

# STATUS OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN MICRO SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTER- PRISES IN INDIA: AN ANALYSIS

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## Abstract

This conceptual paper indicates and emphasizes the women entrepreneurs as the potentially emerging human resource in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Today women entrepreneurship has become significant tool for women empowerment. Women entrepreneurs need to enhance their living standard into a comfortable level along with their family which in turn helps in development of the country. The primary objective of this paper is to find out the status of women entrepreneurs in MSMEs in India. MSME sector has a pivotal contribution to the economies world over and hence very aptly regarded as the growth engine largely because of its contribution to employment generation, manufacturing and exports. In India about 37.51% of GDP is from the MSME sector besides its huge contribution in employment generation. In this context this paper provides and delineate concerning the momentous role of MSME in India. The paper will also provide some conceptual framework of sectoral development of MSMEs in India and also to examine the problems and challenges which are faced by women entrepreneurs in India. It also focuses on initiatives taken by the government for women entrepreneurs.

## I. Introduction

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) are acting as specialist and soul of economic growth in India as well as in the world. Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) play a dominant role in the economic development of a country. MSMEs have been largely recognized as a foundation stone for the industrial development of any country. These enterprises contribute about 90 per cent of the business worldwide. They provide employment to more than 50 per cent of the world's workforce. As a result the contribution of MSME sector to the GDP of some of the major global economies such as Taiwan (85%), Italy (68%), China (60%), France (59%), South Africa (57%), Germany (54%), UK (50%), Singapore (50%) and US (48%) has been substantial. In India about 37.5% of GDP is from the MSME sector besides its huge contribution in employment genera-

tion. Despite the significant contributions of the MSME sector, the sector continues to face certain constraints like, as pointed out in PM's Task Force Report, 2010, availability of adequate and timely credit, high cost of credit, collateral requirements, access to equity capital and rehabilitation of sick enterprises, etc. It thus emerges that adequate, timely and affordable credit is one of the bigger issues for the MSME sector. According to the Fourth Census of MSME in 2006-07 in India, the number of MSMEs was estimated at 36.17 (only 1.56 million registered-source MSME annual report 2012-13, Government of India) million employing about 80.52 million persons. By the year 2011-12 the estimated numbers of MSME units were 44.77 million with employment of 101.26 million persons. Out of these MSMEs, 31.79 percent are engaged in manufacturing and 68.21 per cent in service enterprises. This sector contributes to about 44 per cent of the total manufacturing output and accounts for over 40 per cent of the total exports of the country and forms the second largest source of employment next only to agriculture. In the process the sector manufactures more than 6000 products. MSME sector is better employment generating sector. The organized industrial sector requires an investment of 0.67 million rupees to generate employment of one person, whereas the MSME sector generates employment of 1.27 persons with the same investment. Moreover, it is the MSME sector which can help realize the target of proposed National Manufacturing Policy of raising the share of manufacturing sector in GDP from 16% at present to 25% by the end of 2022.

The Plan of exposition of the study is as follows: Section-1 is the introduction. Section-2 deals with the Review of Literature. Section-3 deals with important objectives of the study. The methodology of the study is explained in Section-4. Section -5 analyses the overall performance of small and medium enterprises in terms of overall performance of MSME Units, Employment, Investments and Gross Output in India from 2001-02 to 2011-12. Section-6 analyses Status of Women Entrepreneurs in India. Section- 7 deals with Government Initiatives on MSMEs in India. In section - 7 deals with Problems of Women Entrepreneurs in India. Section-8 deals with the Challenges of Women Entrepreneurs in India. Section -9 deals with the government initiatives

for women entrepreneurs in India. In section – 10 deals with finding and conclusion of the study.

## II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

**Singh and Raina (2013)** described the problems and challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in India and also analysed the policies of Indian government for women. The study mainly focused to find out the status of women entrepreneurs in India. The study found that in modern India, more and more women are taking up entrepreneurial activity especially in MSMEs. It also observed that Indian women have imprinted a position for themselves in the male dominated world. It further showed that Indian women can well manage their household work as well their workplace deadlines.

