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A STUDY ON WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN INDIA

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Abstract

Entrepreneurship is both about women's position in society and the role of entrepreneurship in the same. Women are faced with specific obstacles (such as family responsibilities) that have to be overcome in order to have access to the same opportunities as men. Also, in some countries, women may experience obstacles related to holding property and entering contracts. Increased participation of women in the labour force is a step towards improving the position of women in society and self-employed women. The report finds that women entrepreneurs play an important role in the entrepreneurial economy, both in their ability to create jobs for themselves and to create jobs for others.

Keywords: women entrepreneurs, empowerment

Introduction

Empowerment of women in social, economic and political spheres in the nation is now on the increase with the spread of education and new awareness, women entrepreneurs have come up to balance the dual role, that is family and entrepreneurial. Now the Indian constitution guarantees equal opportunity removing all discrimination based on gender. No country can achieve development without adequately investing in and utilizing the capabilities of women. In the interest of national development is necessary to facilitate their empowerment. In many developing countries, including India, women have much less access to education, jobs, capital and power than men. Even after five and half decades of planned development Indian women have not achieved expected successes in the main stream of life. There is a need to strengthen and streamline the role of women in the various sectors.

Meaning and definition of entrepreneurship

There is no agreement among authors regarding the meaning of Entrepreneurship. Different authors tried to define it in different manners. This doesn't mean however that there are no common elements among the definitions. Some of the definitions are given below.

According to Ponstadt (1998)

Entrepreneurship is the dynamic process of creating financial wealth. This wealth is created by individuals who assume the major risks in terms of equity, time and career commitments of providing values for some product or service. The product or service may/may not be new or unique but value must be infused by the entrepreneur by securing and allocating the necessary capital and resources.

Nature of women entrepreneurs

There is no agreement among researchers with regard to the differences in the characteristics of male and female entrepreneurs. Some groups of researchers agree that there are no differences. But some others state differences. For example Green & Cohen (1995) stated,

"An entrepreneur is an entrepreneur is an entrepreneur," and it should not matter what size, shape, colour, or sex the entrepreneur might be. If so, good research on entrepreneurs should generate theory applicable to all. While research shows similarities in the personal demographics of men and women entrepreneurs, there are differences in business and industry choices, financing strategies, growth patterns, and governance structures of female led ventures.

These differences provide compelling reasons to study female entrepreneurship – looking specifically at women founders, their ventures, and their entrepreneurial behaviors as a unique subset of entrepreneurship. Just as we have found that clinical trials conducted on an all-male population do not necessarily provide accurate information about the diagnosis or treatment of female patients, we see that scholarly research focused only on 15 male entrepreneurial ventures leaves many questions unanswered for their female counterparts. Some argue that it is important to look at female entrepreneurs who, though they share many characteristics with their male colleagues, are unique in many aspects. Observable differences in their enterprises reflect underlying differences in their motivations and goals, preparation, organization, strategic orientation, and access to resources.

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