

## Women Entrepreneurship and Micro Finance: A Case study of Goa

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### Abstract

Micro financing has given an impetus to the growth of Women Self Help Groups (WSHGs) which in turn have given a fillip to women entrepreneurship, especially in developing countries like India. The main focus of the paper is to study the extent to which micro financing has resulted in growth of women entrepreneurship. The study is conducted in the state of Goa. Data is collected through in-depth personal interviews with members of WSHGs. Sample respondents consisted of members of the WSHGs from all over Goa. Emphasis is laid on qualitative analyses of data collected. Case study method is adopted for substantiating the argument made.

The study reflects that micro financing and formation of WSHGs has helped in exploring the chances of springboards for women to be independent entrepreneurs. However the transformation is never an easy one. There are various challenges faced by women members in both the cases, either venturing in group entrepreneurship or being individual entrepreneurs. The study reflects that there are various factors that influence entrepreneurship among the members of WSHGs. Issues like bank WSHG linkage, nature of membership, infrastructural facilities, marketing facilities, risk taking ability, societal attitude etc. need to be understood and analyzed for enabling women to become effective entrepreneurs.

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## **1. Introduction**

The United Nations Report has concluded that economic development is clearly related to the advancement of women. In the nations where women have advanced, economic growth has usually been steady. Advancement of women promotes women entrepreneurship and more women entrepreneurship leads to women empowerment. Encouraging women entrepreneurship also contributes to the national growth.

Various reasons are cited for women opting for entrepreneurship. Moore and Buttner (1997) have given reasons like need for self determination, self esteem, expectation for recognition etc. which motivates women to take up entrepreneurship. In developing countries, women may take up to self employment and resulting entrepreneurship for different reasons. In these countries, especially in informal sector at micro level, the poor economic conditions force women to take up self employment. It is not easy to take up individual business and be successful in it. Various obstacles slow down the process of women becoming successful entrepreneurs. Lack of access to sufficient funds, balancing of roles between family and business, lack of infrastructure, risk aversion, lack of confidence, gender discrimination, lack of training opportunities, inaccessibility to information, lack of leadership and motivation, difficulty in negotiating with the banks etc. affects women entrepreneurship.

The rise of Women Self Help Groups (WSHGs) is seen as a panacea to many of these problems. WSHGs are viewed as a great booster for the rise of women entrepreneurship in developing countries. Across the world, women account for 90 percent of the borrowers or clients of micro credit and the most accepted strategy for disbursement of micro credit is through women at group level. UN's Millennium Development Goal has emphasized on provision of financial support to the poor or low income people by realizing the fact that instead of targeting individual development it would be more useful to apply this idea to group development. This is mainly because it is easy to form and sustain women's groups with credit as the binding activity, and it is believed that women are better at repayment and have higher creditability than men. Women groups based on credit also receive social sanctions easily. Thus micro credit today has transcended its limited boundaries as credit which is not only accessible to the poor, but is a comprehensive strategy for poverty alleviation and promotion of women entrepreneurship. It is seen as a solution for solving women's difficulties for obtaining finance as the savings of the group itself acts as collateral. Thus

WSHGs are increasingly assuming the role of a facilitator for creation and nurturing of women entrepreneurship.

## **2. Literature Review**

Malhotra (2004) examines how women entrepreneurs affect global economy, why women start business, how business association promotes entrepreneurship and the role of micro finance in producing women entrepreneurship. Studies undertaken so far to examine the impact of micro finance on women entrepreneurship through WSHGs reflects mixed results. A study conducted way back in 1999 in two different project areas of Chitradurga district of Karnataka and Periyar district of Tamil Nadu concluded that the informal groups of rural poor with active intervention of NGOs, adequately supported by training and financial subsistence, ensured and also significantly improved women's participation both from economic and social aspects (Puhazhendhi & Jayaraman, 1999). Another study conducted in Kanyakumari District with around 6000 SHGs and membership nearly 100000, revealed that women trained through SHGs had taken to self employment and were involved in the production and sale of products like syrup, shampoo, pickles and soap (Selvi 2005). A study conducted in Belgaum and Haveri districts of North Karnataka during 2004-2005 with a total sample size of 240 WSHGs members observed that there is a good impact on economic aspects of the members and improvements in their material possession, financial position and total family income. There is a good improvement in the employment generation because of improvement in the different income generation activities (Hirevenkanagoudar et al. 2007). A Study from Ludhiana district of Punjab and Kancheepuram from Tamil Nadu made the following observations. Success of any enterprise is determined by factors such as entrepreneurial and management skills of the entrepreneur. It further observed that, in Sriperumbadur one group was formed which started a super bazaar as part of Poomalai complex near bus stand. This group of 12 women was formed to start a provisional store. Later this store was converted into modern super bazaar in Poomalai complex (Reddy et al. 2004).

