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CONTENTS

Sr. No.	TITLE & NAME OF THE AUTHOR (S)	Page No.
1.	ROLE OF REAL ESTATE (REGULATION AND DEVELOPMENT) ACT 2016 IN PROMOTION OF GROWTH OF REAL ESTATE SECTOR <i>Dr. N. VISALAKSHI & Dr. K. KANAKA RAJU</i>	1
2.	CHALLENGES AND PROBLEMS FACED BY WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN INDIA – AN ANALYSIS <i>Dr. V. BALACHANDRAN & A. PANJAVARNAM</i>	7
3.	THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF MULTILATERAL TRADING SYSTEMS <i>Dr. M B MOHANDAS</i>	11
4.	PRESENTEEISM AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO LABOR PRODUCTIVITY WITHIN MALIAN FIRM SEGMA <i>Dr. TIEDIAN FANE, Dr. SALIMOU KEITA & Dr. ALIOU BAMAMOU MAIGA</i>	15
5.	HUMAN RESOURCES EXPENSES AND ITS EFFECT ON FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE OF INDIAN CORPORATE GIANTS: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY <i>ARINDAM SAHA</i>	21
6.	IMPACT OF CROSS-BORDER FACTORS ON INDIAN STOCK MARKET – WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO EXCHANGE RATE <i>K.NATARAJAN & Dr. L. GANESAMOORTHY</i>	24
7.	IMPACT OF ECONOMIC RECESSION ON THE GROWTH OF SMALL AND MEDIUM SCALE ENTERPRISES IN NIGERIA <i>Dr. JOSEPH EDEWO AGBADUDU & MONEY UDIH</i>	26
8.	IMPACT OF WAREHOUSE SECTOR IN AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT - A STUDY IN WARANGAL RURAL AND URBAN DISTRICTS IN TELANGANA STATE <i>Dr. T. SESHIAIAH</i>	30
9.	CUSTOMER SATISFACTION ON SERVICES OF THE AGRANI BANK LTD DISTRICT COUNCIL BRANCH, FARIDPUR <i>MAHBUBA SULTANA & HUMIRA YEASMIN</i>	34
10.	THE IMPACT OF FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT INFLOWS IN BALANCE OF PAYMENT <i>RENJU JOSEPH</i>	52
	REQUEST FOR FEEDBACK & DISCLAIMER	54

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CHALLENGES AND PROBLEMS FACED BY WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN INDIA – AN ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

Women Entrepreneur is a person who accepts challenging role to meet her personal needs and become economically independent. Many women have this quality but they never got a platform to showcase their talents and hence they don't know their real abilities. Women in India are taking more responsibilities in bringing up children and maintaining a better home with love and affection. At the family level, the task of coordinating various activities in a much effective manner, without feeling the pinch of inconveniences, is being carried out by the women folk. This paper focuses on problems and challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in India. Women are equally competent in running business but still lacks behind in spite of women empowerment movement in our country, there are social, cultural and economic hurdles in the way of women entrepreneurship and the major problem is lack of entrepreneurial environment. In spite of having the potential and talent, women are deprived of opportunities, information and education. Some of the major problems identified are women's family obligations, Gender inequality, Problem of Finance, Low-level risk taking attitude, and the male -female competition. The problems of women entrepreneurs can be eradicated by appropriate training, incentives, encouragement and motivation, social recognition of their entrepreneurial abilities, and family's moral support.

KEYWORDS

women empowerment, women entrepreneur, independent, social barriers, environment, gender inequality.

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INTRODUCTION

You never lose in business, either you win or you learn.

Never hire someone you cannot fire. Choose your life partner carefully.

An unsupportive spouse can kill a business faster than a bad marketing plan."

