

Linkages Between Socio-Cultural Attributes and Success of Women Entrepreneurs

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Abstract

The social institutions and culture are important in developing modal personality of individuals. Because individual internalises his/her own culture i.e., norms, values, role expectations through these social institutions. Different scholars have conducted the study on entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial supply by taking into consideration cultural conditions of a society. More the society produces entrepreneurs greater will be the rate of economic development of a country. It means that the supply of entrepreneurs in a society affects the rate of economic development of a country. It is important to understand the influence of the socio-cultural attributes in the achievement of success in an independent entrepreneurial career, the present study was conducted.

Keywords : Entrepreneurship, Attributes, Success

1.Introduction

To shape an individual's personality some factors play an important role in any society. In an Indian context some social institutions such as family, caste, class, education, religion are considered to be important for the development of personality. Every individual imbibes certain norms, values, role expectations through the process of socialisation. These social institutions and culture are important in developing modal personality of individuals. Because individual internalises his/her own culture i.e., norms, values, role expectations through these social institutions. Different scholars have conducted the study on entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial supply by taking into consideration cultural conditions of a society. And it is revealed from their study that socio-cultural attributes influence the development of entrepreneurship.

According to Berger different individuals possess different drives and motivations in different degrees. It is important to keep in mind that these drives and motivations require cultural conditions to give form and direction to individual potentials (Berger 1991). A Society with a generally high level of achievement will produce more energetic persons, who in turn will bring about rapid economic development (McClelland 1976). According to Thomas Cochran, cultural values, role expectations and social sanctions are the key elements in the theory of entrepreneurial supply. Entrepreneurs are not viewed as being supernormal individuals, but rather as representing society's modal personality. This modal personality is shaped by prevailing child rearing practices and schooling common to the culture. The individual's performance as a businessman will be influenced by three factors, 1) His own attitudes towards his occupation, 2) The role expectations held by sanctioning groups and 3) The operational requirements of the job. Society's values are the most important determinants of the first two factors (Kilby 1971).

Inspired by Webers proposition that religion, norms and values, behaviour and economic development are all interconnected, a number of experts reported their views on this relationship. McClelland (McClelland,1961), Berna (Berna,1960), Richard Fox (Fox, 1969) and Thomas Cochran (Kilby,1971) have also related economic progress with culture. Some of them have tried to explain the economic backwardness of India by linking it with the Indian culture. Tripathi has reported that the Indian personality, by and large, remained 'unentrepreneurial', if not anti-entrepreneurial. McClelland argued that Indians lacked Achievement Motivation due to socio-cultural influences on them. (Shivani, Mukherjee and Sharan 2005).

The present empirical study has been carried out in the Aurangabad and Nanded districts of Marathwada region in Maharashtra, India. Aurangabad district is one of the most important districts with a rich historical background. Aurangabad district can Commonly be called as a base for a visit to the world heritage sites of Ajanta and Ellora. (http://www.Indianetzone.com/161_Aurangabad_district.html). Nanded is also one of the historical places in Marathwada region of Maharashtra, India (<http://nanded.nic.in/htmldocs/goograptionalinfo.html>) It is an important religious place for Sikhs due to the famous Sikh Gurudwara known as Shri Huzur Abchalnagar Sanchkand Gurudwara. Aurangabad is a divisional Capital of Marathwada region and Nanded is also one of the developing districts of this region. The researcher has made an attempt to understand socio-cultural attributes and extent of success of women entrepreneurs in an independent business activity.

More the society produces entrepreneurs greater will be the rate of economic development of a country. It means that the supply of entrepreneurs in a society affects the rate of economic development of a country. It is

important to understand the influence of the socio-cultural attributes in the achievement of success in an independent entrepreneurial career, for which the present study was conducted.

2.The Concept of Women Entrepreneurship

With the emergence of women as entrepreneurs a National Level Standing Committee on Women Entrepreneurs constituted by the Ministry of Industries, India (1984) defined "Women entrepreneurs' enterprise as an enterprise owned and administered by a woman and having a minimum financial interest of 51 percent of the share capital and have at least 50 percent women employees".

