Promoting Women Entrepreneurship: A Systematic Review On The Challenges

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Abstract: In the business world, the emergence of woman entrepreneurs has prompted a new outlook. Women entrepreneurship is inextricably linked with societal and financial benefits. The women’s participation in entrepreneurial activities is limited. The challenge of gender gap in entrepreneurship is present universal across countries. Coughlin and Thomas (2002) defined women entrepreneurs as the women taking ownership for establishing, accomplishing the capital of the enterprise and face all risks for the financial growth. Munshi et al. (2011) stated that initiation of innovative activities towards business endeavours which facilitate economic empowerment and societal betterment of women is labelled as women entrepreneurship. The five year plan of India has embraced various approaches to promote women entrepreneurs. The seventh economic census of India documented that among the women entrepreneurs, 34.3 percent were involved in agricultural activities and 65.7 percent were non-agricultural entrepreneurs. The various schemes promoted by Indian ministry for promoting women entrepreneurs are Rashtriya Mahila Kosh, E-Haat, STEP, Nari Shakti Puraskar scheme and working women hostel scheme. Despite the various initiatives, the percentage of women entrepreneurs remains low in India.

The author of the present study has conducted a systematic review of literature to understand the challenges in promoting women entrepreneurship in India. A review was conducted on the short list of 20 published research articles. A systematic method was used for conducting the review. The content analyses of the research articles were done using the review questions and data were extracted. Critical appraisal was done on the content and the salient highlights were documented. The author concludes that the major challenges faced were gender discrimination, conflict between work and family life, strain to raise capital, inadequate infrastructure, lack of education and training, lack of skills in managing risk and marketing, lack of stability in the business and the environment, scaling up the business, etc.

Key words: Woman Entrepreneurs, Challenges, Promotion, Business Environment.

Introduction

Entrepreneurship is the act of starting a new business or revitalizing an existing one in order to explore a fresh prospective. The entrepreneurs change the economy by producing new money, employment, and products and services. They create new value for the entire social
ecosystem. It is a natural state of mind that develops depending on the individuals’ surroundings and experiences, which make them think about their profession in a specific way.

Over the past years, women entrepreneurship has been an untapped source contributing to the economic growth of the nation. Entrepreneurs generate jobs for themselves and others. Women by being different, contribute to society’s solutions to various management challenges, organisational challenges, and commercial challenges. They also explore and exploit entrepreneurial opportunities. Still, women are only a minority of entrepreneurs. The discriminating reasons of women to become entrepreneurs should be addressed. The policy makers should keep this in mind, while framing policies towards empowerment of women.

The agencies, which are working to promote women entrepreneurship, should focus on empowering women to be self-sufficient and helping them access all of the freedoms and opportunities that are usually denied to them because of gender discrimination. Women have to overcome the male dominated environment for moving to handle their careers on their own. It is interesting to observe that even in this cultural context, India has a high degree of optimism in promoting women entrepreneurs. Indian ministry has promoted various schemes for promoting women entrepreneurs. Some of them are Rashtriya Mahila Kosh, E-Haat, STEP, Nari Shakti Puraskar scheme, and working women’s hostel scheme. The five year plan of India has various approaches for encouraging women entrepreneurs. It is interesting to understand from the seventh economic census data of India that 34.3 percent of the women entrepreneurs in India are engaged in agricultural activities and the rest, 65.7 percent are in non-agricultural activities. A range of factors, including the quality, gender mix, and kind of entrepreneurship, influence the economic effect of entrepreneurship. Gender equality and women entrepreneurship are essential for economic growth.

**Review Method**

The following research methods were used to conduct the systematic review: developing review questions to look for in research articles, conducting an extensive search for research literature on women entrepreneurship, selecting appropriate articles and preparing the list of
short-listed articles, reviewing the short list of articles, extracting content from the research articles, and performing a critical evaluation of the material; then the author documented the salient findings from the review.

