

Challenges and Oppression Faced by Rural Women Entrepreneurship in the Rising Economy of Bijnor District

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Abstract:

Now a days the women's have more and more confident intrusion in business and their management skill mesmerized the whole scenario and make a different set back towards the patriarchy business. But there are still some foundational stoppers for the rural entrepreneurs such as raw material management as the raw material still be an unorganized section which were dominates by the man, in such condition what were the problems faced by the new comer women in the business and what were the solutions driven by them.

Keywords: women entrepreneurship, struggle, business ethics,

I. Introduction

The women in Indian society had been subjected to various social, economic disabilities for many years and rural women were the major victims in those times. However, their status began to change in early part of the twentieth century by the efforts of various social movements, reform movements and women's movements. Despite the efforts of various movements in India, the majority of the rural women in the country suffer in respect of suppression, oppression and socio-economic exploitation. An opportunity of productive work for women is not merely a means to higher income, but it is a means to self-respect to the development of her personality and to a sense of participation in the common purposes of the society. In this context, Women entrepreneurship enables to pool the small capital resources and skill available with women. It paves the way for fuller utilization of capital and also mobilizes the female human potential. A self-employed woman is gaining better status and it enables her to take part in decision making in their family affairs.

In spite of their important contributions to socio-economic development, women suffer from various constraints, which inhibit them from fully realizing their potential for development. Cultural values and social norms hinder the equal participation of women in society. One of the major constraints women face as entrepreneurs is the unequal access to productive resources and services, including finance and skill upgrading opportunities. Some legal provisions and legislative systems make it difficult for women to take initiatives for business development. Furthermore, their reproductive role in the family and the community puts women in a disadvantaged position to engage in entrepreneurial activities. As per 2001 census, women constitute 48 % of the total population. Women as an important human resource were recognized by the Constitution of India which not only accorded equality to women but also empowered the State to adopt measures of positive discrimination in their favour. Drawing strength from the Constitution, the Government of India has been engaged in committed and continuous endeavour towards ensuring all round well being, development and empowerment of women.

Rural women possess abundant resources to take up an enterprise. She has the benefit of easy availability of farm and livestock based raw material and other resources. Hence she can effectively undertake both production and processing oriented enterprises. But to be a successful entrepreneur, women should possess certain fundamental qualities beside the support of the family and government organizations. Entrepreneurial development among rural women helps to enhance their person capabilities but also decision making status in the family and society as a whole. In India, small firms contribute considerably to economic growth and employ a very large number of people, second only to agriculture. The concentrations of these firms are mostly in the urban areas while rural areas have failed to seize the opportunities unleashed by economic reforms. Different models of rural entrepreneurship are being attempted by various government and private agencies to tap the potential of human sources as an engine of growth. However, little is known about the characteristics of rural entrepreneurs who take up entrepreneurship mostly because they do not have a better opportunity and only incidentally due to their interest.

Rural Women Entrepreneur

Nowadays, women are playing a very important role in all walks of life. Today the role of modern women is much more than what was previously. The development of Indian economy is not possible neglecting the women who form a large segment of Indian population. Reducing urban-rural disparities and gender inequalities is a crucial element for any poverty reduction strategy. Mobilizing the potential productivity of rural

people and particularly of women is indispensable to achieve the resilient economic growth that will pull people above the poverty line. With rural areas not able to provide enough opportunities for people to sustain their lives, the burden of supporting the poor and rural population falls increasingly upon cities. The growing number of rural poor seeking work in overcrowded cities stretch social and physical infrastructure and economic opportunities in the urban areas beyond their capacity. On the other hand, the migration of rural men to urban areas leaves unbalanced family structures behind, with women, children and elderly expecting remittances.

Present scenario is very fast changing with technology development, modernization, industrialization, urbanization, education and development. In such conditions, employment opportunity increased drastically for rural women. Entrepreneurship among rural women, no doubt improves the wealth of the nation in general and of the family in particular. Women need encouragement and support from the family members, government, society, male counterparts etc., with the right assistance from varied groups mentioned above, they can join the main stream of national economy and thereby contribute to the economic development. Government should draw up a plan so that the Indian Women Entrepreneurs can work more on empowerment through training and capacity building programs. If our universities and institutions join this resolve with increasing focus on women's business education, the future will see more women entrepreneurs. It is very true that rural entrepreneurship cannot be developed without proper training. Therefore, it is necessary to provide training to rural women to enhance their entrepreneurial skill and paving a path of success to rural women.

