



# **A STUDY ON THE PROBLEMS FACED BY WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN ERNAKULAM DISTRICT**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Entrepreneurs act as the key element for Indian economy. Development of entrepreneurship among women has received special attention of the policy makers to promote the healthy growth of entrepreneurial activities and enterprises owned by women. In this direction, a special character in the seventh plan has converted into the integration of women in economic development. The new industrial policy has stressed the need for conducting special Entrepreneurial Development Programme (EDPs) for women. Besides this, today, a network of institutions exists in the State to promote women entrepreneurship. The commercial banks and the financial institution are an integral part of this network. Many organizations, institutions and associations promote women entrepreneurship by providing financial assistance at concessional rates of interest and also organize industrial fairs and exhibitions. Besides organizing short-term EDPs for women, continues training in all management areas should be given to them. Separate Industrial Estates may be set up for women entrepreneurs to crate altogether a special environment. 80 women entrepreneurs, residing in Ernakulam district have been taken for the study using convenient sampling method.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The entrepreneur is a key to economic development. Evolution of the concept of entrepreneurship was only in the beginning until 18th century. The word entrepreneur is derived from the French word 'Entreprendre' which means 'to undertake'. Thus entrepreneur is a person who undertakes the risk of a new enterprise.

The emergence of women entrepreneurs in a society depends, to a great extent, on the economic, religious, cultural, social, psychological and a host of other factors. To developing countries like India, the presence of entrepreneurs, that too women entrepreneurs is a vital necessity to achieve a rapid, all around and regionally and socially balanced economic growth through industrialization. It also helps in tapping the inherent talent prevailing among them and acts as a panacea for many problems faced by them such as dowry death, low recognition in society, poverty, and unemployment and excessive dependence on male members. There is greater dynamism in the rate of growth of female employment. The emergence of women entrepreneurs is to be viewed as socio-economic emancipation of women.

Women have been successful in breaking their freedom within the limits of their homes by entering into varied kinds of professionals and services. Women entrepreneurs have proved to be on par with their men counterparts in business wisdom and are emerging as smart and dynamic entrepreneurs. There are many reasons for women to enter into entrepreneurial ventures in a predominantly society. Entrepreneurship among women is an important avenue through which women can overcome their subordination within the family and the society as a whole. Therefore, development of entrepreneurship among women has received special attention of the policy makers to promote the healthy growth of entrepreneurial activities and enterprises owned by women. But the Indian women entrepreneurs are facing some major constraints like lack of confidence in their strength and competence, socio-cultural barriers ,market-oriented risks ,lack of knowledge in Business Administration and awareness about the financial assistance ,unexposed to the training programs etc.

## II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

**Thomas (2005):** He analyzed the performance and the complementary strengths of women entrepreneurs' dual role as homemakers and entrepreneurs in Ernakulam district in Kerala state. An analytical survey followed by case studies of twelve women entrepreneurs from Ernakulam district in Kerala state was done. Entrepreneurial competencies of these women were identified and finally a SWOT analysis was done. The study found that women entrepreneurs were facing the problems of policy-practice gaps, lack of professionalism, conservative attitudes, and time constraints, hesitancy to improve entrepreneurial knowledge, obedient nature and low risk bearing capacity. However, a better entrepreneurial environment, supportive family, access to infrastructure and entrepreneurial qualities strengthened women entrepreneurs.

**Anju and Raju (2014)** In their study states that economic empowerment of rural women will lead to the development of our country and it is very necessary to give keen attention over the empowerment of women in the rural areas for the real development of our country in all spheres. This study states that lack of supportive network, financial and marketing problems are the major problems for rural women entrepreneurs.

**Vinodha Devi (2017):** Studied the women entrepreneurship in Ernakulam and found that women entrepreneurs face plenty of problems not only in launching their units but also in running them with financial problems like shortage of working capital.

**Poornima and Ramanaiah (2019)** in their study identified that no stable price for the products manufactured, lack of practical knowledge and marketing problems are the prominent problems faced by SHG Entrepreneurs.

Therefore the present attempt is made to analyse the various problems highlighted through the previous studies.

