

SCHEMES FOR WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN INDIA

Dr. Rakesh Thakare

Assistant Professor,
Department of Microbiology,
Y. C. College,
Lakhandur, Dist- Bhandara.

Abstract: Women's empowerment is the process of empowering women. Empowerment can be defined in many ways, however, when talking about women's empowerment, empowerment means accepting and including people (women) who are on the outside of the decision-making process into it. Women's empowerment is the most crucial point to be noted for the overall development of a country. Women are growing in the field of entrepreneurship and developing the field in dynamic terms. Women can turn things their way when they wish to and it has been noted that they have been very consistent with progress. Women who wish to earn on their own and be businesswomen are encouraged in today's day and age because of the progress their gender has made in the field. If you are a woman, looking forward to establishing yourself and your intelligence in the field, this might be a great way through by breaking walls of the society and making your statement as a successful smart human, even better than men in some cases. For these women owners of MSMEs, there are certain schemes being provided by the government and public institutions throughout the country that have lucrative offers to encourage these companies and make it easier for them to get loans. There are certain age barriers, loan limits and conditions that come with these loans, which we recommend you check in detail before going ahead with the loan.

Keywords: Women Entrepreneurs, MSMEs, Annpurna Scheme, Udyogini Scheme, etc.

Top Challenges Faced By Women Entrepreneurs :

Breaking centuries of conventions, Indian women have come out of their comfort zone and carved a niche for themselves in the business world. The corporate career has given them financial independence and an opportunity to demonstrate their managerial skills. But, entrepreneurship took her much ahead and gave her the confidence to lead the world with an example. India currently has over 8.05 million women entrepreneurs. It is around 14% of the total Indian business industry. Apart from this, recent data also highlights that over 79% of women-owned enterprises are self-financed. On paper, things might look quite progressive and promising. But the reality is, these numbers essay only part of the story. Sadly, women-owned companies are still in the minority and face more hurdles as compared to their male counterparts. Keep reading on as we shed light on some of the top problems faced by women entrepreneurs in India and tips to combat it.

Lack of Finance :

Finance is the life-blood of any business, be it small or big. One of the biggest challenges women entrepreneurs face in India is the lack of finance. They face a shortage of funds on two counts. First of all, they generally do not have enough assets in their name. It means they have nothing to use as collateral for borrowing funds from banks and other financial institutions. This situation limits their access to external sources of finance. Secondly, lending institutes also feel that women are less credit-worthy as compared to men. They believe that women entrepreneurs can anytime wind-up their business for personal commitments. However, the government of India has come up to support and encourage women on financial grounds. Several schemes for women entrepreneurs are launched in this direction:

- Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women – STEP
- Stree Shakti Package
- Annapurna Scheme
- Udyogini Scheme
- Dena Shakti Scheme

Lack of Education :

The female literacy rate in India is around 65.46% as compared to 74% male literacy rate. Illiteracy has always been the root cause of several socio-economic problems in India. In rural areas, women are still deprived of higher education. This condition limits their know-how of business management functions. A well-educated woman has higher chances of managing a successful business empire. On the other hand, less qualified women tend to struggle a lot for managing regular business functions as well.

Here is a list of the top government schemes to promote women education in India:

- **Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Yojana** – To address declining CSR, propagating education, protection, and the survival of girls.
- **Mahila E-Haat** – A multilingual web-based platform to promote marketing skills in women.
- **Mahila Shakti Kendra** – To empower rural women by educating them about digital literacy, employment opportunities, skill development, health, and nutrition.

Low Risk Taking Abilities :

Although Indian parents are coming forward to provide an enriched life to their daughters, they still prefer women to play safe. They encourage their daughters to step into a stable job rather than start their independent venture. This attitude has impacted the risk-taking abilities of women to a larger extent. Here are some simple tips to overcome this challenge:

- Women should focus on building self-efficacy.
- They should understand all the pros and cons before making the final decision.

- They should also have confidence in their abilities to face any challenge that comes in their way.
- It is also crucial to be intelligent in taking risks and fighting negativity in society.

