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A STUDY OF CIRCUMSTANTIAL AND NON-CIRCUMSTANTIAL WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN THE NON-CONVENTIONAL LINE OF BUSINESS IN THE CITY OF PUNE

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Abstract:-Entrepreneurs have become celebrities in this era of globalization, liberalization and electronic media. The entrepreneurial category here includes both the male as well as the female entrepreneurs. With the Indian society undergoing transition, women are enjoying greater freedom. They are not only taking up jobs but also creating job opportunities for others on a much larger scale.

Keywords:Circumstantial , globalization , liberalization and electronic media.

INTRODUCTION:

The present study has been conducted on two categories of women entrepreneurs, viz. the Circumstantial and Non-Circumstantial Women Entrepreneurs in the non-conventional line of business. The circumstantial women entrepreneurs are the ones who have had to suddenly take over the reins of a business that was until then, run by a family member. An unforeseen occurrence such as an accident, death or illness of the member compelled them to plunge into the business and save it from a crisis. Circumstantial entrepreneurs could also be understood to be a category of those women who were forced to start a business of their own under compelling circumstances, just to secure a source of livelihood.

Non-circumstantial women entrepreneurs on the other hand are the ones who have entered business by choice, with planning, total preparedness of the mind (and not under compelling circumstances).

The following model illustrates the sample selected for the study:

	Conventional	Non-Conventional
Entrepreneurs by Choice	1	2
Entrepreneurs by Compelling Circumstances	3	4

Areas marked '2' and '4' in the above model indicate the sample selected for the study. Both the categories of entrepreneurs were taken from the non-conventional lines of business only. (The non-conventional line of the business may be understood to be the one into which women traditionally or generally do not enter).

The study of circumstantial women entrepreneurs reveals that they have gone through an upheaval and struggle on two fronts – the personal and the professional. Yet, each one of them can boast of unmatched fortitude and courage during the days of trial and tribulations. These entrepreneurs definitely deserve the title of 'Heroines'. They could be taken as 'Role Models' for they are the ones who have undertaken the risk of conducting a business of which they had little or no knowledge. They have proved their mettle in situations of high uncertainties and achieved success under conditions of immense pressure and emotional stress. What is even more creditable is that all these women have been selected from the non-conventional lines of business. The study of non-circumstantial women entrepreneurs reveals the fact that all of them preferred to become employers rather than employees. They were bent on using their skills and capabilities. They had the courage and

determination to tread the untrodden path i.e. to undertake those business activities that were so far undertaken by men or the ones in which women were not commonly found.

Both the categories of entrepreneurs in the study proved the fact that no area of business today remains a male monopoly. The study in fact, underlines the modern day truth of a shift from capability to copability i.e. 'New Capability'. The women entrepreneurs seemed to have worked with 'New Capability' as they have been successful in coping with various situation, problems and challenges.

History has shown that the success of individuals is always associated with a spirit of adventure, courage and self-confidence. The present study proves this. In fact, the study echoes the age old-truth loud and clear that, life is not a destination, but a journey-

Of unexpected curves and turning points
That shapes one and decides what one can become
That helps one to discover the best in oneself

The present study is a journey in developing an understanding about the strong will, motivation and determination reflected in the activities of circumstantial and non-circumstantial women entrepreneurs.

GENESIS OF THE STUDY

An exclusive study on women who have been compelled to take up family business because of circumstances has not yet been undertaken in the city of Pune. An attempt has not been made to find out about their struggle and performance in business. The present research work is designed to study the contribution made by the circumstantial and the non-circumstantial women entrepreneurs in the non-conventional line of business in the city of Pune.

OBJECTIVES

Two sets of objectives were designed viz. the general one for both the categories of entrepreneurs and the specific ones exclusively for the circumstantial entrepreneurs.

General Objectives

What were the circumstances/reasons that made them take over/start the business?
What were the problems encountered by them and how did they solve them?
How did they perform in business?
Did they have further plans for developing/diversification of their business?

Specific Objectives

Were the problems of circumstantial entrepreneurs different from those of the non-Circumstantial ones?
What would they have liked to do had those compelling circumstances not arisen?
If given a choice now, what would they like to do? –continue with the same business or Quit it?

Hypotheses

For Circumstantial Entrepreneurs:

Had the circumstances not arisen, these entrepreneurs would never have gone into the type of business they are running today; but once into it, they would not want to give it up.
Compelling forces can prove to be motivational factors and can make women run even those business units of which they have little or no knowledge.

Hypothesis

For Non-circumstantial Entrepreneurs:

Women of today get into business for various reasons like utilizing their knowledge and skills, for attaining economic independence or simply for wanting to do something challenging and adventurous.

Some Definitions/Explanation of terms used in the Study

Circumstantial Women Entrepreneurs:

These could be understood to be a category of entrepreneurs who have entered business without any plans, clear cut goals and mental preparedness.

Non-Circumstantial Women Entrepreneurs:

This category of entrepreneurs can be understood to be the ones who have entered business out of choice and not on account of compelling circumstances.

Non-Conventional Line of business for Women:

This could be described as a line other than the one in which women conventionally entered. Till recently it has been a convention to find women only in art, craft and culinary activities. However, women today are also found in areas like automobile repairs/air-conditioning, construction, transport, distilleries, hotel industry, truck/rickshaw driving, motor rewinding etc. These areas could be considered as the non-conventional areas of business for women.