### **III. STATEMENT OF PROBLEM**

Entrepreneurship is one of the important factors of industrialization; in the absence of entrepreneurship, industrialization cannot take place. Woman's skills and knowledge, their talents and abilities in business and a compelling desire of wanting to do something positive are some of the reasons for the women entrepreneurs to organize industries. According to World Bank, investing more in business of women rather in men leads to greater development of a Nation. Empowering women in entrepreneurship leads to break the inequalities and reduces the poverty. Nowadays it has been realized that enterprising women have cast entrepreneurial talents which could be harnessed so as to convert them from the position of "Jobseekers" to "Job givers". The government has realized the importance of women entrepreneurship. As a result, it offers a variety of programmes for women entrepreneurs. The state of Kerala is the industrially developing area in which some of the entrepreneurs excel in small scale industry. The study aims to analyze the major problems faced by women entrepreneurs in Ernakulam District, Kerala.

### **IV. SCOPE OF STUDY**

This study attempts to provide an outlook on major problems faced by women entrepreneurs in Ernakulam district, Kerala and the study is limited only to the women entrepreneurs of selected groups in the District.

### **V. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

It is extremely important to clearly specify the objective of the study as it generally describe the researchers goals which he want to attain in the study and inform the reader accordingly. The objectives of the present study are:

1. To examine major swot analysis for women entrepreneurs in Ernakulam district, Kerala.
2. To provide suggestion for improving the functioning of Women enterprise.
3. To study whether adequate promotional schemes are offered by Government for women entrepreneurs.

## **VI. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:**

This section tries to explain the research methodology adopted for the current study in detail which includes sample design, sampling size, measuring tools used for data collection and data analysis.

### **(a) Sample design:**

Women entrepreneurs who are the main source of primary data are collected from the women entrepreneurs through a well-structured questionnaire. Secondary data was also used to complete other stages of this study. A sample of 40 women entrepreneurs has been selected for the purpose of study through convenient sampling method.

### **(b) Sampling size:**

The sample size was fixed to 80 women entrepreneurs in Ernakulam District.

### **(c) Data collection:**

The information used in the study are collected from both primary and secondary data source.

Primary data have been collected from the already selected 80 women entrepreneurs through a well-structured questionnaire.

For the collection of secondary source of data journals and publications, books, relevant websites etc., has been used.

### **(d) Tools of Analysis**

The collected data have been analysed by applying simple percentage and Freidman rank test is applied.

## **VI. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

1. Time available for the study are limited which prevents the researchers from making in depth analysis
2. The study has been conducted during the course of study
3. The study is undertaken on the basis of sample so the study suffer from the limitations of sampling

## VII. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Age	No: of entrepreneurs	Percentage (%)
AGE	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Up to 25	18	22.5
26-40	42	52.5
Above 40	20	25
Total respondents	80	100

**Table 2: Age**

As per the table, it is revealed that majority (52.5%) of the women entrepreneurs are in the age group of 26-40 years, 25% of the women entrepreneurs are in the age group of above 40 years of age. Only 22.5% of the women entrepreneurs are aged below 25 years of age. Thus majority of the women entrepreneurs' age ranges from 26-40 years.

**Table 2: Marital Status**

Marital status	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Married	67	83.8
Unmarried	13	16.2
Total respondents	80	100

The above table reveals that while 67 (83.8%) respondents are married and 13 (16.2%) are unmarried. Hence majority of the women entrepreneurs' are married.

**Table 3: Educational Qualification**

Educational qualification	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Primary Education	6	7.5
Secondary Education	16	20
Diploma	12	15
graduates	33	41.3
Post Graduates	13	16.2
Total respondents	80	100

The above table reveals that 33(41.3%) of the respondents are graduates. While 16(20%) have primary education, 13(16.2%) are postgraduates, 12(15%) are diploma holders and only 6(7.5%) of the respondents have primary education. hence, most of the respondents 33 (41.3%) are graduates.

