



ISSN: 2249-7196

IJMRR/Jan 2016/ Volume6 /Issue 1/01-05

Kandi Madhu Rao / International Journal of Management Research & Review

PROMOTION OF WOMEN BUSINESS OWNERS

Kandi Madhu Rao

Lecturer in Commerce, Government Degree & PG College for Men, Srikakulam, Andhra Pradesh.

INTRODUCTION

I. Significance of Women Entrepreneurship

It is generally agreed that entrepreneurial activity is crucial to national development in terms of both economic growth and technical innovation. Women in India have just lately begun to join what has been a historically male-dominated industry.

A woman entrepreneur is a woman of legal business-owning age who chooses to assume the risks that come with starting and running her own company. Entrepreneurship has the potential to increase women's independence both financially and psychologically. In rural areas of a country like India, the income of the male breadwinner is often insufficient to provide for the family's basic needs. In addition, many households in rural India include a male member who is dependent on substances or behaviors such as gambling, alcohol, or narcotics. The man's little salary hardly covers basic needs like feeding and educating his children well. Therefore, it is essential for the women in the group to pursue financially rewarding self-employment opportunities. Peers have more regard for a woman who can handle herself in a crisis and not rely on others. It's true that if a housewife begins working, she may influence her family in more progressive ways, provide her children more opportunities in life, be more helpful to her husband, and make everyone's lives more enjoyable. And if she puts in the time and effort, she just could become a household name and an inspiration to others, whose lives she will have changed forever. Self-Help Groups have been developed by the government of India with funding from UNICEF to achieve this end. Andhra Pradesh's Self-Help Groups reached an amazing 4,75,646 in 2001, with 65.40 lakh members and a total corpus fund of Rs.1624.95 crores (The Hindu, Dated 8-3-2004 p-6).

II .Challenges & Obstacles

Even through female entrepreneurship and the formation of women business networks is steadily rising, there are a number of challenges and obstacles that female entrepreneurs . Majority of these women come from the lowest strata the caste/class hierarchy. Their caste affiliation restricts their mobility, their class membership limits their access to productive, resources while their gender role minimizes their economic participation, it being limited to only extensions of domestic orders. As such they are marginalized as workers are found in situations of immense exploitation and victimization and are therefore, forced to a status of invisibility and powerlessness. Women are always subordinated to men in this country on account of the age-old traditions of religious and cultural constraints. Their lower literacy rate is the main cause and effect of their subordinate position in the society. Majority of the women perform domestic as well as household duties which are never paid. They cannot alleviate the burden of responsibilities like child bearing which is their lot by nature. Though equal status of women in the non-traditional sectors of the economy is allowed by Constitution of India, and the laws have been made to prevent male domination over women in the economic, social, and political fields, the cultural setting has still restricted women in India to their traditional role. Therefore, the task of integrating women in the national development requires simultaneous

efforts to improve their working conditions from both economic and social angles. Broadly women's participation in economic development calls for arrangements that would lighten their domestic workload and release them for other economic and a socially productive work. For this women need to search more avenues for self-employment. The development of women

entrepreneurship can make a significant contribution in this respect.. In short, the following are the major challenges that they have to face in the wake of male-dominated business sphere.

Choice between family and career

- 1) Illiteracy or low level of education
- 2) Dearth of financial assistance
- 3) Socio-cultural barriers. Inhaling gender discrimination

III. Case Studies

The following two real success stories which are collected and prepared in 2006 by the authors reveal how women have benefited a lot in the midst of distress by becoming a member in SGH.

