

Women Entrepreneurship in North-East India

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Abstract:

Entrepreneurs are seen as national assets to be motivated, cultivated and remunerated to the greatest degree possible. Entrepreneurs develop innovative ideas that provide civilization with a large number of products and services which change the way we work and live. The benefits they offer are by creating job opportunities, improving standard of living and contributing to the overall growth of the economy. The present study focuses on scenario to of women entrepreneurship in the North Eastern state of India - prospects and challenges of woman entrepreneurship , along with the promotional policies relating women entrepreneurship for the future In view of the ever increasing problems facing the women entrepreneurs. The North Eastern Region of India (NER) is unique in terms of growth opportunities because it has the potential to become India's economic powerhouse, with a thriving source of energy, oil, natural gas, coal, and limestone, as well as the world's largest perennial water system in the Brahmaputra and its tributaries. As most of the population live in rural area in North East region due to lack of education and skill development courses of entrepreneurship, it is very difficult to growth of woman entrepreneurship in North East India. Education has been instrumental in increasing the participation of women in entrepreneurial activities. Government should provide better educational facilities and schemes to women folk. A Women Entrepreneur's Guidance Cell should be set up to handle the various problems of women entrepreneurs all over North East Region.

Keywords: Government, tributaries, various, scenario, entrepreneurship

Introduction:

Entrepreneurship is critical to the economic growth and development of a country or an area within a country. The development of entrepreneurship is critical for both national and social development. It is very important to grow our rural sector in order to improve the north-east region as a whole. One of the most significant and crucial features of north east India is economic development has been the growth of small and micro industries. The problem of unemployment and appropriate utilization of both human and non-human resources, as well as improving the living conditions of the poor masses, is small-scale entrepreneurship (Singh, 2009). The North Eastern region of India comprises of eight States- Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura. This region is one of the biodiverse regions of the entire country. A North East Indian state occupies 7.9 % of the total geographical area of the nation. Gender equality is a very important factor to long term growth of an economy. As traditional society prevails north east region man are more prefers and get more opportunity than woman. North-east Indian states accounts for only 4% of total establishment by women in India and women entrepreneur of this region provides only 3.76% of employment provided by women entrepreneurs in the whole country. Therefore, enhancement of the entrepreneurial capabilities of women is much needed at present. Entrepreneurship development and income generating activities are a feasible solution for empowering women. Women entrepreneurship programs have gained momentum by encouragement, appropriate awareness, training, environment and support. This has improved the socio-economic status, which is a pre-requisite of women's empowerment. Woman entrepreneurs face

gender based barriers to starting and growing their business including discriminatory property, matrimonial and inheritance laws and cultural practices, limited mobility, voice and representation and unequal share of family and household responsibilities. These factors combined with social exclusion based on sex mean that woman entrepreneurs are less favorable position than man. Treating the women with equality of opportunities is very much required. Every region has its own problems and prospects for the development of entrepreneurship and the North Eastern Region is not an exception to that.

Review Of Literature:

Syed Shah Alam, Mohd Fauzi Mohd Jani, Nor Asiah Omar (May 2011) investigated the key factors which affects the success of women entrepreneurs in Southern region in Malaysia. The results suggested that family support, social ties and internal motivation affect positively and significantly to the success of women entrepreneurs in the small business. It had also shown that in the past, women rarely ventured into business not because of lack of interest but because of lack of opportunities. A study done in the United Kingdom concluded that the gap between male and female entrepreneurs in the region was closing due to the wide opportunities which are being created all over the world for women entrepreneurs to open up businesses.

Seema Goswami (2002), in her book says that during the span of 50 years the status of women has undergone changes which expands the sub-cultural base of westernization, in which the women by their very nature had family increasingly face pressure of fission due to economic, cultural and social reorientation of its function and obligations. According to M. Aminul Islam, a woman of her ability can do everything if she desires to do so. They are not only cooks; they are now breadwinners as well. The economic contribution of women through the magnitude of their unpaid labour is immense. They have proved their mettle in various fields, including higher education, teaching, politics, sports, medical as well as scientific research, information technology, air and water, peacekeeping missions, nursing, wartime, agriculture, construction, business, public and private job sectors, policing, journalism and many more fields. But still women are becoming the victims of social vices like rape, acid attacks, sexual abuse and dowry-related violence.