- *Smallbizlady*

The Indian culture made them only subordinates and executors of the decisions made by other male members, in the basic family structure. The traditional set up is changing in the modern era. The transformation of social fabric of the Indian society, in terms of increased educational status of women and varied aspirations for better living, necessitated a change in the life style of Indian women both in urban as well as in rural areas. Women Entrepreneurship is a person who accepts challenging role to meet her personal needs and become economically independent. A strong desire to do something positive is an inbuilt quality of entrepreneurial women, who is capable of contributing values in both family and social life. This is great news. But, a part of women in some parts of the country still do not know their power. The societal set up in India has been traditionally a male dominated one. Women contribute significantly to the running of family businesses mostly in the form of unpaid effort and skills. The value of this effort is underestimated both by the families that take it for granted and in academic studies. At the family level, the task of coordinating various activities in a much effective manner, without feeling the pinch of inconveniences, is being carried out by the women folk. Women entrepreneurship is essential for every nation. They are needed to compete with well-developed nations; both men and women should participate in all activities on equal basis. Men performance is good, as an entrepreneur, women also should grow well as an entrepreneur. Like a male entrepreneurs a women entrepreneur has many functions. They should explore the prospects of starting new enterprise; undertake risks, introduction of new innovations, coordination, administration and control of business and providing effective leadership in all aspects of business. Generally, women plays dual role, like a housewife and employee, such situations automatically the stress levels of women would gradually increase. Though they are satisfied by playing dual role, definitely they will face stress to handle two roles at a time. Government of India has described women entrepreneurs as an enterprise/venture owned and controlled by women having at least financial interest of 51% of the capital and giving at least 51% of employment generated in the organization to women.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In the last few decades, women had started to realize the value of self-employment and they are now utilizing their capabilities in entrepreneurial activities. Researchers claim that family issues such as giving proper time and fulfilling family culpabilities are the chief issues confronted by them.

Hafizullahet (2012), the study highlighted that male dominance in culture creates problems for female entrepreneurs in terms of limiting their mobility, business participation and market interactions. The further arguments of the research revealed that women entrepreneurs of India have to face both environments; traditional and contemporary in order to run their enterprises. Traditional category includes socio cultural and religious elements while contemporary category is a sub category of above mentioned factors and includes constitutional structure, policymaking and other institutional mechanism.

Palaniappan., Ramgopal and Mani (2012), the study revealed that the lack of proper leadership, planning and inadequate financial resource allocation is some other difficulties that women usually face during execution of their businesses. Many women have these qualities but they never got a platform to showcase their talents and hence they do not know their real abilities. Matching the basic qualities required for entrepreneurs and the basic characters of Indian women reveal that, much potential is available among the Indian women on their entrepreneurial ability. This potential is to be recognized, brought out and exposed for utilization in productive and service sectors for the development of the nation. The vast majority of the world's poor are women. Two-thirds of the world's illiterates are

female. Afza, Hassan and Rashid (2010), His study recognized poor economy and stereotyped society as other factors liable of causing glitches for female entrepreneurs. The major factors that restrain women from business are gender-based discrimination, lack of communal support, limited access to information, inadequate education & training facilities, absence of trust in one's capabilities and access to resources.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the problems and challenges faced by the women entrepreneurs in India.
2. To examine the types of issues and problems they encounter in order to reach the level of success.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The methodology adopted in this research work is descriptive research. The research design of the present work is descriptive type of conclusive one. The study is mainly based on secondary data. The required secondary data have been collected from the standard textbooks, reports of committees, websites and reputed journals and magazines.

WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN INDIA

Entrepreneur: An entrepreneur is someone who is a risk taker and is ready to face challenges.

Women Entrepreneur: It may be defined as a woman or group of women who initiate, organize and run a business enterprise. Government of India has defined women entrepreneurs as owning and controlling an enterprise with a women having a minimum financial interest of 51 percent of the capital and giving atleast 51 percentage of the employment generated in the enterprise to women.

TABLE 1: STATISTICAL DATA OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN INDIA

States	No of Units Registered	No of Women Entrepreneur	Percentage
Tamilnadu	9618	2930	30.36
Uttar Pradesh	7980	3160	39.84
Kerala	5487	2135	38.91
Punjab	4791	1618	33.77
Maharashtra	4339	1394	32.12
Gujarat	3872	1538	39.72
Karnataka	3822	1026	26.84
Madhya Pradesh	2967	842	28.38
Other states	14576	4158	28.71
Total	57,452	18,848	32.82

Source: Wikipedia.org

PROBLEMS FACED BY THE WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN INDIA

