

ISSN-p-2229-5356

e-2321-3698

Vol. 5, Issue 1, Jan., 2014

Impact Factor = 0.47

# Indian Journal of Health & Wellbeing

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**Chief Editor**  
**Sunil Saini, PhD**

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**Indian Association of Health, Research & Welfare**

# Indian Journal of Health and Wellbeing

Volume 5 Issue 1 January, 2014

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## Impact of skill training programmes on women entrepreneurship

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Entrepreneurship is a more suitable profession for women than regular employment in public and private sectors since they have to fulfill dual roles. India has been ranked among the worst performing countries in the area of women entrepreneurship in gender-focused global entrepreneurship survey. One way in enhancing the entrepreneurial activity in a country is by providing entrepreneurial training and education to potential and existing entrepreneurs. Hence this study was undertaken to study the socio economic profile of 372 women who enrolled in the skill training programmes and to observe the impact of the training programmes on entrepreneurship. A well structured questionnaire was used to elicit the socio economic information at the time of enrollment and after 6 month of completion of the training programme to study the impact. At the time of enrollment 94 per cent of the participants stated that their future focus was to establish an own business, but only 70 per cent of them were established their own trade. 89 per cent of them stated that knowledge through the training programme was one of the reasons for their success. In depth training programmes will definitely encourage women to undertake and cross the obstacle in managing the business.

Keywords: women, entrepreneurship, skill, training, impact, Avinashilingam

Entrepreneurship has gained greater significance at global level under changing economic scenario. Everywhere in the world, it is seen as one of the most important solutions to unemployment, poverty and low economic growth. The creation of new ventures and growth of existing businesses are vital contributing factors to any economy (Rasego et al., 2011). An entrepreneur is a person who is able to look at the environment, identify opportunities to improve the environmental resources and implement action to maximize those opportunities. The entrepreneurial skills are also needed to improve the quality of life for individuals, families and communities and to sustain a healthy economy and environment (Kanch, 2011)

Entrepreneurship is a more suitable profession for women than regular employment in public and private sectors since they have to fulfill dual roles. Women have been taking increasing interest in recent years in income generating activities, self employment and entrepreneurship. This is seen in respect of all kinds of women both in urban and rural areas. Women are taking up both traditional activities (knitting, pickle making, toy making, jam & jelly) and also non-traditional activities (like computer training, catering services, beauty parlour, gym, etc.). It is clear that more and more women are coming forward to set up enterprises (Rajani, 2008 & Saurabh, 2008).

India has been ranked among the worst performing countries in the area of women entrepreneurship in gender-focused global entrepreneurship survey, released by PC maker Dell and Washington based consulting firm Global Entrepreneurship and Development Institute (GEDI). In India, despite the high economic growth of the past decade, just 26 per cent of women have access to the banking system. Only 13 per cent of managers in India are women. Only 9 per cent of venture capital Investors in India is women versus about 19 per cent in the US (The Economic Times, 2013).

One way in enhancing the entrepreneurial activity in a country is by providing entrepreneurial training and education to potential and

existing entrepreneurs. Studies say that lack of education and training is most frequently mentioned weakness by the women entrepreneurs. Therefore it is imperative to focus on the training of entrepreneurs and in particular on the development of previously disadvantaged individuals, specifically women entrepreneurs. Researchers say that the only way to encourage larger numbers of women into self employment is to recognize that there is clear need to widen access to business start-up and growth training and advice (Both, et al., 2006).

Economic status of women is now accepted as an indicator of a society's stage of development. Majority of want to be women entrepreneurs are from middle class families. Their potential should be indentified and trained. Education on credit, savings, skills and social capital will have positive impact on opportunity for entrepreneurial activity of women entrepreneurs which could lead to business performance; depending on the entrepreneur's attitude to risk (Ekpe, et al., 2010).

With this focus the present study was carried out with the following objectives.

### *Objectives of the study*

- To study the socioeconomic status of women interested in entrepreneurial skill trainings
- To analyse the impact of training on their entrepreneurship
- To study the factors responsible for women to become entrepreneurs
- To identify the problems experienced in establishing business

## Method

### *Participants*

Avinashilingam University for Women, situated in the center of Coimbatore city, Tamil Nadu, India is offering multifaceted skill training programmes especially suitable for women through its department of Lifelong Learning and Extension. The courses offered were demand based and consist of well structured, pre-evaluated and up to dated course curriculum. It had extensive practical training with necessary theory. The course content was

divided into different modules namely Basic skills, recent advancements, entrepreneurial skill development and Business plan preparation and implemented through hands on training, group discussion, case studies, and interactive forums with experts and digital lessons. Hence it was selected for the study.