Kamala Singh defined a woman entrepreneur as "Confident, innovative, and creative woman capable of achieving self-economic independence, individually or, in collaboration, who generates employment opportunities for others through initiating, establishing and running an enterprise by keeping pace with her personal, family and social life" (Singh 1992).

In the present research work, the researcher defined a woman entrepreneur as," a woman who is innovative, creative and who establishes her own business and provides some unique kind of services to the society, individually or in collaboration by generating employment to others."

3.Methodology

The present empirical Study in Aurangabad and Nanded districts intends to understand the Socio- cultural attributes of women entrepreneurs which influence women entrepreneurs to enter into independent business activity. The study is descriptive and analytical in nature. The universe for the present study constituted all the women entrepreneurs working in Aurangabad and Nanded districts from three sectors: manufacturing, trading and services.

Aurangabad district comprises of nine talukas Such as Sillod, Kultabad, Soygaon, Paithan, Vaijapur, Gangapur, Kannad and Phulambri. Nanded district includes eight talukas such as Kandhar, Loha, Deglur, Biloli, Dharmabad, Nagegaon, Narshi and Ardhapur. From each district three talukas were selected for the present study because it was not possible to include all the Talukas from both the districts for want of time, energy and money constraints. Therefore the researcher has selected only three Talukas from both the districts. Establishment of MIDC (Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation) in these Talukas were considered as important Criteria for the selection. The comprehensive lists of women entrepreneurs from Aurangabad and Nanded districts were not readily available.

No organized efforts were made earlier on the part of the government or on the part of the non government organisations (NGOs) to prepare an exhaustive lists of entrepreneurs in manufacturing and trading sectors from both the districts. By using snow ball technique the researcher herself had to prepare the lists of women entrepreneurs to be used as a sampling frame for the present study.

4.Review of Literature

Hadimani (1985) has conducted an intensive study of 200 entrepreneurs in a small-scale traditional handloom weaving industry of Mahantpur town. It has examined the role of various sociological factors in the real life situations of the handloom entrepreneurs and suggested ways and means of making them successful entrepreneurs. It also throws light on various problems of the handloom industry, the type of economic environment of the handloom weavers and the role of the handloom industry in urbanisation and urban development. The study revealed that the castes with traditions of manufacturing cloth either failed or remained static, while the castes with entrepreneurial traditions succeeded in becoming good entrepreneurs.

Bhanushali, S.G. (1987) has conducted a study of 125 entrepreneurs in the small scale engineering industry of Kolhapur. He had developed very comprehensive psycho-socio-economic criteria to measure the development of entrepreneurial personality. He has applied these criteria and co-related their success status to the social, educational and occupational background of these entrepreneurs. The study measured the success status of entrepreneurs in the small-scale engineering industry in Kolhapur. The study reveals that, the persons from the minority or marginal groups trained in the art of engineering and having long contact with engineering industry have better capabilities to achieve success status. Caste, education, parental support together have favourable and cumulative effect on the making of an entrepreneur.

Prasad and Rao Venkateswara (1998) have done an empirical study of 125 women entrepreneurs in the state of Andhra Pradesh to study socio-economic background, motivating factors and problems faced by women entrepreneurs. It is observed in the study that large number of units were started by the women in the age-group of 30-40 [40 percent]. Married women entrepreneurs coming from nuclear families are venturing to start new units. Units promoted by technically educated and non-technical but educated women are also successful. Loans, interest subsidies and marketing facilities offered by the institutions are inadequate.

Shivani Shradha, Mukherjee and Sharan Raka (2004) have conducted an empirical study of the

entrepreneurs of Ranchi, the capital city of Jharkhand. A random sample of 200 entrepreneurs consisted of 150 male entrepreneurs and 50 female entrepreneurs. The study involved a comparative measurement of levels of entrepreneurs, examining links between these variables and a few socio-cultural factors such as caste, religiosity, family structure and family support. The findings of this study suggest that there is a definite relationship between socio-cultural attributes of entrepreneurs and the level of success achieved by them. Certain socio-cultural attributes like caste, perceived family support and education influence the growth of entrepreneurship.

Shelina Akhter (2005) has conducted a survey of 100 women entrepreneurs of Chittagong city of Bangladesh. Her study is based on both primary and secondary data. This study aims at exploring the socio-economic conditions of the women entrepreneurs in Chittagong city, to understand the impact of their business on their families and society, and to find out their problems and ways to solve them.