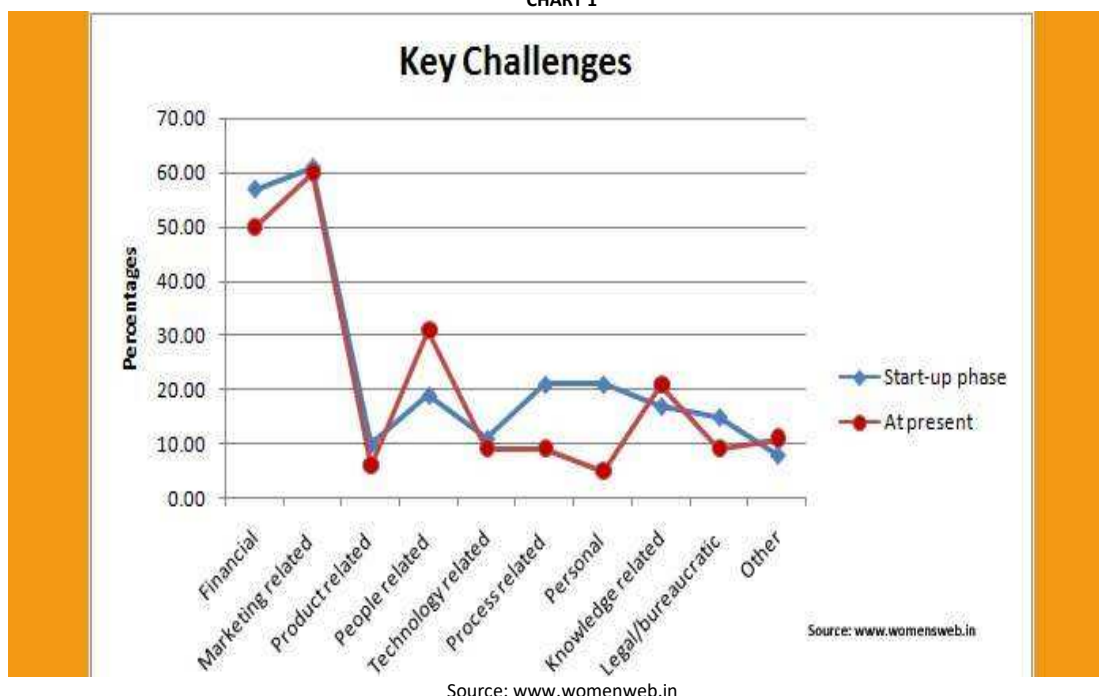
The problems and constraints experienced by women entrepreneurs have resulted in restricting the expansion of women entrepreneurship. Women in India face many problems to get ahead their life in business. Women entrepreneurs face a series of problems right from the beginning till the enterprise functions. Being a woman itself poses various problems to a woman entrepreneur. A desirable atmosphere is necessary for every woman to inculcate entrepreneurial values and involve greatly in business dealings. But Women in India are faced many problems to get ahead their life in business.

