

*MINOR RESEARCH PROJECT IN COMMERCE*

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**INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT SYSTEMS AND NETWORKS  
OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS – A STUDY ABOUT THE  
PERCEIVED EFFECTIVENESS**

*Submitted By*

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The issue of Gender has been a matter of concern in the study of Entrepreneurship. This can be attributed to the lesser degree Women participating in Entrepreneurial activities when compared to Men, a phenomenon which has been observed in many countries, particularly India. Women can play a significant role in terms of contributing to Economic development as Entrepreneurs. But due to socio-economic-political realities in the past Women's role as Entrepreneurs has been quite lackluster.

In India the involvement of Women in Entrepreneurial activities stands at less than ten percent. This situation prevails even though there are number of Institutions (Governmental and NGO's) actively promoting Entrepreneurial Development Programmes across the country under various schemes. In addition, there are a number of Financial Institutions, Banks, consultants for Technical / Marketing / Training/ Research and also Women Entrepreneurial Networks at state and National Level.

This study is about the effectiveness of Institutional Support systems and Networks available to Women Entrepreneurs. Institutional Support Systems and networks available to Women Entrepreneurs would refer to agencies and organizations offering facilities and services in a given geographical area to encourage the establishment, growth and development of women owned SME's (small and medium enterprises).

### Objectives

The objectives of the study are

- i. To identify the various components and dimensions of the Entrepreneurial Infrastructure / framework of Women Entrepreneurs in Karnataka
- ii. To analyze the awareness, availability and accessibility of Programmes and services offered by the Entrepreneurial Infrastructure and Networks to Women Entrepreneurs in Karnataka
- iii. To examine and investigate the effectiveness of Institutional Support systems and Networks of Women Entrepreneurs in Karnataka in meeting the various needs and requirements of Women Owned Business.

- iv. To suggest measures for improving the Entrepreneurial Infrastructure of Women Entrepreneurs.

### Dimensions of the Entrepreneurial Infrastructure / Institutional Support framework of Women Entrepreneurs in Karnataka

Institutions can play an important role in the development of Women entrepreneurs through support programs. The challenges and problems which women entrepreneurs face as state above can be effectively mitigated through effective institutional support mechanisms.

Support is extended by various institutions is in the form of technical, financial, marketing, infrastructure & logistics and training, research & consultancy Support and through Women Entrepreneurs Networks (WEN's)

Technical support: Technical support services comprise of creating awareness and promoting the adoption of new technologies among women entrepreneurs. These agencies also help in showcasing of appropriate technologies/ technological innovations by organizing demonstration programmes for the benefit of women Entrepreneurs. Technical support also includes providing training on Technology related issues to women entrepreneurs.

Financial Support: Women Entrepreneurs received financial support from institutions such as commercial Banks, state financial corporations, SIDBI, NABARD etc. Financial support includes providing information and creating awareness about the availability of Credit and financial schemes, Assistance in preparing the loan proposals and completion of documentation. To encourage women entrepreneurs financial Institutions, offer Market oriented interest rates and service charges with liberal terms of margin requirements and repayment schedules.

Marketing support: Marketing seems to be one of the weak areas posing major problems to Women Entrepreneurs. The various forms of marketing support are information dissemination through seminars and workshops, organizing training programmes, conducting market research, establishing display and retail centers, assistance in branding and advertising, identification and appointing network of dealers, facilitating the use of ICT's and

E-commerce platforms, establishing storage and warehousing facilities and common testing centers.

Training / Research / Consultancy Support: This support provided comprises of organizing entrepreneurship development programmes, conducting research accelerate the process of Women entrepreneurship development, organizing diagnostic studies for rehabilitation of sick industries. Consultancy services are provided for obtaining statutory and procedural clearances, technology up gradation, controlling pollution and carrying out energy audits, improving overall productivity, profitability, growth and promoting exports.

Infrastructure and Logistics Support: To provide conveniences to women entrepreneurs in carrying out production related activities institutions such as IIDC's (Industrial Infrastructure Development Corporations) and Industrial estates in the respective states. Support is extended by the above institutions in the form of allotment of land at industrial estates and SEZs, access to easy loans, providing facilities such as Water, Power, Linkages, Communication, disposal of waste etc. Other facilities such as business information centre and incubators are also made available. Institutions also provide opportunities to women owned SSI units in Industrial Estates to enjoy entrepreneur cluster benefits related to Raw material, market technology services, linkages. Logistic support is extended in the form of material handling/loading/unloading, Transportation, Warehouse/storage management, and Compilation/documentation.

Women Entrepreneurial Networks/ Associations (WEN's) support: Women Entrepreneurs Networks (WEN's) are basically associations which seek empowerment of Women through Entrepreneurship Development and work on the paradigm of Entrepreneur guiding Entrepreneur. These associations require voluntary efforts of successful women entrepreneurs to guide other members by adopting professional tools of counseling, business incubation, training, handholding and leveraging peer-group support to effectively conduct business.

## METHODOLOGY

An empirical approach with Causal Comparative or Ex Post Facto Research Design has been adopted by this study. As a study which is explorative in nature, the critical component included the conducting of a survey. The survey instrument utilized in the study was a standardized questionnaire. This Questionnaire was administered as interview schedule in face to face interviewing or was handed to participants to complete by themselves. For the purpose of the study the unit of analysis was the individual. The sampling frame identified for this study included 250 women entrepreneurs who owned micro small and medium-size businesses in 3 districts of Karnataka. This also included women Entrepreneurs in the start-up phase of their respective business as well as established businesses owned by women. A multistage Convenience sampling procedure was adopted for the investigation. The questionnaire design was based on use of use of a five point Likert scale to measure the perception about institutional support. Descriptive statistics was used to obtain baseline data. Data from questionnaires was Coded using MS-Excel. These frequency tables were used to make conclusions and provide recommendations to the development of the women entrepreneurs in Karnataka. The Data was analyzed using SPSS software package and correlation and regression tests were conducted.

## Conclusion

Through this study it has been observed that the awareness level about certain type of support services like Technological support and Governmental support is lacking among the Women Entrepreneurs. The perception about Women Entrepreneurial Network support, Financial and Marketing support is quite satisfactory. Based on this study suggestion have been made to create better awareness about Institutional support systems to the Association of Women Entrepreneurs of Karnataka which is an active organization promoting the cause of Women Entrepreneurs in Karnataka.