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Changing Discernments: Women Entrepreneurs' Expedition in Arunachal Pradesh, India

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Abstract: The rising prominence of women entrepreneurs in India has made a profound impact on both the social and economic landscape of the nation. Their active involvement in the workforce has been instrumental in uplifting numerous families from poverty and has played a pivotal role in generating employment opportunities. The transformation brought about by women entrepreneurs in India has set the stage for a deeper exploration of these changes on a regional level. In this context, this study aims to gauge the perceptual shift in attitudes among the women entrepreneurs of Arunachal Pradesh by examining their attitudes both before embarking on their entrepreneurship journey and afterward. To achieve this goal, data was gathered from 340 women entrepreneurs residing in Papumpare District of Arunachal Pradesh. The findings demonstrate a noteworthy transformation in their attitudes, particularly in areas such as self - esteem, self - confidence, as well as visibility and respect within the context of the study region.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Respect, Self - confidence, Self - Esteem & Visibility

1. Introduction

A Woman Entrepreneur may be defined as a "Woman or group of women who initiate, organize or run a business enterprise. " A woman who is confident, innovative, and creative is capable of achieving self - economic independence individually or in collaboration and generates employment opportunities for others through instigating, establishing, and management of the enterprise by keeping pace with her family and social life (Kulkarni, 2012, p.3). Traditional cultural perception perceived the roles of women to be confined within the four walls of the house, but in modern times, with economic reforms there is a transitional trend that is observed in terms of women's participation in economic growth and women participation in business entities has been remarkable. Recognition, reputation, resource regeneration are some of the advantages of women entrepreneurship besides monetary gains and financial inclusion. However any drastic changes in a cultural diverse environment like India is never easy. Perception of weakness, exploitation by middlemen etc. put barriers on the mobility and risk - taking ability of entrepreneurs in general and women in particular (Colaco & Hans, 2018).

Women entrepreneurs are contributing towards the growth of the economy and the enhancement of their socio - economic conditions. They have shown an unbelievable impact on all sections of the economy. Improved education level, standard of living, and privileges at par with their male counterparts are some of the important factors that have contributed to them stepping into the business world (Singh, 2014). Women entrepreneurs are becoming outstanding forces to consider within the business world and they are not only involved in business for survival, but they tend to influence their inner urge of creativity and to prove their potentialities. Educated women are contributing to an immense extent to the social

transformation with their change in perceptions (Singh, 2014, p.1)

The concept of women entrepreneurship in Arunachal Pradesh is quite recent and has yet to achieve outstanding success. Their numbers for overall enterprise are still small. However, the potential for developing women entrepreneurs in the state is high due to its rich culture and tradition and the availability of abundance of natural resources (Kalita, 2015). However, in recent time women have embarked into different fields of entrepreneurship and slowly they are gaining popularity and enjoying success in their business. They are contributing immensely in the economic development of the state by generating employment opportunities to women and youth in the state. (She at work blog, 2022). Entrepreneurship has changed the lives of many women in different perspectives, change in perception being one of the major contribution.

This paper is organized into six key sections. To begin, the initial section introduces the central theme of the study. Following this, the second section delves into an extensive exploration of the existing literature within the chosen domain. Moving on, the third section provides a detailed overview of the research methodology applied to fulfil the stated research objectives. In the fourth section, the analysis and interpretation of the collected data has been presented. The fifth section encapsulates the findings and conclusions derived from this study. Finally, in the sixth section, potential avenues for future research, highlighting areas of further exploration has been outlined.

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2. Review of Literature

An attempt has been made to present a concise resume of available literature on different aspects of women's entrepreneurship relevant to the proposed study:

For active involvement of women in entrepreneurship, the socio - economic and demographic attributes plays a significant role and have a great impact, especially when they are involved in venture management. Many women entrepreneurs obtain help and support from their family members for management of their enterprises, especially from their male members (Kalyani & Chandralekha, 2002). More women entrepreneurs in both the organized sector and unorganized sector choose a proprietorship pattern of enterprises whereas family - owned business comes second as the choice for a pattern of enterprise by women entrepreneurs. The reason for this could be their self - confidence and their desire to achieve their dream. They agreed they have become more independent and successful and they have proved themselves in society that they can do anything and achieve their goals (Mall, 2015).