- **Family ties** - Women in India are very emotionally attached to their families. They are supposed to attend to all the domestic work, to look after the children and other members of the family. They are over burden with family responsibilities like extra attention to husband, children and in laws, which take away a lots of their time and energy. In such situation, it will be very difficult to concentrate and run the enterprise successfully.
- **Male dominated society**- Even though the constitution speaks of equality between gender male chauvinism is still the order of the day. Women are not treated equal to men. Their entry to business requires the approval of the head of the family. Entrepreneurship has traditionally been seen as a male preserve. All these put a break in the growth of women entrepreneurs.
- **Lack of education** - Women in India are lagging far behind in the field of education. Most of the women (around sixty per cent of total women) are illiterate. Those who are educated are provided either less or inadequate education than their male counterpart partly due to early marriage, partly due to son's higher education and partly due to poverty. Due to lack of proper education, women entrepreneurs remain in dark about the development of new technology, new methods of production, marketing and other governmental support, which will encourage them to flourish.
- **Self-Confidence** – In India, women have lack of self-confidence in their strength and ability. The family members and the society are unwilling to stand beside their organizational growth. To a certain degree, this situation is changing with Indian women and yet to face an incredible amend to boost the rate of growth in entrepreneurship.
- **Socio-Cultural Barriers** – Family and personal obligations sometimes works as a great barrier for succeeding in business career of women entrepreneurship. Only few women are capable of managing both home and business efficiently, giving sufficient time to perform all their responsibilities in priority.
- **Risks Related to Market** – Tuff competition in the market and lack of mobility of women make them dependent on middleman essential. Many business-women find it very difficult to capture the market share and make their products well popular and accepted by customer. They are not fully conscious of the changing market environment conditions and hence can effectively exploit the services of media and internet.
- **Mobility Constraints** - Women in India have to face lot of restriction on their mobility, our society still have some conservativeness, and due to that career of women is limited to four walls of kitchen. Though women faced lots of problems being mobile in entrepreneurial activity, the mobility problem has been eliminated to very certain extent by the expansion of education awareness to all.
- **Business Administration Knowledge** – Women must be educated and trained continuously to acquire the skills and understanding in all the required functional areas of business venture. This will make women to excel in decision-making and develop good business skills.
- **Financial Assistance** – Most of the women especially in rural areas are not aware about the financial assistance provided by various institutions. The efforts taken for Women entrepreneurs may not able to reach the entrepreneurs in rural and backward areas.
- **Training Programs** - Depending upon the needs, duration, skill and the purpose of entrepreneur there are various workshops and training programs available the social & welfare association. Such kinds of programs are really helpful to new and young entrepreneurs who desire to start a small and medium sized business on their own.
- **Cost** - Some business have highly production and operation cost that adversely affects the expansion of women entrepreneurs. The installations of new machineries during expansion of the productive capacity and like similar factors discourage the women entrepreneurs from entering into new areas.

CHALLENGES OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN INDIA

Entrepreneurship was once considered a man's territory, but each year, more and more women set out on the journey to launch and lead their own companies. These business-savvy ladies inspire other women with dreams of founding startups, but many female business owners face still face significant obstacles because of their gender.

CHART 1



BIGGEST CHALLENGES WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS FACE TODAY

- **Women entrepreneurs think they need to act like men** - Most female business owners who have attended networking events can relate to this scenario. When women entrepreneurs have to talk business with primarily male executives, it can be intimidating. To compensate and protect themselves, women often feel as though they need to adopt a stereotypically male attitude toward business.
- **Emotions and nurturing skills can affect women's businesses** - Though trying to act like a man does not guarantee success for a female entrepreneur, allowing her 'feminine' qualities to stand in the way of getting things done is not necessarily recommended, either. By nature, women are more emotional and nurturing, which can sometimes be a hindrance to running a business.
- **Women often lack the support of other female business leaders** - Various female business leaders felt insecure about being in the minority as women who excelled in math and science, and longed for more camaraderie and support from female peers in their fields.
- **Many women have to balance raising families with running their businesses** - Work-life balance is often a goal of entrepreneurs across the board, but mothers who start businesses have to simultaneously run their families and their companies.
- **Women entrepreneurs are afraid of failure** - According to 'Global Entrepreneur Monitor' the fear of failure is the top concern of women who launch startups. Failure is a very real possibility in any business venture, but it should not be viewed as negative.

INDIVIDUALITY OF A SUCCESSFUL WOMEN ENTREPRENEUR

SHE HAS A POSITIVE ATTITUDE

There is no energy that can mimic what is released when a positive, high-stepping woman enters a room. A positive attitude is the fuel needed to drive us from idea conception to realization. A positive attitude takes conscious effort on your part. Arrest negative thoughts and replace them with positive ones. Listen to the things you are saying to yourself in your mind. Deliberately use words that focus on constructive, affirming truths about you.

SHE CAN OVERCOME OBSTACLES

Women who have struggled in their lives tend to have amazing inner strength. Use adversity to your advantage. At the end of a struggle, you are a better, more valuable person. Helen Keller said, "Character cannot be developed in ease and quiet. Only through experience of trial and suffering can the soul be strengthened, vision cleared, ambition inspired and success achieved".

