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CONFLICT OF DUAL ROLE PLAYED BY THE WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN MALAPPURAM DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

Women in business generally themselves fulfilling number of different roles in their lives, for example, wife, business women, mother and so on. For some women career/business of family are viewed as distinct alternatives they make a choice between the two. For others however there are attempts to combine both, which for many women lead to conflicts since the larger part of the childcare and house keeping. In the present study an attempt has been made to identify the level of conflict women entrepreneurs have to undergo with respect to the traditional role family and the new role of an entrepreneur. The objectives of the study is to identify the role of family support and conflict in women entrepreneurs and to explore the factors that influence women in the initiation of enterprises. Also to apprehend the social determinants of women in enterprise creation and analyze the characteristics of women entrepreneurs in Malappuram and explain their styles of business operations.

Key Words: Entrepreneurship, Women Entrepreneurship, Role Conflict

INTRODUCTION

Efforts are made to promote self-employment among women labor in many developing countries including India during the last decade. This indicates new awareness on the part of the government and policy makers to recognize the role of women in economic growth and their capacity to alleviate poverty at household level. The value attached to the development of entrepreneurship in economic planning boards pervasive promise not only in terms of generating and mobilizing human resources. But also for sustaining and protecting them from degeneration.

The need for developing entrepreneurship is unquestionable with in the process of small enterprise development through entrepreneurship; women are still struggling against many obstacles built in to their social status not only in India but also in all other developing countries. In these areas economic independence for women may be regarded as disruptive of family life. The social norms relating to the status of women range from outright taboos against working outside the home to pressures that discourage women from being involved in self-employment entrepreneurial ventures. In the other hand, the proportion of educated and skilled women in total unemployment is increasing. However, conditions are changing

economic norms modernization and technology up gradation, development of trade and commerce and spread of education.

Definitions of the Terms

For the present study, the following terms are defined bellow:

Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship is a purposeful activity indulged in initiating, promoting and maintaining economic activities for production and distribution of wealth. An entrepreneur is a critical factor in economic development and an integral part of socioeconomic transformation.

Entrepreneurship has been recognized as an essential ingredient of economic development. The basic concept of entrepreneurship can notes an effectiveness' an urge to take risk in the face of uncertainties and an institution that is, a capacity of showing things in a way which afterwards proves to be true'

Women Entrepreneurship

The concept of women entrepreneurship lays emphasis on the utilization of women labour force productivity there by generate income and out put on one hand and to alleviate poverty and reduce the negative social effect of unemployment of under employment among women.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The concept of developing women entrepreneurship lays emphasis in the utilization of women labor force productivity there by generate income and out put on one hand and alleviate poverty and reduce the negative social effect of unemployment of under employment among women and also confining women only to house hold non-economic activities. The latter aspect is known as the problem of segregating women through socio cultural means depriving them total quality and the fruits of modernization and economic development. The programs for developing women entrepreneurship would make ardent upon sedition or segregation of women and deprivation of women. Thus the development of women entrepreneurship has enormous implication for combating against poverty and deprivations as well as exploitation of women.

Attempts would make to expand women employment in the household sector by providing adequate support in the areas of technology up gradation, training, credit raw materials and marketing. A decentralized approach for providing these facilities will help considerably in the expansion of women's employment in these sectors.

This growth of small-scale units set up by women entrepreneurs is not only by number. What appears to be more important is the noticeable shift. The women entrepreneurs have shown by setting up specialized type of industries as against stereo typed house hold industries being set up earlier. The myth that the women are fit only for papad and pickle making is crushed completely. Even they have not only confined themselves to garment or service industry but has made a shift to computer, chemicals and construction materials.

Composition of Women enterprises

Sl No	Types of Enterprises	
1	Garment	35.03
2	Services	15.47
3	Food Processing	13.90
4	Chemicals	8.50
5	Engg. Job work	7.66
6	Manufacturing	7.60
7	Furniture&Fixtures	5.56
8	Construction material	2.20
9	Handicrafts	1.50
10	Leather	1.47
11	Computer	0.63
12	Agro	0.37
13	Consultancy	0.05
	Total	100

From the above illustration, it can be seen that majority of the women (35%) are engaged in the garment while 15-47% run service unit, and still another 13.90% own food processing units. All these are predominantly a famine area as compared to manufacturing, chemicals, engineering job work or computer. Therefore, an inference may be drawn the women entrepreneurs are still domain art in traditional and science units, but they have entered in to more sophisticated technology oriented and difficult ventures. The number is less but indicative of great future potential. But whatever achievements have been made by the promotional agencies or the women themselves has it touched just the fringe.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- 1) To identify the role of family support and conflict in women entrepreneurs
- 2) To explore the factors that influence women in the initiation of enterprises
- 3) To apprehend the social determinants of women in enterprise creation
- 4) To paralyze the characteristics of women entrepreneurs in Malappuram and explain their styles of business operations

METHODOLOGY

(a) **Sample size and selection** Sample for this study was collected from Malappuram districts. As the women entrepreneurs constitute only 20% of the total entrepreneurs it was decided to have a separate sample of entrepreneurs than from one part of the district. Thus 40 entrepreneurs were selected from 6 Taluks. Focus group interviews were also from part of the survey to capture qualitative data.