**Highlights from the Research articles**

The author has shortlisted 20 research articles for the present study and conducted the review. The major highlights from the review are summarized below:

Arafat et al. (2020) stated that understanding of the factors which encourage women to be entrepreneurs, especially in India, should be well-understood through the perspectives of cognitive and social capital before planning and designing any policy intervention. The study tests the following hypotheses: opportunity perception has an impact on entrepreneurial quality in women, perception of risk influences entrepreneurial qualities in women negatively, perceived capability has an impact entrepreneurial quality in women, social networks has an impact on entrepreneurial qualities in women, and financing other’s business informally has an impact entrepreneurial quality of women. The findings of the study were that opportunity perception and risk perception do not encourage women to start entrepreneurial activities, whereas perceived capabilities, social networks, and being informal investors promote entrepreneurial qualities among women. The solutions as stated by the authors were educating on risk awareness, creating a favourable environment for women, facilitating networking among women and other entrepreneurs, understanding of non-financial motives, and promoting informal investments.

Nair (2019) stated that for entrepreneurial activity to be sustainable, innovation and proper diffusion are inevitable. Inexperience and low skills in entrepreneurial activity and a deficit of funds were the common obstacles which inhibit entrepreneurial venture and innovation in entrepreneurship in women. Stakeholders’ engagement is crucial for entrepreneurship. First, a
stakeholders’ engagement plan should be critically examined, then the stakeholders’ engagement strategies should be developed such as capacity building, building rapport with stakeholders, etc. Policies should be framed in order to encourage innovation and growth. Stakeholders’ engagement framework is a sustainable way to encourage creativity in women. However, the success of this framework depends on individual stakeholder and alignment of mutually beneficial goals of each stakeholder. Aspirations, hierarchy, and involvement of each stakeholder should be taken into consideration. The transparency in business enhances the trust factor in entrepreneurial ventures, and capacity building is also crucial for women entrepreneurs.

Manimekalai (2009) documented the role of women entrepreneur’s association of Tamil Nadu (WEAT) in promoting women’s entrepreneurship. Women in the middle-income and lower-income groups engaged in micro entrepreneurship. It was mostly in service sectors, with part-time, self-employed women focusing more on feminine or female-friendly occupations such as tailoring, beauty clinics, ready-made clothes, and fancy boutiques. Women in self-help groups had mixed success in launching microbusinesses. Micro-credit aided them in meeting their consumer loan needs, and saving for the small group. Self-Help Group (SHG) women in Tamil Nadu had been unable to begin micro entrepreneurial operations. Bharathidasan University’s Centre for Women’s Studies assisted in the formation of the Women Entrepreneurs Association of Tamil Nadu (WEAT) in March 2005. The research article documented the achievements of the WEAT.

Deepak (2014) examined the numerous internal and external variables that motivated and demotivated women entrepreneurs. It is an attempt to quantify certain non-parametric elements in order to provide a perception of ranking. It would also make recommendations for removing and decreasing barriers to women entrepreneurial growth in the Indian context. On the grounds of tenacity, inclination, and capacity to work hard, as well as talents unique to emotional intelligence, there were substantial disparities between women and men entrepreneurs. As a result, broad policies could be implemented to promote and expand women entrepreneurship in India, as women entrepreneurship is critical to the success of any economy, large or small.

Sharma (2021) stated that women had no role in the economic development of the nation and did not go beyond their conventional roles in the early 1900s. Women entrepreneurs in urban areas with high profiles are in the limelight, whereas little attention is paid to rural women entrepreneurs. Self-Help Group contributed to women’s empowerment in urban and rural areas. Women entrepreneurs are utilising various state and central government programs and have significantly contributed to the economic development of the nation. The common reasons for women to start entrepreneur ventures are: diversifying the family business, intent to express their creativity and imagination, earn higher profits, compulsion from family to take up business after the male member like father and husband, and need for using their time effectively. Various strategies for promoting women entrepreneurship includes empower women by creating awareness on entrepreneurship, emphasising formal education for women, changing the conventional mind-set of society towards women, building self-
confidence, potential women entrepreneurs could guide new women entrepreneurs and adequate finance and infrastructure facilities to aid women development.

Jaim (2021) studied the experiences of non-western women entrepreneurs. Majority of the studies focused on Western economies and the family’s role is underestimated. The author has conducted a systematic review with high-quality journals related to influence of family on entrepreneurial characteristics of women. The author has documented the issues in family and gender issues which affect entrepreneurship qualities in women. Major family related issues include domestic responsibilities, the role of husband, role of other family members, support facilities for childcare, dowry used for businesses and marriage. Policymakers and practitioners should empower women by supporting them through their businesses, especially in developing countries.

