

WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN INDIA: WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO ETHICAL BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

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ABSTRACT

Women entrepreneurship is a recent approach in India which has enabled to utilize the 50% inactive resource- women of educated population of the country. Women have entered almost all industries as entrepreneurs. Whatever industry they are working in, their business practices tend to be different from the male population. The study attempts to analyze the element of professional ethics in their business practices. Various companies which are being run by women at the top management will be studied for the purpose of this research. Secondary data available in the form of reports of various companies, work of previous scholars, articles from books and magazines. Primary data will be collected from employees of the companies which are being run by women entrepreneurs. At the same time consumers of the products or services marketed by these companies will also be contacted. Analysis of both the kinds of data will lead the researcher to certain findings which will be the basis of suggestions and recommendations to the decision makers. Such researches may give us a clear picture of business practices followed by the newly introduced gender at the top management. The new trend emerged in Indian economy has to be handled properly or we might not be in a position to make full use of this valuable resource of the economy. If the researcher can give one good recommendation for the same, then the effort of this research is worth it.

KEYWORDS: *Entrepreneurship, Indian Economy, Ethical Business Management, Business Ethics.*

Introduction

Research Question

Are women successful as entrepreneurs in managing organizations ethically?

Related Questions

- Are women employers more ethical in their behavior than male employers?
- Do women follow an ethical business policy?
- While marketing the products, do women share the product knowledge honestly with the prospective customers?
- Are women entrepreneurs honest in issues like salary structure, promotions and recruitment?
- Is there any difference in rates quoted and the product shown with the rates and product in actual transaction?
- Are male employers more successful than the female employers?

Literature Review

- **Baverly** opines that cultural and economic limitations are the reasons for women's inadequate performance in the public sphere are a hindrance in the growth of women entrepreneurship. His study concludes that there have been significant achievements in advancing women in leadership and political roles, but that there are still institutional and cultural barriers embedded in business systems.

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- **Robert Loo** draws a comparative analysis of three studies conducted on 'ethics and gender' and concludes that women are more ethical than men as per the research outcome of all the three studies but men are more ethical in women in some situations. Specific ethical variable is an important component in gender based decisions.
- According to **Saundra et. al**, in the present scenario researchers are studying individual and situational variables as the focus of their studies. Many models have been developed Saundra's study focuses on individual variables of gender in their decision making and check the elements of ethicality. He has used a laboratory format and decision exercise tools to create similar to reality situations and see the influence of demographic factors.
- **E. Holly Buttner's** findings share with the readers that ethical perspective driving the entrepreneur's management decisions concerning their businesses are the choice of participants about their relationship with the management. Gendered nature of decision has also been discussed in his study.
- **Dr. Alka Jain** in her chapter of the book on gender inequalities discusses how women have to fight between their household jobs and organizational jobs. She has shown concern about less cooperation from the family members and urges a need to encourage women to work for the economy and become entrepreneur. This can be further scope of study if relationship between multiple stress factors and ethics in the workers is there.
- **Satya Prakash** concludes in his research that there is a direct relationship between the economic growth, poverty reduction and women entrepreneurship. He opines that women entrepreneurship is gaining recognition but still there is a long way to go and the way is not that easy. She has to utilize her strengths creatively and ethically to overcome the threats and grab all the opportunities to minimize her weaknesses.

Research Gap

The previous researches talk about women entrepreneurship in social references more. Economic effect has been also studied in revenue and profits. The author attempts to check the elements of ethics in various fields of management like HRM, marketing and finance etc. Such

Objective of the Study

- To check the elements of ethics in their organizational and business behavior.
- Comparative analysis in the business behavior of male and female entrepreneurs.
- To study relationship between business behavior, business practices and business success.

Hypothesis

There is a direct relationship among the three variables- business behavior, business practices and business success.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Elements of Ethics in Male and Female Entrepreneurs' Business Policies

When the question was asked if women employers are more ethical in their behavior and policy decisions than male employers the replies were of a mixed perception from respondents. 54% agreed to the idea that women entrepreneurs follow ethical business practices while 46% responded that male entrepreneurs are more ethical in their business behavior.

Diagram 1: Elements of Ethics in Male and Female Entrepreneurs' Business Policies



- **Do Women Entrepreneurs follow an Ethical Business Policy?**

The question was asked by customers and vendors. Their experience in dealing with women entrepreneurs was the basis of their answers. This question was not merely based on their views or perceptions but personal experience. 60% of the respondents said that women entrepreneurs follow ethical business policies while 40% said that they do not follow ethical practices.