Despite so many WSHGs mushrooming and so much credit being disbursed, not all WSHGs are a success story. This may be chiefly due to non availability of the right credit at the right time and in right quantum. A study on SHGs in Pondicherry concludes that among the problems encountered by the SHG respondents, the

first rank, (mean score 63%) was given to the problem 'loan not received on time' as a result of which production activities suffered (Nirmala 2004). Manimekalai and Rajeswari (2000) in their study on SHGs in Tiruchirapalli district of Tamil Nadu found that the dominant problem faced by the WSHG members was shortage of capital. Further the units engaged in service provider business performed better and helped to repay the loan on time, whereas the production units not only failed to generate its own capital but also affected loan repayment.

There could also be reasons related to the group members which may affect group entrepreneurship. A study on SHGs in Tamil Nadu observed that the assistance under the SGSY scheme reached the intended beneficiaries, however the groups by and large failed to turn into micro enterprises as they were risk-averse. The study suggested that imparting skills and disbursement of credit alone would not lead to promotion of entrepreneurship among the members of the groups. Efforts were to be initiated to cultivate risk bearing ability among the members of the groups (Narayanswamy 2005).

Falendra (2003) in a case study on micro enterprises under SGSY in Jammu & Kashmir, observed that the skill development of the Swarozgaries was not attempted, and that the training funds remained unutilized or misappropriated. Manimekalai (2004) in his article observed that to run the income generating activities successfully the SHGs must get the help of NGOs, and that the bank officials should counsel and guide the women in selecting and implementing profitable income generating activities. Another study reflected that women were not interested in group activity. Making of the groups into entrepreneurial groups appeared to be inviting problems for their interpersonal relations. Lack of group efforts in attending to critical inputs such as raw material, technology and training were some of the missing links to make enterprise viable (Reddy 2004).

### **3. The Problem**

The main focus of the paper is to study the extent to which micro financing has resulted in growth of women entrepreneurship. The important questions probed are: Does formation of WSHGs guarantees women easy access to finances? Does availability of finances ensure success of the entrepreneurship? What other factors, besides finance, are necessary for starting up and sustenance of any business activity?

## **Case Selection**

The present study is conducted in the state of Goa. The state is selected because of the following reasons. Goa has had a long colonial history. While the British ruled India for barely 200 years, Portuguese ruled Goa for nearly 450 years. Thus the impact of the Portuguese domination, in political and socio-cultural terms, has been deeper as compared to the impact of the British domination in India. Portuguese introduced various reforms like ban on Sati and child marriage, promoted widow remarriage and education for women. Goa, unlike the rest of India, has a Uniform Civil Code (UCC). The laws with regards to property, inheritance, marriage and divorce have given women legal equality at par with men. This has had a significant impact on the social status of women in Goa.

Goan society is undergoing an economic transformation from agriculture and fishing to industrialization. Industrialization has resulted in both positive as well as negative impact on women in Goa. It has created more employment opportunities, though it has adversely affected primary sector where women were employed on a larger scale. It has also affected the ecosystem, damaging paddy fields and increasing shortage of water and electricity which has resulted in increasing burden of development on women. The cultural contact with the West is significant because of tourism. However the increasing visit of tourists to Goa has resulted in increasing the cost of living in Goa. Migration of male members of the family in search of jobs to other countries, especially to Gulf countries, is another factor which has influenced women's position in Goa. The migration of male members in the family has led to tremendous influence and change in life of female family members. This has also led to female dominated families, where women control the expenditure and investment of the valuables: and decides how to manage their property, children's education and family consumption. It has led to confidence building in these women. The social mobility enjoyed by the women has had positive impact on the minds of people, resulting in granting larger space and scope for women in Goa. So when these women have got an opportunity through WSHGs to establish themselves as entrepreneurs it is expected that they will take it up and make the best out of it.

