

WASTE TO WEALTH THROUGH WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

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ABSTRACT

Women play a crucial role in the growth of the economy. Over the years, Indian women have made a substantial impact and achieved success across sectors, both within the country and overseas. In India though women are playing key role in the society, but still their entrepreneurial ability has not been totally tapped due to the gender disparity shown to the women in the society. Every woman looks for the best opportunities to work from home ,which involve little to no start up capital and minimal risk. Craft is one such innovative vista that is open to the women to start their own small businesses(SB). This study focuses on one such craft which is made out of grocery bag waste. The study also provides knowledge, skill and competence in business which happen to be the core reasons for women to come forward to take up business ventures. The study act as a push and pull factor for women to have a self supporting occupation and to serve the country by reducing shopping bag wastes(SBW) which act as a major threat to the environment.

KEYWORDS: Indian women, SB- Small business, SBW- Shopping bag wastes

INTRODUCTION

According to some estimates, Between 500 billion and a **trillion** plastic grocery bags are used globally each year. Plastic grocery bags are the convenient means to carry items home from the store. However, these single-use bags frequently end up as flyaway litter, speckling trees and shrubs throughout the countryside. If these bags get mixed up in storm drains, they enter waterways. This can place them into rivers and even oceans eventually. In the oceans, plastic bags cause harm to sea creatures who mistakenly think that they are food. Plastic grocery bags are not always recyclable at all types of facilities. A better alternative might be to upcycle them into stylish and practical items you can use at home and make craft out of them.

Recently **craft business** has emerged as new business idea which is said to be perfectly suitable for women. Eco- friendly art and craft have been into fashion during the last few years. Making arts and crafts from **recycled products** has emerged as a continuing trend. So one can base her idea of running craft business

with the help to recycled products like recycled bags, paper, board, cloths, waste material at home etc. If one involve her innovative ideas and give fresh new look at products using recycled items it will be appreciable.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- ❖ The study aims to create an awareness about the new business opportunities out of household grocery bag wastes.
- ❖ The study helps in analysing the various benefits and challenges in this business
- ❖ The study helps in identifying various promotional activities that can help in marketing the products.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Greene et.al. (2003), evaluate the research & publication contribution in the area of women entrepreneurship. The study categorized various journals & resources of research on the basis of certain parameters concerned with women entrepreneurship like gender discrimination, personal attributes, financing challenges, business unit, context and feminist perspectives.

Singh, 2008, identifies the reasons & influencing factors behind entry of women in entrepreneurship. He explained the characteristics of their businesses in Indian context and also obstacles & challenges. He mentioned the obstacles in the growth of women entrepreneurship which are mainly lack of interaction with successful entrepreneurs, social un-acceptance as women entrepreneurs, family responsibilities, gender discrimination, missing network, low priority given by bankers to provide loan to women entrepreneurs. He suggested the remedial measures like promoting micro enterprises, unlocking institutional frame work, projecting & pulling to grow & support the winners etc. The study advocates and ensures synergy among women related ministry, economic ministry & social & welfare development ministry of the Government of India.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

According to the study being self-employed is said to be the dream many people including the women who are home makers. **Small business** interest is one's first step to fulfill this dream. Craft business is an innovative idea for women to start it as a small business. One can do excellently in it if she posses the creativity and interest in this proper field. Before starting a crafts business, it is very important to be totally prepared so that one doesn't end up into failure. Even the highly motivated women may struggle in deciding the right business idea. Hence this study helps the starters with creative business ideas out of household wastes with no or little investment.

“If you are a motivated and wanted to be self-employed business woman but are not sure of the type of the business to start with this study gives you an insight and guidance to grab i new trendy untapped business opportunities available in India”

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study is based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data I collected through questionnaire using convenience sampling method in Coimbatore. Secondary data have been collected from various journals, articles and relevant websites. The study has been limited to secondary data and primary data is not used in this study.

VARIOUS TYPES OF PRODUCTS MADE OUT OF GROCERY BAG WASTE

Make a cool lamp

This cool lampshade can be manufactured from out of hundreds of black and white plastic bag rosettes. The bags are cut into long strips, rolled loosely into rosette shapes, and then glued to the shade.



Pendant Light

. This pendant light can be shaped from out of a bunch of black and white plastic bags, but looks like a million bucks.



Weave a basket from old plastic bags

Instead of having those old plastic bags fill up that under-sink space to the brim, use them to make a nice woven basket, which can be used to store anything from fruit to, well, plastic bags. Grab a cutting mat, blade, ruler, some masking tape, a heavy yarn needle and crochet hook



Plastic Bag Rug

These rugs are made out of plastic shopping bags, cardboard, yard, pencil and scissors



Braided sleeping mat from plastic bags

These sleeping mat are made out of plastic yarn, plastic bags, knitting needles or crochet needles and scissors.



Plastic Bag Jewelry

These are made out of plastic bags and other materials that are layered, collaged together and bonded by fusing.



BENEFITS OF STARTING THIS BUSINESS

Reusability of waste materials:

The materials which are considered as wastes usually fill the trash bin. In this type of business, the most used raw materials are from the recycled wastes, bags. Some of the household items such as plastic cups, cans, cardboard boxes, pins, buttons, magazines and old clothes are also used to make handicraft products. Therefore, it helps to recycle the waste.