In this study, different variables were taken into account to assess the socio-economic status of urban women entrepreneurs. It is revealed in the study that women entrepreneurs with education from S.S.C to post-graduation were greater in number. This reveals that educated women now-a-days have developed a particular inclination towards self-employment. It is also revealed that family values too greatly influence people in determining their careers and small size of the family motivated women to get involved in independent business and industry as entrepreneurs.

5. Objective

In the present study, an attempt has been made to understand the relationship between socio-cultural attributes of women entrepreneurs in terms of age, education, religion, caste, class and extent of success achieved by them in an independent business activity.

6. Linkages between Socio- Cultural Attributes of Women Entrepreneurs and Extent of Success Achieved by them in an Independent Business/Profession.

To understand the linkages between socio-cultural attributes and level of success achieved by the respondents, some socio-cultural variables of women entrepreneurs (Age, education, religion, caste, class) were crossed with the variable extent of success in terms of lower extent, medium extent and higher extent.

6.1 Extent of Success : Own- perception of the Respondents

In order to find out the extent to which the respondents feel that they are successful in their business/professional lives, three alternatives were given to them in the ascending order i.e., to a lesser extent, to a medium extent and to a greater extent. The data regarding the responses are presented in the table no.6.1

The data in the table reveal that an overwhelming majority of the respondents (56 percent) feel that they are successful in their business/ profession to a greater extent, 27 percent of the respondents feel that they are successful in their business to a medium extent and only 17 percent of the respondents feel that they are successful to a lesser extent.

Five socio-cultural variables were crossed with the extent of success to fulfill the requirements of the objectives. The analysis of these cross tables is presented below.

6.2 Age and Extent of Success

Let us look at the present age of respondents and self- perception of their success. An attempt has been made to understand the link between present age of the respondents and extent of success achieved by them. Age factor plays an important role in achieving one's success in business / profession.

The data regarding the respondents present age were crossed with the extent of success and they are presented in the table no.6.2. It is revealed in the table no.6.2 that, 40.4 percent (29.2 + 11.2) of the respondents' present age was found to be between the age- group of 31 to 40 and they were found to be successful either to medium extent or to a greater extent and the remaining 14 percent of the respondents between the age- group of 31-40 were found to be successful to a lesser extent, 28 percent of the respondents were found to be in the age group of 41 and above and majority of them were found to be successful either to a medium or to a greater extent, while 16 percent of the respondents were found to be between the age-group of 21 to 30 and majority were found to be successful either to a medium or to a greater extent. Only 1 percent of the respondents were found to be below the age-group of 20 and were found to be successful to a medium extent.

It is revealed from the data that 40.4 percent of the respondents in the present study were found to be between the age-group of 31 to 40 and were found to be successful either to a medium or to a greater extent. This is the age-group when women are physically strong and relatively free from their family responsibilities and can spend more time for their business / profession to achieve success. It is also revealed from the study that as the age increases the extent of success also increases. For the success factor in any business/profession requires more and more experience on the part of entrepreneur.

6.3 Education and Extent of Success

Education is an important socio-cultural factor that influences the performance of an entrepreneur. It is believed

that education received in Schools and college inculcates the value of achievement and the value of equality of opportunity and also enables people to inculcate various types of technical skills (Shivani, Mukherji and Sharan, 2005).

Therefore, in this study, to understand the relationship between education and the extent of success, these two variables were crossed and they are presented in the table no.6.3.

In the table no.6.3, it is revealed that 40.4 percent (27.6 + 12.8) of the respondents were found to be educated upto graduation and were found to be successful either to medium extent or to a greater extent and the remaining 7 percent of the respondents were found to be educated upto graduation and were found to be successful to a lesser extent, 36 percent of the respondents who were found to be educated up to post graduation were found to be successful either to medium or to a greater extent. Only 6 percent of the respondents who were found to be educated up to post graduation were found to be successful to a lesser extent. Very few (17 percent) of the respondents were found to be educated up to 12th and were found to be successful at all the levels.