## **4. Data Collection**

The required data for the study was collected in two phases. In the first phase the data was collected through in-depth personal interviews with the members

of WSHGs. This comprised of data dealing with the personal attributes of women members, functioning of the group, fund management by the group, characteristics of the group, factors influencing the group, activities of the group, WSHGs and bank linkage etc.

The second phase comprised data collection using observation technique, by attending various activities of the group such as monthly meetings of the group, income generating activities i.e. work they do, exhibitions, kiosks run by the members etc. The sample respondents consisted of members of the WSHGs from all over Goa. Sample size was 100 (hundred) WSHGs, at least 8 (eight) from each of the 12 (twelve) Talukas of Goa. However for this paper emphasis is laid on qualitative analyses of the collected data. The Case study method is adopted for substantiating the argument made.

## **5. Data Analyses**

The study reflected that micro financing and formation of WSHGs has helped in exploring the chances of springboards for women to be independent entrepreneurs. However the transformation is never an easy one. There are various challenges faced by women members in both cases, whether venturing in group entrepreneurship or being individual entrepreneurs. The study reflects that there are various conditions that influence entrepreneurship among the members of WSHGs. These conditions can be divided into two parts: necessary conditions and enabling conditions.

### **A. Necessary Conditions**

#### ***Adequate and Timely Availability of Credit***

The WSHG members could get credit mainly from three sources: (a) loans from the banks, (b) subsidy or revolving fund from the State, and (c) loan from their own group's saving or from their corpus fund. The Government of Goa under District Rural Development Agencies (DRDA) established revolving funds for the WSHGs which are BPL groups. This subsidy has helped the women to raise their own capital to start up their business. Also the monthly contribution of the members contributes towards creating a stable and sound corpus fund for the group. The Below Poverty Line (BPL) group members contribute minimum

of Rs 50 per person per month and Above Poverty Line (APL) group members contribute nothing less than hundred rupees per person per month. This corpus fund also fetches them good interest rate from the banks over a period of time. It also serves as collateral to get loan from banks.

A favourable WSHG Bank linkage has been an advantage for WSHGs in Goa. There are various factors which influence the WSHGs and bank linkage; a) Location of the bank influences the decision as to which bank the WSHGs should operate. b) The services provided by the bank officials - the approach of the bank employees, their availability, willingness to help with paper work, etc. also decides the bank chosen. c) The word of mouth is important, as women in the village communicate to each other about the benefits of operating in a particular bank. d) The role of the inter-mediator (NGO) is also important.

The nationalized banks, especially Bank of India has maximum linkages with WSHGs in Goa. In fact some of these groups have been initiated and nurtured by this bank. It was observed that though the banks followed their own criteria in disbursing loans to WSHGs, the capital did reach the beneficiaries on time. The banks sanction the loans by assessing the performance of the groups. The performance of the group is assessed by the bank by looking at the amount of inter-lending availed by the members of the group. The savings are as partial collateral. The loan is disbursed by the bank depending on the savings of the group in the bank. The purpose for which credit is availed is decided by the group. The credit is availed for various purposes for productive investment such as to start a small group business, buy cattle, start a masala unit, poultry farming, vegetable growing on cooperative efforts etc. The banks carry out timely inspection to monitor proper utilization of loans. Some banks train the women members in financial transactions. Training with regard to maintaining and updating the passbook, timely contribution to savings, written and not oral on-lending, use of cheque books, etc. has been imparted.

A few case studies are cited below to substantiate how availability of timely and adequate credit benefited members of WSHGs to become effective entrepreneurs.

**Case I:** Manjunath SHG from Gaondhongari, Canacona is a success story. The group was formed in 2004 with sixteen members. The leader of the group, Navidita Gaonkar, is also a member of the Forest Committee of Forest Department. This contact helped the group in getting the yearly contract from the forest department for cashew harvesting on collective basis. They approached the

bank in which they had their group account and the bank sanctioned them a loan of eighteen thousand. They worked hard during the season and were able to make brisk business. This augmented the financial position of the members. With increased income, the group further diversified its activities. It purchased public address system with mikes, speakers, plastic chairs, pandal items etc. and rent them out for occasions like birthdays, weddings and other ceremonies.

**Case II:** Sateri Mahila Self Help Group with 20 members was formed in 2004 in Honda Sattari. The group participated in exhibitions at various places. The members were also provided an open space by the village Sarpanch where they prepared sweets for Diwali and sold at good rate to the neighbouring people. They could get net profit of 2500. They also put up stall in their village during social gatherings, local festivals etc. The manager of the bank in which they had their group account was co-operative. Besides sanctioning small loans as and when required by the group, the bank employees also placed catering orders to the group. They got the contract of providing tea and snacks to the bank employees on daily basis. The group had no problems with the bank employees and found them very co-operative.

