

POST-INDEPENDENCE GROWTH OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN MAHARASHTRA - CAUSES AND EFFECTS: AN OVERVIEW

Mrs. Anjali Paulastye¹, Dr. (Prof.) Tejashree Deshmukh²

¹ *Research Scholar, PTVI Institute of Management, Mumbai.*

² *Professor, Dean-Academics & In-charge Director, PTVI Institute of Management, Mumbai.*

Abstract

The contribution of women in economy can be thought keeping in mind two perspectives, one as an employee and another as an employer who can be also an entrepreneur. The participation of women in entrepreneurship plays a catalytic role in the socio-economic transformation of any nation. Most of the surveys and literature are focused on data on women labour force, literacy, health aspects and motivating and limiting factors for women entrepreneurs in general. But data on women entrepreneurs at national and state level is rather scanty. This research paper is an attempt to analyze the causes and effects of growth of women entrepreneurship in Maharashtra, in post-independence era. Growth in women entrepreneurship in Maharashtra in post-independence era has been critically analyzed in context of multi-faceted socio-economic factors such as sex ratio, literacy, economic growth of state in post-independence era, contribution of agricultural and nonagricultural activities, no of establishments, level of employment, composition of women labour force- hired or non-hired, supportive ecosystem, lucrative schemes by state and central government etc. Positive changes brought in by growth in women entrepreneurship are also analyzed with reference to the per capital income, impact on women crimes, literacy level, share of women in higher education, etc. Effect of growth in women entrepreneurship in Maharashtra has resulted into the proud pronoun for Maharashtra State as "Progressive State". Many states have set the Maharashtra State as benchmark when it comes to social development, freedom & safety of women and contribution of women in state economy. A Robust support socio-ecosystem is the prerequisite for this kind of eco-system. Right methodology and positive approach of policy makers can help women to take initiatives and make their own foot print in the business fraternity.

Keywords: *Women-entrepreneurship, Growth, Women, Entrepreneurs, Maharashtra, Government Initiatives, Post-independence.*

Introduction:

Women can play their contributory role in socio-economic development through two roles, employee and employer. Both roles are important. However, role of an Employer, i.e. Entrepreneur can play catalytic role in the socio-economic transformation of any nation.

There are many proven examples of women as successful entrepreneurs with their sincerity, determination, hard work and leadership skills. Now a day, women have expanded their entrepreneurial horizons by crossing the unwritten boundaries of male dominated business areas. Many doors are opened for women such as technical, managerial executives, corporate trainers, Counselors, administrators, finance professionals, pilots etc. Government has set up many new IIMs, IITs, NITs and IIITs with special quota for female students for nurturing the new generation to play successful role as entrepreneurs by imparting them techno-managerial skills. Many students of these institutes have come up with successful Start Ups recently. Such

initiatives are certainly going to work as major driving force for rural as well as urban women. Government has supported potential as well as existing women entrepreneurs through various promotional schemes, training programs, procurement policies for PSUs & Government expenditure with the aim of women empowerment in the long run. The Traditional skills of rural women are being turned into business opportunities in various fields such as textiles, catering, embroideries, boutiques, crafts and many more. Maharashtra is among the most developed Indian states and since independence, has continued to be the single largest contributor to the national economy with a share of 14 per cent in all-India nominal GDP.

Aim of the Study:

The aim of the paper is to analyse the cause and effect on growth of women entrepreneurship in Maharashtra, in post-independence era.

Most of the surveys and literature are focused on data on women labour force, literacy, health aspects and motivating and limiting factors for women entrepreneurs in general. But data on women entrepreneurs at national and state level is rather scanty. This research paper is an attempt to analyze the causes and effects of growth of women entrepreneurship in Maharashtra, in post-independence era.

Objectives:

1. To identify the causative factors for the growth of women entrepreneurs in Maharashtra
2. To identify the restrictive factors for the growth of women entrepreneurs in Maharashtra
3. To identify the measures taken by the Government for the growth of women entrepreneurship
4. To identify the impact of growth of women entrepreneurship on socio-economic factors.

Literature Review:

Adhia N. in 2015 has done exhaustive research about what is current perception about the topic under research. Scrutiny of other's research work provides updated information and latest developments about the topic under research. It also throws light on their recommendations and further scope of research indicated by them. Moreover such scrutiny also give input about latest research and data analysis tools. .

According to Suri & Verma has done the research work on the darker side of women entrepreneurship and brought out the reality factors in analytical form. This research paper has also made an effort to link the Government Initiatives to overcome this age old male dominance in corporate sector. Various Government schemes have given wings to many potential entrepreneurs to start their ventures with minimum possible investment. (Suri, Verma, 2020)

Swain in 2022 tried to throw light on some important aspects like Policymakers at state level and National level have taken many initiatives over the past few decades with various allied objectives few of them may be specifically for growth of women entrepreneurship.