Xavier et al. (2012) explored the mind-set of women who have started to become owners of Small, Medium Entrepreneur (SME) after quitting their salaried jobs. The authors focused on reasons for women to quit a job to start a new company, entrepreneurial characteristics and finally, their hardships faced during the transition period. Tendency to become independent, desire for economic growth, and personal growth were the driving factors for a woman to leave salaried jobs for start-ups. Attitude towards business, good communication and listening skills along with self-discipline were the common traits observed among these women. They were confident, creative, leaders, problem solvers, efficient in executing plans, analytical, flexible and were able to achieve a good work-life balance. However, there were certain issues and challenges, such as a shortage of efficient staff, problems related to growth of business, and above all, constraints due to high overhead costs and little or no consultation from experts in the field.

Yadav and Unni (2016) studied women entrepreneurship growth over the last thirty years. The authors have examined twelve entrepreneurship related journals from the years 1900 to 2016. The authors stated that a theoretical base for research pertaining to women entrepreneurship is still at the nascent stage. Furthermore, there is a need to study entrepreneurial process of businesses founded by women. Adopting innovative ideas have become imperative. Aspiring women can be targeted and given access to apprenticeship in suitable industries because gaining exposure to start-up could be beneficial. Areas of women entrepreneurship should not be confined within boundaries and should become transnational in order to foster professionalism among the women entrepreneurs.

Moreira et al. (2019) stated that research on the entrepreneurship traits of women has increased globally due to changing socio-cultural conditions. However, there is a dearth of knowledge on the internalising process of firms and the role played by women entrepreneurs. The authors reviewed the papers systematically by identifying keywords relating to women entrepreneurship, shortlisting various articles relating to women’s entrepreneurship, analysing the bibliometric information such as year of publication, and identifying various concepts, models, and frameworks. The keywords analysed were classified into three clusters: Cluster 1
is the epistemological relation and gender, Cluster 2 is the cultural and social reasons for starting a business, and Cluster 3 is motivations, performance, and other business characteristics. Internationally culture plays a determining role for women. Motivation of women entrepreneurs depends mainly on their country of origin. This could be understood by 5M which is money, management, motherhood, market, macro factors. Future research should be carried out on the focus of women entrepreneurs on international markets.

Suseno and Abbott (2021) responded to a variety of discourses available for digital social innovation from women entrepreneurs’ point of view. The authors discussed the effectiveness of digital technology to create opportunities for reducing issues relating to individual identity and influence of individual, social and structural factors pertaining to women entrepreneurs. The authors found that individual identity and the influence of individual, social and structural factors do not encourage entrepreneurial qualities in women, whereas technology creates opportunities to redress negative effects. Technology also aids the social innovation of women entrepreneurs. Furthermore, there is an impact of digital social innovation on education, environment, climate, employment, community development, and healthcare. Future research can be conducted examining the model proposed in different countries’ contexts.

Chhabra et al. (2019) examined the importance of entrepreneurial purpose for encouraging women's entrepreneurship in India's micro, small, and medium businesses (MSMEs). The authors have framed the concept of entrepreneurial purpose and then validated the entrepreneurial intention instrument. New insights were drawn through this model for measuring entrepreneurial purpose among women. Personal characteristics, subjective, motivation, self-efficacy, and ecosystem play a vital role on desirability, feasibility and potential towards starting an entrepreneurship venture. The authors contributed to new knowledge on women entrepreneurship and the model serves as an ideal model for designing programs for training women entrepreneurs in India. This would also help various institutions, incubation centers and policy makers to promote women entrepreneurship.

Samantroy and Tomar (2018) explored various aspects such as empowerment of women, agency building and women’s well-being in the background of sustainable industrial development after carefully analysing the entrepreneurial activities of women entrepreneurs. The authors have used the data from the National Sample Survey and Economic Census for understanding more on women entrepreneurship in macro level. The authors gave suggestions stating that entrepreneurship not only influences the economy, but also redresses various questions of vulnerabilities related to gender socially and build a sustained labour by effectively utilising women’s agency. The limitations of the study were that there was little data available on skills, education and income that reflected entrepreneurial tendencies of women.