**Case III:** Luisa from Ribander continues her traditional business. The male members from the family venture in sea early morning in their canoe for fishing. Luisa carries the fish catch to the market and sells it. Till recently she carried the fish in 'Pantalee'(cane container)and travelled by public bus. As she became the member of WSHG she also felt empowered. She, through the group, approached the Bank for a loan to purchase a two wheeler (Activa Scooter). Her loan was sanctioned. Now she drives to the market on her own, this saves her time and also she is no longer dependent on public transport. She now aims to take another loan to buy cold storage provision as shelf life of fish is short.

A major opportunity came to the WSHGs when the Government of Goa introduced the Mid-Day Meal Scheme in Schools in Goa. WSHGs were able to get contract of supplying these meals to the government schools and government aided schools in their locality. The seed money was provided by the banks in which the group had its account.

### ***Women not treated as Monolithic Bloc***

A minute observation of the WSHG-bank linkage reflected that some banks had different approach towards different WSHGs much of which depended on the members who constituted the group. Women were not treated as a monolithic

bloc/homogenous group by the banks. The class, residence, reference, political affiliations etc. influenced bank's decision whether to sanction the loan and how much to sanction. It was observed that some WSHG members had to face hardships in getting the required loan assistance from banks. The amount of loan disbursed to WSHGs was not constant. The criteria as well as the amount of loan sanctioned changed from group to group. Similarly different conditions were posed by banks as requirements for disbursement of loan. A BPL WSHG in Chimbhel, Tiswadi Taluka, Goa, was denied loan for starting a 'Ready-made Garment sale business' on the ground that they did not have proper space to store the garments. In another case it was observed that the bank refused to sanction the loan, as one of the WSHG members' husband had taken an individual loan and had defaulted. In Assonora, Bardez Taluka, Goa, the bank did not release the revolving fund of the BPL group in a particular village, as another SHG from that village had defaulted. The bank manager asked the group to get the other group to repay the loan if they wanted the bank to release the fund to them. This definitely reduces the entrepreneurial chances among women.

**Case IV:** A BPL WSHG from Chimbhel in Tiswadi taluka approached the bank for loan. The members were interested in ready -made garment business. The members were migrants from neighbouring state of Karnantaka, but currently living in Goa for last five years. The bank manager told the members that they lived in 'Kaccha' houses and the business they were interested in could not be started in such a space which was prone to rat menace. The members purchased a steel cupboard from their own savings and met the manager and requested him to sanction the loan. But still he refused. When the researcher inquired with the manager the reason for denial of loan to this group, he said that they were migrants and therefore there were chances that they could default. He was therefore not keen on taking the risk.

### ***B. Enabling Conditions***

Besides adequate and timely finances, there are also other enabling conditions necessary for individual or group entrepreneurship of women to be successful. Some of these are discussed below:

#### ***Nature of Membership***

Much of the success of the group entrepreneurship depends on the type of members it consists of. Whether the members are core members v/s others, interested v/s non interested, committed v/s non committed, old v/s young,

volunteered v/s nominated, literate v/s illiterate, short sighted v/s far sighted, new v/s older members, possessing knowledge v/s lack of knowledge, members from family with political linkage v/s members with no political background, skilled v/s non-skilled members, risk averse or otherwise influences the success of the entrepreneurship. A case is cited below to substantiate how membership influences entrepreneurship.

**Case V:** Mahamaya SHG formed in the year 2003 with ten members in Canacona is praiseworthy for the novel adjustment worked upon by its members. The members of this group cultivated on a common land and grew vegetables collectively. They sold the vegetables in the main market at Canacona. All their work was divided on a rotational basis by the members. They sowed together. Watering was done on rotation. Two members carried the vegetables to the market on rotation and sold them. The profit was deposited in the SHG account. All the members were housewives who eventually became entrepreneurs mainly due to the cohesion in the group members.

But there are cases where due to illiteracy and disinterest of some members of the group, the groups which had ventured in income generating activities had to give up their activities and dismantle their group.