372 women who enrolled in the different skill training programmes during 2010-11 were taken for the study. A well structured questionnaire was developed in local language (Tamil) to elicit information. The questionnaire was developed with 40 questions which covered elements namely socio-economic, demographic details, personal objectives, their future plan and their attitudes towards self employment. The developed questionnaire was phase evaluated and given at the time of enrollment.

After the 6 months of completion of their training period, they were approached to observe the impact of skill training programmes. A questionnaire was developed with 40 questions which cover namely nature of trade, type of investment, attitude towards business at the initial stage, profit and income, issues and reason for success and phase evaluated. It was administered to the women who started their enterprise after the training programmes. The collected informations were consolidated, tabulated and analysed using percentage.

The collected information were consolidated, tabulated and analysed

## Results

The results and discussions of the study was given as below

- Socio economic profile of the women enrolled in the skill training programmes
- Impact of the skill training programmes on entrepreneurship
- Socio economic profile of the women enrolled in the skill training programmes

Table I gives the Number of women enrolled in the skill training programmes

Table I: Number of women enrolled in the skill training programmes

Sr.	Name of the skill training programmes	Duration enrolled	Number	Per cent
1	Fashion designing	6 months	93	25
2	Pattern making	2 months	30	8
3	Herbal beauty care	3 months	97	26
4	Computer courses	2 months	12	3
5	Needle craft	2 months	18	5
7	Arts and crafts	15 days	32	9
8	Bridal makeup	1 week	10	3
9	Application of mehndhi	1 week	19	5
10	Flower tying	1 week	34	9
12	Hair style	1 week	27	7
	Total		372	100

During 2010-11, 372 participants enrolled in the 12 skill training courses offered by the University.

Among the offered courses, greatest enrollment was seen in herbal beauty therapy (97 per cent) followed by Fashion designing (93 per cent). Next to that about 32-34 per cent enrollment was seen in courses on Arts and crafts and flower tying. 30 per cent who wanted to upgrade their pattern drafting and garment finishing skills opted for the pattern making course.

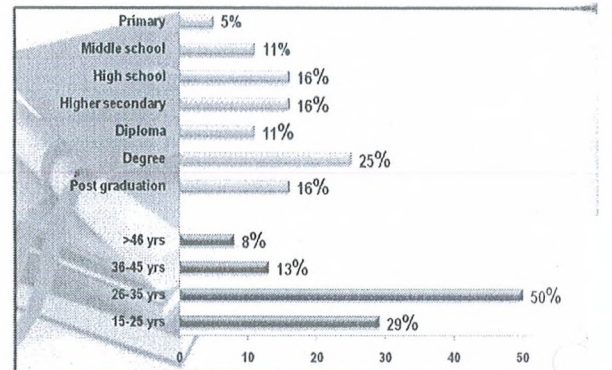
Only less than 8 per cent joined for hair style (7 percent),

Application of mehndhi (5 per cent), Needle craft (5 per cent) computer courses (3 per cent) and bridal make up (3 per cent).

Among overall enrolled participants, 32 per cent were from rural and 68 per cent were from urban areas.

Figure 1: Gives the age and educational qualification of the enrolled women.

Figure 1: Age and educational qualification of the enrolled women



The figure clearly shows that majority (50 per cent) of the women who joined for these income generating skill training courses were between 26-35 years, succeeded by the age group between 15-25 years (29 per cent). It was interesting note that even after 46 years 8 per cent were interested to learn new skills.

Regarding the education qualification, greatest per cent (25 per cent) of women were completed graduation and 16 per cent women were completed post graduation, higher secondary and high school.

Table 2 depicts the socio-economic status of the enrolled women

Table 2: Socio-economic status of the enrolled women

S.No	Particulars	Number	Per cent
I	Marital status		
1	Married	178	48
2	Spinster	127	34
3	Widow	39	10
4	Divorced	28	8
II	Type of family		
1	Joint	89	24
2	Nuclear	283	76
III	Size of the family		
1	>4	56	15
2	3-4	193	52
3	1-2	123	33
IV	Family income/month		
1	Rs.5,000-Rs.15,000	153	41
2	Rs.15,000-Rs.25,000	147	40
3	>Rs.25,000	72	19

