

## **Khadi Village Industries as a Tantamount of Women Entrepreneurism**

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### **Background**

Since the times immemorial, philanthropists are working to perk up the women eminence in the society. Up till now progress in this regard is within the confines of neoteric words formation, like in eighty's, women development then in ninety's women welfare and now women empowerment. There was innovation in words but the repute is consistent. Way out of this conundrum is to look into the points at issue viz. 'what we have' and 'what can be done.' The key of 'what we have' is Khadi and Village Industries-the pioneer of Sustainable Human Development and the way out is rejuvenation and re-engineering of Khadi Village Industries.

Khadi Village Industries objectives (economic, social and wider), concentrates on the integration of concept of villagism with economic development of people and the country (KVIC, 2009; Gandhi, 1955). History divulges that the basic idea behind setup of Khadi and Village Industries was not only mass mobilization but it was also a social movement to uplift women as an economic and social being (Gandhi, 1955). The adoption of wage system was also a part of protection of women who were exploited on the basis of low wages for equal work (Verma, 2012).

Khadi and Village Industries is the indigenous way to make women self-reliant, self-contented and economically developed in one word entrepreneur. At present 70% women are the beneficiaries of Khadi and Village Industries scheme (KVIC, 2009). It is the thread that connects 'Rural Indian Nari' with country's main work force from their home itself. Basically, it is a group of more than hundred cottage industries which are labor intensive; requires meager investment; uses sustainable technology and supports Gandhi's approach to development. It also provides work to marginal women workers; alter women, less educated and illiterate women (KVIC, 2009). There are more than thousands of women centric options available besides simple tools-technologies. It provides funds as well as insurance to the women workers. At present government is planning to provide funds for the shelter of the workers.

### **Significance of Khadi Village Industries with respect to Women Entrepreneurism**

India's strategy of women empowerment aims at the removal of poverty through removal of unemployment. Though agriculture forms the main occupation of the country and rural women are widely involved in it, increasing population pressure and declining holdings have already made it difficult to provide employment even to those who currently depend on it. It is realized that the rural industries outside the fold of agriculture can offer greater scope for labor absorption in villages (Verma, 2012). Khadi Village Industries are labor intensive industries with a scope of providing more employment with an investment of less capital (KVIC, 2009). It provides infrastructure, financial help, training and guidance which are mandatory for establishing entrepreneur. Women workers are provided all of it within their home, to break the ceiling of hypocrisy and emancipated as women entrepreneur.

### **Role of Khadi Village Industries in women entrepreneurship**

Khadi Village Industries are helping women at economic as well as at personal level. For economic development of women- it provides more avenues of work, economic independence and raising socio-economic status. There are number of options available like spinning, dyeing, stitching, quilt making, soap making, papad making, pickle making, match stick making etc. It stipulates the rate of payment as per the amount being manufactured by the women worker. It helps in increasing family income as well as mobilizing women to get better and become inspiration for others.

Personal development in terms of institution refers to the methods, programs, tools, techniques and assessment system that support human development. Khadi Village Industries focuses on improving knowledge, awareness, develops talent, potential, enhance quality of life and contribute to the realization of aspirations and dreams. They have training programs for guidance and knowledge; insurance and housing schemes for sense of security; financial help through low interest rate loans.

### **Problems and Challenges**

- Non-availability of raw material in every season. This results in unpredictable annual income and variable amount of work. It acts as negative reinforcement for the workers.
- Meager payments. The payments are based on the amount of work done like amount of thread spun. Rate of payment is decided by the centre where they sell the pooni. The amount is low cause of which women feel less motivated to work.
- Technology and machines. In the age of smart machines the existence of traditional machines is like throw down the gauntlet. Work and energy efficient machines are required. So that women worker feels less fatigue and strain which will lead to increased productivity.
- Availability of funds. A lesser amount of funds are available because of which most of the industries are either shut or in ruins. Only Khadi sector in most of

the centers is working. Due to which lesser number of avenues of employment are available for women workers in reality. This is one of the causes of lost Khadi Village Industries sheen.

- Loss. One of the major problems of the Khadi Village Industries is loss. The consumption, more input and less output and no profit making strategy are the reasons of losses. Loss signifies lesser funds and lesser funds to reduced payments to women workers.
- Marketing Strategies. Customers are the ways and means of advertisement of Khadi Village industries. This approach is not applicable in the present era. There are lots of options available which are easily accessible and on tips of customers. So, in this case steady tortoise will not be a winner. This adds to one more step in the above cycle (poor marketing strategy-lesser funds-reduced payments).
- All of the above problems are incorporating in the decline of Khadi Village Industries prominence.

### **Suggestions**

- Without making major changes in the administration and legislation of KVI following are some suggestions that can be incorporated to improve the productivity and success of the program:
- It is suggested that if work organization principles are incorporated there will be better functioning and productivity among women workers.
- It is advised to use motion economy to decrease the stress and strain of the women workers.
- It is recommended that to improve the design of charkha according to the ergonomics principles which will help to improve the women workers efficiency and decrease their fatigue.
- It is opine that women workers should be made aware of the above mentioned concepts through seminars, workshops and research development programs. This will make them knowledgeable as well as reduce the harmful effects of poor postures and equipments. It will also improve the efficiency and productivity. It will also help them to realize the importance of the correct posture and work organization in terms of their health and job performance.
- Refresher, in-service and entrepreneurship programs will help women to update their knowledge regarding their work. It will also make them a better work manager.
- It is advised to make sure the availability of the raw material all over the year. This will increase the job opportunities and also motivate them to work properly. It can be done by proper exchange and in time exchange of raw material inter-intra state.
- Better marketing strategy will make people discerning which will improve the sales.

Khadi Village Industries are losing its gleam. The reason behind the situation is the diversion from Gandhian Philosophy, lack of interest among people, improper funds and motivation. It was the foremost organization with the philosophy of women empowerment and sustainability. Its present state is trivial, which is a matter of concern. It is a legacy of India which is becoming paltry now. There is a need of refurbishment.

KVI is based on Gandhian Philosophy of - 'Sarvodya-welfare of all'. It is not only concerned about women but also about the organism and environment. KVI is the epicenter of self-sufficiency of women and villages. It can be further concluded that KVI attempts are going pear-shaped with respect to women development especially. This is an alarming situation. In this way, it will lose its patina and one of the India's legacy, brand and tradition will be nowhere to be found.

It is said that-it's never too late. KVI has the musk, one need to stop looking around and start believing in it. Then only the reverie of women entrepreneurship can be achieved.

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