Family Responsibilities :

What is more important for a woman— family or career? The majority of the Indians would say, family. It is where most of the women lose the plot. A career-oriented woman has to juggle between her work and family constantly. She is not given the freedom to concentrate on her career as men have. It is one of the biggest reasons why women entrepreneurs get discouraged and choose to go for 9-to-5 jobs. Are you also facing this issue? If yes, it is high time you stand for yourself. Here are some tips for you:

- Consult with your family members and devise a convenient way to strike a work-life balance.
- Get in touch with nearby day-care centres to take care of your children, if you have any, till the time you are in office.
- Be clear with your priorities and learn time management skills for the best results.

Poor Networking Skills :

Networking is crucial for strengthening business ties, gaining knowledge, building confidence, and expanding business. However, it is seen that women prevent themselves from stepping out of their comfort zones. The majority of them are not pro in networking with clients and customers. This habit can act as a big roadblock in the success of their entrepreneurial ventures. Here are some networking tips for such women:

- Start attending networking events.
- Identify the right conversational icebreakers.
- Enhance your knowledge about the industry.
- Develop relationships.

Security And Safety Issues :

Lack of safety and security is one of the biggest women entrepreneurs' challenges in India. Entrepreneurship demands long working hours and complete dedication. That's not all; you might also need to travel a lot, and be present for the clients and customers 24x7. The constant rise in the crime rate de-motivates women from pursuing their passion for becoming a successful business owner. Although the government of India is taking every possible step to curb this issue, things will take time to get normal and safer.

Bottom-line :

These are the top challenges that women entrepreneurs face around the world. However, many inspirational women have overcome these challenges and have carved a niche in this male-dominated industry. You can also succeed in your business ventures. All

you need to do is have the right mindset, clarity of vision, and a determination to pass through every hurdle that comes into your way.

The government of India is also supporting women's empowerment to the fullest. Right from funds to education, the government is taking every possible step to develop women's status in society. Stay aware of the latest schemes for women entrepreneurs in the country, and avail its benefits to the fullest.

However, in brief, let us see how women are encouraged by different organizations under various schemes-

Annapurna Scheme:

This loan is provided to women in the food catering industry, still establishing their small scale businesses. The loan allows these women entrepreneurs to avail it as capital requirements like buying equipment and utensils, setting up trucks, etc. Under this scheme, women can sell packed food items and snacks which is one of the most common businesses that women entrepreneurs scope out and excel in since it is something that housewives have been managing all their lives and are accustomed to. This boosts their sales since they have a chance at better capital and new products to kick-start their business than they could otherwise afford. The loan limit is Rs. 50,000 under the scheme.

Bharatiya Mahila Bank Business Loan:

This banking scheme supports women and their businesses on a large scale, that is why it was created in the first place. Women have ventured into different fields of business and are constantly pining for success. This bank has the vision to provide economic empowerment to women. The loan limit via this source is Rs.20 Crores.

Mudra Yojana Scheme:

It is a Government of India initiative that aims to improve the status of women in the country by providing business loans and supporting them so that they can be financially independent and self-reliant. After approval of the loan, they will be given Mudra cards that work like credit cards with the withdrawal limit being 10% of the loan. This scheme has several different types of plans as per business type, level of expansion, and loan aim. The loan limit under this scheme by the government is Rs. 10 Lakhs.

Orient Mahila Vikas Yojana Scheme:

This scheme is for women who hold 51% share capital separately or collectively as a proprietary concern. It is a very good opportunity for these stakeholders to help expand their business and add to the development of their field. This scheme does not require collateral security while also giving a concession at the interest rate of up to 2%. The period of repayment is flexible up to 7 years and the loan limit is Rs. 25 Lakhs.

Dena Shakti Scheme:

This scheme is also for women entrepreneurs but limited only to those in the fields of agriculture, retail, manufacturing, are small enterprises or micro-credit organizations. As per RBI limits, the maximum ceiling limits to women beneficiaries are also provided according to the sector they are expanding or planning to open a business in. The loan limit is Rs.20 Lakhs.