(b) **Primary Data collection and Analysis** The present study is basically based on primary data collected from fieldwork for the purpose of collecting primary data; a detailed questionnaire was prepared and used. The data, thus collected was entered in to small tables and the adding up method was adopted to prepare functional tables. The functional tables that are very important for the analysis are used in the study.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

To past it briefly the review of related literature helps the researcher, to located and formulate a feasible and useful problem to avoid necessary duplication, to minimum the work and to get a better insight in to the areas under investigation.

Welsh and young's study forces on a comparative analysis of male and female entrepreneurs along selected demographic, personality and behavioral dimension. The parameters selected are risk-taking focus of control, machiavelism self-esteem, receptiveness to innovation, rigidity, attitude towards government regulations and economic optimism. This study has revealed that men have high economic optimism than women.

Singh N.P and Gupta R.S in there study potential women entrepreneurs pointed out that women entrepreneurs generally come from joint families because of several advantages such as lower stress as compared to women coming from Nuclear families.

Honig-Hattel, S& Martine, says in their study that women tend to use only personal assets at start up and take minimal or no external finding.

Tinker, 1985 pointed out that women entrepreneurs spend their income to improve the home situation and particularly for children's education'

Simpson, Sandra, M studied on women entrepreneurs' women at work psychological and organizational perspective and pointed out that divergence between women and men comes in the form of problems that women experience which men do not.

Sengupta, Rita, and Mishra pointed out that most of the women (93%) reported that they did not have any problem in performing their role in the family as wife, mother, daughter-in-law, and daughter in addition to their entrepreneurial activities.

Thomson (1991) in his study "A comparison of social performance in female owned and male owned small business" pointed out that motivating force for women to become business owners is interest in helping others.

Huttic, Maccoby & Jackling have made studies on cognitive & abilities have pointed out the gender bias is often quoted as an important factor impeding the growth of women entrepreneurship.

The status of women in terms of social demographic indicators such as population, sex ratio and literacy rate is quite high in Kerala relative to national average.

The entrepreneurship among women in Malappuram becomes relevant as a potential instrument for generating employment and income. The conservative socio-cultural factors present in Kerala society have restricted women from entering in to entrepreneurial ventures. There are several factors that tend to change this scenario. There are

- (1) Special schemes being promoted by government and financial institutions aimed at self-employment / entrepreneurship among women as income earners for the family.
- (2) Attitudinal changes in favor of financial and social independence
- (3) Lack of employment opportunities in the traditional white collar category with government agencies.

Social characteristics of women entrepreneurs in Malappuram

Entrepreneurial itself and its quality are amenable to intervention. There are contain qualities and values which are formed by the family/social circumstances in which one lives in the following paragraph we discuss some of these aspects about women entrepreneurs of Malappuram in terms of age, education, marital status, work of experience, family income and family behavior.

The cultural boundaries in the Indian women live in entirely different from that of other countries in the world. Marriage is often considered as the most important happening in a woman's life. The importance given to education particularly to girls, during the period of this century by the maharajas of the cost while state of Travancore, had made significant social changes in Malappuram. Female education influenced the social and family life patterns of the Malappuram society including nutrition, hygiene birth rates, delay in marriage etc. no deference is noted between females are computing in all levels along with males in educational and related activities-. As a result of girls opting for higher education, the women in Malappuram are getting married only after attaining the age of 18 years, however, they are not encouraged to take up any entrepreneurial activity on their own till recently.

AGE AND MARRIAGE

AGE OF RESPONDENTS

AGE	MARITAL STATUS		TOTAL	PERCENTAGE
	Married	Unmarried		
<25	2	4	6	10.5
25-29	3	2	5	12.5
30-34	8	3	11	27.5
35-39	4	1	5	12.5
40 and above	12	1	13	32.5
Total	29	11	40	100

Table: 2

Sources: Primary Data

Table 2 shows the age and marital status of respondents. The analysis of age of the responds indicates that a significant majority were more than 25 years in age and almost 72.5% were above 30 years and under 44years. Das in her study almost comes out almost with the same results saying nearly to parent of woman being under 44 years of age. The data on the marital status shows that 72.5% of woman entrepreneurs are married.