Bullough et al. (2020) stated that entrepreneurship among women is crucial for creating jobs for the future and it contributes to economic and social growth. However, the nuances of
entrepreneurship qualities in women are understudied, and so the authors have investigated empirical papers on gender dynamics and culture which impacts the entrepreneurial qualities in women. The new frameworks devised are on socio-cultural dimensions, gender identities and expectations, environment conducive to entrepreneurial ventures. The scope for future study provided by the author were examining the role of women in situation like COVID-19, expectations form community, region and country, use of Hofstede,GLOBE,Schwartz model for analysing cultural tensions and overlaps, study of de-globalisation and digital environment.

Agarwal and Lenka (2018) evaluated the development initiatives and programs aimed at empowering women entrepreneurs in India. The entrepreneurial spirit among citizens contributes to the progress of the nation. There is no place for gender bias in the nation building process. The initiatives taken by the Government were the five-year plans reorientation towards women welfare and empowerment which also includes women entrepreneurship programs. The programmes offered by the government were aimed at making women financially self-sustained. Despite the efforts taken by the government the level of entrepreneurship ventures is low within the nation. The enterprise performance of start-ups depends on personal, social, motivational, and environmental factors that drive entrepreneurial learning and competencies. A deeper understanding would make the entrepreneurship programs successful on a larger scale.

Awasthi et al. (2020) investigated the efficacy of encouraging secondary school girls to become entrepreneurs. Data was obtained from the Indian Human Development Survey. Results indicated that motivating girls at the secondary school level would help in building entrepreneurship ventures in the future. Social factors such as infrastructure and marriage influence women to start and run a business. Policymakers should create awareness among girls at secondary school level that would encourage them to become entrepreneurs and would help with self-employment. It would open up several avenues for job and venture creation.

Digan et al. (2018) examined the impact of women entrepreneurial empowerment on organisational performance, specifically business revenue. They emphasised the moderating effects of bricolage and psychological capital on the relationship between women's empowerment and performance. Visibilities of talents, managerial skills, determination are core qualities for entrepreneurship development in women and are ideal for empowering them. Data was taken from 369 women who have their own enterprise and are empowered with good income. Managing constraints in resource through novel way and overcoming the issues posed by self-employment through psychological capital further empowers women entrepreneurs. Bricolage and Psychological Capital would help Non-Governmental Organisations and Government in the immediate future frame various strategies and programs for improvising SMEs owned by women entrepreneurs. Such initiatives increase
the opportunity to learn, provide access to education and training, and form a network for women entrepreneurs, ultimately empowering them to own their own business.

Kumari and Mor (2021) in their case study on Indian women micro entrepreneurs documented the entrepreneurship and source of finance. Demographics such as age, nature of business, and geographical location are related with women microenterprises’ funding. Age, education and Marital Status did not affect the entrepreneurial traits of women. Microenterprises have been operational for many years which are in manufacturing and allied businesses, and service sector especially the ones operating from their respective hometowns showed a preference for self-raised finance. The sources of finance included the age of the business owners, education, marital status, geographical location, type of the industry, age of the firm. There is a requirement for starting new trading business far from their home town and also redressing the financial needs involved in microenterprises owned and managed by women in rural areas.

Handy et al. (2007) in their article examined the behaviour of Indian women entrepreneurs in the for-profit and non-profit sectors to understand whether there are any differences or parallels. Individuals who want to promote various social causes in the non-profit or for-profit sector are attracted towards entrepreneurial activities. Two groups of women entrepreneurs who are founders of similar enterprises for women and children in the same city were chosen for the study. The findings showed that entrepreneurs involved in non-profit enterprises have a high pay-off because of the promotion of social causes whereas for-profit entrepreneurs did not have a proper pay-off. Support from family is crucial for entrepreneurial behaviour. Some other factors include work experience in the sector, social class, education and caste. The influence however, varies according to different sectors.

