

Challenges of Women Entrepreneurs: With Specific Reference to Tourism Industry

S. Meera

Assistant Professor

, Indian Institute of Tourism and Travel Management (Ministry of Tourism), Nellore

Entrepreneurial motivations among women are increasing in recent times due to various factors like government support, education among women, and urge for economic independence etc.

However, the performance of women entrepreneurs in terms of profits, market share, contribution, sustainability is not very encouraging. Women Entrepreneurs are more apprehensive about their performance and this could be due to lack of empowerment, confidence, gender centric factors and lack of internal and external support and cooperation.

Women Entrepreneurship has been identified for the purpose of the study; attempting to analyse the reasons for the lack of performance among them with specific focus on women entrepreneurs of Tourism Industry.

Key words: Women Entrepreneurs, Tourism Enterprises, Factor Analysis.

Challenges of Women Entrepreneurs: with Specific focus on Tourism Industry

Women Entrepreneurs have been defined by Government of India as “Enterprise owned and controlled by women having a minimum financial interest of 51% of the capital and giving at least 51% of employment generated in the enterprise to women”. Women entrepreneurship has been gaining popularity in India due to women empowerment. The inherent abilities of innovative thinking, self motivation, persistence, persuasiveness along with favourable external factors like Education, government Policies for women entrepreneurs have acted as catalysts resulting in the growth of women entrepreneurship.

Tourism is suitable for women as nature and expectations of tourism industry are conducive for the manifestation of the inherent qualities (Entrepreneurial abilities) of women. Women entrepreneurs have mushroomed in tourism industry – some are travel agents and tour operators, others are owning tourism enterprises, hotels and managing self help groups. Around 70% of travel industry accounts for women and 10 top Entrepreneurs were awarded top 10 Women Entrepreneurs of The year by Abacus India. The winning ladies are Benazir Nazar Vaghani, Director, Akbar Holidays Pvt. Ltd; Bhavana Agashiwala, Founder and Director, Columbus Travels; Bilkish Nasrulla Tejani, Director, Equino Fun Holidays; Chitra Pursnani, Director, 7 Continents Holidays; Hutokshi Marker, COO, Trailblazer Tours India Pvt. Ltd; Pratima Pathak, Managing Director, Harinim Travels Pvt. Ltd; Seema Makhija, MD, Travel Voyages; Veena Patil, Founder and Managing Director, Veena World; Veneeta Rawat, Director, Amazing Vacations; and Zelam Chaubal, Director, Kesari Tours.

Women Entrepreneurs In Tourism

Considerable research within the literature on women entrepreneurship concerns the barriers and constraints women face in the process of becoming, and being, entrepreneurs (Roomi and Parrot, 2008; Brindley, 2005; Moore and Buttner, 1997; Blanchard et al., 2008; Becker-Blease and Sohl, 2007; Botha et al., 2006; Heidrick and Johnson, 2002; Bates, 2002; Winn, 2005; Della-Giusta and Phillips, 2006). Women do not only face barriers and constraints in the process of becoming entrepreneurs; barriers and constraints women face as employees also push them towards becoming an entrepreneur, highlighting the positive aspects and opportunities of being a female entrepreneur (Heilman and Chen, 2003; Moore and Buttner, 1997; Mattis, 2004). Often studies on barriers, constraints and opportunities link their discussion to the second big area of research: the differences between female and male entrepreneurs (Becker-Blease and Sohl, 2007; Carter and Bennett, 2006). Thus, another big area of research is the focus on the differences between female and male entrepreneurs with regard to several aspects, such as access to capital, personal characteristics and motivations (Watson and Robinson, 2003; Buttner and Rosen, 1988; Watson and Newby, 2005; DeMartino and Barbato, 2003; Runyan et al., 2006; Fuller-Love et al., 2006; Walker and Webster, 2007; Catley and Hamilton, 1998), which can be linked to the three theoretical perspectives within the general entrepreneurship literature. The extent and nature of women's employment in the tourism industry and employment opportunities for women in this sector is found in tourism literature. (Samir El-Sharif Ibrahim et al., 2007; Iverson and Sparrowe, 1999; Doherty and Manfredi, 2001; Kempadoo, 2001; Roehl and Swerdlow, 2001; Ng and Pine, 2003; Gibson, 2001). (Jovo Aateljevic, 2009)

Research Background

Less than 7% of women entrepreneurs have been found in formal sector and most of the women entrepreneurs are found in informal sector as it is easy to make an entry and to survive.

Out of 40 Tourism women entrepreneurs interviewed, 25 of them felt that their performance in terms of profit, market share etc were less against male entrepreneurs. Buttner and Rosen [1988] had confirmed in their work that characteristics of successful entrepreneurs were found more in men than in women. In this context it was imperative to conduct a survey to identify the factors responsible for such underperformance.

Objectives

1. Identify the challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in tourism industry.
2. Identify the relationship between variables.
3. Identifies the factors which influence the variables relating to performance of women entrepreneurs.

Research Methodology

Primary data was collected on the basis of purposive sampling to choose 40 women entrepreneurs at the initial stage. 25 of them who had reported underperformance were considered in the second phase.

Factor analysis has been used to identify the relationship between variables and to segregate them into specific factors. The most important factor has been identified .

Challenges faced by Women Entrepreneurs

A pilot study was conducted on 10 entrepreneurs; pretesting the questionnaire. As the results were satisfactory, the questionnaire was administered and following challenges were identified.