**Benard and Victor (2013)** examined the growth of women entrepreneurs in Dar es Salaam city of Tanzania on strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. It used a sample of 130 women entrepreneurs and simple random sampling technique for the selection of sample. The study found that a major strength was the need for financial independence for women entrepreneur. It also observed that the major opportunity was the desire to own boss which leads to women entrepreneurship. It further found that the weakness was that most women lack entrepreneurs fail because of lack of education and the major threat to be the pressure of child care in the family.

**Jayan (2013)** analysed women entrepreneurship in MSMEs and the relationship between industries related factors and success of entrepreneurs with special reference to Coimbatore city. The study identified that the factors which motivate women to become a successful entrepreneurs are achievement motivation and human relation.

**Subramanyam and Reddy (2012)** presented an overview of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in India. The study analysed the performance of MSMEs in India. It made a comparison of the growth of MSME sector with overall industrial sector and also investigated into the sickness of MSMEs. The study found that MSME sector has contributed significantly to India's Gross Domestic Product and export earnings. It also found that sickness in Industry doesn't occur overnight rather it takes 5 to 7 years to erode the health of an industrial unit.

**Kumar and Gugloth (2012)** evaluated the performance of MSMEs before and after liberalization. The study also analysed the impact of globalization on the performance of MSMEs and made a comparative analysis of the growth pattern of key parameters between pre and post globalization period. It took a period from 1999 to 2010 for the analysis. It also focused on the on-going changes in the business environment. The study found that the small scale sector has grown rapidly over the years. It also found that the period of liberalization and the development of MSMEs sector constituted an important segment of our economy.

**Tambunan (2009)** made a study on recent developments of women entrepreneurs in Asiandevolving countries. The study focused mainly on women entrepreneurs in small andmedium enterprises based on data analysis and review of recent key literature. This studyfound that in Asian developing countries SMEs are gaining overwhelming importance; morethan 95% of all firms in all sectors on average per country. The study also depicted the factthat representation of women entrepreneurs in this region is relatively low due to factors likelow level of education, lack of capital and cultural or religious constraints. However, thestudy revealed that most of the women entrepreneurs in SMEs are from the category offorced entrepreneurs seeking for better family incomes.

**Singh (2008)** identifies the reasons & influencing factors behind entry of women in entrepreneurship. He explained the characteristics of their businesses in Indian context and also obstacles & challenges. He mentioned the obstacles in the growth of women entrepreneurship are mainly lack of interaction with successful entrepreneurs, social unacceptance as women entrepreneurs, family responsibility, gender discrimination, missing network, low priority given by bankers to provide loan to women entrepreneurs. He suggested the remedial measures like promoting micro enterprises, unlocking institutional frame work, projecting & pulling to grow & support the winners etc. The study advocates for ensuring synergy among women related ministry, economic ministry & social & welfare development ministry of the Government of India.

**Lall & Sahai (2008)** conduct a comparative assessment of multi-dimensional issues & challenges of women entrepreneurship, & family business. The study identified Psychographic variables like, degree of commitment, entrepreneurial challenges & future plan for expansion, based on demographic variables. Through stratified random sampling & convenience sampling the data have been collected from women entrepreneurs working in urban area of Lucknow. The study identified business owner's characteristics as self-294 perception self-esteem, Entrepreneurial intensity & operational problem for future plans for growth & expansion. The study suggested that though, there has been considerable growth in number of women opting to work in family owned business but they still have lower status and face more operational challenges in running business.

**Damwad (2007)** describes the experiences, initiatives & obstacles faced at five Nordic countries like Finland, Denmark, Iceland, Norway & Sweden towards women entrepreneurship. It broadly identifies few obstacles like financing, lack of knowledge & skills in business life, markets & entrepreneurial activity, work life balance including lack of growth & wishes to grow and most importantly women as other groups are heterogeneous.

Greene et.al. (2003) evaluate the research & publication contribution in the area of women entrepreneurship. The study categorized various journal & resources of research on the basis of certain parameters concerned with women entrepreneurship like gender discrimination, personal attributes, financing challenges, business unit, context and feminist perspectives.

Das(2000) performed a study on women entrepreneurs of SMEs in two states of India, viz,Tamil Nadu and Kerala. The initial problems faced by women entrepreneurs are quite similar to those faced by women in western countries. However, Indian women entrepreneurs faced lower level of work-family conflict and are also found to differ from their counterparts in western countries on the basis of reasons for starting and succeeding in business. Similar trends are also found in other Asian countries such as Indonesia and Singapore. Again the statistics showed that the proportion of business setup and operated by women is much lower than the figures found in western countries.