Handy et al. (2002) examined women entrepreneurs from a certain segment of non-profit organisation in India to study the causes of self-selection. The findings of the study were that non-profit entrepreneurs received a high pay-off from promotion of social causes. NGOs whose goals were close to the ideology of entrepreneurs offered a high level of satisfaction to the entrepreneurs. Lack of financial capital could be overcome by access to donations, networks and volunteers. Women entrepreneurs are feminist and their marital status does not influence their decision to start an NGO. The intention to become entrepreneur is not a random event of self-selection. It is influenced by personal characteristics, cultural and socio-economic factors. The authors examined women entrepreneurs from a certain segment of non-profit organisation in India to study the causes of self-selection.

Neha (2015) examined the predominance of women entrepreneurship in India by interpreting the concept, profile, and dynamics of women entrepreneurship in India. The emergence of female entrepreneurs has given rise to a new perspective in the field of entrepreneurship. Women entrepreneurship is inextricably linked to societal and economic benefits. Despite the fact that women make up over half of India’s population, their participation in entrepreneurial
activity is still severely restricted. The women entrepreneur faced a wide range of gender-specific and gender-neutral challenges as they built and managed their enterprises. Entrepreneurial activity in India is relatively low, with most of it focused in Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, and Maharashtra. It is imperative to create a more favourable environment for female entrepreneurs. A large number of women-owned enterprises are unregistered and suited for government support. Therefore, analysis of the impact of the existing policies can help to find new ways to encourage the women to start business. Women's entrepreneurship is a diverse and complex topic that needs in-depth research to uncover its intricacies.

Maurya and Mohanty (2020) investigated the access to credit by women entrepreneurs in the unorganised sector. The study used cross-sectional data which represents the women in the unorganised sector nationally. The findings showed that there are certain disparities regionally in access to credit to women entrepreneurs. Engaging in diverse activities and maintaining accounts with authorities were the criteria for granting access to credit. There is only five percent increase in the credit share of women entrepreneurs in unorganised sector. Women belonging to the weaker sections of the society such as Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe have lesser access to credits. Self-Help Groups and Micro-Finance Institutions could be a game changer for women in rural areas. Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana provides loans to SMEs without collateral. Almost 70 percent of the beneficiaries who benefited through this scheme were women.

Status of Women Entrepreneurship in India

In India, women entrepreneurs can contribute to a great extent to improving the economic situation faster. However, the educational status of women poses a challenge since 60 percent of the women in India are illiterates. This is the main cause of the socio-economic problems which these women face and the reason for their low self-esteem and lack of motivation. The education status of women with their added social problems interferes with their decision to start business enterprises. Social activists and service organisation has to shoulder the responsibility to help the women to shirk their fear, low self-esteem and low motivation to redress their problems in their socio-economic status. Some of the other important obstacles which block the road of women’s progress in their entrepreneurship are their other responsibilities with their families, balance between home and business, dependence of women on middle men for promoting their entrepreneurial activities, lack of knowledge of the changing market, and lack of awareness of business administration and financial assistance.

Women entrepreneurs are being supported by the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) through various programs that help women entrepreneurs build their talents and build their own identities. The Prime Minister's Employment Generation Program (PMEGP) Scheme had resulted in the formation of 1.38 lakh women-owned businesses since its inception. Women-led initiatives account for roughly 30 percent of all projects in the PMEGP. Under the scheme's Special Category, women entrepreneurs are eligible for 25
percent and 35 percent subsidies for projects in urban and rural regions respectively. The list of several different schemes which are promoted by the Government of India in favour of women entrepreneurs includes SBI’s Stree Shakti Scheme, SIDBI's Mahila Udyam Nidhi, Annapurna Scheme, Dena Shakti Scheme, Udyogini Scheme, Rajiv Gandhi Mahila Vikas Pariyojana (RGMVP), NGO’s Credit Schemes, Assistance to Rural Women in Non-Farm Development (ARWIND) schemes, Entrepreneurial Development Programs (EDPs), Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), MahilaVikas Nidhi, Mahila Samiti Yojana, Indira Mahila Yojana, Management Development Programs, Women’s Development Corporations (WDCs), Marketing of Non-Farm Products of Rural Women (MAHIMA), Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC), Micro and Small Enterprises Cluster Development Programs (MSE-CDP), Indira Mahila Kendra, Micro Credit Scheme, National Banks for Agriculture and Rural Development’s Schemes, Trade Related Entrepreneurship Assistance and Development (TREAD), Priyadarshini Project, Rashtriya Mahila Kosh, Working Women’s Forum, Training of Rural Youth for Self-Employment (TRYSEM), Prime Minister’s Rojgar Yojana (PMRY) (Saraswat & Lathabahvan, 2020).