Improves the creativity and skills:

With proper skills and development, there is a definite chance to grow your own business. It is the best platform to enhance your interests and skills.

Availability of raw materials:

Since handicraft is all about making craft with available things (mostly recycled household waste products), the raw materials are very cheap and easy to purchase.

Make money with self-employment:

It is one of the best ways to eradicate unemployment. It provides innumerable opportunities to explore the skills and talents. Women who are homemakers and unemployed people can spend their leisure time in learning to reduce waste out of handicraft skills to earn good amount of income.

Minimum investment:

The business completely depends on individual skills and ordinary household waste as raw materials. Therefore, there is no need for big industry or wasting machines.

Environment friendly:

The most attractive thing of handicraft items is Eco-friendly property. They are made up of wood pieces, recycled plastics, bottles and other waste materials which are eventually converted into beautiful pieces of handicraft items. They are not machine-made; hence they use less amount of energy and give minimum amount of waste output. Most of the hand made products are more biodegradable and environmental friendly than factory-made products. They are also completely free from hazardous materials and chemicals.

Good quality and uniqueness:

Only hand made products of good quality arrives to the market. Hence, people can completely trust and buy them. Usually, handicrafts are unique because creativity plays an important role in producing them. Due to the uniqueness factor, the designs and craft works really amaze many buyers all around the world.

CHALLENGES TO BE FACED IN THIS BUSINESS**Short Life**

As the product itself has its origin from the remains of the other trashed waste products and heaps of partially used ones the recycled product, though, is eco-friendly is expected to have a shorter life span than the intended original one.

Lack of Networks

Female entrepreneurs are more likely to encounter difficulty because they are less likely to be associated with networks of people with the help of which they can easily and conveniently launching and sustain their businesses. "Networks" include people who provide mentorship, help and valuable information to entrepreneurs.

Lack of Education

Illiteracy is the root cause of socio-economic problems. Due to the lack of education and that too qualitative education, women are not aware of businesses, technologies and market intelligence. Also, lack of education causes for low achievement motivation among women. Thus, lack of education formidable obstacle for women to set up and run the business enterprises.

Limited Mobility

women mobility in India is highly limited due to various social, economic, linguistic and cultural reasons. A single woman asking for room is still looked up suspiciously. Cumbersome exercise involved in starting an enterprise coupled with the officials humiliating attitude towards women compels them to give up the idea of starting an enterprise.

Stiff Competition

Women entrepreneurs do not have organizational set-up to pump in a lot of money for canvassing and advertisement. Thus, they have to face a stiff competition from organized sector while marketing their products with organized sector. Such a competition ultimately results in the liquidation of women managed enterprises.

Training

Training programs are essential to new and young women entrepreneurs who wish to setup a small and medium scale units. The programs enrich the skill and potentiality of women entrepreneur.

Market Oriented Risk

Women invariably have to face the challenges of market because of stiff competition. Many business women find it difficult to capture the market and compete with their counter parts . They are not fully aware of the changing market conditions

Motivational Factors

Successful women should be self-motivated with best of mind and take up risk and shoulder social responsibilities. The other factors such as family support ,government policies, financial assistance etc. are also important to set up business.

Lack of Confidence

Women lack confidence in their strength and competence. The family members and the society are reluctant to encouraged and stand beside their entrepreneurial growth

Lack of practical experience

If women want to excel with craft business they need to have practical experience ranging from basic design to complete construction .

PROMOTIONAL MEASURES THAT CAN BE USED FOR BUSINESS

Gift With Purchase

Reward largely or frequently purchased products with printed custom artwork.

Trade Shows, Festivals And Public Events

Increase your visibility at shows, festivals or public events—so as to be remembered long after the events are over.

New Product Launch

Increase excitement about your product launch by packaging it with a free, limited edition reusable bag.

Publicity

The media and blogosphere loves green content. Generate media attention by offering a large scale crafts giveaway.

Event Sponsorship

Find an event attended by your target audience and offer to donate crafts in trade for sponsorship benefits.

CHALLENGES FACED BY WOMEN IN STARTING BUSINESS

CHALLENGES	RANK
Problem in finance	2

Scarcity of raw material	4
Stiff competition	5
Limited mobility	7
Family ties	1
Lack of education	6
Low risk bearing ability	8
Male dominated society	3

The information shows that the first rank is being given to family ties and least rank is given to low risk bearing ability.

ADVANTAGES IN WOMEN TAKING UP BUSINESS

ADVANTAGE	RANKING
Social networking	2
Intuition	4
Pain tolerance	6
Multi-tasking	1
Patience	3
Listening	5

The information shows that the first rank is being given to multi-tasking and least rank is given to pain tolerance

CONCLUSION

In India although women constitute the majority of the total population, the entrepreneurial world is still a male dominated one. The principal factor in developing entrepreneurship among women is not in terms of infrastructure or financial assistance or identifying an enterprise, but the effective steps are actually needed to provide entrepreneurial awareness, orientation and skill development programs to women. Hence the role of Women entrepreneurs in economic development should be recognized and steps should be taken to promote women entrepreneurship.

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