Case study - 1

Smt. Sambangi Nagamani from Patakottagudem of Kottagudem Mandal, Khammam District, Andhra Pradesh, hailed from a very poor family. She is thirty-three years old with a minimum academic qualification of 8th class. Her life partner is professionally a tailor, earning Rs.600/- per month, which is insufficient even to provide a square meal to their three wards—one son and two daughters. Day by day they sink to serve the minimum basic needs of their children. They proved a failure in discharging their parental duties and responsibilities like providing food and education. Owing to this, now and then they had to take loans from the wolfish moneylenders who devours and gobble up their domestic existence. They were exploited and were helpless in repaying the debts as they were saturated at Rs.5,300/- There was no help during this crisis period. None treads the heels of these penurious destitute to pamper them in their midlife crisis. By the timely advice of her husband, she sold away some gold ornaments for Rs.3000/- with which she purchased one grinder for grinding pulses, spices, cereals and other food ingredients and started earning Rs.400/- per month but it was a speck of dust even to pay the interest not to speak of liquidation of previous debts. Consequently it became the last gasp of crisis even to pay the school fee for their children causing them inevitably to drop out. Because of heavy competition, their income was reduced from omega to alpha. Such misshapeness caused disgust and dispassionate among the parents especially about the future of their daughters. Subsequently her health too deteriorated, dragging them to the cobweb of debts. At this appallingly deplorable and critical condition, there dawned an eastern beacon of light by DRDA and Velugu project team about the different schemes for the SHG massive programme. They disclosed the process and policies in the Patakottagudem village conference how they would unfailingly help the distressed women with lower income groups. Mrs.S.Nagamani patiently listened to this benevolent programme. She discussed the scheme of SHG with the neighbours and the members of Prasanthi Mahila Group run with the help of Grama Deepika. She too joined as a member and started her visions of futurity in 1999 in the thrift movement with a subscription of Rs.30/- per month. She borrowed an amount of Rs.1500/- and Rs.3000/- in two stages as an internal loan from the SHG. She invested half of the loan amount towards liquidating her previous debts and the remaining for the domestic expenses. After being boosted up her unflinching faith and staunch belief and confidence in SHG scheme, she used to pay regular thrift and loan installment and become a stronghold. Thus she blessed with and bestowed on a boon in tidal waves and flood of poverty. Our protagonist, Smt.S.Nagamani envisaged visionary idea, a lightening flash in her dark cloudy life, of starting a new enterprise by starting new garments product business, a demand oriented market. She approached the then DRDA APO and visibly explained to him about her future plans. Immediately he consented and suggested that she could avail raw material at low cost at Vijzyawada and Hyderabad where garment business is the cynosure.

She welcomed his precious advice and with flying colours completed training in textile designing, piece cutting, learning novel types of models, stitching skills etc in TTDC Khamma. She was granted an amount of Rs.15000/- bank linkage loan in the year 2000. She purchased three sewing machines and from the remaining amount and adding her own capital of Rs.2000/-she bought for colours of cloth on wholesale in Vijayawada. Besides this, she also purchased stickers, colour twins, different types of buttons, cloth in flowers, colour treads etc in Hyderabad. Thus she procured complete raw materials for her product. She recruited two trained women tailors and gave training on the techniques and skills garment making. Later, as another progressive stride, she ventured some parallel garment making such as nighties, petticoats and children garments. She fruitfully marketed them in local colonies and excluding all expenditure. This venturesome victory pulled her from the brink of disastrous collapse and filled in her the core confidence to the brim and led her to the expansion of her business right from wholesale markets to the footpath vendors on cash and credit for which the DRDA benignly smiled on her by sanctioning further amount of Rs.50,000/- to her for meeting the ample orders received from the cross-section of business people. Her capital investment is commitment and conviction, her enthusiastic zeal, industrious soul and spirit. She purchased three more sewing machines and raw materials and recruited two more tailors to earmark herself up to the crest of exposure. She supplied her products to the local DWCRA Bazaar, Exhibitions, Melas and Pushkaras. She also, with dogged determination, spiritedly participated with her products in other State exhibitions such as Madhya Pradesh and Orissa etc, organized by the Ministry of Rural Development and participated in collaboration with DRDA and by proving her mettle from the futile to fertile and from the crescent state of life to the full moon. She was honoured with "The Best Participant Award" which boosted up her reputation and boomed her sales in the garment business. Thus Smt.Nagamani emerged from dust to crest, from a shes to flying ace like phoenix. She championed herself in understanding the varied target of the public on her business especially on fashion design. Because of the consumption of dresses with latest fashion, irritable competition on prices in the market, on the advice of the local DRDA, on the skills of technology, she could supply quality garments at low cost to the consumers as per their targets a deal benefit for consumer and her income as well. She was fully acquainted with latest innovation and TTDC training. Thus she could expand the realms of her business to the interstates and the profit increased from Rs.2000/- to Rs.5500/- per month. Besides this she earned complete exemption for sales tax on her garments business through DRDA. Now she cleared all the private loans and group loans except an amount of Rs.24,800/- bank debt apart from her present own assets such as six sewing machines worth Rs.3500/- each, one bicycle, two and half tulas gold ornaments and one colour Television. She could provide some livelihood to five more women of her locality who are below poverty line. But all the days are not springy and spongy but thorny too tread on. To best two with laured wreath she had to mount various challenges flooded from different quarters like male dominance, lack of freedom in the business, cutthroat competition in the field, craze of public in mill made products lack of packing technology, lack of commercial publicity for the products and lack of capital investment. Even then she did not budge an inch with utter difference but fullest confidence and fortitude. She surmounted all these critical hurdles and barricades by investing her profits in a planned way i.e. repayment of loans, group savings on time, on children's education, on business reinvestment by avoiding lavish expenditure. Sometimes she was cleft in stick between a housewife and head of enterprise. But by her resourceful wit and wisdom, she planned herself at the apex of her career. She did not leave her family suffer for. For the marriages of her children she took a LIC policy for Rs. 1,00,000/- and Recurring deposit of Rs. 50,000/- and had been regularly paying the installment. She remodeled her old house to RCC under AP Government Housing Scheme and got gas under Deepam Programme. She was ambidextrous in dealing with her regular proceedings and in discharging her social responsibilities and citizanal duties like HIV Aids Awareness Programme, Eradication of Child Labour and Illiteracy, Clean and Green, and Dropout Avoiding Camps. She is an exemplary role model to other women in the society for social service.