Diagram 2: Do Women Entrepreneurs Follow an Ethical Business Policy?



- **Ethics in Marketing by Women Entrepreneurs**

"While marketing the products, do women share the product knowledge honestly with the prospective customers?" This is the question which was asked from the respondents to assess the ethics followed by women entrepreneur in marketing their product to industrial customers. 58% customers said that the marketing practices were not ethical in women entrepreneurs while 42% were of the view that women follow ethical practices in marketing.

Diagram 3: Ethics in Marketing by Women Entrepreneurs



- **Ethics in HRM by Women Entrepreneurs**

Another area checked by the author was human resource management. A question "Are women entrepreneurs honest in issues like salary structure, promotions and recruitment?" was asked through the questionnaire and the response collected shows that 70% women entrepreneur do not trouble the staff for their salary, promotion etc. while 30% said that they face trouble from women entrepreneurs in salary, recruitment and promotion related issues. The diagram below interprets the data:

Diagram 4: Ethics in HRM by women entrepreneurs



- Business Practices of Women Entrepreneurs**

To check the elements of ethics in business policies of women entrepreneurs, the question “Is there any difference in rates quoted and the product shown with the rates and product in actual transaction?” was asked. This was an open ended question. A mixed response was received for this particular question. More than 75% respondents agreed that the women do not follow unethical business practices. 25% were of the view that even if there is a discrepancy found in the transaction this is most of the time because of some other reason like lack of technical knowledge, situational pressures etc. but not the dishonesty. The reason behind this perception could be our respect for women and their innocence. The data has been summarized in the following diagram:

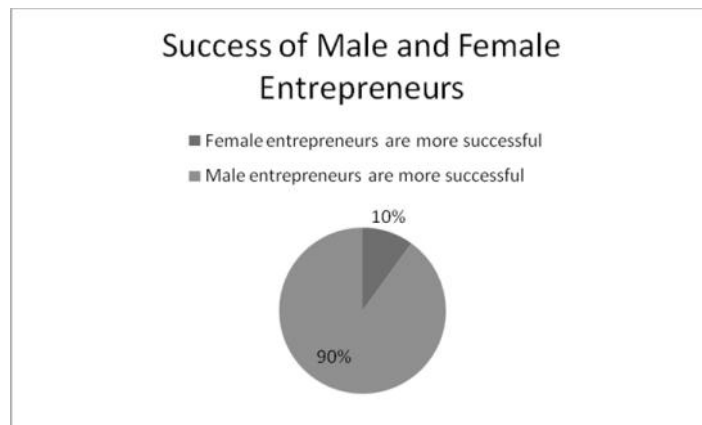
Diagram 6: Business Practices of Women Entrepreneur



- Success of Male and Female Entrepreneurs**

In Answer to the question “Are male employers more successful than the female employers?” 90% respondents said that male entrepreneurs are more successful than female entrepreneurs. Only 10% said that women entrepreneurs are more successful than the male entrepreneurs. The Diagram 5 depicts the data very clearly.

Diagram 6: Success of Male and Female Entrepreneurs



Findings

- Business behavior and policy decisions of male and female entrepreneurs are not much different, but somehow women follow more ethical practices.
- Marketing practices of women entrepreneurs are a little more ethical than men.
- In HRM, women stand much better than men as their HRM practices are considered to be more ethical.
- In general, business practices of women entrepreneurs are considered to be more ethical.
- Perception of success rate for women entrepreneurs is very less; people generally feel that women are not successful entrepreneurs.

Conclusion

Findings of the study show a relationship between business behavior, business policies and business success. Though there is not much difference between business behavior of male and female entrepreneurs, but a change in their business policies and their implementation is seen. Behavior is what is shown to the people, inside or outside the organization, while business policies indicate the rules inside the organizations. But this change does not show a positive relationship with the success in business. Hence the hypothesis stands true that there is a direct relationship among the three variables.

Suggestions and Recommendations

- First suggestion is for women entrepreneurs that they should work on business success while not compromising at the ethics front. They need to formulate strategies for profits and social responsibilities both.
- As social units, we should encourage women entrepreneurs and suggest ways to become a successful entrepreneur.

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