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South Asia: Role, status and challenges woman in business leadership

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Abstract

Women role in business leadership is a burning topic. We can check development of a society to see women role in business. The objective of the study is to know about the ratio of women entrepreneur. This research is fully based on the secondary data. In this research I analysis the role of women in business, advantage if there are women entrepreneur, challenges which women face when they start a business and which steps can take to increase the ratio of women entrepreneurship. I realize that it is necessity to give a place in business to women. It is fact that approximately in all countries women are playing a role in business but their ratio is very low. No doubt women can do everything. It is fact that now a day come when women come forward and their ratio uplift.

Keywords: Challenges woman, business leadership

Introduction

South Asia term used to represent the Southern region of the Asian continent. In south Asia there are eight countries Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Pakistan. Patriarchy means a system of society or government in which men hold the power and women are largely excluded from it. There are many schools of thought about patriarchy. Some scholars thinks that six thousand years ago when the concept of fatherhood took root, as the beginning of the spread of patriarchy ^[1]. In Marxist theory Friedrich Engels assign that origin of patriarchy to the emergence of private property, which has traditionally been controlled by men. In this view men directed household production and sought to control women in order to ensure the passing of family property to their own offspring, while women were limited to household labour and producing children ^[2].

In Vedic Era (1500-500 AD) we have Rigved which is written evidence that patriarchy was real existing that. There used to be kings who use to rule the state, queen were not involved in major decision for taken for the state. Even after the death of king his son took over the next king not daughters. There can be some exceptions to this but majorly patriarchy was privilege during that time.

With the passing of time situation of women in society is improving for example- The Great Jhansi ki rani Lakshmi Bai who fought for Indian Independence, Indira Gandhi was the Great leader in Indian politics, Sirimavo Bandaranaike who was prime minister of Sri Lanka and like this many Great leaders all over the South Asia who contribute in many fields. Till now we have thoroughly understood situation of women in the past and how it is improving in the current years. Now come to our main topic the role of woman in business leadership.

Let us first understand meaning of business in general term sells and purchase of goods and rendering of services.

Role and status

We have discussed that which situation comes that women are towards in business and now a days they are playing an important role in business leadership.

- Chanda Kochhar is the former MD and chief executive officer of ICICI bank. She is widely recognized for her role in shaping retail banking in India ^[3]. She had been a great banker through her years in the ICICI bank although there are some allegation of corruption on her.

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- Indra Nooyi is an Indian business executive serving as a chairman of Pepsico, which is the second largest food business in the world. She is a CEO for thirteen years from 2006 to 2019. She has consistently ranked among the world 100 most powerful women ^[4].
Kiran Mazumdar Shaw is an Indian billionaire entrepreneur. She is the chairperson and managing director of Biocon limited (biopharmaceutical) and she is also the chairperson of Indian institute of management Bengluru. She was awarded the Othman gold medal for the outstanding contributions to the progress of science and chemistry ^[5]. She is on the financial times top fifty women in business list ^[6].
- Rifa Musthapha is an attorney at law and an entrepreneur in Sri Lanka. She is executive director of fear way aviation academy and f-air. She also seats on the board of directors of fairway holdings and fairway city hotels. She currently serves as the president of the women chamber of commerce and industry in Sri Lanka.
- Shamama Arbab is the director of Euro industries, a food processing business in Peshawar, Pakistan ^[7]. After achieving business success, Arbab played a pivotal role in setting up the women's chamber of commerce and industry. She is now vice president of this organization.
- Rita Bhandary is the president of federation of women's entrepreneur association of Nepal. She is a successful entrepreneur. Bhandary runs both a handmade paper company and a marketing cooperative and has a numerous posts with the government of Nepal.
- Dr. Manju Kalra Prakash is an assistant secretary general at the federation of Indian chambers of commerce and industry (FICCI). Dr. Manju Kalra Prakash was invited by the European Union for its European Union visitor's program and was awarded the prestigious Bharat Nirman award in the area of women empowerment.
- Roya Mahboob is a businesswomen and entrepreneur from Afghanistan. She founded and serves as a CEO of the afghan citadel software company, a full-service software development company based in heart, Afghanistan. In 2013, Roya Mahboob was named to Time magazine's 100 most influential people in the world. In 2013 she build internet classroom in high schools in Afghanistan.
- Selima Ahmad is the vice chairperson of the Nitol Niloy trading group and the founder of the Bangladesh women's chamber of commerce and industry (BWCCI). She establish Bangladesh woman chamber of commerce and industry in 2001 to encourage women's participations in the private sector and to promote a business environment more conducive to women entrepreneurs ^[8].
- In Maldives there are many women who are playing an important role in business. Fathimath Nafha (Duty manager, full moon resort and spa) Kumar Askerova (group director of sales and marketing lily hotels and resorts) Ms. Raheema Saleem (managing director of housing director of Finance Corporation.
- Anusha Zubair, sales and marketing manager at Fushifaru Maldives. She completed her design degree from the University of Massey. In 2004 she was offered a sales and marketing role for what was to become the

Maldives most iconic resort, Huvafen Fushi. She was the youngest female manager at that time.