Most (48 per cent) of the participants were married and 18 per cent were found to be destitute women. Majority (76 per cent) were in nuclear family and 41 per cent of the participants earning was observed to be between Rs.5,000 to Rs.15,000 followed by Rs.15,000 to Rs.25,000 (40 per cent) and more than Rs.25,000 (19 per cent)

Table 3 illustrates the number of women established the trade

Table 3: Number of women established trade

Name of the trade	Number	Per cent
Beauty clinic	74	76
Dress designing unit	93	76
Art and crafts	19	59
Embroidery unit	11	61
Computer documentation unit	3	25
Flower shop	27	79
Mehandhi artist	13	68
Bridal makeup and hairstylist	19	51

Among the participants, 70 per cent of the trainees established their own trade in their relevant field. More than three fourth of the

participants of flower tying (79 per cent), herbal beauty therapy (76 per cent) and fashion designing course (76 per cent) were established their own trade at their economic level. It might be due to the immediate earning potential of these courses due to their high demand. 50-68 per cent of the participants of application of mehandhi (68 per cent), embroidery course (61 per cent) and arts and crafts (59 per cent) started their own venture in their learnt field.

Only 25 per cent of the computer course participants were started own business in a small scale level namely wedding card designing, project typing and other documentation works.

Table 4: gives the area wise classification of the women who established the trade.

Table 4: Area wise classification of the women who established trade

Sr.	Year	Number	Rural		Urban	
			Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
1	Beauty clinic	74	25	34	49	66
2	Dress designing unit	93	32	34	61	66
3	Art and crafts	19	7	37	12	63
4	Embroidery unit	11	2	18	9	82
5	Computer documentation work	3	1	33	2	67
6	Flower shop	27	11	41	16	59
7	Mehandhi artist	13	5	38	8	62
8	Bridal makeup and Hair stylist	19	8	42	11	58

Among the women entrepreneurs 35 per cent were from rural and 65 per cent were from urban areas. Regarding the trade, rural women contribution in establishing flower garland making and bridal makeup and hair style was maximum (41-42 per cent) where in other trade it was found to be below 40 per cent.

Table 5: illustrates the sources of stimulus stated by the women to establish the trade

Table 5: Stimulus stated by the women to establish trade

Sr.	Particulars	Number	Per cent
1	Economic survival	247	95
2	Selfrealization	75	29
3	Technical knowledge	221	85
4	Influence by success stories	161	62
5	Heavy demand for the product & high profit margin	192	74
6	Infrastructure facilities	93	36

The above table clearly says that majority (95 per cent) of the women established trade for their economical survival, followed by Technical knowledge (85 per cent). Heavy demand of the products and its high profit margin provoked 74 per cent of women to start the trade and 62 per cent by the influence of other success stories and 36 per cent started business due to the infrastructure facilities available to them.

Table 6 depicts the details of the trade established by the selected women entrepreneurs.

Table 6: Details about the trade established by the women entrepreneurs

Sr.	Particulars	Number of participants	Per cent
I	Nature of the trade		

1+	Individual	201	78
2	Group	58	22
II	Nature of investment		
1	Bank loan	59	23
2	Personal savings	111	43
3	Loan from friends/relatives	132	51
4	Self Help Group loan	89	34
5	others	45	17

Maximum per cent (78 per cent) of them started business individually and only 22 per cent established their trade in partnership. 51 per cent of the women entrepreneurs received loan friends and relatives for their capital investment and only 23 per cent got loan from bank.

Table 7 gives the details about the capital investment and monthly income of selected the women entrepreneurs

Table 7: Details about the capital investment and monthly income of the selected women entrepreneurs

Sr.	Particulars	Number of participants	Per cent
I	Capital amount invested		
1	Rs.1,00,000 Rs.2,00,000	67	26
2	Rs.50,000 Rs.1,00,000	34	13
3	Rs.25,000 Rs.50,000	92	36
4	<Rs. 25,000	66	25
II	Monthly Income		
1	>Rs.25,000	73	28
2	Rs.10,000 Rs.25,000	75	29
3	<Rs.10,000	111	43

The above table says that all the trade was found to be small scale enterprise and maximum per cent (36 per cent) invested less than

50,000 and earning more than Rs. 10,000/month as their income.