**Table 4: Nature of Business**

Nature of business	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Manufacturing	19	23.7
Trading	8	10
Service	53	66.3
Total of respondents	80	100

From the table it is inferred that 53 (66.3%) of the women entrepreneurs are in the service industry, 19 (23.7%) of the women entrepreneurs are in the manufacturing industry and 8 (10%) of the women entrepreneurs are in the trading industry. Hence majority 53 (66.3%) of the women entrepreneurs belongs to service industry.

**Table 5: Reason to start business**

Particulars:	No.of respondents	Percentage
To make changes in the society	12	15
To build a career and independent living	49	61
to implement own idea	17	21
To utilise the free time	02	3
Total number of respondents	80	100

From the table it is revealed that 49 (61%) of the respondents reason to start business is to build a career and independent living. Followed by 17 (21%) to implement own idea, 12(15%) to make changes in the society and 2 (3%) to utilise the free time of the women respondents. Hence, the majority of the women respondents 49 (61%), reason to start business is to build a career and independent living.

**Table 6: Source of Finance**

Sources of finance	No.of respondents	Percentage (%)
Parents	23	28.7
Friends and Relatives	15	18.8
Financial Institutions	35	43.8
others	7	8.7
Total respondents	80	100

The above table reveals that 35 (43.8%) of the women entrepreneurs find sources of finance from the financial institutions followed by the funds from parents 23 (28.7%), funds from friends and relatives 15 (18.8%) and funds from other sources 7 (8.7%). Thus most of the women entrepreneurs find the source of finance from the funds available from the parents.

To ascertain the problems faced by the women entrepreneurs in the Ernakulam district, Freidman test is employed.

#### Ranks

Major Problems Faced by the Women Entrepreneurs	Mean Rank	Rank
Combining family life and business life	3.96	2
Availability of funds	3.72	4
Lack to assess the market conditions	3.42	7
Increased competition	4.18	1
Lack of support from the government	3.88	3
Availability of employees	3.55	6
Availability of raw materials	3.66	5

From the Friedman test, it is inferred that the major problem faced by the most of the women entrepreneurs are increased competition in the business world. Followed by the problems like combining family life and business life, lack of support from the government, availability of funds, availability of raw materials, and availability of workers for the concern and lack to assess the market condition.

#### VIII. FINDINGS

- . Majority of the women entrepreneurs ranges in the between 26 to 40 years.
- . Majority of the women entrepreneurs are married.
- . Most of the women entrepreneurs are graduates.
- . Majority of the women entrepreneurs are in the service area.

- . Majority of the women start business to build a career and independent living.
- . Most of the women entrepreneurs borrow funds from the financial institutions for promoting their business.
- . Major problem faced by the women entrepreneurs is the increased competition.

### **IX SUGESSTIONS**

- Government and financial institutions should provide special assistance and incentives for encouraging women entrepreneurship.
- Proper training shall be given to the women entrepreneurs through Government Programmes. Training women for entrepreneurial and managerial activities in industry should be conceived as one of the most important factors for accelerating economic growth.
- Training in entrepreneurial attitudes should start at the high school level through well designed courses.
- Women industrial estate shall be setup in each District for upgrading level of activities of women entrepreneurs.
- Co-operative institution and Banks use a share of their profit for the promotion of women entrepreneurs by providing free training, loans with subsidy, and loan without interest for helping them to identify suitable products under their jurisdiction.
- The Government assistance should be given in the areas like marketing, distribution etc. of the Women entrepreneurship products.

### **X. CONCLUSION**

It is evident from the study that women are ready to face the challenges associated with setting up of business. Society is very much receptive to the concept of women entrepreneur, so is the family. The challenges and opportunities provided to the women in this digital era are growing rapidly. Women are not into business not only for survival but to satisfy their inner urge of creativity and to prove their capabilities. Women education is contributing to a great extent to the social transformation. Women entrepreneurs can contribute largely to the wealth of the society in a most efficient manner. But they need to perceive fully the role and significance of entrepreneurship. So the forthcoming days are definitely meaningful and decisiveness to the women entrepreneurs. The future will see more women venturing into areas traditionally dominated by men. The major problems faced by our respondents were financial deficit and doubt of self-confidence.



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