### III. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

1. To examine the growth and performance of MSME Sector in India.
2. To study the Current Scenario of women entrepreneurs in India.
3. To find out the problems and challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in India.
4. To study the initiatives taken by government for women entrepreneurs in India

### IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study is descriptive and analytical in nature. The data used for the study is secondary in nature and has been collected from annual reports of Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Government of India, website of Reserve Bank of India, various journals, newspapers and white papers on Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises. The growth and performance of MSMEs has been analysed using Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) Technique.

## V. GROWTH AND PERFORMANCE OF MSME SECTOR IN INDIA

The Micro, Small and medium Enterprises (MSMEs) have emerged as an engine of growth in several developed and developing economies of the world. In India also, they have emerged as a vibrant and dynamic component of the economy by virtue of their significant contribution to GDP, industrial production and exports. Therefore, India's GDP grew at the average growth rate of 7.6 per cent during the period from 2005-06 to 2011-12. However, the most important contribution of this sector is towards employment generation which is second only to agriculture. The experience in recent years has shown that employment in agriculture sector has been declining; large industries have also experienced jobless growth and hence, the main responsibility for job creation rests with unorganised sector and also with the micro, small and medium manufacturing and service enterprises. Considering its potential and ability, the MSMEs sector has been assigned a target of 15 percent annual growth and additional employment of 4.4 million persons during Twelve Five-Year Plan. In this section, the primary objective of this paper is to find out the MSME sector has a pivotal contribution to the economies world over and hence very aptly regarded as the growth engine largely because of its contribution to employment generation, manufacturing and exports

The overall performance of MSME Units, Employment, Investments and Gross Output in India from 2001-02 to 2011-12 are presented in **Table-1**. The number of unit established in year 2001-02 was 105.21 lakh and it was increased 123.42 lakh in 2005-06. Thereafter, it was drastically increased to 361.76 lakh in 2006-07 and 447.73 in 2011-12 which is more than six times. Employment generated by the sector was 29.49 million out of which more than 35 per cent were youth in the age group 15 to 35 years. The percentage growth of employment was increased till 2011-12. The Market Value of Fixed Assets was drastically increased to Rs.154349.00 in 2001-02 and Rs.1176939.36 in 2011-12 due to domestic structural reforms. But the percentage of Gross output has shown wide variation over the years.

**Table-1. Performance of MSME Units, Employment, Investments and Gross Output**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Total Working Enterprise (in Lakh)</b>	<b>Employment (in Lakh)</b>	<b>Market Value of Fixed Assets (In Crore)</b>	<b>Gross Output (In Crore)</b>
2001-02	105.21	249.33	154349.00	282270.00
2002-03	109.49	260.21	162317.00	314850.00
2003-04	113.95	271.42	170219.00	364547.00
2004-05	118.59	282.57	178699.00	429796.00
2005-06	123.42	294.91	188113.00	497842.00
2006-07	361.76	805.23	868543.79	1351383.45
2007-08	377.37	842.23	917437.46	1435179.26
2008-09	393.70	881.14	971407.49	1524234.83
2009-10	410.82	922.19	1029331.46	1619355.53
2010-11	428.77	965.69	1094893.42	1721553.42
2011-12	447.73	1012.59	1176939.36	1834332.05
<b>CAGR</b>	<b>12.83%</b>	<b>12.39%</b>	<b>18.45%</b>	<b>16.88%</b>

(Source: Annual Report 2012-13, Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Government of India)