The domestic deity in her stirs for giving qualitative education to her children. Her eldest daughter is now studying II BA in Government Degree College, Kottagudem, her second daughter is studying Intermediate in a private junior college and her only son is studying class VIII in a local private school. Her sole life ambition is to give good and proper education to her children so as to see them in higher position of life. Now, she recollects how her river of life meandered on rocky stones and how it fell from dizzy heights un heights unhesitatingly and how, after joining the SHG, her life flowed peacefully and calmly. Now she is very ardent and confident, bold and venturesome to lead and to develop leadership qualities, communication skills, and technologies upgrading initiation within her. Finally she extended her thanks to the APO who helped a lot in making her join SHG through Velugu and at last she thanked the Government of Andhra Pradesh who worked for the empowerment of Rural Women through DRDA and their permissive performance.

Case Study – 2

Pedda sreeramuram is a remote village, in Kanchali mandal of Srikakulam District. There is one poor family consisting of four members in the village. The head of the family is Smt Renuka Prabhavati, aged 32 years. She is very industrious and diligent lady. The entire family is wriggling in the pool of poverty. She has great zeal and enthusiasm to come out of poverty. She and her husband worked in agricultural field to eke out their livelihood. They used to get Rs.50 to Rs.60 as wages per day. They had two children one male and one female in a small hut. It is a very difficult thing to come out of hardships with this meager amount of income. Besides this, the income is only seasonal. She miserably failed to provide the primary needs of food, shelter and clothing. She was unable to provide good education to her children. Their life is very pathetic and miserable. In these tragic conditions, her husband became sick and bed-ridden and unable to work anywhere. After sudden ailment of her husband she not only faced problems related to finance but also was ill-treated by her in-laws and relatives. She used to collect dry leaves of coconut as fire wood and used to cook the food for members of the family. Seldom she used to go for labour work and received Rs.25 per day. This money is not sufficient for her to afford the family needs. Hence sometimes, she borrowed money from moneylenders. Paying the interest to the moneylenders itself takes a toll, leaving little, if at all anything to repay the principal amount. At the hands of moneylenders, she was often caught in a debt trap, for which she felt agony. Under these circumstances, one day she approached the gram sarpunch for an amicable salvation. The sarpunch, who was kind and generous man, advised her to join in SHG. He explained the advantages of SHG vividly and gave her a helping hand to join SHG. But this illiterate and ignorant woman could not understand the concept of SHG named “Sri Venkateswara Mahila Self Help Group” in 1998. She emphasized the significance of savings and its good returns. This encouragement brought her to this stage today. To her bewilderment as on date of enquiry her balance of saving is Rs.600/-, Rs.800/- and Rs.1500/- respectively to meet the medical expenses towards her husband and sundry domestic needs. With this bright light of help and enlightenment she discussed with her husband for their economic betterment. Her husband advised her to take an acre of land with coconut plantation on lease for 5 years from local landlord to start coconut business at national highway nearer to their village. She approached the bank through the SHG for bank linkage loan and received Rs.20,000, from loan sanctioned for the Group which amount to Rs. 75,000/- In addition to this added her own funds to the tune of Rs.3000, she acquired 1.5 acres of coconut plantation for five years on lease. She adopted better strategies for the conservation of the land and she took the advice of the nearest Horticulture personnel for appropriate use of fertilizers, water management and achieved tremendous result by which she gained high yield of coconuts. She earned nearly more than Rs.1000 per month as profit and met the home needs and paid the loan installments regularly. The initiative of selling coconuts on highway has been encouraging her entrepreneurship and increased enthusiasm.

