

Stress Faced by Women Entrepreneurs - A Critical Review

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Abstract

“Women Entrepreneur” is an individual who agrees exciting role to come across her individual wants and become economically autonomous. The development of women entrepreneurs and their involvement to the development of the country is very much visible in India. In a short period of time the number of women entrepreneurs increased all over the country. Women entrepreneurs plays a vital role in creating employment to others in the well-organized sectors and set the trend for other women entrepreneurs to develop. They should be praised for the increased contribution, utilization of advanced technology, identifying the niche in the export market and investing high in their business activities. Women are playing various roles like, mother, wife, and daughter-in-law and so on and they need to strike hard to fulfil the role needs. Along with it they also need to perform the role of chief executives in their business. With these deliberations this conceptual study was carried out to discover role stress and limitations faced by women entrepreneurs. This article also reviews the literature around women entrepreneurship and the Stress faced by them. It is wished that this study will be valuable to fellow researchers who are pertaining in this research area.

Keywords: Women Entrepreneurs, Stress, causes of stress, role stress, entrepreneurial activity

Introduction

The development of women entrepreneurs and their involvement to the development of the country is very much visible in India. In a short period of time the number of women entrepreneurs increased all over the country(Gartner, 1985). Women entrepreneurs plays a vital role in creating employment to others in the well-organized

sectors and set the trend for other women entrepreneurs to develop(Akande,1994). They should be praised for the increased contribution, utilization of advanced technology, identifying the niche in the export market and investing high in their business activities. The capacity of the women entrepreneurs and the capability of contribution is more than what the women entrepreneurs already do (Yahya, 1998).

There are two main reasons why the subject of women entrepreneurs should be studied separately.

The first reason behind the women entrepreneurs is that, it is an important untouched source of the growth of the economy (Bat, 1995). They create new jobs for themselves and also for others and render a great service to the society. The women entrepreneurs also gives solutions for the management, business and the organizational issues and provide problem free society. The second reason behind the women entrepreneurs is that the participation rate of women in entrepreneurship activities is less when compared to the male entrepreneurs. But when compared to men, women entrepreneurs are generally pick out different business activities.

Women Entrepreneurs

In the past decades women are restricted to be there in the four walls of the house. The achievement made by the women as a supportive role in the family is viewed exclusively. But now a days the scenario is completely changed (Boyd and Gumpert, 1983). The women have proved that they are not less than their counter-part in the life. The women face various constraints and perform various tasks in their life. Because of all these constraints they become stressed out in their actions (Hall and Savery, 1986). When perceived pressure exceeds a persons perceived ability to cope with it results in stress (Choy et.al, 2005). Various complicated work performed by the women in the family and the entrepreneurial activities leads to a greater stress which cause conflict in the workplace. Women are playing various role

like, mother, wife, and daughter-in-law and so on and they need to strike hard to fulfil the role needs. Along with it they also need to perform the role of chief executive in their business (Wincent and Ortqvist, 2006). With these deliberation this conceptual study was carried out to discover role stress and limitations faced by women entrepreneurs.

In the economic growth, the women entrepreneurship is accepted as a significant source. The women entrepreneurs create new jobs for themselves and also for others and render a great service to the society (Cooper et.al, 2001). The women entrepreneurs face lot of discrepancy regarding the gender based issues in starting the new businesses. In order to reduce those discrepancy, the government should take initiative to help women entrepreneurs by providing various schemes, incentives and promotional measures.

Stress

Stress is the distinct common response of the human body to a request made by it. Everyone in this world undergo some kind of stress or the other. In many cases the stress can be reduced with the passage of time or when an individual gets familiar to the condition (Harris et. al, 1999). The demands of the work environment in the organization is on psychological situation which results in organizational stress. The stress of the women entrepreneurs will be decreased based on their work knowledge, experience and confidence in the work (Shepherd and Douglas, 2000). In general it is also believed that when an employee is trained well in the work it will reduce stress at work. Some of the aspects which affects the women

entrepreneurs psyche and performance are; demands in the job, work pressure, aging of women entrepreneurs, peer group pressure, competition in the market, financial risks etc. (Havlovic and Keenan, 1991). The skilled women entrepreneurs are initiated to experience highest amount of stress. Many causes contribute for the increasing stress level of the women entrepreneurs and a challenge is made in this article to examine such causal factors for stress.

In the entrepreneurial environment the stress faced by the entrepreneur are inseparable. Women entrepreneurs operating in a new business venture face lot of stress and their ability to predict the business outcomes are low and the risk they face is very high (Shane and Venkataraman, 2000). The researchers who are interested in studying the entrepreneurial activities have addressed the issues related to the stressful situations faced by the entrepreneurs. Yet the application if the stress is not established clearly till date. (Johnson, 1995).

Kuan, (1994) defines stress as “The stress-appraisal theory, “a particular association between the individual and the atmosphere that is appraised by the person as taxing or exceeding his or her resources”. The stress-appraisal theory evidently clarifies that, “individuals’ performance is a result of their primary and secondary appraisals- primary assessments are the individual’s first valuation of a stressor, i.e., situations and occurrences they encounter, while secondary assessments are the valuation of the available individual-level resources or competencies to meet the demands forced by those stressors” (Latack, 1986).

Definition Of Stress By Various Authors

Kahn et al. (1964) “stress as a function of discrepancies between one’s expectations and one’s ability to meet demands and discrepancies between the individual’s expectations and their personality”.

Vasumathi et al. (2003) “stress is a result of our expectations, greed, desires and ambitions: when there is a discrepancy between these and the outcome of our efforts to achieve success, stress is experienced”.