SHE IS STRONG-MINDED

Strong-minded does not mean that you are rude, conceited or destructive. On the contrary, a strong-minded woman displays confidence. When you are strong minded, you're empowered, possess a healthy self-image and take responsibility for your life. The entrepreneurial spirit, by its very nature, requires us to consider possibilities that most aren't brave enough to.

SHE IS SOFT-HEARTED

Charity and compassion allow us to reach beyond our cookie-cutter lives and make a difference in the lives of others. By reaching out to others, we grow as individuals. A woman with a compassionate heart has great influence.

SHE HAS INTEGRITY

You do not need to leave victims in your path to be victorious. Do not need to step on others to step to the next level. Integrity must be the very core of your character and always put honor before dollars and live by your convictions. As you gain respect and trust, your company will grow. People seek to do business with those they trust.

SHE HAS BALANCE IN HER LIFE

Our lives revolve around four major categories like family and friends, health, wealth and spirit. These areas must be balanced to lead a fulfilled life. Evaluate your balance continually. A balanced life allows you to think clearly with imagination and optimism.

SHE SETS GOALS

Goals are dreams with a plan for realization. Commit your short- and long-term goals to writing. Record how and when you will achieve them. Post your goals in plain sight and review them often. Record the reward when the goal is attained. Remember that you cannot hit a mark you cannot see, and continual success demands a plan.

SHE IS DRIVEN BY A CAUSE

Looking for the hole in the market is a strategic move in every entrepreneur's plan. Find the needs in your business ventures and pursue those causes with passion.

SHE IS A TEACHER

Great women teach. People want to know what you have that ignites that flame within. We can help mold the great women of tomorrow.

SHE'S FOCUSED ON THE NEXT STEP

The greatest point of resistance is just before breakthrough. We must have a stubborn resolve to see ourselves to the other side. When challenging circumstances seek to derail us, if we just take that next step, we will find that we have made it.

REMEDIAL MEASURES FOR WOMEN ENTREPRENEUR

Vocational Education: The first measure would be to provide education, particularly vocational and technical education to girls. The curriculum should be restructured to include accountancy, management, computer science, small scale industry, entrepreneurial development, etc.

Entrepreneurial Motivation at School Level: The girls at the school level should be inspired to adopt entrepreneurship. Generally, women dream to become job seekers rather than job makers. To motivate the women, a coordinated effort should be made among the educational institutions, government departments, and the business world.

Accessibility to Information: All possible access to information should be provided for women entrepreneurs. Government agencies, association of women entrepreneurs, NGO's and universities should assume responsibilities in this regard.

Separate Publication: Separate publication should be brought out and distributed to women entrepreneurs on subsidized rate in order to create awareness and encourage them to avail of the benefits offered to them. Media should be used to give maximum information for promoting the cause of women entrepreneurs.

Access to Technology: Access to technology is low for women entrepreneurs. Due to lack of finance and information they cannot have proper tools and equipments to improve the products.

Simple Formalities: Efforts should be made to simplify the procedures, formalities, rules and regulation etc. in matters regarding registration and getting assistance from different departments and government agencies.

100% Finance: Banks and financial institutions should offer 100% loans without collateral security to qualified technocrats. Similarly, term loans and working capital loans should be sanctioned liberally on different terms.

Training: The Government of India has organized a number of workshops on Trade Related Entrepreneurship Assistance & development for the benefit of women entrepreneurs. It seeks to empower women in rural & semi urban areas through development of entrepreneurial skill, elimination of various constraints faced by them & through strengthening trade support network.

CONCLUSION

Women entrepreneurs face many problems in various aspects of finance, marketing, health and family. After independence, law guaranteed equal rights and equal opportunities in education and employment for women. The Primary motivations to women to get success as an entrepreneur not only in the form of financial assistance and government schemes, there should be psychological support from family members and husband. Even though, government supporting in financial aspects, without having moral support from near and dears women may not get success as an entrepreneur. When it is a business, business is all about profits, losses and tensions. Someone should support in all times positively to avoid problems. This support will support a lot not only women and all. Now a days the aspirations of women entrepreneurs are increasing because their self-confidence, self-esteem, self-motivations are increased. The literacy rate is gradually increasing, becoming well aware of all things enhancements in knowledge levels will make women to have aspirations in future.

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