

Challenges and Support during Project Stage: A Case Study of Women Entrepreneurs of Udupi District

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Abstract:

Women entrepreneurs are the women who initiate a business, gather all resources, take risks, face challenges, provide employment to others, and manage the business independently. "Women Entrepreneurship" means an act of business ownership and business creation that empowers women economically in a position in society. Women entrepreneurship provides effective framework for sustainable development of the country. It helps in sustainable revitalization of GDP of a country by generating the employment. Women Entrepreneurship needs to be encouraged, prompted and supplemented by the benefit of the aggregate economy of the country. In this study, the researcher attempted to examine challenges faced and support received by the women entrepreneur during project stage in the district of Udupi. The research paper is based on the primary data. The collected data is analysed using Simple Percentage Method, Ranking Method. The study found that very few women entrepreneurs have professional qualification and have received formal training. Furthermore, most women were housewives prior to entering the business and lacked practical experience. The majority of women entrepreneurs have experienced difficulties with finance, meeting regulatory standards, and technical difficulties, including project reports, and have benefited from support from family members, particularly spouses.

Keywords: Women Entrepreneurs, Challenges, Support, Start-up Problems, Project Planning

Introduction:

Over the last decade, the Indian economy has grown steadily, and there has been a parallel increase in the number of start-ups and new businesses in the country. While many Indian women have entrepreneurial ambitions, it is often more difficult for them to succeed. In fact, India has been identified as one of the countries where women business owners (as well as women leaders and professionals) face adverse conditions, pronounced cultural biases, and a lack of business resources such as finances, capital, training, and development. Women's entrepreneurial activities have increased, and an increasing number of women are entering the industrial scenario and establishing their own businesses. Women's entrepreneurship development is vital for strengthening the industrial base, creating job opportunities, and stimulating growth in the country. Women entrepreneurs make significant contributions to society. Women are more likely than men to start businesses that have both social and economic goals, as well as hybrid ventures.

Women's entrepreneurship in India has grown significantly over the last few decades. Women entrepreneurs are becoming more prevalent in all industries. In fact, according to the 2021 BNP Paribas Global Entrepreneur Report, India has the highest percentage of female entrepreneurs. The survey included 2,500 entrepreneurs from the United States, Europe, the Middle East, and Asia. For the first time in 13 years, the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) study of 59 economies finds that women are starting businesses at a higher rate than men in three economies, with rates nearly equal in four others. Entrepreneurship is a less desirable career option in India, according to the report, when compared to BRIC and factor-driven economies. India's Total Early-Stage Entrepreneurial Activity (TEA) is lower than the global average for efficiency-driven countries at 9.9%, compared to 10.7% for Singapore, 14.0% for China, and 12.7% for the US. In fact, among all economies driven by factors, India has the second-lowest TEA rate after Algeria (21 percent). According to the report, roughly one third, or 32%, of all early-stage entrepreneurs are women.

According to the Sixth Economic Census, Only 14% of commercial firms in the nation are run by women entrepreneurs. This indicates that just 8.05 million of the 58.5 million operational enterprises have a female boss. The poll also showed that the majority of these women-run businesses are modest in size, predominate in the manufacturing and retail trade sectors, and are around 79 percent self-financed.

Present study is conducted to analyze the challenges faced and support received by the women entrepreneur during project stage of Udupi District.

Review of Literature:

Mehta and Mehta (2011)¹ discussed various challenges faced by rural women entrepreneurs and some suggestions for effective development of women entrepreneurs. The researcher found that the women limited themselves to the three Ks: knitting, kids, and the kitchen. The development of women entrepreneurs requires appropriate efforts across the board. There will always be a place for rural women business owners in economic development. The researcher concluded that the sole pressing requirement is to foster an environment that will encourage women to work for themselves and advance overall national development. The rural women entrepreneurs in India have promising futures.

Kumari, S (2012)² analysed the different problems and challenges facing women entrepreneurship in India after independence. The time has come for women to express their creativity and entrepreneurial spirit instead of spending their days doing housekeeping. The position of women in a changing society has also been influenced by political changes in India. Although women's involvement in organised business as entrepreneurs is relatively new, they have always contributed to the industrial process. The government has been making every effort to persuade parents to send their daughters to school by providing facilities and engaging in persuasion tactics. Even though these initiatives have been somewhat successful, a breakthrough won't happen until women and men have equal opportunity.