Pradhan Mantri Rozgar Yojana:

Also known as PMRY, this is one of the best schemes for women entrepreneurs both socially and financially. The focus of this scheme is on creating skill-based, self-employment through women entrepreneurs and smart minds at work being utilized for monetary independence. This scheme covers both urban and rural areas and was developed through several amendments in cost, eligibility, and subsidy limits. The loan subsidy amount is up to 15% of the project cost with an upper ceiling of Rs. 12,500 per borrower as a restriction. The scheme applies to all types of ventures in industries, trade and services. The age limit is 35 years and loan limit for business is Rs. 2 Lakh while for service and industry, Rs. 5 Lakh.

Udyogini Scheme:

This program encourages women to be self-reliant and help them in self-development by empowering them economically to be able to do so. This scheme encourages budding women entrepreneurs by providing loans in the regards and giving good rates of interest in comparison to private sector skyrocketing rates, while also being a trustworthy source of lending. This is only valid for those who have a family income of less than Rs. 40,000 per annum. They especially encourage loans in the trade and service sector and the cap amount for the same is Rs. 1 Lakh.

Cent Kalyani Scheme:

The scheme is targeted at both new businesses and those that aim to grow and expand; the only specific emphasis is on the scheme being for Women Entrepreneurs. Retail trade, education and training, and self-help groups are not eligible for the scheme. The eligible categories are given in detail with the rules on their website. This loan is a collateral-free loan as well as zero processing fees. The selected eligible categories of business women can take the loan and expand their business through these schemes for women entrepreneurs. Under this scheme, the loan limit is Rs. 100 Lakh.

Mahila Udyam Nidhi Scheme:

This scheme aims to meet the gap in equity. It promotes MSMEs and small sector investments in different industries to grow and excel in their areas. This also encourages the reconstruction of SSI units that are deemed incapable but are actually viable to save. A period of 10 years is given to the debtor to repay the loan and the limit for the loan is Rs.10 Lakhs.

References:

- Kabeer, Naila. "Gender equality and women's empowerment: A critical analysis of the third millennium development goal 1." *Gender & Development* 13.1 (2005): 13-24.
- Mosedale, Sarah (2005-03-01). "Assessing women's empowerment: towards a conceptual framework". *Journal of International Development*. 17 (2): 243–257. doi:10.1002/jid.1212. ISSN 1099-1328.
- Rahman, Aminur (2013). "Women's Empowerment: Concept and Beyond" (PDF). *Global Journal of Human Social Science Sociology & Culture*. 13 (6): 9. Archived (PDF) from the original on 10 August 2017. Retrieved 11 December 2018.
- Bayeh, Endalcachew (January 2016). "The role of empowering women and achieving gender equality to the sustainable development of Ethiopia". *Pacific Science Review B: Humanities and Social Sciences*. 2 (1): 38. doi:10.1016/j.psr.b.2016.09.013.
- Baden, Sally; Goet, Anne Marie (July 1997). "Who Needs [Sex] When You Can Have [Gender]? Conflicting Discourses on Gender at Beijing". *Feminist Review*. 56 (1): 3–25. doi:10.1057/fr.1997.13. ISSN 0141-7789. S2CID 143326556.
- Oxfam (Forthcoming), "Women's Economic Empowerment Conceptual Framework"
- Deneulin, Séverine; Lila Shahani, eds. (2009). "An Introduction to the Human Development and Capability Approach: Freedom and Agency" (PDF). *Sterling, VA: Earthscan*. Archived (PDF) from the original on 2016-06-16. Retrieved 2016-09-01.
- Gupta, Kamla; Yesudian, P. Princy (2006). "Evidence of women's empowerment in India: a study of socio-spatial disparities". *GeoJournal*. 65 (4): 365–380. doi:10.1007/s10708-006-7556-z. S2CID 128461359.
- Mehra, Rekha (November 1997). "Women, Empowerment, and Economic Development". *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. 554 (1): 136–149. doi:10.1177/0002716297554001009. S2CID 154974352.
- Kabeer, Naila. "Contextualising the Economic Pathways of Women's Empowerment: Findings from a Multi-Country Research Programme." (2011).
- <https://www.indifi.com/blog/9-schemes-for-women-entrepreneurs-in-india/>
- <https://www.pciglobal.org/empowering-women/>
- www.idronline.org/empoweringwomen/projectsresults