## VI. STATUS OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN INDIA

The origin of the basic word “entrepreneurship” is from a French word “Entree” To enter” and “Prendre” “to take” and in general sense applies to any person starting a new project or trying a new opportunity. The oxford English dictionary 1897 defines the term “Entrepreneur” in similar way as the director or the manager of public musical institution, one who gets up entertainment arranged, especially musical performance. Initially in the early sixteenth century applied to those who were engaged in military expeditions. In seventeenth century it was extended to cover civil engineering activities such as construction and fortification. Since then the term entrepreneur is used in various ways. The Definition given by Govt. of India about women entrepreneurship, “An enterprise owned and controlled by a Women and having a minimum financial interest of 51% of the capital & giving at least 51 % of the employment generated in the enterprise to Women”. Women work participation is low in India in comparison to selected countries of the world. Women work participation in India is 31.6 % whereas in USA it is 45 %, UK 43 %, Canada 42 %, France 32 %, Indonesia 40 %, Sri Lanka and Brazil both 35 %. In India, men generally take the lead in the entrepreneurial world. With the changing cultural norms and increase in literacy rate more and more Indian women are accepting entrepreneurship as their career. With the advent of media, women are being aware of their own traits, rights and also the work situation. They are flourishing as designers, interior decorators, exporters, publishers, garment manufacturers and still exploring new avenues of economic participation.

**Table-2. Women Work Participation**

Country	Percentage
India	31.6
USA	45
U.K	43
Indonesia	40
Sri Lanka	45
Brazil	35

Source: World Bank Report

## VII. Problems of 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. A few problems can be detailed as;

**Lack of 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.

**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.

**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.

**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.

**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.

## VIII. Challenges of Women Entrepreneurs in India

**1. Balance between family and career-** Women in India are very emotionally attached to their home and families. They are supposed to attend to all the domestic work, to look after the children and other family members. They are overburdened with family responsibilities like taking care of husband, children and in laws which takes away a lot of their time and energy. In such situation, it is very difficult to concentrate and run an organization successfully and efficiently.

**2. Socio-cultural barriers-** The traditions and customs prevailing in Indian societies sometimes stand as an obstacle before women which stop them from growing and prospering. Castes and religions dominate our society and hinder women entrepreneurs too. In rural areas, they face even greater social barriers. They are always seen with an eye of suspicion.

**3. Male dominated society-** Even though our constitution speaks of equality between genders, male superiority is still the order of the day. Women are not treated equal to men. Their entry into business requires the approval of the head of the family who is mostly a male member. Entrepreneurship has traditionally been seen as a male task. All these hamper the growth of women entrepreneurs.

**4. Illiteracy or low level of Education-** Women in India are lagging far behind in the field of education. Even after more than 60 years of independence many women are still illiterate. Those who are educated are provided either less or inadequate education than their male counterpart partly due to early marriage, partly due to household responsibilities and partly due to poverty. Due to lack of proper education, most women entrepreneurs remain in dark about the development of new technology, new methods of production, marketing, networking and other governmental support which will encourage them to rise in the field of management.

**5. Dearth of financial assistance-** Women entrepreneurs suffer a lot in raising and meeting the financial needs of the business. Bankers, creditors and financial institutes do not come forward to provide financial Assistance to women borrowers on the ground of their less credit worthiness. They also face financial problem due to blockage of funds

in raw materials, inventory, work-in-progress, finished goods and non-receipt of payment from customers in time.

**6. Lack of Technical knowhow-** Management has become a specialised job which only efficient managers perform. Women entrepreneurs sometimes are not efficient in managerial functions like planning, organising, controlling, directing, motivating, recruiting, coordinating, and leading an enterprise. Therefore, less and limited managerial ability of women has become a problem for them to run the enterprise successfully.

**7. Marketing Skills-** Since most women cannot run around for marketing, distribution and money collection, they have to depend on middle men for the above activities. Middle men tend to exploit them in the appearance of helping. They work in order to add their own profit margin which result in less sales and lesser profit for women entrepreneurs.

**8. Entrepreneurial Skill-** Lack of entrepreneurial aptitude is a matter of concern for women entrepreneurs. They have limited entrepreneurial abilities. Even after attending various training programmes on entrepreneurship women entrepreneurs fail to overcome the risks and troubles that may come up in an organisational working.

**9. Lack of Self-Confidence-** Women entrepreneurs because of their inherent nature, lack self-confidence which is essentially a motivating factor in running an enterprise successfully. They have to work hard to strike a balance between managing a family and managing an enterprise. Sometimes they have to sacrifice their entrepreneurial urge in order to strike a balance between the two which results in loss of a prospective entrepreneur.

**10. Mobility Constraints-** Women mobility in India is highly limited and has become a problem due to traditional values and limited driving skills. Moving alone and asking for a room to stay out at night for business purposes is still looked upon with suspicious eyes. Sometimes, inexperienced women feel uncomfortable in dealing with men who show extra interest in them other than work related aspects.