Shankar (2013)³ attempts to research the idea of women entrepreneurs in India to motivate people to start their own businesses, why women entrepreneurs in India are making slow progress, and what initiatives the Indian government is taking to support and advance women entrepreneurs in the country? Today's corporate environment is strongly fuelled by women entrepreneurs. Not only are they able to balance motherhood and business, but they also make up nearly half of all companies in existence today. Due to their prior jobs in other fields, many female entrepreneurs are between the ages of 40 and 60. Instead of seeking financial gain, their main objectives are involvement in the community and personal fulfilment.

Kumbhar, V (2013)⁴ analysed the issues regarding women entrepreneurship in rural India. The research work is based on secondary research and a few observations; in order to identify these problems, the author has read a number of research papers and articles. A lack of a clear plan for life, an imbalance between women's obligations to their families and careers, a lack of direct property ownership, a lack of knowledge about one's capabilities, a lack of ability to take risks, difficulties working with men, negligence on the part of financial institutions, a lack of self-confidence, a lack of professional training, mobility restrictions, and a lack of interaction with successful people are among the findings of the study.

Objectives of the Study:

- To analyse the problems and challenges faced by women entrepreneurs during project stage.
- To analyse the support received by women entrepreneurs during project stage.
- To give fruitful suggestions based on the findings of the study.

Scope of the Study:

The researcher in this study has made an attempt to determine the challenges faced and support received by the women entrepreneur during project stage in the district of Udupi.

Research Methodology:

The Present study is based on primary data collected from 100 sample respondents of Udupi District. The collected data were analyzed and interpreted by using statistical tools i.e. percentage, frequency and rank methods.

Analysis and discussion

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondent Women Entrepreneurs

Variables	Characteristics	Frequency	%
Age- (Yrs.) (At start of Business)	< 25	1	1
	25 -35	81	81
	35 -45	9	9
	45 - 55	1	1
	> 55	-	-
Marital Status	Unmarried	2	2
	Married	98	98
	Widow/ Separated	-	-
Type of Family	Joint	21	21
	Nuclear	79	79

Source: Compiled Based on Primary Data

As depicted in Table 1, the majority of women who started businesses were married and between the ages of 25 and 35. Additionally, as most female entrepreneurs come from nuclear families, support from family members, especially spouses.

Table 2: Education, Training & Experience of Respondent Women Entrepreneurs

Variables	Characteristics	Frequency	%
Educational Qualification	Up to 12	15	15
	UG	60	60
	PG	21	21
	Professional	2	2
	Any Other	2	2
Training Received (At start of Business)	Formal	14	14
	Informal	43	43
*Past experience / None	Professional	6	6
	Other*	37	37
Occupation (Before Induction into Business)	Manufacturing	4	4
	Agriculture	-	-
	Trading	1	1
	Professional/Service	3	3
	House wife	91	91
	Other	1	1

Source: Compiled Based on Primary Data

As depicted in Table 2, the majority of women entrepreneurs are fairly educated, with more than 60% possessing a university degree (UG or PG). But just 2% of women hold professional degrees. It is noted that just a tiny percentage of responders have professional training, while the majority have simply formal training. The remaining women company owners either have obtained informal training from a variety of sources or are managing their companies based on prior expertise earned from helping, taking part in, and watching over other enterprises. Many women, it would seem, receive their first managerial experience in their own businesses. It has been noted that 91 percent of female entrepreneurs were housewives prior to starting their businesses.

Table 3: Business Characteristics of Respondent Women Entrepreneur

Variables	Characteristics	Frequency	%
Form of Organization	Sole Proprietary	91	91
	Partnership	31	31
	Pvt. Ltd.	9	9
	Public Ltd.	-	-
	Cooperative Society	-	-
Capital Investment	Up to 10 Lakh	2	2
	10 – 25 lakh	32	32
	25 – 50 Lakh	94	94
	Over 50 Lakh	3	3

Source: Compiled Based on Primary Data

As indicated in table 3, most women entrepreneurs were having sole proprietorship firm which constituted 91 percent of total population followed by women entrepreneurs were having partnership firms i.e. 31 percent and few women entrepreneurs were having Pvt. Ltd. firms i.e. only 9 percent. There were no firms in the form of public limited company or cooperative society. It is found that in the sample surveyed 94 industries (94 percent) belonged to category of 25-50 lakh capital investment, followed by industries in the investment group of 10 – 25 lakhs. There were few industries having capital investment up to 10 lakhs as well as capital investment in excess of 50 lakh.