According to Frederick Harbison in his book, *Entrepreneurial Organisation as a Factor in Economic Development*", specifies the following functions of women entrepreneurs:

- a) Explore the prospects of women entrepreneurs,
- b) Undertaking of risks and the handling of economic uncertainty,
- c) Innovation,
- d) Co-ordination, administration and control, and
- e) Routine supervision.

Significance of the Study

Rural women's economic and social development is necessary for overall economic development of society and nation. Rural women are now increasingly run their own business yet their entrepreneurial potential, managerial skill and socio-economic contribution remain largely neglected. Women entrepreneurship development is the instrument of women empowerment. Empowerment through entrepreneurship leads to self-fulfilment and makes women aware about their status, existence, right and their position is in the society. In modern era, women are becoming socially empowered, and economically empowered through business ownership. Women entrepreneurship is gaining importance in India in the wake of globalization and economic liberalization. The institutional and policy framework for developing entrepreneurial skills, providing vocational education and training has widened the horizon for economic development of women. Women entrepreneurs tend to be highly motivated, self disciplined & self directed. On the other hand, empowerment of rural women is also very significant. Economic empowerment of rural women will lead to the development of our country and it is very necessary to give keen attention over the empowerment of women in the rural areas for the real development of our country in all spheres. Women's entrepreneurship is important for women's position in society, and economic development of women will lead to development of family, community and country. It opens up new avenues for creating employment opportunities for women and men

II. Methodology

The study has been undertaken in the rural areas selecting women entrepreneurs' undertaken different line of small business. A sample size of 25 random bases was selected out of 127 women entrepreneurs in the study area. The data for the study was collected by preparing questionnaire, there after tabulating the data to arrive for conclusion.



The district of Bijnor forms the north-western part of the Meerut Division. Legendary history ascribes its foundation to Raja Ben (also spelt Bin or Bain) and described as Vena, a minor hero king of Northern India, in the Mahabharata and the Puranas. This monarch never realised any tax from his subjects. He raised a part of the revenue by the sale of bijana (fans) manufactured by himself, because of whom the place obtained its present name, Bijnor (Bijnaur). More probably, the word is a corruption of Bijanagar (town of fans) or Vijayanagar (town of victory).

The district lies between latitude 29° 2' N. and latitude 29° 58' N., and longitude 78° 0' E and 78° 59' E. Its maximum length from north to south is about 102 km. and from east to west about 90 km. According to the Statistical Abstract 2003 of Uttar Pradesh, the district covers an area of 4561 sq. km., in which the rural and urban area containing 4422.50 and 138.50 sq. km., respectively.

The physical aspect of the district possesses diverse characteristics. The greater portion of the district is open and highly cultivated. The major part of the district forms a part of the Indo-gangetic alluvium, which consists of clay, sand, kankar and reh. Hard granite is also available near the surface of the Ramganga in the northern part of the district. Due to changing course of flow of Gangas, the adjoining area of the district changes frequently. The district has 5 Tehsils, 11 Blocks, 12 Municipalities, 21 Town Areas, 2 Census towns. There are 2148 Inhabited Villages, 841 Uninhabited Villages, 4 Forest Villages, 959 Gram Panchayat or Sabhas, 130 Nyaya Panchayat, 6 Nagar Panchayat, 2 Parliamentary and 7 Legislative Assembly Constituencies .

Objectives of the study

Empowerment is an active process, which enables rural women to realize their identity and power in all aspects of life. It enables rural women to have more access to knowledge and resources, greater autonomy in decision making, greater ability to plan their times, free them from the clutches of irrelevant customs built and practices. The purpose this paper is to investigate the challenges before the women entrepreneur in general and rural women entrepreneur in particular. This broad objectives has been achieved after taking into account the various problems encounter by the women entrepreneurs which has been broadly classified into following three categories

- I. Production and Marketing problems.
- II. Financial and Infrastructure problems
- III. Social Problems

I. Production and Marketing problems

Following are the parameters identified to study the production and marketing problems of the rural women entrepreneurs in the study area.