The marital status of woman and age of entrepreneurs thus seem to be determinant factors in enterprise creation. As a woman gets married she is seen to be more secured and well protected. As a result she has the liberty to take up a new

venture that originates from "real home" which is her husband's or her in-law's home. The husband may be a source of strength in fact material status and age run parallel for these business women which explains why married older females have been more successful in setting up centers of self-employment.

The reason for such a result could be the reduced in terms of the family responsibility nature woman are given more respect and help in the society compared to younger females. These enables this women to focus on their own interest in other words, these women feels less pressured and encounter fewer difficulties in dealing with a male dominated society. Researches in the west have discovered that most woman are little order when they en mark on their economic ventures as compared to the age of woman.

Another important aspect could be that the women of Kerala also do not consider entrepreneurship as a profession. Rather it is, naturally, the last choice for them to earn money. This may also cause the late entry of them in to this field. Data indicate that to present of women have less than 3 children. The literacy rate in Kerala, particularly among women may be one cause for smaller families. This is an achievement in itself because this helps ambitious woman to fulfill their potential and spend more of their time for the benefit of the children and family.

EDUCATION

EDUCATION OF RESPOIDENTS

EDUCATION	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
<=SSLC	19	47.5
+2	9	22.5
UG	7	17.5
PG/Professionals	5	12.5
TOTAL	40	100

Table 3

Source: Primary Data

Considering the historical factors that promoted education in the district in general and the women in particular, a higher educational level among women entrepreneurs was expected. But this is not related in the sample population. It is identified that around 47.5% has studied up to the level of matriculation and 22.5 percent up to 17.5 percent graduate and only 12.5 to postgraduate and above.

These lead to the following interference.

(1) The women entrepreneurs in small enterprise do not consider higher education

as an essential requirement for enterprise creation.

(2) A person with higher educational level normally seems to prefer white-collar jobs rather than becoming an entrepreneur. However, if given proper intervention training there are chances to motivate them to take up entrepreneurship.

(3) There is an association between the educational level of women entrepreneurs and

that of their spouse/father

FAMILY PROFILE

The family profile of the respondents refer to the type of family they belong to Nuclear family denotes a family with husband, wife and unmarried children, joint family means husband, wife, children, husband's/wife's parents, brother, sister and their children. Extend family means family with husband, wife, children, husband's/wife's parents. The study reported that 48% of the respondents have a nuclear family and the remaining coming from joint/extended families. It has been observed that normally women coming from nuclear families face less problems and questions to deal with at home. They do not have to answer to their parents in law or deal with a large number of members in a joint family. In personal interviews, found that most women identified a small family as an important factor in conducting their independent husband.

On the other hand, women from joint families have the advantage of learning their children at home with the grand parents who also help to take care of the household responsibilities. Several studies have shown that women entrepreneurs generally come from joint families because of several advantages such as lower stress as compared to women coming from nuclear families. Thus both joint and nuclear families contribute their own way to ameliorate the situation of women.

It has also been reported that Indian women, whose families are involved industrial and business activities achieved success faster than others and the success is attributed to the fact that these women entrepreneurs could assume the role of independent decision maker and leader easily'

FAMILY EDUCATION

The educational background of the family also a factor overall, the women came from families with some good background. Educational levels of fathers and husbands, income level of the family and education of the female are correlated'

It is generally agree the educational contributes towards the quality of human life and thereby becomes an important input in the productive process. An educated family plays an important role in motivation. Thus, women entrepreneurs are seem to have

benefited from a propensity towards education. However the family professional background reflects that 90 percent of thus women do not come from entrepreneurial backgrounds. This reality has not, prohibited thus women to venture out and establish their own enterprise. Moreover-they have gained full support of their family members' This may be investigated by an increasingly consumer culture in which the need for a second income become significant.

FAMILY SUPPORT DECISION MAKING

It is believed that environmental support is firmly grounded in cultural and social norms. Matriculation of women entrepreneurship often encound severe environmental constrains-which exist in the form of socio cultural attitudes and institutional discrimination. This section seeks to highlights the following factors.

The accepted traditional roles of women in society are of those of wife and mother. The under valued third role is that of an economic nature. The difference in the perceptions of what as suitable economic activities for women based on the different social contents. In the Kerala context, women have been given a high social status through matrilineal succession.

The change from joint family to nuclear family as influenced the role of the woman in the family; the women economic role has been now given more importance along with the other two roles. with the mounting level of unemployment and competition for employment, women now tern towards entrepreneurship which had not been socially accepted till recently. It has to be noted that to get social acceptance a significant majority of them involve themselves entrepreneurial activities only after marriage. This has to be viewed in the context of support and inspiration provided by the family members. In this study 37.5 % of the despondence the motive force for venture creature are their parents. Spouses give the needed support in the cases of 21%. Thus a significant majority (60%) has support and encouragement from the family indicating that changes that are taking place in the society towards woman entrepreneurship leading to creative and productive

activities. Support and encouragement means support in the respects including physical and moral so as to give courage in all respects including moral and physical so as to give courage and confidence. It also indicates dependency nature of woman on their family.

PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

Divergence between women and men comes in the form of problems that women's experience which men do not. This is true in their social rules particularly in the participation in social organizations. Society forbids women through norms, controls and rules in taking up social rules in a free manner. Such norms and controls are used in a conservative society, not even allowing women to play the expected rules by themselves. This is a crucial issue of taking up the subordinate role both inside and outside the family.

PARTICIPATION IN SOCIAL ORGANISATIONS

BEFORE ENTERPRISE CREATION	AFTER ENTERPRISE CREATION		TOTAL
	YES	NO	
YES	15	6	21
NO	09	10	19
TOTAL	24	16	40

Table 4

Cultural and social values exercise a profound influence on human behavior particularly among woman. The presents of positive and negative societal attitude influences entrepreneurial behavior of woman. Consciously or unconsciously the society is giving a message that "men are better and more important than woman, and that the prime role in life for woman is that wife and mother " the responsibility of taking decision on day-to-day activities normally rest with the entrepreneur'

ROLE CONFLICTS

Acknowledging the efforts of role conflict is not meant to reinforce the notion that women in variably adopt wife/family commitments. For some women career/business of family are viewed as distinct alternatives they make a choice between the two. For others however there are attempts to combine both, which for many women lead to conflicts since the larger part of the childcare and house keeping still falls to women. Women in business generally themselves fulfilling number of different roles in their lives, for example, wife, business women, mother and so on. Conflicts experienced do not seem to depend on whether women are married or not, or whether they have children or not. Women experience more conflicts with children who are no longer living at home.

In the present study an attempt has been made to identify the level of conflict women entrepreneurs have to undergo with respect to the traditional role family and the new role of an entrepreneur. Most of the women constituted in the sample (93%) reported that they did not have any problem in performing their roles in the family as wife, mother, daughter-in-law and daughter in addition to their entrepreneurial activities. The main reason for this may be that the income of women benefits the entire household they tend to receive full emotional support from their families and especially mothers in law in taking care of the household chores. Middle class families are also have the support of maid servants who assist in daily chores and in raising their children.

Further probing shows that women entrepreneurs are receiving good amount of support from their spouses and as such it would not be a problem for them to adjust with the two different roles they have to perform. However, they have not

clearly the spell out the type of support received from their spouses particularly with respect to family responsibilities. The support in enterprise creation and management could be of three types.

1. Men, in general are not enthusiastic of women opting entrepreneurial activities. They do not actively involve in the enterprise development activities of their spouses.
2. They provide all the necessary support and take up responsibility in connection with enterprise creation. In other words, in a women industry, the husband is running the business behind the curtain.
3. However, there are instances where women look after the production and other day-to-day activities with the firm, while the husband concentrates on marketing and other related activities. In such industries, roles are clearly demarcated. Women in all such cases are responsible for household activities indicating the acceptance of conventional female roles and committed to family achievements. In other words, their commitments towards entrepreneurial activities come after considering their traditional female role. The family and the family comes in good stead for women entrepreneurs to get the support of their spouses in adjusting with the entrepreneurial activities. It was found from past experiences that the last two types of spouse support would be considered as successful one in sustaining the enterprise successfully.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

In recent times, the area women entrepreneurship has been attracting considerable attention in the literature on economic and social change. Entrepreneurship is an ideal tool where by women can be drawn in to the mainstream of economic activity and improves their social status. The studies on women entrepreneurship have not made any attempt to look at the socio cultural factors such as fear of failure in the Indian context we have to see the significance of the family support required by the women entrepreneurs in this context. In the light above this study was conducted among the women entrepreneurs in Malappuram. The study was conducted on a representative samples collected from the different taluks of Malappuram district

FINDINGS .

1. The important finding of the study is 80% of woman entrepreneurs are in the middle age group (30) and are married. Thus the marital status and age of entrepreneurs seems to be a determinant factors in enterprise creation .
2. The woman entrepreneurs in small enterprise do not consider education as an essential element for entrepreneurship development as 57% of them were having education only up to matriculation. However it also evident that for activities involving high investment and creation of value added products educational level is considered as one of the determinant factor.
3. Through the background of family business may give role models for the entrepreneurs a majority (85%) of woman entrepreneurs are first generation entrepreneurs.
4. The motivating factors which are promoted enterprise creation are identified as economic gain , own ambition , availability of finance and social status .
5. Woman entrepreneurs have identified the non-availability of finance as the critical problem in venture development
6. Significant majority of the respondents are of the opinion that role conflicts do not stand in creation of enterprise, however it also evident that from the study that the successful woman entrepreneurs are having total support from the family.

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