



A STUDY ON THE AWARENESS OF GOVERNMENT SCHEMES AMONG THE WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

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Abstract:

According to the sixth economic census by the National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO), only 14 per cent businesses in India are run by women. It is estimated that over 90 per cent of finance requirement for women entrepreneurs is met through informal channels since they are unable to source formal, collateral free and transparent financing for their enterprises. Apart from this, gender bias and lack of knowledge of government schemes were amongst the major hindrances for women entrepreneurs in the informal sector. The society, the government and the women themselves have a major role to play in enabling women to pursue entrepreneurship in today’s world. The government support is a precondition for the entrepreneurship development among women. This development has become an essential part of our economic policy. The main purpose of this paper is to study the awareness of government schemes among the women entrepreneurs in South Mumbai, among the selected wards (A- E).

Keywords: women entrepreneurs, informal sector, gender bias, government policies.

Introduction:

In India, women are surrounded by family, children, values, culture, and tradition and thus have to face various problems in turning out to become an entrepreneur. There are number of obstacles right from their initial commencement till running the enterprise. Uncalculated investments, bad debts and frivolous spending’s could lead to financial struggles in future.

Entrepreneurship is a way to economic development. “Emancipation of women is an essential prerequisite for economic development and social progress of the nation”- Gurumoorthy (2000). Greater opportunities for women to become

entrepreneurs will help in poverty reduction. Women entrepreneurship is gaining importance in India. The knowledge of finance and financial literacy, micro credit programmes can help result in higher incomes of women and improved financial literacy among women.

In order to promote more and more number of women enterprises in the Micro and Small Enterprises Sector, a number of schemes have been formulated by the government. The following table highlights the schemes and policies of the government to empower and help the women entrepreneurs by providing them training and giving them financial and marketing assistance:

Schemes under Ministry of Women and Child Development	Mahila e- Haat National Mission for Empowerment of Women Scheme Support of Training and Employment Programme for Women (STEP) Rashtriya Mahila Kosh
Schemes under the Ministry of Micro,	Trade Related Entrepreneurship Assistance and Development Scheme for Women (TREAD)

Small & Medium Enterprises (MSME)	Mahila Coir Yojana Micro and Small Enterprises Cluster Development Programme (MSE- CDP)
Schemes under the ministry of Rural Development	Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana- National Rural Livelihood Mission (DAY-NRLM)
Schemes under NABARD	Assistance to Rural Women in Non-Farm Development (ARWIND) Marketing of Non-Farm Product of Rural Women (MAHIMA)
Schemes under SIDBI	Informal Lending Mahila Udyam Nidhi Mahila Vikas Nidhi
Nationalized Banks Schemes	Annapurna Scheme Stree Shakti Package Cent Kalyani Dena Shakti Orient Mahila Vikas Yojana
Other Schemes are	Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana Stand Up India Scheme Entrepreneurship Development Programme

Review of Literature:

Begum and Srinivasan (2000) suggests that knowledge input programmes should be planned in the extension work of the community. Skill development training programmes of the government impacts and promotes self-employment for women of the vulnerable sections of society. A lack of training and prior experience, handicaps women to market their products and services strategically. Women require special attention to nurture their entrepreneurship potential and make it successful.

Jerinabi & Santhiyavalli, (2001) observed that there is a need for realignment of policies for minimizing gender specific barriers confronted by women entrepreneurs. There is a need to equip women entrepreneurs in formal and informal sectors of Indian economy with relevant managerial and technical skills. The government policies should create a framework to assist women operating in both formal as well as informal sector. This can help the enterprises to transform from micro to small and small to medium.

Poonam Sinha, (2005) Organizations catering to financial and non-financial needs of women entrepreneurs must be sensitized to serve women entrepreneurs. Campaigns targeted at improving awareness of women entrepreneurs about various schemes and programs should be well planned and executed. Single window system for comprehensive assistance to women entrepreneurs is the desirable step. Training and development programs must be designed and delivered keeping in consideration the unique requirements of women entrepreneurs.

Objectives of the study:

- To study the socio-economic profile of women entrepreneurs from the informal sector in South Mumbai.
- To analyze the awareness level of women entrepreneurs about various government schemes.

Research Methodology:

For this purpose, primary data was collected of **300 women entrepreneurs from the informal sector in South Mumbai from the selected five wards A, B, C, D, and E.**

The interview schedule method was used to collect the primary data. Sample size is 300

respondents. **Random sampling technique is used to collect the sample size.**

Analysis and Interpretation:

Variables	Interpretation
Age	Age is the key variable in understanding the socio economic status of the respondents in the study. The maximum number of respondent's i.e. 25.3% belonged to the age group of 35- 39 years and 40 - 44 years with 23.3 % respondents. This was followed by the respondents above 60 years of age were 3.7 %. It means the respondents are more from the middle age group as compared to the elderly age group.
Religion	The majority i.e. 55.3% respondents were from the Muslim religion. This was followed by the Hindu religion who were 38% and subsequently by the Christian religion who were 6.7%.
Category	For understanding the category the respondents were classified into two categories viz open category and reserve category. It was found that, 97% respondents belong to the open category and 3% respondents belong to the reserve category. The respondents from the reserve category were classified further into different categories based on their caste viz. Scheduled Caste (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), Other Backward Class (OBC) and others. The 3% respondents belonged to the OBC category only.
Education	With regards to educational level, it is significant to note that 65.7% respondents are graduates. There were 23% respondents who had secondary education and 9.7 % respondents who did post-graduation studies. Remaining, 2% respondents had primary education.
Annual income	The economic situation of the respondents can be traced by the level of income. It was found that 85.7 % respondents belonged to the income group of less than Rs.1 lakh per annum. This was followed by 13.7% respondents whose income was between Rs.1 lakh to Rs.2 lakhs. There were 0.7% respondents who earn above Rs.2 lakhs per annum.
Type of business	It was observed that, 22.7% respondents were seen as sellers of readymade designer dresses operating from home. This was followed by 15% respondents who were engaged as wholesalers and retailers having rental shops. There were 14% respondents who were engaged in manufacturing business of making herbal fairness creams, soaps, perfumes, henna cones etc. and 7% respondents were real estate agents. There were 17% respondents from the teaching field and 2.3% respondents who were involved as fruits, vegetables and fish vendors. There were 9.3% respondents who were engaged in food/ beverage supplying business. Very few respondents were seen in beauty parlors and matrimonial alliances viz. 4% and 7% respectively.
Awareness regarding the Government schemes	None of the respondents are beneficiaries of any government subsidy or a part of any social security scheme of the government. There is no awareness among the respondents about any government schemes.

Conclusion:

There is a dire need of awareness of government schemes and encouragement to young women entrepreneurs. None of the

women entrepreneurs are aware of the government schemes, which is a setback. SHG's and NGO's can help to create awareness to spread information about

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various government policies, credit schemes, easy loan facility, banking habits culture, cashless transactions, market online buying and selling of products, planning of retirement, work from home etc. leading to financial mindfulness among women entrepreneurs. NGO's and SHG's should constantly make efforts in educating the budding women entrepreneurs in terms of understanding the financial matters. This will uplift women's economic development.

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