1. Sources of Raw Material
2. Irregular Production

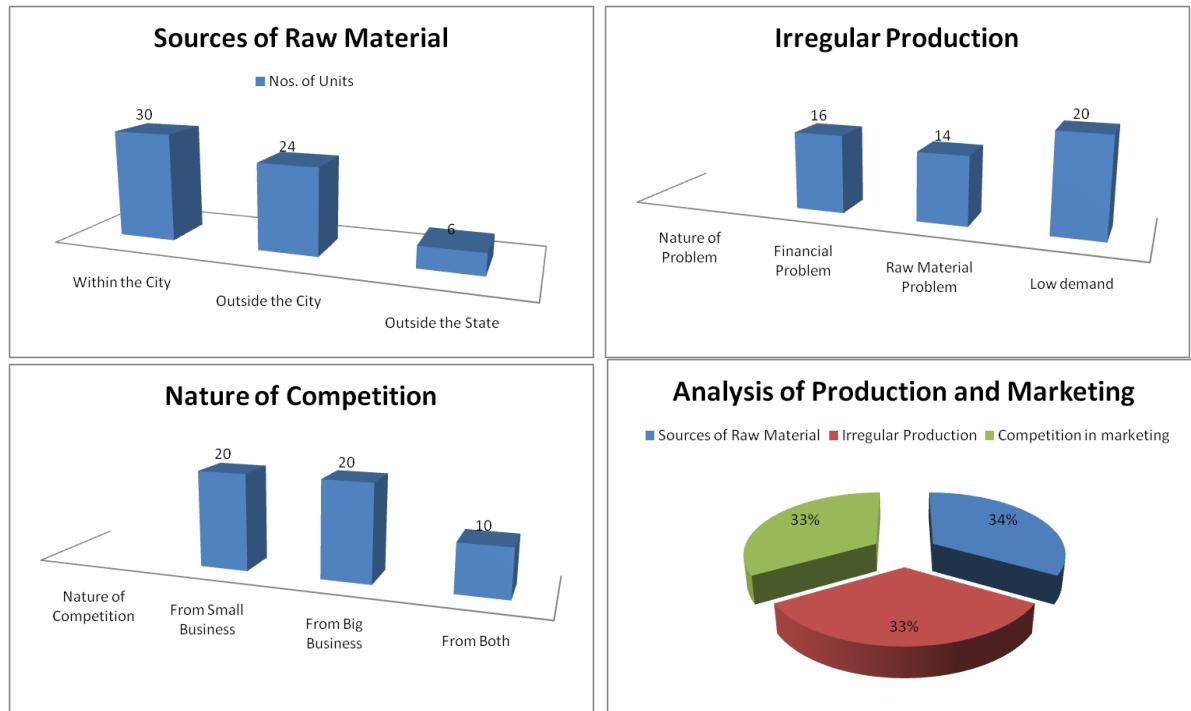
3. Competition in marketing

The following tables give details of the various problems of the women entrepreneur. The data is collected by preparing a set of questionnaire and having properly tabulated to arrive some conclusion.

Table- 1: Analysis of Production and Marketing

Sources of Raw Material	Source	Nos. of Units	Percentage
	Within the City	30	60
	Outside the City	24	48
	Outside the State	06	02
	Total	50	100
Irregular Production	Nature of Problem		
	Financial Problem	16	32
	Raw Material Problem	14	28
	Low demand	20	40
	Total	50	100
Competition in marketing	Nature of Competition		
	From Small Business	20	40
	From Big Business	20	40
	From Both	10	20
	Total	50	100

The perusal of the Table- 1 indicates that the rural women entrepreneurs are facing both production and marketing problem in the form of availability of raw material in turn which affects the production, Apart from the much competition in marketing their product. Further the graphs also reflect that most of the sample units are getting raw material from within the place of the units locates. Low demand for the product produced by the sample units is another constraint for the rural women entrepreneur apart from equal competition from both small business as well as big business.