In the present study it clearly indicates that overwhelming majority of the respondents were found to be educated up to graduation and post-graduation level and were found to be successful either to a medium or to a greater extent. It clearly indicates that without higher education one can not enter and achieve success in business / profession.

6.4 Caste and Extent of Success

Caste is an important socio-cultural factor which continues to play an important role in one's entry into an entrepreneurship and achieve success in it. Some social groups in the society tend to produce a large number of entrepreneurs, while some others do not produce them at all. An individual's development of personality largely depends upon his or her upbringing, religious or cultural ethics, caste or community ethics and so on.

Therefore in the present study an attempt has been made to understand the relationship between caste background and the extent of success achieved by the respondents. The data regarding the relationship between the caste background and the extent of success achieved by them are presented in table no.6.4.

The data presented in the table no.6.4 indicates that an overwhelming majority of the respondents (69 percent) were found to belong to open caste category and out of it 53.4 percent (17.6 + 35.8) were found to be successful either to a medium extent or to a greater extent. Remaining 31 percent of the respondents were found to belong to OBC, SC/ST/NT, and other community caste category and majority of them were found to be successful to a greater extent.

It is clearly revealed from the present study that an overwhelming majority of the respondents were found to belong to open caste category and majority of them were found to be successful to a greater extent. As compared to open caste category entrepreneurs the percentage of OBC,SC/ST/NT and other community entrepreneurs were low but their caste background does not influence the success level in the business/profession. It is revealed from the study that to enter into an entrepreneurial activity it is a phenomenon which is still associated with the persons belonging to a open caste category and it is still low among the persons of OBC,SC/ST/NT and other community category entrepreneurs.

6.5 Religion and Extent of Success

Religion is an integral part of a cultural system. It is important because it promotes social solidarity and reinforces social norms and values. Religion makes people share common beliefs and thus a common value system. Milton Singer argued on the basis of an empirical study conducted by him in Madras that Hindu industrialists in Madras compartmentalise their religious lives and their business activities. Singer (Singer 1972), Timberg (Timberg, 1978) and Saberwal (Saberwal, 1976) had altogether rejected weber's thesis that religion, norms and value, behaviour and economy are all interconnected. They were of the view that India's economic backwardness was due to certain structural conditions that were unsuitable for entrepreneurship and not because of social or cultural systems prevailing in the country. (Shivani, Mukherjee, Sharan 2005)

It is in this context in the present study, to understand the relationship between the religion and extent of success, these two variables were crossed and they are presented in the table no.6.5.

The data presented in the table no.6.5 indicates that an overwhelming majority of the respondents 90 percent were found to belong to Hindu religion and out of it 75 percent were found to be successful either to a medium or to a greater extent and 15 percent of the respondents were found to be successful up to lesser extent. Another 10 percent of the respondents were found to belong to Muslim, Sikh, Jain and Christian religion and majority of them were found to be successful either to a medium or to a greater extent.

It is revealed in the present study that an overwhelming majority of the respondents were found to belong to Hindu religion. And they were found to be successful either to a medium extent or to a greater extent. In the context of the present study representation of the respondents of other religion were found to be very small and majority of them were found to be successful either to a medium or to a greater extent. Findings of the study suggest that religion does not appear to affect the success level of the respondents.

6.6 Class and Extent of Success

Social environment of individuals such as socio-economic class may also influence to enter into an entrepreneurial activity. The individuals get benefited from the business experience of other individuals of the class they belong to. Community they become more productive and hence more inclined to become entrepreneurs.

It is revealed from the table no.6.6 that majority of the respondents 57 percent were found to belong to middle class and majority of them 54.2 percent (18.0 + 35.2) were also found to be successful either to a medium extent or to a greater extent. Remaining 4.0 percent of the respondents were found to be successful to a lesser extent. 36 percent of the respondents were found to belong to upper class and majority of (12.8 + 16.4) them were found to be successful either to a lesser extent or to a greater extent. Very few (7 percent) of the respondents were found to belong to lower class and majority of them (0.8 + 2.4) were found to be successful either to a lesser extent or to a medium extent.

It is revealed in the present study that an over whelming majority of the respondents were found to belong to middle class and they were found to be successful either to a medium or to a greater extent.