Schindehutte et al. (2006) “Prior research into entrepreneurial stress also yielded the opinion that stress may affect the entrepreneur’s propensity to pursue growth, recognize emerging opportunities, or achieve balance between work and family or personal demands”.

Jamal (2010) “job stress can be conceptualized as an individual’s reactions to work environment characteristics that appear emotionally and physically threatening to the individual”.

Jamal (1984 and 1999) “a poor imbalance between the individual’s abilities and experiences and the work environment in which the excessive demands are regularly put on the individual, or the individual is not fully equipped to handle a particular situation”.

Rogers (1975) “the term stress carries with it negative connotations implying inadequacy, and an inability to perform at expected standards. Yet interestingly, the presence of stress as experienced by the entrepreneur can be seen to be a result of the entrepreneur’s personality, and that there will be no stress response if the situation is not perceived by the individual as stressful”.

Causes of Stress

In the fast growing technical environment everyone in this world face stress. There are many things which cause stress to an individual. These stress can be organized easily when it is under our control and view, when the individual is under stress's control there comes the major issue. There are various methods to control the stress faced by the entrepreneur (Lazarus,1998). Some of the most common stress sources are discussed below;

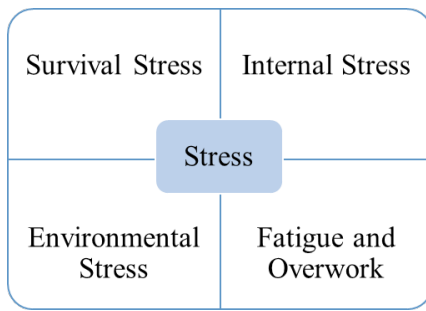


Fig. 1 Sources of stress

Stress Faced By Women Entrepreneurs

In today's ever changing environment it is deliberated as a base of ill health, stress and related issues becomes an important topic for academic interest and research in the various area. There are numerous studies which examines the stress managing activities as a part of stress management(Lazarus and Folkman, 1984; Cooper, Dewe and O'Driscoll, 2001). The internal position or reaction of anything imagined or real that a person knowingly or innocently classifies as a danger is known as stress (Manshor, 2000). In most of the working atmosphere stress is experienced by all individuals which has become more popular and famous subject to explain the variety of work behaviour

at workplace. The psychological changes persuaded by environmental demands is used to define the term stress (Mellahiand Wilkinson, 2004). Stress is a process where an individual's wellbeing in the society is intimidate by the ecological forces or events.

Stress among the women entrepreneurs causes a disturbance in the emotional stability of a person which includes a state of inefficiency in the behaviour, personality and has costly losses for individuals, organizations and society (Miller, 2000). The type of work which women entrepreneurs possess are subject to stress. The part of the entrepreneur is reliant on the formation of an innovative venture by uniting various resources to generateturnover from the business opportunity (NasurdinandRamayah, 2003). Once the new venture is initiated, the entrepreneur take care the responsibility for its performance, which can be observed through various perceptions which may be of financial or non-financial (Gartner, 1985). Compared to the other job categories women entrepreneurs experience more stress in their career (Ortqvist et. al, 2007). An empirical study obvious that about 70 per cent of corporate entrepreneurs and executives consider that it is more stressful to run their own business venture than working in other organizations. In the recreation of the business, the women entrepreneurs can work in highly stressful situations and are open to the force of commitments and responsibilities. The role associated stress experienced by the women Entrepreneurs can be categorized into three major dimensions, role overload, role conflict and role ambiguity (Boyd and Gumpert, 1983; Johnson, 1995 and Harris et. al., 1999). These factors acts as a biggest threat to the

women entrepreneurs in withdrawing from being an entrepreneur (Parker, 2006).

All the entrepreneurs are exposed to stress because of impact of both organizational and personal circumstances (Selye, 1976). Women entrepreneurs are exposed to more stress as the demands of family and profession most of the times causes conflict in them. As a women, they have to struggle hard to fulfil their various roles.

Role stress among the women entrepreneurs has the possibility to start the continuous activities and events that may eventually lead to failure, as women entrepreneurs are likely to have doubts and become disappointed with their present situation (Pearlin and Schooler, 1978). In addition, the investigators have defined that a lack of involvement, knowledge, experience and the type of educational background may indicate women entrepreneurial stress. A study was made based on the conflicts experienced by the women entrepreneurs, whose knowledge is insufficient to make decisions and the issues related to making wrong decision in certain sections (Parker, 2006). These sections comprise of entering a new or unknown market, advancement in technology or certain business thoughts. As an outcome, the incapability to manage with these tests may generate pressure on the women entrepreneurs' thereby creating stress. According to Robertson, (2004) such conditions have been defined as 'role novelty', which refers to an untrained script for a precise role, which can be extended from education or experience.

Conclusion

The women entrepreneurship is a combination of both women's situation in the society and the role of entrepreneurship in the similar society. The women entrepreneurs tackled many problems and difficulties regarding marketing their products as well as taking care of their family issues. They should also access the same opportunity which the male entrepreneurs possess. Improved contribution of women in the employee force is a requirement for improving the situation of women in society and as a self-employed women. Above all the entrance of rural women in small and micro enterprises (SME's) is being stimulated and intensified. The women from rural area can do miracles by their effectual and capable participation in entrepreneurial actions. The rural women are having basic knowledge, potential, skill and capitals to inaugurate and manage enterprise. More over Creation and establishment of women Entrepreneurs network is being stimulated. Women entrepreneur networks are main sources of information about women's entrepreneurship and they are gradually acknowledged as an appreciated tool for its growth and expansion. These activities will motivate other women to involve in the entrepreneurship activities with the correct assistance and they can support their capabilities besides addition to the domestic income and nation-wide efficiency.

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