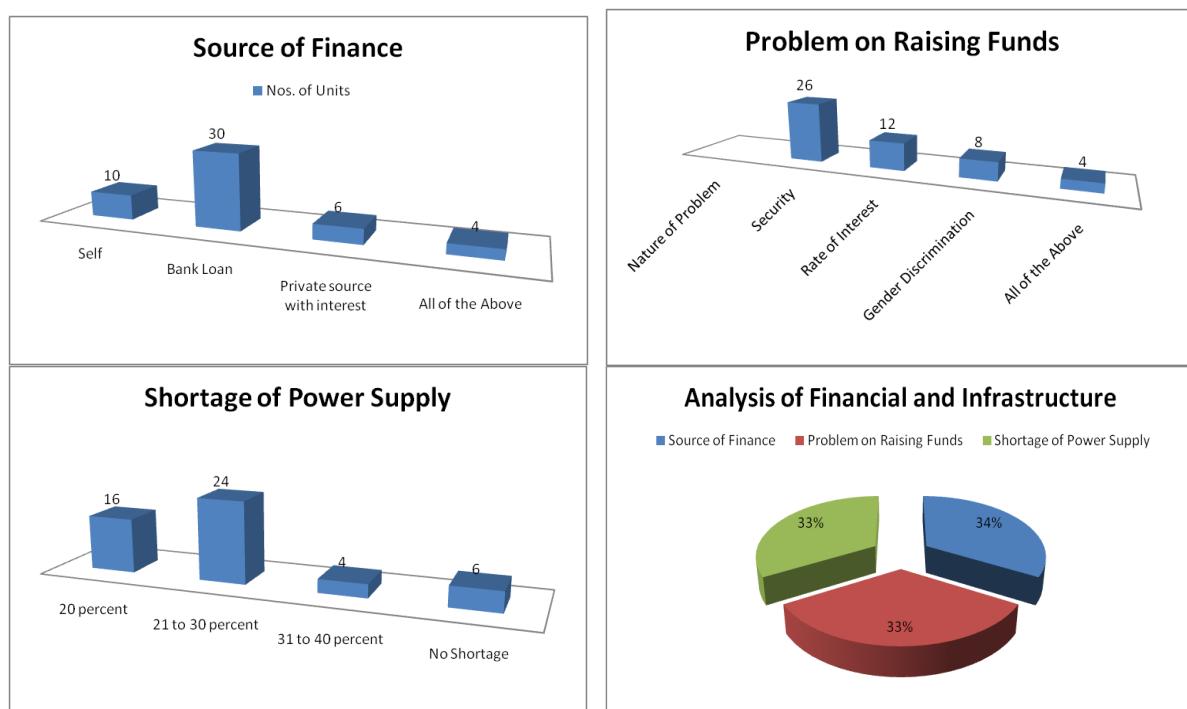
II. Financial and Infrastructure problems:

Following are the parameters identified to study the Financial and Infrastructural problems of the rural women entrepreneurs in the study area.

1. Sources of Finance
2. Problem on Raising Funds
3. Power supply

Table- 2: Analysis of Financial and Infrastructure

Source of Finance	Source	Nos. of Units	Percentage
Self	Self	10	20
	Bank Loan	30	60
	Private source with interest	06	12
	All of the Above	04	08
	Total	50	100
Problem on Raising Funds	Nature of Problem		
All of the Above	Security	26	52
	Rate of Interest	12	24
	Gender Discrimination	08	16
	All of the Above	04	08
	Total	50	100
Shortage of Power Supply	Shortage of Power Supply		
All of the Above	20 percent	16	32
	21 to 30 percent	24	48
	31 to 40 percent	04	08
	No Shortage	06	12
	Total	50	100



As far as financial and infrastructure problems are concerned most of the units are depend on the bank loan and a few of them are started their business out of own fund. When there is loan capital naturally there will be the problem on interest thereon. As normally women don't have any property in their names, hence they face the problem of giving security to get the loan. Further, bankers feel free and prefer to advance to men than women in rural areas because of the various reasons. Due to the shortage in the production of power, normally Govt supply less power in rural areas when compare to urban & this affects on the production process which is clearly depicted in Table-2