Conclusions

It is revealed in the present study that socio-cultural attributes such as age, education, caste, religion, class definitely affect their entry into an independent business/profession but it does not influence the success level of the respondents. Some studies such as Prasad and Rao(1998) suggests that units of technically educated and non-technical but educated women are successful in their business. Shelina Akhter(2005) also revealed in her study conducted in Bangladesh that educated women have developed particular inclination towards self-employment. Hadimani (1985) suggested in his study that caste background with entrepreneurial traditions succeeded in becoming good entrepreneurs. It means that socio-cultural attributes do influence the entry of women into business/professional activity. But to understand its success level more and more studies need to be conducted in this area.

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Table no.1
Sector-wise Women Entrepreneurs of Aurangabad and Nanded Districts.

Sector	Aurangabad District Total Entrepreneurs	Sampled Entrepreneurs	Nanded District Total Entrepreneurs	Sampled Entrepreneurs
Manufacturing	80	33	72	28
Trading	78	36	70	33
Service	308	56	293	64
Total	406	125	435	125

Table No.6.1
Extent of Success : Own -Perception of the Respondents :

	Extent of Success	Frequency	Percentage
1	To a Lesser Extent	44	17.6
2	To a medium Extent	67	26.8
3	To a greater Extent	139	55.6
	Total	250	100.0

Table No.6.2
Age-groups and the Extent of Success:

Present Age-groups	Extent of success			Total
	Lesser extent	Medium extent	Greater extent	
Below 20	-	3 (1.2)	-	3 (1.2)
21 to 30	2 (0.8)	18 (7.2)	20 (8.0)	40 (16.0)
31 to 40	35 (14.0)	28 (11.2)	73 (29.2)	136 (54.4)
41 and above	7 (2.8)	18 (7.2)	46 (18.4)	71 (28.4)
Total	44 (17.6)	67 (26.8)	139 (55.6)	250 (100.00)

Table No.6.3
Education and the Extent of Success:

Educational level	Extent of Success			Total
	Lesser extent	Medium extent	Greater extent	
Up to 12 th	12 (4.8)	11 (4.4)	20 (8.0)	43 (17.2)
Up to Graduation	17 (6.8)	32 (12.8)	69 (27.6)	118 (47.2)
Post graduation	15 (6)	24 (9.6)	50 (20.0)	89 (35.6)
Total	44 (17.6)	67 (26.8)	139 (55.6)	250 (100.0)

Table No.6.4
Caste and Extent of Success Achieved by Respondents:

Caste	Extent of Success			Total
	Lesser extent	Medium extent	Greater extent	
Open	32 (12.8)	44 (17.6)	97 (38.8)	173 (69.2)
OBC	04 (1.6)	05 (.2)	06 (2.4)	15 (6.0)
SC/ST/NT	03 (1.2)	15 (.6)	20 (8.0)	38 (15.2)
Other Communities	05 (2.0)	03 (1.2)	16 (6.4)	24 (9.6)
Total	44 (17.6)	67 (26.8)	139 (55.6)	250 (100.0)

Table No.6.5
Religion and Extent of Success:

Religion	Extent of Success			Total
	Lesser extent	Medium extent	Greater extent	
Hindu	38 (15.2)	62 (24.8)	126 (50.4)	226 (90.4)
Muslim	05 (2.0)	03 (1.2)	02 (0.8)	10 (4.0)
Sikh	- (0.0)	01 (0.4)	07 (2.8)	8 (3.2)
Christen	01 (0.4)	- (0.0)	01 (0.4)	2 (0.8)
Jain	- (0.0)	- (0.0)	03 (1.2)	4(1.6)
Total	44 (17.6)	67 (26.8)	139 (55.6)	250 (100.0)

Table No.6.6
Class and Extent of Success

Class	Extent of Success			Total
	Lesser extent	Medium extent	Greater extent	
Upper class	32 (12.8)	16 (6.4)	41 (16.4)	89 (35.6)
Middle class	10 (4.0)	45 (18.0)	88 (35.2)	143 (57.2)
Lower class	2 (.8)	06 (2.4)	10 (.4)	18 (7.2)
Total	44 (17.6)	67 (26.8)	139 (55.6)	250 (100.0)

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