

## **A STUDY OF ENTREPRENEUR TRAITS AMONG STUDENTS OF WOMENS' COLLEGES IN MADURAI CITY**

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### **Introduction**

This study attempts to measure the existing levels of entrepreneurial skills in the students and also to suggest ways and means of motivating them in the classroom to respond to the needs of the time and to address the problem of unemployment in the country. The study focuses on women entrepreneurs as there is a growing realization regarding the potential contribution of small enterprises both in developed and developing countries. Due to their unique economic and organizational characteristics, small enterprises play an important economic, social and political role in employment creation, resource utilization, and income generation and in helping to bring about change in a gradual and peaceful manner.

Khan (1997), in his work on women's entrepreneurship, advocates that self exploration needs to be introduced in the first phase of training course to help potential women entrepreneurs imbibe entrepreneurial identity. Singla and Syal (1997) have classified the problems being faced by women entrepreneurs at different stages of their entrepreneurial career into three major categories i.e. problems related to project formulation, project implementation and project operations.

The main and secondary objectives of the study are to ascertain the level of entrepreneurship traits among students of women's colleges and to analyze the association between age, branches of study, family's occupation etc and the level of entrepreneurial traits respectively.

### **Methodology**

To achieve this goal, a survey of final year graduate women students was conducted. The colleges under study were Madurai Meenakshi Government College, Fatima College, Lady Doak College, Sourashtra Women's College and EMG Yadava Women's College all located in

Madurai. Out of a total of 3100 final year students, 500 students (100 students from each college) were chosen randomly.

The survey involved ten dimensions related to successful entrepreneurial traits – innovation, perseverance and hard work, leadership and motivating ability, need for achievement, risk taking ability, need for decision making, planning/foresight and problem solving, information seeking and receiving feedback, interpersonal skills and positive self-concept. Within these dimensions, several variables were included. Respondents were required to indicate their perceptions of these variables contributing to the existing level of successful entrepreneurial skills by way of awarding scores on a five point scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

In addition to the primary data questionnaire, required secondary data was collected from government agencies, books, magazines and journals.

The statistical analysis was based on the following measures/tests: coefficient of variance (using its mean and standard deviation values), Kolmogorov-Smirnov one sample test (D Statistic), Kruskal Wallis one-way Anova test or H Test, and the Mann Whitney U test.

### **Results and Discussion**

Within the 'innovation' trait, the variable 'making the best use of opportunities' had the least coefficient of variance (38.70), followed by 'having confidence even while doing the job for the first time' (39.66) and 'adventurous' (41.01). Within the 'perseverance and hardwork' trait, the variable 'not discouraged but ready for a tougher course' displayed the least coefficient of variance (39.66), followed by 'not studying for exams only' (40.89) and 'interest in extracurricular activities' (41.24). Within the 'leadership and motivating ability' trait, the variable 'taking the lead' had the least coefficient of variance (37.27), followed by 'not keeping quiet in the class, when the lecture lacks clarity' (37.65) and 'participating in Dept Seminar' (40.63). Within the 'need for achievement' trait, the variable 'putting up the stalls during celebrations' indicated least coefficient of variance (33.23), followed by 'enthusiasm to maintain records' (41.94) and 'participating in Dept Seminar' (40.63). Within the 'risk taking ability' trait, the variable 'trying lottery tickets'

had the least coefficient of variance (27.56), followed by ‘capable of taking risks in relationships’ (32.97) and ‘giving up studies if needed’ (37.50). Within the ‘decision making ability’ trait, the variable ‘capable of choosing daily wear’ had the least coefficient of variance (34.07), followed by ‘not taking a long time to select the subject for daily study’ (39.09) and ‘quick and prompt decision’(41.46). There is also no significant relationship between the branch of study and the entrepreneurial traits possessed by the respondents.

### **Conclusion**

On the basis of these findings, the following suggestions are made: (1) the organizing of a women’s entrepreneurial cell in campus which motivates students towards proper entrepreneurial training. The more enthusiastic students can even be exposed to market opportunities to induce a taste for entrepreneurship. (2) The organizing of seminars/conferences to stimulate entrepreneurial skills (in addition to soft skills training). This could include banking orientation programmes and even parental support programmes. (3) The providing of more liberal education opportunities including entrepreneurship as a means to higher status, independence and empowerment. The existing college should be shaped into a high performing institution with commitment to help the potential entrepreneurs within the four walls of the institution just enough to unleash minds to create a sustainable future.

### **References**

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