According to Limbu and Bordoloi (2015), women in rural Assam have a lot of difficulties in running their businesses, and some females even avoid going into business because of the high failure rate.

V Krishnamoorthy and R Balasubramani (April 2014), identified the important women entrepreneurial motivation factors and its impact on entrepreneurial success. The study identified ambition, skills and knowledge, family support, market opportunities, independence, government subsidy and satisfaction are the important entrepreneurial motivational factors. The study also concluded that ambition, knowledge and skill, independence, dimensions of entrepreneurial motivational has significant impact on entrepreneurial success.

Tambunan, Tulus, (2009) focused in his article mainly on women entrepreneurs in small and medium enterprises based on data analysis and review of recent key literature. This study found that in Asian developing countries SMEs are gaining overwhelming importance; more than 95% of all firms in all sectors on average per country. The study also depicted the fact that representation of women entrepreneurs in this region is relatively low due to factors like low level of education, lack of capital and cultural or religious constraints.

Dr. Sunil Deshpande & Ms. Sunita Sethi, Shodh, Samikshaaur Mulyankan (Oct.-Nov.-2009) in their research paper exhibits the encouraging and discouraging factors in an enterprise and to provide solutions to the various problems faced by the women entrepreneur group. For the betterment of women entrepreneur emphasize should be on educating women strata of population, spreading awareness and consciousness amongst women to outshine in the enterprise field, making them realize their strengths, and important position in the society and the great contribution they can make for their industry as well as the entire economy.

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (2004) stated that women entrepreneurs have been recognized as an important source of economic growth which is still untapped. Through creating new jobs for themselves and for others, women entrepreneurs provide their contribution to society and economy by solving various problems related to management organization and business.

In a study on entrepreneurs of Northeast India, Sinha (2003) claimed that the women entrepreneurs of Northeast India have enough potential to take up entrepreneurship as their career. An enterprise may be a small shop or an advanced technology-based industry and entrepreneurs cannot be differentiated in terms of their business. Entrepreneurs can only be differentiated in terms of their lifestyle, attitude, value and behavior. Author made a study on 400 men and women entrepreneurs in Northeast region and found that for women entrepreneurs, setting up an enterprise is it difficult job and at the same time it is very difficult for them to run it with profitability.

Importance Of Study:

An entrepreneur is an economic leader who can spot prospects for the effective introduction of new goods, processes, and sources of supply, “as well as assemble plant and equipment, labour, and arrange them into a concern. Entrepreneurship is the process of identifying opportunities and putting in place the resources needed to take advantage of them. An entrepreneur encourages capital production and wealth creation in society, hence lowering unemployment and poverty. Experience with various programs have highlighted the benefits of formation of women’s groups for building confidence and focusing on developmental tasks. Different groups in various states all over the country have focused on skill development and awareness generation, promoting economic development through income generating activities, inculcating thrift and credit management activities among poor women. Access to and control over economic and financial resources is a critical component of economic development in any country. Gender equality and women empowerment is required for sustainable and inclusive growth not only in Northeast region but all over India. In this matter, the women entrepreneurs can play in influential rule in North East Indian states. Women of the North East are now playing a proactive role in all walks of life but in the field of business, it has not been a very easy journey for them to enter the threshold of a man’s arena Today, North Eastern women have also move beyond the known and have ventured into the less traversed sectors in entrepreneurship One of the most eco-friendly sites in the map of India.

Objective Of Study:

1. Study about present status of woman entrepreneurship in north east India.
2. Scope and challenges of woman entrepreneurship in north east India.
3. Give suggestion to solve the problem of encouragement of woman entrepreneurship.