1. Nonavailability of finance .
2. Limited marketing possibilities.
3. Pressure of Domestic responsibilities.
4. Cut throat competition.
5. Lack of professional respect.
6. Specific problems pertaining to expansion/diversification.
7. Lack of innovations.
8. Nature of tourism enterprises-with less scope for diversification, requirement for professional expertise.
9. Lack of guidance and direction.
10. Lack of government support.
11. Lack of infrastructure.
12. Lack of foresightedness.
13. Risk Aversion
14. Lack of motivation
15. Lack of mobility
16. Problems in balancing career and family
17. Lack of administrative skills.

18. Lack of time
19. Seasonal nature of employment
20. Lack of reliable and fixed income
21. Definite compulsion to earn profits within short span.
22. Uncertain Business environment.

Research Findings

On the basis of challenges outlined from available literature on women entrepreneurs in general and tourism entrepreneurship in particular, questionnaire was prepared. Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5 was utilized to indicate strongly agree to strongly disagree responses for each of the 22 variables identified. Factor analysis was done to group the variables and to understand the relationship and Eigen values were considered to understand the importance of the factor.

The result of the varimax rotation is given below indicating the communalities. (Table No 1.). It indicates the communalities which reflect as to how much a variable is actually accounted for by the underlying factor taken together. The Eigen values show the relative importance of the factor on the basis of the variables considered under each factor. On the basis Of both the tables the 5 factors and underlying variables have been identified; depending on their scores.

Factor 1: The variables of unreliable income(V1),Seasonality in terms of work and income(V2),compulsion to earn profits within short span of time(V4),Lack of professional Education(V6), lack of innovations(V7),Lack of Infrastructure(V8), Cut Throat competition(V9), have indicated High scores. Accordingly , factor 1 has been called as ‘Tourism Specific issues ‘ posing challenges to the women entrepreneurs.(highest eigen value-8.980 explaining 40.818% of variance)

Factor 2: Lack of Motivation (V15),Lack of foresightedness(V16) have been called as ‘General internal factors’ affecting entrepreneurial abilities(eigen value 3.716 explaining 16.890%).

Factor 3: Career domestic work balance(V18),time availability(v19) and presuure of domestic responsibilities(V11) have been called as ‘Balance Between Work and Job Factor’.(eigen value 2.247 explaining 10.214% of variance)

Factor 4: Lack of Exposure(V20), Lack Of mobility(V21), have been termed as ‘Gender Specific Factors’.(Eigen value 2.241 explaining 10.18% variance)

Factor 5: General Business Environment related challenges(V22),lack of government support(v13) has been termed as ‘ General External Factors’.(eigen value 1.967 explaining 8.942%)

On the basis of Eigen values (all are above1), it can be concluded that Gender Specific Issues do not account for the underperformance of women entrepreneurs. As a corollary , it can be concluded that tourism is a good avenue for women entrepreneurs.

However, the Government needs to address the concerns of Tourism industry as most of the challenges faced are specific to the tourism industry as such.

No.	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
Reliable income(V1)	.937	.132	.060	.136	.146
Seasonality(V2)	.921	.088	.154	.166	.082

Nature of tourism enterprises(V3)	.919	.151	.108	.177	.221
Compulsion to earn profit in short time(V4)	.892	.139	.240	-.072	-.018
Lack of Finance(V5)	.887	.301	.051	.162	.251
Lack of education(V6)	.864	.077	-.031	-.031	.275
Lack of innovations(V7)	.851	.259	.336	-.032	.079
Lack of infrastructure(V8)	.819	-.394	.185	-.017	-.185
Cut throat competition (V9)	.761	.399	.155	-.095	.032
Administrative difficulties(V10)	.631	.564	.207	-.051	.219
Pressure of Domestic responsibilities(V11)	.626	.376	.460	.285	.158
Lack of guidance(V12)	.619	.185	.394	-.035	.555
Lack of govt support(V13)	.592	-.327	.381	-.057	.510
Lack of respect as professionals(V14)	-.127	-.857	.039	.369	-.014
Lack of self motivation(V15)	.123	.816	.118	.211	.100
Lack of foresightedness(V16)	.520	.673	.206	.005	.139
Risk aversion(V17)	-.083	-.605	.244	.174	-.596
Career domestic balance(V18)	.150	.200	.878	-.277	.066
Time Availability(V19)	.453	-.151	.696	.327	.100
Lack of exposure(V20)	.095	.140	.007	.891	.222
Lack of mobility(V21)	.035	-.468	-.136	.832	-.132
General Business Environment related challenges(V22)	.188	.219	.174	.391	.777

Table No.1 Indicating the communalities of different variables

References

- Alison Morrison, M. R. (2006). *Entrepreneurship in the Hospitality, tourism and Leisure Industries*. Great Britain: Butterworth, Heinman.
- Bateson, J. E. (1995). *Managing Services Marketing*. Fort Worth: College Publishers.
- Desai, D. (2010). *Small scale Industries and Entrepreneurship*. New Delhi: Himalaya Publishing House.
- Jovo Ateljevic, S. J. (2009). *Tourism and Entrepreneurship- International Perspectives*. USA: Elsevier.
- Ray A. Cook, L. J. (2007). *Tourism- The Business of Travel*. Pearson Education: Delhi.