Table 4: Problems Faced During Project Stage by Women Entrepreneurs

Problems Faced in Planning	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
Technical skills	94	94	1
Managerial skills	63	63	4
Organizational skill	42	42	5
Finance	93	93	2
License / Registration / NOC	72	72	3
Other	21	21	6

Source: Compiled Based on Primary Data

As depicted in table 4, most women entrepreneur faced one or other challenges in project stage. 94 percent of women entrepreneurs were facing lack of technical skills as the major problem which ranked 1, which is understandably so because majority of the women entrepreneurs were not technically qualified. The problem concerning Finance took the second place in ranking, followed by statutory compliance e.g., license, registration and NOC, managerial skills, organizational skills which ranked 3, 4 & 5 respectively.

Table 5: Help Received by Women Entrepreneurs During Project Stage

Help in Project Planning	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
Husband	88	88	1
Family Members	71	71	2
Friends	13	13	4
Professionals	34	34	3

Source: Compiled Based on Primary Data

All the women entrepreneurs received support at the entry stage from members in their families. Factors like the nature, extent, and type of family support were important in determining the progress of enterprises run by women. Women entrusted such responsibilities to husband, other members of the family or professional who did the work on payment.

As depicted in table 5, 88 women entrepreneurs have received help from husband amounting to 88% of sample industries. Since majority of the entrepreneurs begin business after marriage, the role of husband in women entrepreneurship development has been significant. This was followed by help received from other members of the family (71%). 34 entrepreneurs (34%) have taken help from professionals and 13 entrepreneurs (13%) have been helped by their friends.

Table 6: Nature of Support Received by Women Entrepreneurs During Project Stage

Nature Support	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
Project Identification	40	40	6
Project Report	55	55	4
Project Planning	49	49	5
Site Selection	33	33	7
Setting up Business	26	26	8
Govt. formalities	69	69	2
Banking	60	60	3
Financial Management	76	76	1

Source: Compiled Based on Primary Data

Table 6 indicates the nature of support received during project stage by women entrepreneurs. The table shows that the finance management was one area in which women entrepreneurs

needed and received maximum support i.e. 76 percent and ranked first. Full filling government formalities and compliance was the next in which 69 percent entrepreneurs took assistance and support. Other areas where support was needed by women entrepreneurs are banking i.e. 60% ranked 3, project report preparation 55% ranked 4, project planning 49 percent which ranked 5, project identification 40 percent which ranked 6, site selection is 33% which ranked 7 and setting up business is 26 percent which ranked 8.

Findings:

- It is found that the majority of women who started businesses were married and between the ages of 25 and 35.
- Over 60 percent of women entrepreneurs are found to be fairly educated, with a university degree (UG or PG).
- It is found that around 91 percent women entrepreneurs were house wife before their induction into business.
- Most entrepreneurs were having sole proprietorship firm which constituted 91 percent of total population followed by women entrepreneurs were having partnership firms and few entrepreneurs were having Pvt. Ltd. Firms.
- It is found that majority of the entrepreneurs begin business after marriage, the role of husband in women entrepreneurship development has been significant.
- Finance management was one area in which women entrepreneurs needed and received maximum support (76%) and ranked first and setting up business ranked last (26% ranked 8).

Suggestions:

- Professional training helps women entrepreneurs to enhance their business in every field. The Government should set up a training centre to the micro women entrepreneurs for improving their technical knowledge and creativity in the business.
- Women entrepreneurs have to depend on their own saving due to the unhelpful attitude of banks while providing finance to them. So, Banks should play a positive role to provide loan to women entrepreneurs so that they can have adequate finance to establish their business.
- Banks, Government agencies and different financial institution should simplify the procedures, formalities, rules and regulations in matter regarding registration and getting assistance from them.
- Most of the women entrepreneurs unaware of the many government programmes and plans. They can readily join in the programmes if they are well informed on the plans.

Conclusion:

The current study provides some distinct indicators on the nature and challenges faced by women entrepreneurs during business startup. While the majority of women start their own businesses between the ages of 25 and 35 and after getting married, the challenges they experience are linked to their educational background, professional training, and familial support. Very few women had professional qualifications or had had formal education. Additionally, the majority of women entrepreneurs were housewives prior to starting their

businesses and lacked relevant experience. Many of their start-up difficulties may be explained by this. Before starting a firm, it is advised that women entrepreneurs get some prior exposure to the industry, either through hands-on experience or by attending courses and conferences designed for their industry.

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