### ***Availability of Infrastructure Facilities***

Availability of infrastructure also influences the functioning of the entrepreneurship. Availability of adequate space, training, guidance and cooperation from government officials, type of activity selected like manufacturing/non manufacturing, service oriented or trade related, availability of markets for raw materials as well to sell finished goods and assistance from NGOs, also influence the success of entrepreneurship initiated by WSHGs. Lack of role models, inadequate experience, lack of relevant networks and social positions, lack of access to social capital, lack of resources like land, premises, competing demands on time, gender discrimination by bankers, customers, suppliers also influence entrepreneurship.

**Case VI:** Five women from Guiridolim, Salcete, South Goa, came together and decided to form a group in 2000. They decided that they could start a small business of mat-making. Though the initiative to form the group was taken up by the RDA, the women were not provided with any skills. They however, had the traditional skill to produce cane mats. But they did not have sufficient space and more importantly could not get the raw materials required. They decided to start

a 'flour mill' however as per the Goa Mundkari Act, they had to get permission from the Bhatkar (landlord) to start such a mill, which was refused. They now began to look out for newer options. Meanwhile they continued to make local goods which were much in demand like cake, bibinka, crosses etc. and sold their items at various exhibitions. They had to face a lot of hardships in marketing their produce. A major opportunity came their way when the Government of Goa introduced the Mid-Day Meal Scheme in Schools in Goa. They were able to get a contract of supplying these meals to the government school in their locality. It was the determination of these women that helped them sail through the adverse winds and keep the SHG going.

### ***Marketing Skills***

The marketing strategy adopted by the WSHGs to promote their products also influence the entrepreneurship. WSHGs are just one of the players in the market. They have to compete with the existing players with regards to offering products or services. Markets are dynamic and changing. Women entrepreneurs have to compete for space (area of operation), compete for the type of business and for recognition. They have competition from branded products and competition from other players in the organized sector (e.g. shops). Newer SHGs forming in the same locality, newer SHGs starting similar activities, existing groups splitting and forming newer groups and doing similar activities also can be a competition for WSHG members. With free availability of products and services around, customer has a very high bargaining power. Therefore it is necessary that women entrepreneurs concentrate on 5Ps that is Product, Price, Promotion, Place and Public relations.

It was observed that though the products of the WSHGs were of good quality, they lacked variety, were not branded, and were poorly packaged (did not carry warranties, durability date etc.). Most of the WSHGs were engaged in selling eatables and few others were involved in decorative items, soft toys and readymade garments. The products did not have consistency. The prices also were on the higher side. Some of these groups failed to do sales promotion and also lacked public relations. This affected the sale of their goods. The market is buyers market and therefore WSHGs need to have proper marketing strategies to meet these challenges.

**Case VII:** Sateri Self Help Group from Khorlim, Mapusa, North Goa started with manufacturing and selling of "Puran-Poli" a local sweet delight. Today the group has its own dough mixing and frying machinery and is selling Puran-Poli all over

Goa, earning brisk profits. In fact this group is more popularly known as Puran-Poli Group in North Goa.

### ***Societal Attitude***

The societal attitude towards women entrepreneurs, which normally is not very positive, also affects women entrepreneurship. Business is normally regarded as men's forte. In organized business houses at least the women belonging to the families of these houses have scope to venture in business. But in informal sectors, for women to make a place for themselves is a very difficult ride, especially so when their activities are regarded as supplementary to their main role of a housewife. The attitude of a banker, supplier, retailer and customer (most of them being men) should not be one of apathy. Women need fair opportunities and co-operation to do the business. In Goa the atmosphere is comparatively congenial to women taking up group entrepreneurship. As mentioned earlier the existence of UCC and the overall socio-economic conditions in the state has created opportunities for women to venture into entrepreneurship.

### ***Miscellaneous Factors***

There are other factors also that affect women entrepreneurship. One of them that influence the functioning of the group is its 'risk taking capacity'. The group can venture in new areas, provided it is willing to incur the loss in case of failure of the enterprise.

**Case VIII:** Shradda Sawant from Marcela, Goa completed her post graduation and joined teaching. She had deep interest in cooking and she joined the WSHG in her village. She managed her job as a teacher and contributed to her Group's catering activities. But her teaching job was temporary. She decided to take risk. She left the job, took loan from her group's savings and started her own catering business. She put up her stall at various strategic places on important occasions. She became famous for her 'raw mango pickle' and 'papad'. Today she has the fame as successful entrepreneur.

