample Respondents According to Their Perception towards Various Issues (N=250)

S. No	Issues	% of Respondents					c 2 of equal Probability
		SA	A	UD	D	SD	
1	Right place for a woman is home	14.0	7.6	1.6	13.6	63.2	304.44
2	Women join entrepreneurial career out of compulsion	17.2	24.0	14.0	16.8	28.0	16.76*
3	In case of dire economic need job is more suitable for woman than an entrepreneurial career	25.2	29.6	26.8	10.8	7.6	50.48
4	Being a women is a boon for becoming an entrepreneur	7.6	32.0	3.2	24.8	32.4	94.60
5	Supervision and control of labor are easy for women entrepreneurs	30.0	19.2	15.6	29.6	5.6	52.44
6	Marketing of products poses no difficulty for women entrepreneurs	19.2	29.2	9.6	31.6	10.4	52.52
7	Availing of financial assistance from support systems is a problem for women entrepreneurs	24.4	28.4	9.2	20.4	17.6	26.56
8	Acquiring technical know how is a problem for women entrepreneurs	32.0	38.0	10.0	11.6	8.4	96.64
9	Managerial training is a must for women entrepreneurs	43.6	28.8	9.2	16.4	2.0	136.00
10	It is difficult for woman to survive as an entrepreneur if there is no help from husband / guardian	50.0	26.0	8.0	14.0	2.0	180.00
11	Woman's success in entrepreneurial career results in neglecting family and home	35.2	27.6	15.6	11.2	10.4	59.72
12	Women entrepreneurs can compete with men entrepreneurs	43.6	35.2	16.0	4.8	0.4	177.4

Note: $(c 2) = (c 2)_{0.001,4} = 18.465$

* Distribution is significant at level of significance $p= 0.001$.

Source: Primary Data