Tripathy in 2012 stated that Post-Independence (After 1947), the need for growth of entrepreneurship was realized and gained the importance in Industrial Policy Resolutions (IPRs) and five year plans and Information Technology boom in mid-late 90's, leading to third wave of Entrepreneurship sweeping through the country.

Kittur Praveen (2014) has stated that special technical and managerial training courses for women must be started to improve their skills in order to encourage women entrepreneurship.

Dhruba Hazarika (2011) has highlighted the potential of women entrepreneurs to contribute country's development. Empowering women will be the right approach for their socio-economic growth.

Methodology:

Research design:

This research paper is based on the secondary data available in open source. Existing data is summarized and collated to increase the overall effectiveness of research. The secondary data is used such as research material published in research reports, various NGO websites, official websites of various government departments, specific websites of various government initiatives etc.

Data Design:

The research design is the overall strategy that is chosen to integrate the different components of the study in a coherent and logical way, thereby, ensuring to effectively address the research problem; it constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement, and analysis of data. However, as this research paper is based on secondary data, data design is not applicable.

Result:

Growth in women entrepreneurship in Maharashtra in post-independence era has been critically analyzed in context of multi-faceted socio-economic factors such as sex ratio, literacy, economic growth of state in post-independence era, contribution of agricultural and nonagricultural activities, no of establishments, level of employment, composition of women labour force- hired or non-hired, supportive ecosystem, lucrative schemes by state and central government etc.

Positive changes brought in by growth in women entrepreneurship are also analyzed with reference to the per capital income, impact on women crimes, literacy level, share of women in higher education, etc. Effect of growth in women entrepreneurship in Maharashtra has resulted into the proud pronoun for Maharashtra State as “Progressive State”. Many states have set the Maharashtra State as benchmark when it comes to social development, freedom & safety of women and contribution of women in state economy.

Discussion:

Post-Independence, the Government of India have focused on balanced and mixed growth of economy through three important measures as mentioned below;

- Encourage appropriate distribution of monetary power among public and private sectors.
- Push the industrialization deeper into the remote areas which in turn can get developed in all relevant sectors of economy through allied services and ancillaries.
- Encourage and push the entrepreneurship in potential technocrats and potential non-technical entrepreneurs of various sectors of society.

To support this mission, Government laid emphasis on the growth of entrepreneurship in various Five Year plans and Industrial Policy Resolutions (IPRs).

Maharashtra plays a vital role in generating employment, promoting entrepreneurship, contributing to local economies and the country's GDP. According to the Ministry of MSMEs, Maharashtra has the highest number of MSMEs in India. The state's MSME sector employs 24% of the total workforce in the state. The state contributes around 13% of the total MSME output in India.

A Robust support socio-ecosystem is the prerequisite for this kind of eco-system. Right methodology and positive approach of policy makers can help women to take initiatives and make their own foot print in the business fraternity. Stimulating women entrepreneurship can go a long way in bridging gender gaps and empowering women. (Tiwari, 2017)

Causative Factors for the Growth of Women Entrepreneurs in Maharashtra:

Need and motivation are very closely related with invention. Motivation is caused by push and

pulls. These push and pull factors stimulate the potential entrepreneur's expectations. In other way, Motivation pushes entrepreneurial decisions directly and existence of an enterprise is pulled out of that. (Rajalakshmi, 2014)

Push Factors: Push factors are external forces as indicated below;

1. **Unemployment:** Unemployment can push the women for starting a new venture.
2. **Recession:** Recession has worked as a push factor to force the unemployed women to start a new venture.
3. **Inadequate family income:** Increased expenses due to inflation exert financial pressure may lead to endeavor into new ventures. In such cases, inadequate family income becomes push factor to start a new venture.
4. **Dissatisfaction with current job:** In many cases of unbearable pressure and dissatisfaction at job, has led to new ventures by women entrepreneurs.
5. **Repayment of unavoidable Loans:** Financial pressure of repayment of unavoidable loans works as push factor for starting new ventures.