Methodology:

A systematic study in any branch needs a pre-determined and well thought out methodology to find out the truth. There are in fact, a number of methods that may be applied for the purpose of research work. Secondary data have been used, sources like DIC, Circle Offices, BDO offices, offices of Extra Assistant Commissioners and different institutions of the district has been explored to collect secondary data schedule. For the secondary data text books, research articles, government policies and strategies regarding women entrepreneurship development have been used in order to present the fact and findings in the logical format.

Present Status of Woman Entrepreneurship:

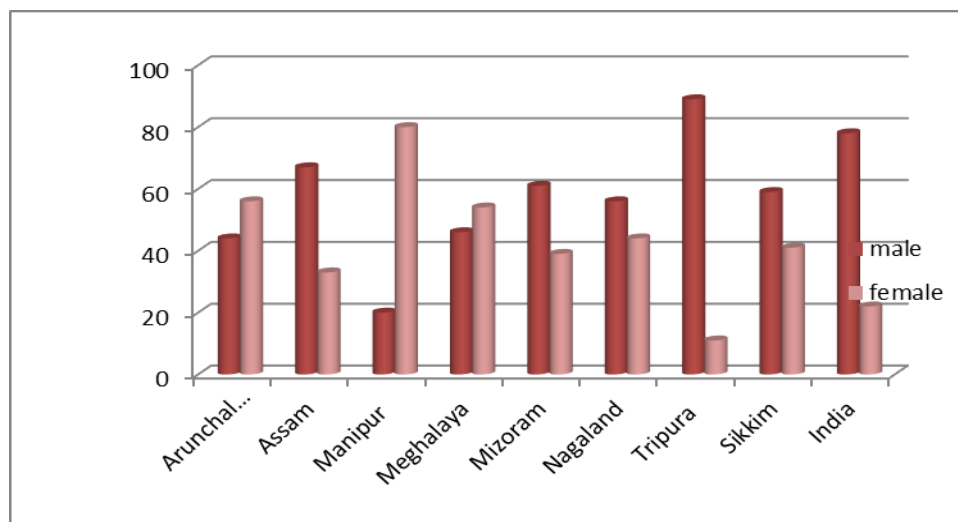
In India, out of total 18,02,991 establishments; 78% are owned by men and 22% are owned by women. In this way, total number of proprietary establishments in Arunachal Pradesh and Assam is 173 and 89,275 in which 56% and 33% have women owners. In Manipur, Mizoram and Meghalaya, total number of proprietary establishments is 56,861; 2,319 and 3,703 respectively. In Nagaland and Sikkim 44% and 41% establishments are owned by women. But, in Tripura, out of 10,588 establishments only 11% are owned by females [Sixth Economic Census (2013-14), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation].

Among the North eastern states, Assam has the largest number of establishments by women without hired worker and also has largest number of establishments by women with at least one hired worker among North eastern states.

Employment provided by women entrepreneurs is highest in Assam (2, 53,072) and lowest in Sikkim (9066). [Source-Sixth Economic Census (2013-14), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.]

Figure-1: Distribution of proprietary establishment by sex of owner (in percent) Source- Authors own calculation from Sixth Economic Census (2013-14), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation

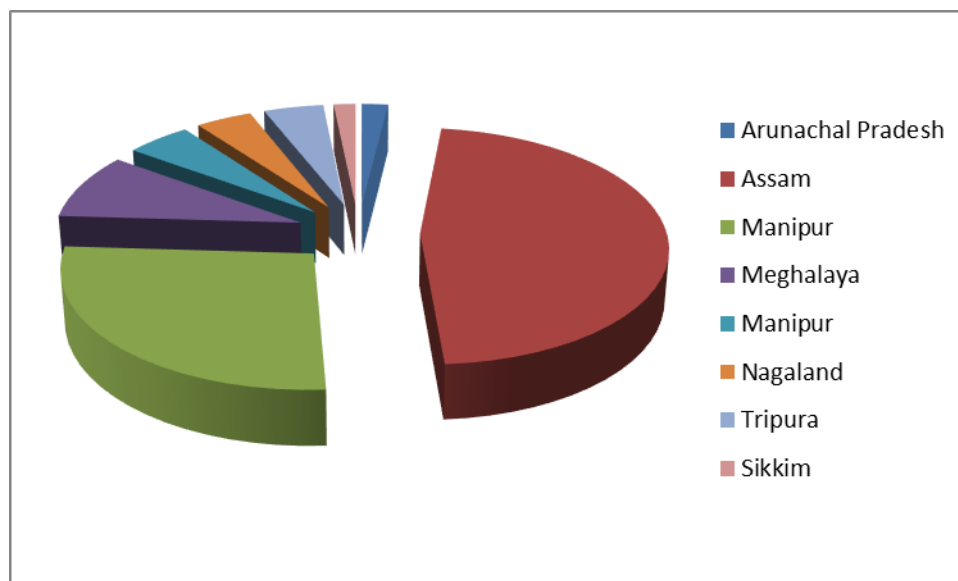
State	Male	Female
Arunachal Pradesh	44	56
Assam	67	33
Manipur	20	80
Meghalaya	46	54
Mizoram	61	39
Nagaland	56	44
Tripura	89	11
Sikkim	59	41
India	78	22



When an entrepreneur is the only owner of an establishment, it is called proprietary. In other words, proprietaries are owned by a single individual. In India, out of total 18, 02,991 establishments; 78% are owned by men and 22% are owned by women. In Northeast India except Arunachal Pradesh and Meghalaya percentage of male establishment is higher than the female establishment.

State wise female establishment in Northeast India (Figure 2)

State	No. of Female
Arunachal Pradesh	6413
Assam	154158
Manipur	88286
Meghalaya	29530
Mizoram	15828
Nagaland	13657
Tripura	14506
Sikkim	5304

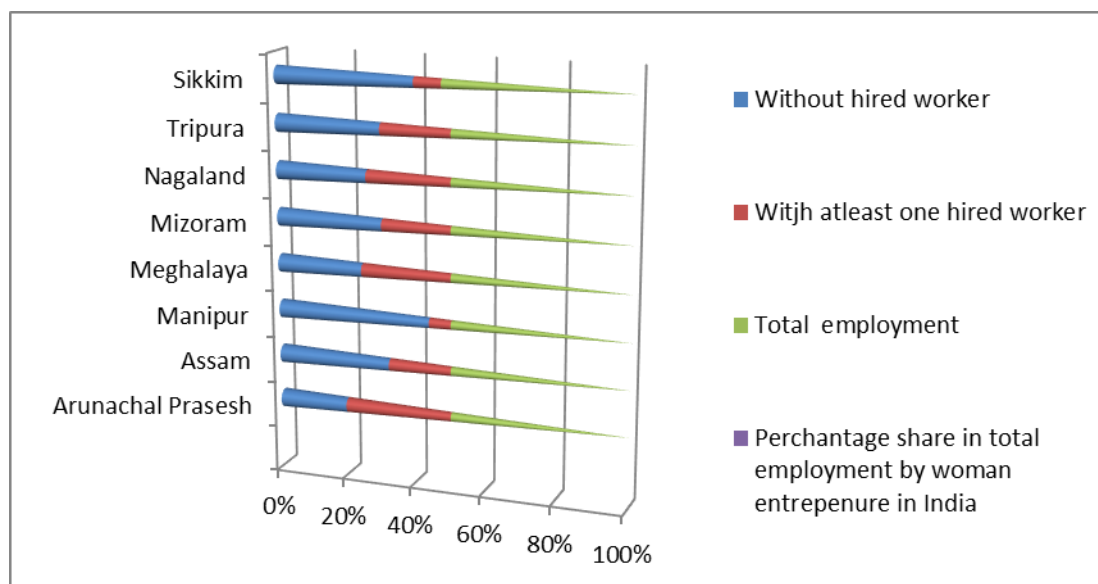


Source: Source-Sixth Economic Census (2013-14), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.