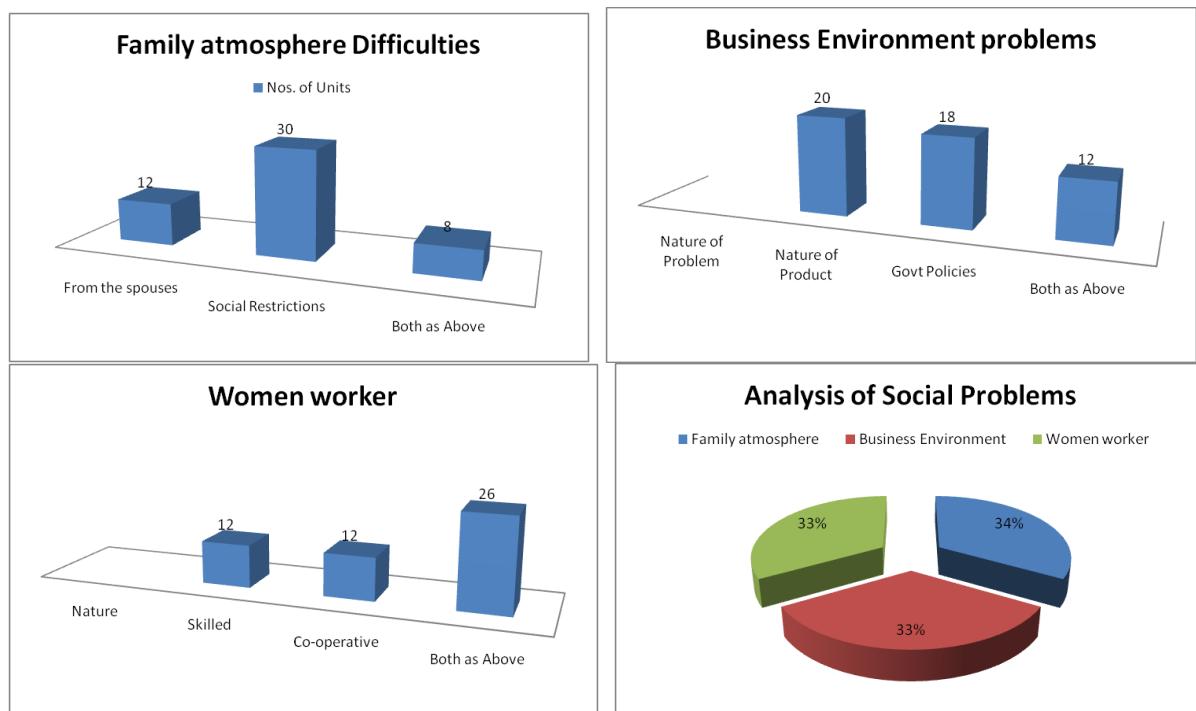
III. Social Problems:

Following are the parameters identified to study the Social problems of the rural women entrepreneurs in the study area

1. Family atmosphere
2. Business Environment
3. Women worker

Table- 3: Analysis of Social Problems

Family atmosphere	Difficulties	Nos. of Units	Percentage
	From the spouses	12	24
	Social Restrictions	30	60
	Both as Above	08	16
	Total	50	100
Business Environment	Nature of Problem		
	Nature of Product	20	40
	Govt Policies	18	36
	Both as Above	12	24
	Total	50	100
Women worker	Nature		
	Skilled	12	24
	Co-operative	12	24
	Both as Above	26	52
	Total	50	100



Rural women entering business driven by financial needs and family circumstances are said to influence by push factors. The Table-3 clearly indicates that rural women entrepreneurs are facing difficulties because of the social restrictions and the narrow type mentality of the men. Further the product produced by rural women entrepreneurs is also counts more. Availability of literate and skilled workers is also a problem for and the rural women entrepreneurs.

III. Conclusion:

The empowerment of rural women entrepreneurship is a contemporary issue regardless of the country in which a social planner tries to bring a sustainable development. Further, the rural women in Indian society had been subjected to various social, economic disabilities for many years and rural women were the major victims in those times. However, their status began to change in early part of the twentieth century by the efforts of various social movements, reform movements and women's movements. Despite the efforts of various movements in India, the majority of the rural women in the country suffer in respect of suppression, oppression and socio-economic exploitation. Empowering women is an important end in itself, not only as a human rights issue but also as having the potential to enhance human well being. Empowering women and improving their status are essential ingredients for realizing the full potential of the economic and political development of the entire society thus ensuring sustainable development.

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