- Sonam a Pelden first Bhutanese entrepreneur, who is among the Forbes "30 under 30 Asia" list under the consumer technology category before this Sonam worked with the economist in New York and Asian development bank ^[9].
- Bhutan association of women entrepreneurs is a registered organization with the aim of reaching out to marginalized members of society mainly single mothers, unorganized sector and unemployed youth. In this association many women are connected. These are as following -
 - Damchae Dem, Founder/ CEO of BAOWE
 - Namgay Wangmo, Finance officer
 - Tshering Wangmo, Project coordinator Rural livelihood project
 - Tshering Pelden, Project coordinator urban livelihood
 - Yangchen Lhamo, Micro finance institute
 - Tashi Lhamo, Legal and media

Despite the hardships many women endure daily, second half of the 20th century for women has been a tremendous gain in three major areas- Education, rights and leadership. This has driven the change with accelerating gender equality.

Advantage

Diversity has been shown to faster creativity and innovation. Price water house cooper (PWC) and l'oreal organizations across industries are seeking to prioritize and benefit from a diverse and inclusive work environment. Men and women will have different experience and backgrounds, which shape their approach to business. Men and women will collaborating with people who think differently can breed creativity and promote the innovative ideas that push organizations forward.

Soft skill is the fundamental attributes like another attributes example for knowledge and technical skill. Women excel at the soft skills needed for business leadership. Although characteristics like effective communication, empathy and self-awareness are difficult to measure. They are highly valued and can make a real difference to the bottom line.

Challenges

Several studies around the world have been carried out which light on the challenges faced by women entrepreneurs. The gender discrimination that often prevails at all levels in many societies impact the sphere of women in industry too. Research from the rest of the world indicates that women and men differ on some of the above factors. While several of these challenges are in inherent to many countries, some of them are more severe in South Asia.

Access to finance is a key issue for women society is still a male dominant society that we have already discussed. Woman does not have money in their hand. Accessing credit, particularly for starting an enterprise is one of the major constraints faced by women entrepreneurs.

The ability to tap into new markets requires expertise, knowledge and contacts. Women often lack access to training and experience. They do not know about market goods and services strategically. They have often not been exposed to the international market and therefore lack of knowledge about what is internationally acceptance.

Women have limited access to vocational and technical training in South Asia. In fact, women on average have less access to education than men and technical and vocational

skills can only be developed on a strong foundation of basic primary and secondary education.

Table 1: Female - Male gap in education in South Asia

	Female literacy as % of male literacy	Average years of schooling	
India	67	6.3	3.7
Pakistan	50	5.1	2.5
Bangladesh	62	3.3	1.8
Nepal	41	3.4	1.5
Sri Lanka	94	7.2	6.6
South Asia	67	5.8	3.4

Source: Mahbub Ul Haq Human development center, Human development in South Asia 2003: The employment challenge (Oxford University Press), 2003.

This table shows that in South Asia countries has low literacy rate and that is the primary reason for their less involvement in business. of the already low vocational educational enrolment of less than 2 percent in South Asia, Female students comprise only a quarter of 1 person.

The situation of women in vocational education is very poor. Women have no education and experience relevant to starting and managing and thus less potential for success. Women have double work burden and childcare responsibilities. So gaining relevant skills and knowledge is also more difficult and making them less able than man to attend formal and informal training.

Women have fewer business contacts, less knowledge dealing with the government bureaucracy. Most women entrepreneur operates on a small scale and generally not members of professional organization. Most existing networks are male dominated. When a woman does venture into these networks, her task is often difficult because most network activities take place after regular working hours. There are hardly woman only or women majority networks where women could enter, gain confidence and move further.

Most women have little access to policy makers or representation on policy making bodies. Large companies and men can more easily influence and have access to policy makers, who are seen more as their peer. Women's lack of access to information also limits their knowledge able input into policy making.

Ways to increase women entrepreneurship worldwide

NO doubt that no country in the world has closed its gender gap. Woman have made many strides when it comes to the entrepreneurship, but still a few barriers keeping them out of the business world Women have a fear about failure. They have lower confidence level and a better way to get over this is education. More training and education programs geared to women could help build confidence and reduce the fear that starting a business is a high risk Endeavour.

Providing role models and guidance to women could greatly enhance entrepreneurship rates. Woman could to show and introduced the Economic, social and lifestyle benefits of business ownership. There is still inequality in term of providing woman the loans and other financing they need to start and grow a business.

Conclusion

We have discussed all the benefits and challenges which woman faces when they start a business or a job. After that we studied the role of women in business leadership. We

saw that the role of women is very little. In the last I want to say that this conference is a very good effort to reform the women situation. This conference attracts all the people attention. Now that days comes when women would come towards and break out of our comfort zone, we need to be able, be bold, be brave and look beyond because life is about taking risk.

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