In North East India, the number of establishments by women is highest in Assam (1, 54,158) and lowest in Sikkim (5304).

State wise total number of persons employed under women entrepreneur (Figure 3)

State	Without hired worker	With at least one hired worker	Total employment	Percentage share in total employment by woman entrepreneur in India
Arunachal Pradesh	5493	8586	14079	0.1
Assam	162675	90397	253072	1.88
Manipur	96938	13884	110822	0.82
Meghalaya	28625	30076	58701	0.44
Mizoram	15940	10387	26327	0.2
Nagaland	14290	13233	27523	0.2
Tripura	5439	3627	9066	0.07
Sikkim	14951	2929	19880	0.15



Source-Sixth Economic Census (2013-14), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.

The table given above shows the total number of persons employed under women entrepreneurs in the eight North eastern states. In India, the total number of persons employed under women entrepreneur is 1,34,48,182. Among the North eastern states, Assam has the largest number of establishments by women without hired worker and also has largest number of establishments by women with at least one hired worker among North eastern states.

Scope of Woman Entrepreneurship:

The North Eastern region of India is rich with abundant natural and human resources and there is ample scope for agro-based industries, handloom and handicrafts, dairy industry, organic fruit and vegetable processing etc. North Eastern region's economy is an agrarian economy with abundant natural resources, still it remains underdeveloped mainly because lack of entrepreneurship. The environment of an underdeveloped region is also not conducive for the emergence of entrepreneurship. In the North East India there is tremendous scope for agro-based industries, agro forestry, horticulture, mushroom farming, herbal, medicinal and aromatic plants, organic fruits and vegetables processing, handlooms and handicrafts, bee keeping, meat and poultry products, cereal based products, consumer industry, milk and milk based products, food processing, paper products, jute and mestas products, cattle rearing, fishery, edible oil, processing of oils and fragrances, gas based intermediary products, floriculture, spices production and processing wood based products etc. Women from the region have realized the potential resources of the region and have initiated various entrepreneurial activities in order to tap the natural wealth of the region.

Challenges Of Woman Entrepreneurship:

The present study reveals that the proportion of women entrepreneurs in north eastern States to total number of women entrepreneurs in the country is quite discouraging. There exists a gender gap in participating entrepreneurial activities in North east India. Most of the North eastern states hardly account for 0.5 % of total women entrepreneur in the country. The main reasons include

1. Lack of awareness and dynamism
2. Insignificant entrepreneurial zeal and motivation
3. Lack of managerial and marketing skills
4. Problem of unemployment and jobseekers
5. Inadequate finance and infrastructure support system.
6. Lack of education and practical training amongst women entrepreneurs
7. Non participation in the decision making process
8. Socio-religious-political barriers
9. Lack of self-confidence and optimistic attitude
10. Introvert, dependent and shy by nature
11. Inappropriate social security
12. Mostly preoccupied with household activities and responsibilities.

Suggestions And Conclusion:

In view of the ever-increasing problems facing the women entrepreneurs, it appears that since there is a long way to go in terms of social revolution and transformation of prevailing notions and attitudes. The study reveals that if women gets opportunities they can come out from kitchen and take active part in economy of the state and contribute for the well-being of their families. It is observed from the study that the emerging trend of women entrepreneurial development in small and tiny business and industry is not up to the mark. In order to develop entrepreneurship in North East India, it has been suggested that the following ideas be put forward:

- The government should urge banks to publish and distribute brochures and booklets in local languages regarding the financial and non-financial help available at each bank and district industries centre (DIC) to potential and current enterprises.
- Promoting entrepreneurship among women is especially important to tackle the problems of under employment and unemployment in the society.
- Education has been instrumental in increasing the participation of women in entrepreneurial activities. Government should provide better educational facilities and schemes to women folk.

- Creating provision of micro credit system and enterprise credit system linked with SHGs to the women entrepreneurs at local level with low rate of interest.
- Positive attitude in the society recognizing the role of women as entrepreneur may lead to the development of appropriate environment in which women will be able to exploit their entrepreneurial talents.

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