Research Methodology

Data from both the categories of entrepreneurs was collected with the help of questionnaire and interview schedule. Forty circumstantial and twenty non-circumstantial entrepreneurs operating in small or tiny scale enterprises were selected for the study. These entrepreneurs belonged to the manufacturing, trading as well as the service units. The questionnaire contained 70 objective type of questions and one open-ended one. The interview schedule contained questions relating to the support/help they received while taking over the business, their experience in business etc.

Purpose of taking over/starting the business:

Circumstantial entrepreneurs took over the business on account of compelling circumstances. The objective was obviously economic in nature. Besides, they wanted to keep the family business alive and also get themselves absorbed in work. On the other hand, the non-circumstantial started business not only for economic reasons, but for meaningful engagement and also for making a career in business.

Stumbling Blocks:

Both the categories of entrepreneurs faced technical, financial, labour and marketing problems. This shows that circumstantial entrepreneurs did not face any different type of problems.

Performance in Business:

97.5% of circumstantial entrepreneurs were successful in business i.e. they were making profits. Only one entrepreneur was not able to run the business on profitable basis on account of personal reasons. On the other hand, all the non-circumstantial entrepreneurs made profits in their business.

Future Plans:

Both the categories of entrepreneurs had concrete plans to grow and even diversify their business.

With regards to the special objectives, the following findings may be shared:

The study indicated that 50% of the circumstantial entrepreneurs would have remained housewives had the circumstances not arisen. 25% would have taken up a job and the remaining 25% said they would have started a business of their choice. Given a choice to quit the business now, only 17% of circumstantial entrepreneurs would like to quit, while the remaining 83% would like to continue with the business.

The above findings show that the hypotheses with reference to circumstantial and non-circumstantial entrepreneurs have been adequately proved.

Personal Observation

An in-depth study of the two categories of entrepreneurs reveals that both the type of entrepreneurs project a high degree of managerial, risk taking ability, commitment, clear vision, self reliance, an eye for minute details and a sense of efficacy in their operations. Seeds of effective management seemed to be embedded in them. Good administration reflects in their work and accomplishments. They definitely did not speak of management techniques in the sophisticated language of the management gurus. Nevertheless, they knew them all. These entrepreneurs also had a professional approach to business. The circumstantial entrepreneurs were capable of putting the most sensitive issue behind their minds and handle the business with total commitment and the right attitude.

According to experts, activities can be divided into male/female types. Activities relating to war, police, law and order, politics, mining, engineering, steam ships, machinery, invention, philosophy, journalism and games like football are masculine in nature. On the other hand, activities of feminine nature could be child rearing, nursing, cooking, dress making, shopping, matters relating to society and insurance. Men therefore, according to these experts, deal with the complex and women with the simple. Herbert Casson says, "Men are centrifugal and women are centripetal." In other words, men deal with the outside world while women with home and activities related to it.

Regarding the above, I personally feel, this belief needs to be replaced by the idea that women can deal with the simple as well as the complex. They can be both 'centrifugal' as well as 'centripetal'. There is no area or profession that women have not entered today. They are seen attending to tasks considered masculine in nature too. At the same time, they also perform feminine tasks like looking after the home and children and honouring social commitments.

Personal interaction with the entrepreneurs revealed that they confronted role conflict problems while managing the two fronts – home and business. However, they knew how to sort them out with the technique of time management. Mrs. Veena Chawla, a circumstantial entrepreneur says, "I set out my priorities. I have to do injustice to neither, so I manage the home and business by turns, giving more importance to what is more urgent at that point in time."

Women entrepreneurs are playing various roles like that of a mother, wife, daughter, daughter in law, bread winner and that too so beautifully ... surely they can be labeled as 'Role Models'.

The study shows that these entrepreneurs are highly motivated. The circumstantial entrepreneurs are motivated by the survival instinct. This motivation is so strong that they can run even those enterprises successfully of which they have little or no knowledge. The non-circumstantial entrepreneurs on the other hand are also sufficiently motivated. They possess a strong inner urge to take up something challenging, adventurous, to become economically independent, and to utilize their knowledge and skills fruitfully.

CONCLUSION

Women can make a meaningful contribution to the development of a home, society, nation and the world. Their contribution can be tremendous. According to Dr. Ashok Kolaskar, former Vice Chancellor, Pune University, "two-thirds of the work in the world is done by women. Biological research has shown that women are mentally richer and stronger".

Women entrepreneurs, therefore, can be considered as a vital sector that can contribute to the economic development of a country. The spread of education and awareness is prompting women entrepreneurs to soar higher ... to new realms ... to areas considered to be male bastions, until recently. With the Indian society undergoing a transition, women are not only being accepted in business but also in activities which were hitherto male dominated.

The industrialized city of Pune is witnessing the emergence and growth of women entrepreneurs. Women are found in a vast and varied spectrum of industries today. The ball has been set rolling and women in business are seen contributing on a much larger scale ...giving way to the dawn of a new era – an era in which the contribution of women will not only be recognized but also accounted – an era in which there will be no gender specifics and the words of Dr. V. G. Patel, former director of EDII, Ahmedabad, will have more meaning than ever before, "Once an enterprise starts, the difference between a male and female must be forgotten because an entrepreneur is an entrepreneur, business is business and profit and loss strictly depends on entrepreneurial competencies."

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