**Case IX:** Mahila Self Help Group Co-operative Society (MSHGCS) – Result of Collective Efforts

Though there are more than 10,000 WSHGs in Goa, not all are co-operative societies. In the type of enterprises running under SEWA banner in Gujarat funded by Co-operative Bank of SEWA, the most important aspects are asset-

building, asset creation and asset ownership for women. Same is the emphasis of AGRAGAMEE in Odisha. One such effort is Mahila Self Help Co-operative Society in Bardez Taluka of Goa, which has around 1000 members with around 80 WSHGs.

Motivated by the business made by WSHGs, the groups of Bardez under the leadership of National Co-operative Union of India (NCUI) decided to come together and form a Co-operative Society. This gave birth to Mahila Self Help Group Co-operative Society. Each member of the Self Help Group was now made a member of this society and had to buy at least one share of Rs 100. The meetings were held at the NCUI motivator's residence. 11 members were elected as office bearers. Monthly meetings were held. The members decided to go for large production of goods. They required a permanent space to do that. A request was made to the Government of Goa as a result of which they were able to get a shop at Kadamba Bus stand Mapusa. Subsequently they got an opening at Kadamba Terminus at Panaji, the capital of Goa. Slowly their business grew.

At present nearly 400 women earn their living by being a member of this MSHGCS. The goods sold include food items, even chappatis and subji, besides ladoos, chaklis, shankarpalis, dodol, bibinca, dosa, puranpoli, etc. catering to both the communities, Christian as well as Hindu in Goa. Now customers flock to this centre as they get fresh items, with a feel of homely made goods. Their service is very prompt. Proper standardization and quality assurance is ensured as the rates and date of manufacturing is put in the form of tag on the packets. Today the business of the Society is running in lakhs. Members prepare the goods at their respective homes and put them on the stall. Members volunteer on rotation basis to be at the stall and only those are allowed to sell their goods at the stall. The society also takes orders and caters lunch boxes, ceremonies etc. The Society has been able to get major breakthrough by getting the contract of supplying meals to school children under the Government's Mid Day Meal Scheme. Nearly 3000 children are provided meal by this society. The society has been able to make even LIC Policy of all its members. Thus it has gone a long way in empowering women in these villages of Bardez Taluka. The society has its own yearly audit. The members have picnics and other outing and get together, celebrate woman's day, have cultural programme, competitions and prize distribution.

## **6. Conclusion**

There is potential for WSHGs to be successful entrepreneurs and availability of timely and adequate credit is an essential condition for this potential to become a reality. However one should not assume that credit can automatically translate into successful micro enterprises (Mahajan 2005). For microfinance to be more effective there is a need for positive change at macro environment level. Much bigger role is expected from the state machinery in this regard. A holistic approach, and not a piecemeal one, is called for. To serve the purpose of economic growth, we need a new paradigm of livelihood finance with much larger levels of resource allocation, both from public resources as well as from capital markets (Mahajan 2005). The focus should be on most important aspects of asset building, asset creation and asset ownership for women.

There should be further enhancement in the Micro credit financing like there should be promotion of market linkages, insurance coverage to crops, livestock etc. NGOs should take greater initiative. Also women have to be provided with formal training in financial transactions. It was observed that the procedures of banking with emphasis on complicated qualifying requirements, margin etc. still leads to women shying away from banks.

Market depends on the customers for the produce, and the goods produced. While some goods may find market within the locality, others may have to be moved out to be sold. In such cases the WSHGs could get the help from NGOs and government officials. They could be promoted by organizing exhibitions, providing them sales counters in various government offices, and other outlets. Allotment of space for WSHGs in shopping complex constructed by the government, at bus stands and other strategic places can go a long way in promoting women entrepreneurship. Tie up arrangement with the co-operatives, purchase of materials produced by the WSHGs by the government departments and academic institutions could also be of help.

Most importantly the mindset of the society has to change. There are studies which reflect that setting up of enterprise has resulted in only small increase in income at the cost of heavier workloads and repayment pressure. There could also be withdrawal of male support in the family and thus increased autonomy of women could be only temporary (Mayoux 1997). The traditional gender division of work and the general mindset of the society have to undergo a sea change. Women are important human resources and they should be encouraged to come out of the four walls of their house, from clutches of patriarchy, from the typical

9 to 5 job concept, and should be recognized as potential entrepreneurs. By providing the necessary infrastructural support and with proper training, role models, experience, and support from NGOs, State and society at large, women can prove themselves as successful entrepreneurs.

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