While men still outnumber women in start-ups, the gender gap in social enterprises is narrowing. This might be explained by the fact that the roles and stereotypes that influence women’s behaviour result as a strong link to social enterprise ideals. Since government institutions are unable to address all social issues, increased participation in social activities makes women a crucial player in promoting these necessary efforts.

Women in the organized and unorganized sectors, women in traditional and contemporary industries, women in urban and rural industries, women in big and small-scale businesses, and single women and joint ventures are the many types of women entrepreneurs. Factors which influenced the entrepreneurship development are individual factors, socio-culture factors, environmental factor and supporting factors (Joshi & Sanchiher, 2018).

Women entrepreneurs have potential talent equal to men for managing businesses, but they still lag behind in spite of a lot of initiatives towards women empowerment in our country. There are social, cultural, and economic barriers in the way of women’s entrepreneurship, with the lack of an entrepreneurial environment being the most serious issue. Women are denied chances, knowledge, and education despite their aptitude and talent (Nehru & Bhardwaj, 2013). Every woman aspires to start her own business, but in our Indian atmosphere, it is impossible to succeed in the way that it should be (Kaushik, 2013). Research studies have documented that entrepreneurial intention is the major psychological factor which influences women entrepreneurs. More policies and strategies should be implemented to encourage women to start businesses. The Government of India’s 'Start Up India' programme, which was executed in the year 2016, had a great impact in encouraging women to become entrepreneurs (Bhuyan & Pathak, 2019).

**Challenges faced by Women Entrepreneurs in India**

There are numerous challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in India. The most common problems are related to their struggle in the male-dominant social order. Financial institutions are not convinced about the entrepreneurial ability of the women entrepreneurs.
Therefore, their access to credit from banks for their working capital is tough. The next challenge is the women entrepreneur’s efforts to balance between family responsibilities and business focus. It is commonly believed that women entrepreneurs have less management skills, as well as less assertiveness and marketing skills. They have to rely on others to manage their business and update their technology in order to scale up (Kumar, 2006).

Bhuyan and Pathak (2019) stated that lack of support from family members when it comes to starting a business is a significant disadvantage for women entrepreneurs. Access to training, conflicts between work and household commitments, labour issues, lack of necessary education and expertise, and access to funding are all obstacles for women entrepreneurs (Akhalwaya & Havenga, 2012).

Yoganandan and Gopalselvam (2018) stated that technology governance has increased in business activities and women entrepreneurs are exposed to minimal training in technology. Women entrepreneurs find it tough laying their infrastructure for their business. Women are expected to perform the stereotype roles like taking care of family and children. They do not get recognized by society when they perform different roles like being an entrepreneur. In their mobility, women entrepreneurs face severe problems which are a great challenge for them in their business. Risk taking in business is not adequate for women entrepreneurs. They prefer to be protected space of life which reduces their efforts to move ahead courageously in their business (Dhillon, 2017).

Women entrepreneurs’ population continues to be minimal and many things comein their way of progress and they also lack role models to get them self-motivated (Gupta & Aggarwal, 2015). Vijayakumar and Jayachitra (2013) have stated that insufficient technical and professional training for women entrepreneurs is a major challenge. Sathyadevi and Fasla (2016) have stated that educational background of the women entrepreneurs played a critical role in their entrepreneurial success. The women entrepreneurs’ individual motivation helps execute the business successfully.