Table 8 illustrates the challenges faced by the women entrepreneurs during establishment

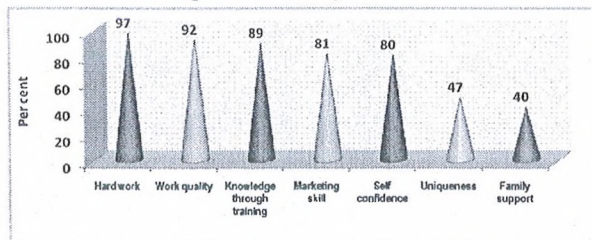
Table 8: Challenges faced by the women entrepreneurs during establishment

Sr.	Problems	Number	Per cent
1	Inadequate capital investment	149	58
2	Socio-cultural barrier	97	37
3	Work-Family conflict	139	54
4	Market oriented risks	173	67
5	Lack of Motivational factors	169	65
6	Lack of Knowledge in business management	81	31
7	Lack of Awareness about the economical assistance	201	78
8	Lack of Trainings	61	24
9	Employee related issues	87	34

Greatest challenge faced by the women entrepreneurs at the time of establishment was lack of awareness about economical assistance (78 per cent), followed by market oriented risk (67 per cent), lack of motivational factor (65 per cent), Inadequate capital investment (58 per cent) and Work family conflict (54 per cent). Less than 50 per cent of women entrepreneurs faced challenges like socio cultural barrier, lack of knowledge in business management, lack of training in certain aspects and employee related issues at the time of establishment.

Figure II gives the reason for success given by the selected women entrepreneurs.

Figure II: Reason for success



Maximum per cent of the women entrepreneurs said their success was due to their hard work (97 per cent), Work quality (92 per cent), knowledge through skill training attended (89 per cent) and marketing skills (81 per cent) and 80 per cent said their success was due to their self confident. About 40-47 per cent said other reason for their success.

## Discussion

Among the offered course except pattern making, all other courses were well suitable for the beginners irrespective of their age and educational qualification. The pattern making course was suitable for the person those who wanted to update their known tailoring skills. The enrollment in Herbal beauty therapy and Fashion designing was found to be more when compared to other courses. This might be due to the immediate earning potential of the courses. These skills have ever lasting demand as far the human race is there and can be practiced at their home scale level.

The educational level and family background influences women participation in the field of enterprise (Goyal, M., 2011). The highest percentage of the participants were graduates and followed by post graduates, high school and higher secondary school education. Most

of them enrolled in the training programmes with the focus to become an entrepreneur.

Nearly three fourth of the trainees entered into business venture in their relevant field after completing the course, both in rural and urban area. Maximum per cent of entrepreneurs were seen in field of Beauty and Apparel designing. Only One fourth of computer courses trainees were entered into self employment might be due to the highest capital investment.

Economical survival was found to be the primary reason for most of the trainees to enter in to the new business venture followed by technical knowledge. Minimum per cent of the women obtained bank loan for their capital investment. This minimum percentage might be due to the intrinsic procedures and formalities practiced in bank sector and lower awareness to the relevant schemes.

This finding was found to be similar results revealed in a study on problem and prospects of women entrepreneurs with reference to Erode district by Palaniappan, G (2012). He opined that this minimum percentage might be due to the intrinsic procedures and formalities practiced in bank sector and lower awareness to the relevant schemes. Jayammal (2009) stated that there are several problems in getting financial assistance from the financial institution and it also took long period for processing.

Their maximum investment was found to be less than Rs. 1,00,000. Women controlled business are often small and it is not always easy for women to access the information they need regarding technology, training, innovative schemes, concessional alternative markets, etc. (Goysl, 2011).

The problem faced by women entrepreneurs at the time of inception was found to be similar with the findings of the study on Problems of women entrepreneurs in Coimbatore conducted by Jayammal (2009). The findings revealed that 67.8 per cent of subjects faced very tough competition in the sales of the product and majority of the women faced financial problems at the initial stage and less than 50 per cent faced employee related problems (47 per cent).

From the figure (II) it is clear that the trainings given by University have played one of the major roles in the success of women entrepreneurs. Rao et al. (2013) stated that education and training is found to be significant for the success of the women entrepreneurs. A well planned course training curriculum definitely improve the women self confidence to take up new business ventures.

## Conclusion

Women entrepreneurs enter business predominantly for economic survival. Most of the women were interested to become entrepreneur at the beginning but lack of motivation, lack of economical support and low access to technical skills due to various reasons they lack confidence to take up self employment. There should be a continuous attempt to inspire, motivate, stimulate and co-operate women entrepreneurs.

Vocational training institution need to increase more to involve women community to understand the business and skill management. It also should strengthen their professional competence in managerial, leadership, marketing, financial, production and profit planning, account keeping and other skills. In depth training programmes will definitely encourage women to undertake and cross the obstacle in managing the business.

Manuscript received October 2013  
 Revised manuscript received December 2013

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