In addition, she bought coconuts from the local coconut growers and resold them to grocery stores and wholesalers in order to make a living. The urban street merchants and mobile vendors would go to her hamlet to stock up on coconuts, which they would then resell at a profit. By offering her high-quality coconuts at a fair price, she was able to maintain a positive relationship with her clientele. She has been accepting both cash and credit for the sales of coconuts. She offered price discounts to customers who bought a lot of coconuts all at once. Within a short time frame, she has been peacefully recouping past dues. During the summer, her coconut sales skyrocketed, and she couldn't keep up with the demand. She had everything planned out to ensure the best possible outcome. The substantial rise in her harvest improved her financial standing. She has managed to increase her monthly salary to Rs.3500/-, and during the summer months it even reached Rs.4500/-.

She had to work very hard and yet deal with issues like epidemics and food shortages. The Training and Technology Development Centre (T.T.D.C.) was a source of positive reinforcement for her. In 2002, she went to the Area Planning Officer (APO) at the DRDA in an effort to get a second connection. She succeeded, and the DRDA subsequently approved a loan of Rs.85,000/- for the Group as part of the SGSY, of which she received Rs.25,000. She put in an additional Rs.5,000 from loan repayment and personal savings, and used the combined total of Rs.27,000 to buy an acre and a half of land in the hamlet and drill a well for water drainage. The soil is rich, and there is plenty of water under the surface. She eventually settled down as a modest farmer, an endeavor that brought her unending acclaim and contentment. She cultivated coconut trees and sometimes used cutting-edge agricultural practices. Her husband's illness rendered him unable to help her with the coconut grove. So, she paid a local resident Rs.500/- per month to work in her company and tend to her expanding coconut grove. For her to make the big jumps, she has to be able to make decisions quickly. She became the epitome of service to the other ladies in the Group since she was extremely consistent in paying off her obligations to the bank. Thankfully, in 2002, the education department in her town began providing lunch to schoolchildren. The Mandal Education Officer had selected her as the program's caretaker because of her stellar reputation. He proposed that she get Rs.10,000/- from the DRDA's Community Investment Fund. The next year, she was given the same amount and successfully implemented the school lunch program, buying cooking tools, grains, dishes, and a single fire to feed the whole student body. This honorable position paid her Rs.600/- per month, thus she was happy with her choice. She applied for and received a home under the A.P.Housing Scheme, and with the help of moneylenders she was able to borrow the necessary funds to build an RCC structure in its stead. She dried her eyes after receiving one gas connection from Deepam Scheme. She has become self-sufficient and has helped her SHG organize essential community services. As a result of her financial stability, she gained the respect of her in-laws and other family members, altering the dynamic inside the family. After joining a SHG, a lady who had previously spent her life writhing in poverty emerged as a prosperous business owner. The SHG is a door opener to untold sources of joy and wealth. She is well-off enough to provide her kids a great college education. She claims that her life's guiding principle should be "simple living and high thinking." With considerable enthusiasm, she accomplished her goals. She hopes her kids will grow up to be responsible members of society who find satisfying careers and satisfying lives. She achieved her life's greatest successes with the encouragement of DRDA and SHG. She concludes that the Velugu project intervention helped her feel better about herself.

IV. Conclusion

The ladies whose families were living below the poverty line in these two cases definitely saw a dramatic improvement in their economic and living situations after becoming members of a SHG and beginning an income-generating activity.