Pull Factors: Pull factors shoot from internal forces. The decision to become self-employed concretes due to the pull effects induced by some internal forces as indicated below;

1. **Only alternative of earning:** Rising expenses due to responsibilities as well as inflation leads to the thought process of alternative earning.
2. **Challenge to self:** Self-esteem plays very important role in the life of career-oriented women.
3. **Fulfillment of dreams:** Inspiration from role models, determination to prove self, results into big dreams which eventually turn into entrepreneurship.
4. **Desire to be own boss:** Dissatisfaction on job due to partiality, politics, disturbed interpersonal relations, unrealistic target pressures, non-sanctioning of well needed leaves, unbalanced performance management by senior management, wrong promotional policies etc. result into desire to become own boss.
5. **Need of flexibility for balancing family and work:** Progressive women decide to start their own ventures so that they can prove themselves keeping the optimum balance between domestic and work responsibilities.
6. **Desire to cultivate hobby:** Many women opt for entrepreneurship related to their hobby so that life becomes an enjoyable journey.
7. **Influence by Role models:** With wide wings of media, there is ease in getting information, success stories of successful people. Such inspiration gives birth to the entrepreneurial realities.

Restrictive factors for the growth of women entrepreneurs in Maharashtra: Many challenges are faced by Indian women while beginning an entrepreneurial venture.

- (i) **Lack of support from family members:** Moral and operational support by family members can do wonders in the life of female member of the family and in overall social and financial growth of the family.
- (ii) **Negative Societal Attitude:** On the background of male dominated society, success of women entrepreneurial largely depends on the cooperation from family as well as society.
- (iii) **Lack of finance & lack of control on finance:** It is difficult to get the right to invest and financial support in early phase of any business started by women.
- (iv) **Lack of marketing knowledge due to poor exposure to market forces:** Due to male dominant culture, less interaction with market forces, lack of business communication skills, marketing of the goods or services becomes challenging to the women entrepreneurs.
- (v) **Lack of confidence:** As women were focused on domestic works for generations together, they lack confidence in the unexplored market.

(vi) Lack of knowledge about taxation on input as well as output: Taxes play an important role in costing of any product or service. Lack of knowledge of all these taxes can result into penalties, loss of opportunities, increase in input cost and loss of credit etc.

(vii) Lack of technical knowhow: For women entrepreneurs, non-exposure to the technical field can lead to loss of opportunities, increased acquisition & maintenance costs and loss of production.

(viii) Multiple responsibilities: All the roles and responsibilities at domestic front and at work place put the limitation on available time for the business. Women entrepreneurs have the challenge of justifying their presence in all of these roles with optimum balance.

(ix) Restriction on mobility: Considering the domestic responsibilities, women entrepreneurs cannot be away from home for longer period. Restriction on mobility may result into loss of opportunities.

(x) Unawareness of the supports and various government schemes: There should be timely knowledge of many schemes launched by Central as well as state governments and various opportunities by various ministries and government bodies for the growth and support of women entrepreneurs. (Binod Kumar, 2019), (Shukla, Dwiwedi, 2023) (Ramesh B, 2018)

Measures by the Government for the growth of women entrepreneurship:

- The First Five-Year Plan (1951-56) push the efforts for welfare initiatives for women by establishing Central Social Welfare Board, Organization of Mahila Mandalas and various Community Development Programs etc.
- In the second Five-Year Plan (1956-61), the steps were taken to empower rural sector women workforce which are mainly involved in agricultural activities by providing earning potential through not only sale of raw agricultural produce but the value added food products made from these agricultural raw materials into the untapped markets at better rates.
- The Third Five-Year Plan (1961-66) and Fourth Five-Year Plan (1969- 74) have focused on women welfare by imparting them the education useful for their employment as well as for starting their own ventures.
- The Fifth Five-Year Plan (1974-79) has given importance to two types of training of women, for increase in income and for self-protection.
- The Sixth Five-Year Plan (1980-85) has moved further to the next step of welfare; i.e. Development. This plan takes measures to overcome hurdle of “lack of access to resources” which was restricting the economic, academic and social growth of women.
- The Seventh Five-Year Plan (1985-90) envisioned the target of women empowerment through gender equality. As a learning through monitoring of earlier five year plans, policy makers put an emphasis upon qualitative aspects such as awareness of rights, training and confidence for better employment.
- The Eighth Five-Year Plan (1992-97) introduced the concept of Panchayati Raj Institutions to focus on women empowerment at the grass roots level.
- The Ninth Five-Year Plan (1997-2002) introduced the strategy of Women’s Component Plan. As per this strategy, funds/ benefits were allocated for sectors having potential for development of women.
- The Tenth Five-Year Plan (2002-07) emphasized on women empowerment through the activation of National Policy for Empowerment of Women and ensuring Survival, Protection and Development of women and children through rights based approach.
- The Eleventh Five-Year Plan (2007-2012) focuses on women empowerment from various perspectives such as political, education, economic independence and legal.
- The Twelfth Five Year Plan (2012-2017) emphasized to ensure dignity & equality of all women.