Efforts by Government and other Agencies for Promoting Women Entrepreneurs

The research studies have documented that women entrepreneurship is a process which includes their growth and development. Though the positive sign of women getting involved in entrepreneurship has increased, the size of the population is minimal. Reviewing the challenges, which the women entrepreneurs face their growth and development, have to be focused by Government and Non-Governmental Organisations. Special focussed efforts have been taken by Indian government to promote women entrepreneurs and also address their challenges. The government has proposed and executed various efforts in their five year plan to promote women entrepreneurs. Since the development of the country depends on the economic growth of women. The seventh five year plan has had a special focus on the integration of women into development. The eighth five year plan has included Educational development program for women entrepreneurs in rural areas (Prime Minister’s Rojgar Yojana) the other efforts of the government are the scheme for training women farmers in agriculture and associated activities, promotion of women co-operative schemes in industries like dairy farming, horticulture, animal husbandry etc. The Rural Development
Programs (IRDP) and training of rural youth for self-employment also focuses on the promotion of women entrepreneurs. Following this, every five year plan of India has included programs and schemes to promote women entrepreneurs. Some of the scheme are Trade Related Entrepreneurship Assistance and Development (TREAD), Swarna Jayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana which focused on promotion of new businesses by women, Women Development Corporation were set up to facilitate credit facilities for women. The State Industrial and Development Bank of India promoted the Micro credit scheme, Mahila Udyam Nidhi, Women entrepreneurial development program, Mahila Udyam Nidhi, etc.

It is a critical time to address the barriers which require to be lifted from the society. It is perceived by the society that women are not capable of doing business. It is strongly believed that women have to focus on their families, and the motivation level of women is very low. The development programs which are designed to develop entrepreneurial interest should focus on behavior, self-motivation, self-esteem etc. The core component for development of women entrepreneurship is to make them aware of their pride as woman, to believe in their potentials, distinct in their identity and role played for the economic growth of the country (Rama Mohan Rao, 2016).

Government of India has taken various initiatives to give funding and support to women entrepreneurs. NITI AYOG launched the Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP) and the main aim of this platform was to create a network of women entrepreneurs. SIDBI joined the efforts and has encouraged women entrepreneurs to share their experience of their entrepreneurial life and also provide services like financial support and alliance with corporates etc. The next initiative was Bharatiya Mahila Bank which supported the financial needs of the poor women entrepreneurs. The upper limit of the loans was upto 20 lakhs. Dena Sakthi scheme is the special initiative to support women entrepreneurs and motivate them to start firms in the area of food manufacturing and processing industries. The Annapurna scheme is executed by Bharatiya Mahila Bank and it offers loan upto Rs 50,000 to women entrepreneurs. Shree Sakthi loan is the scheme by SBI which support women entrepreneurship. This special scheme helps women to get loans at a concession of 0.005 percent on the loan which exceeds Rs 2 lakhs.

It can be inferred that strong efforts are taken by Government of India to fix the issues of women entrepreneurs.

Summary
The reviews of papers have helped the author to comprehensively understand the challenges in promoting women entrepreneurship in Indian setting. The main reasons for the entrepreneurial decision of women are driven by internal and external forces. There are many bottlenecks which slow the growth of women entrepreneurship. The role played by larger associations, NGOs and Government becomes critical in promoting and facilitating the growth of women entrepreneurs. Woman entrepreneurs add to the country’s economic growth and prosperity. There are many promotional exercises and programs which are undertaken by the government to motivate women, especially women in rural areas. The diverse kinds of challenges faced by women in growing as entrepreneurs and managing their enterprises have
to be redressed by policy decisions and non-formal efforts. The government has undertaken multiple efforts in the form of schemes to ensure the opportunities for women to explore entrepreneurship. The challenges can be fixed, mainly with awareness building on their capabilities and skill building. Though the entrepreneurial interest among women in India is low, there is definitely an increase in the percentage of women getting into entrepreneurial initiatives. On the other side of women, who have got into entrepreneurial initiatives, inspires other women.

**Conclusion**

To conclude the challenges which women face as entrepreneurs or blocks before getting into entrepreneurial activities should be clearly articulated by NGOs and Government. Some of main challenges are women restricted by the family, lack of capital investment for the business, lack of education especially in rural areas in urban lack of knowledge about entrepreneurial activities, role conflict within family as women are expected to anchor household activities, unfavorable environment where they have to face the male interfering in their business relationships, lack of information about the dynamics of business for example subsidies available and Government programs, tough competition, marketing issues, etc. Some of the remedial measures which can be applied to fix these challenges are promotional help, training, assistance in selection of innovative technology involved in the business, financial and marketing assistance, and finally, the family support.

**References**