## IX. Government Initiatives for Women Entrepreneurs in India

Development of women has been a policy objective of the government since independence. Until the 70s the concept of women's development was mainly welfare oriented. In 1970s, there was a shift from welfare approach to development approach that recognised the mutually reinforcing nature of the process of development. The 80s adopted a multi-disciplinary approach with an emphasis on three core areas of health, education and employment. Women were

given priorities in all the sectors including SSI sector. Government and non-government bodies have paid increasing attention to women's economic contribution through self-employment and industrial ventures. The First Five-Year Plan (1951-56) envisaged a number of welfare measures for women. Establishment of the Central Social Welfare Board, organization of Mahila Mandals and the Community Development Programmes were a few steps in this direction. In the second Five-Year Plan (1956-61), the empowerment of women was closely linked with the overall approach of intensive agricultural development programmes. The Third and Fourth Five-Year Plans (1961-66 and 1969-74) supported female education as a major welfare measure. The Fifth Five-Year Plan (1974-79) emphasized training of women, who were in need of income and protection. This plan coincided with International Women's Decade and the submission of Report of the Committee on the Status of Women in India. In 1976, Women's welfare and Development Bureau was set up under the Ministry of Social Welfare. The Sixth Five-Year Plan (1980-85) saw a definite shift from welfare to development. It recognized women's lack of access to resources as a critical factor impeding their growth. The Seventh Five-Year Plan (1985-90) emphasized the need for gender equality and empowerment. For the first time, emphasis was placed upon qualitative aspects such as inculcation of confidence, generation of awareness with regards to rights and training in skills for better employment. The Eight Five-Year Plan (1992-97) focused on empowering women, especially at the Gross Roots Level, through Panchayat Raj Institutions. The Ninth Five-Year Plan (1997-2002) adopted a strategy of Women's Component Plan, under which not less than 30 percent of funds/ benefits were earmarked for women related sectors. The Tenth Five-Year Plan (2002-07) aims at empowering women through translating the recently adopted National Policy for Empowerment of Women (2001) into action and ensuring Survival, Protection and Development of women and children through rights based approach. During (2007-12) Govt. ensured that at least 33 percent of the direct and indirect beneficiaries of all government schemes are women and girl children. A CSS training programme, STEP provides training for skill up gradation to poor and asset-less women in traditional sectors of agriculture, animal husbandry, dairy, fisheries, handlooms, handicraft, Khadi and village industries, sericulture, social forestry, and wasteland development. In framing policies/schemes for the Twelfth Five Year Plan (2012-17) the special needs of women must be taken due care of. The Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana (MKSP) which is a sub-component of NRLM was recently launched to meet the specific needs of women farmers, and help them achieve social, economic and technical empowerment. At present, the Government of India has over 27 schemes for women operated by different departments and ministries. Some of these are:

Prime Minister's Rojgar Yojana (PMRY), Entrepreneurial Development Programme (EDPs), Management Development Programme, Women's Development Corporations (WDCs), Marketing of Non-Farm Products of Rural Women (MAHIMA), Assistance to Rural Women in Non-Farm Development (ARWIND) Schemes, Trade Related Entrepreneurship Assistance and Development (TREAD), Micro & Small Enterprises Cluster Development Programmes (MSE-CDP), National Banks for Agriculture and Rural Development's Schemes, Rajiv Gandhi Mahila Vikas Pariyojana (RGMVP), Priyadarshini Project- A programme for Rural Women Empowerment and Livelihood in Mid Gangetic Plains, NABARD- KfW-SEWA Bank Project, Exhibitions for women, under promotional package for Micro & Small enterprises approved by CCEA under marketing support, Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana (MKSP) etc.

## X. CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises are contributing to the economic growth and development of Indian economy. Women Entrepreneurs who were traditionally kept behind the four walls of their houses, now in modern society are capable of managing both their family and business. Though they face many problems and challenges in their path of becoming a successful entrepreneur but the government has taken many initiatives for the growth of women entrepreneurs. Finally, it can be said that there is a long way to go for women entrepreneurs and MSMEs in India and their success is the success of Indian economy.

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