Subsequently, Government of India has launched many schemes for potential and existing women entrepreneurs. Few of them are as mentioned below;

1. Stand up India Scheme
2. Prime Minister Employment Generation Program (PMEGP)
 3. Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY):
4. Seed Money Scheme (SMS)
 5. District Industries Centre (DIC) Loan Scheme:

Various schemes for MSMEs published by Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises;

1. Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP)
 2. Credit Guarantee Scheme for Micro & Small Enterprises (CGTMSE)
 3. Micro & Small Enterprises Cluster Development Programme (MSE-CDP) Scheme
 4. Scheme of Fund for Regeneration of Traditional Industries (SFURTI)
 5. Entrepreneurship Skill Development Programme (ESDP) Scheme
 6. Assistance to Training Institutions (ATI) Scheme
 7. Coir Vikas Yojana
 8. Procurement and Marketing Support (PMS) scheme
 9. International Cooperation (IC) Scheme
 10. National SC-ST Hub Scheme
 11. A Scheme for Promotion of Innovation, Rural Industries and Entrepreneurship (ASPIRE)
 12. Khadi Gramodyog Vikas Yojana: Umbrella Scheme
 13. Promotion of MSME in NER and SIKKIM
 14. Tool Rooms and Technical Institutions - A Component of Infrastructure Development & Capacity Building scheme
 15. MSME Champions Scheme
 16. Credit Guarantee Scheme for Subordinate Debt (CGSSD) for Stressed MSMEs
 17. Self-Reliant India (SRI) Fund
 18. Raising and Accelerating MSME Performance (RAMP)
- (Swain, 2022)

Organizations promoting and assisting women entrepreneurship in India;

1. **MCED: Maharashtra Centre for Entrepreneurship Development (MCED)**
 2. National Resource Centre for Women (NRCW)
 3. Women's India Trust (WIT)
 4. Women Development Corporation (WDC)
 5. Development of Women and Children in Urban Area (DWCUA)
 6. Women Development Cells (WDC)
 7. National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC)
 8. All-India Development Banks (AIDBs), viz. IDBI, IFCI, ICICI, IIBI, IDFC and SIDBI
 9. Specialized Financial Institutions (SFIs), viz. Exim Bank and NABARD
 10. Investment Institutions, viz. LIC, GIC, NIC, NIA, OIC, UII and UTI
 11. Regional/ State-Level Institutions, viz. NEDFI, SIDCs and SFCs
 12. Commercial Banks
 13. Co-operative Banks
- (Ramesh B, 2018)

The impact of growth of women entrepreneurship on socio-economic factors:

1] Impact of Women Entrepreneurship Development on Women: One women entrepreneur inspires hundreds of other potential women entrepreneurs. She also inculcates the importance

of education, financial independence among other women as well as girls in society.

2] Impact of Women Entrepreneurship Development on Families: Development of women entrepreneur in a family inculcates the gender equality in her kids & desire for higher education. It improves the social status of family as well as it improves the financial status too.

3] Impact of Women Entrepreneurship Development on Community: The women entrepreneurs have more participation in the social activities. Successful women entrepreneur plays role of mentor for other potential women entrepreneurs in that community.

4] Impact of Women Entrepreneurship Development on State: Women empowerment has positive social and economic impact on the state. Women entrepreneurship also helps for overall social coherence of the state.

5] Impact of Women Entrepreneurship Development on Country: Women entrepreneurship is the sign of development of a nation on international front. It also indicates the gender equality, stability and inclusive growth of the society at large.

6] Impact of Women Entrepreneurship Development on MSME Sector: MSME sector has many good schemes for women entrepreneurs designed to help women entrepreneurs to start new ventures as well as to expand the existing business. It has resulted as motivating factor for potential women entrepreneurs.

Conclusion:

The Government of India as well as various state governments have taken many initiatives since independence to empower women through giving them special incentives through various schemes at national, state and district levels for the purpose of imparting technical as well as managerial skills to potential women entrepreneurs, financial assistance, marketing assistance through various seminars, exhibitions at state, national and international level. Corporate Social Responsibility expenses are also being utilized for this purpose by many corporates.

Overall ecosystem of India is becoming stronger continuously along with the increasing economic contribution of women in Indian Economy. Long term policy decisions and strong network of various government bodies & NGOs will certainly bring out the desired results in the years to come.

Limitation:

This research paper is limited to cause and effect analysis on the basis of secondary data as many research papers and Government reports available in open sources. Government Initiatives are dynamic as Government keep on launching new schemes and modifying the existing ones. Women entrepreneurs need to keep themselves updated with the latest developments.

Contribution of this Research Paper:

This research paper has summarized the causes for the growth of women entrepreneurship in the form of push and pulls factors. It can help the potential women entrepreneurs to introspect, identify and give deterministic push to their hidden potential. It can also be helpful to realign the existing schemes and launch new schemes for the growth of women entrepreneurs.

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