Numerous studies related to entrepreneurship has mentioned that the socio - economic status, such as age, gender, family income, family occupation and individual background, such as education and work experience have an impact on entrepreneurial activities. Under the concept of human capital there are two key demographic characteristics i. e., education and work - experience. Therefore, socio - economic conditions of women entrepreneurs have relationship to the type of business activities they are engaged in (Basu & Virick, 2008).

Women's empowerment is considered to be a capability building and it has to be encouraged and spread across the nation. Empowering women is a great impact of entrepreneurship among women. Setting a proper legislation for curving discrimination against women can enhance the empowerment of women through entrepreneurship. Women's rigorous networks and movement towards their business enterprises can also have a great impact in empowering them (Mall, 2015).

Entrepreneurship has individually provided independence to the women entrepreneurs, which is the most essential requirement for women to realise their dreams. It has also improved the economic and social status of the women post their involvement in entrepreneurship and has been a blessing for their family with contribution of regular income for household essentials (Singh, 2014). The beauty of women entrepreneurs is the inspiration for other women to come up and participate in maintaining enterprises with equal opportunities. Participation of women in entrepreneurship has increased their income, self - value, self - poise and better social status. Entrepreneurship has empowered and motivated them and they have generated large number of employment for many women in the society (Fazalbhoy, 2014).

Women Entrepreneurs who were traditionally kept behind the four walls of their houses, now in modern society are capable of managing both their family and business. Though they face many problems and challenges in their path of becoming a successful entrepreneur but the government has taken many initiatives for the growth of women entrepreneurs (Dangi, 2014). The broad areas of inquiry, including the emergence of women - owned firms in the global economy, entrepreneurial and firm characteristics, financing patterns, the greatest challenges to enterprise growth, and the influence of culture and family on the entrepreneurial organization. Recommendations are provided to contribute to an increased understanding of the dynamics of women - headed entrepreneurial enterprises around the world (Gundry, Miriam & Posig, 2002).

The three aspects of power characterized as "positive" from within Rowlands' distinctions ("power to", "power with" and "power within") dominate, as opposed to those emphasized in the literature ("power to" and "power over"). Findings include empowerment of the "me" (individual) also synergistically contributes to empowerment of the "we" (society), when considering empowerment within a collective society (Poh Yen, Wood & Bastian, 2022). The individual perceptual factors relate to the entrepreneurial outcome, remains a challenge, due to the social systems of women. The value of this study lies in providing significant insights on micro - entrepreneurship increasing the probability of women's social inclusion with a better strengthening of the relationship based on fear of failure and resilience (Adams, Kabalan & Dankwa, 2023).

3. Objectives

The following are the objectives of the study:

- To measure the attitude of women entrepreneurs in the context of Self - Esteem, Self Confidence, and Visibility & Respect.
- b) To study the perceptual shift in attitudes among women entrepreneurs in the study area before and after embarking on their entrepreneurial journey.

On the basis of objective (ii), the following hypothesis has been developed:

 H_0 : There is no change in attitude of women entrepreneurs before and after embarking the entrepreneurial journey.

4. Research Methodology

This section explores the methodology and framework employed for conducting the research.

4.1. Design of the study

The present study relies on primary data for the fulfilment of the stated objectives and the statistical tools are performed through IBM SPSS Version 27.0. A self - designed questionnaire cum schedule with a mix of descriptive and Likert - type questions, keeping in context the research objectives of study, was administered to collect the primary data. The systematic random sampling method was adopted to select the women entrepreneurs of Papumpare District of Arunachal Pradesh. The survey was conducted in the year 2022. The process yielded a total of 340 women entrepreneurs from the study area. The reliability statistics of the questionnaire cum schedule is depicted in table 1.1.

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Table 1.1: Case Processing Summary & Reliability Statistics

		N	%
	Valid	340	100.0
Cases	Excludeda	0	.0
	Total	340	100.0
a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure			

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.906	10

Source: Field Study, 2022

The reliability outcome of the scale has a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.906 for 17 items as shown in the Table 1.1. The satisfactory alpha coefficient value recommended for related

studies lies above 0.65 in most cases (Goforth, 2015). Hence the calculated value of 0.906 is satisfactory for the present study.

4.2 Data Analysis and Statistical Tools:

Before selecting an appropriate hypothesis test, it's important to assess whether the data follows a normal distribution. To determine this, a Kolmogorov - Smirnov test was conducted on the dataset, and the results are outlined in Table 1.2. The outcome of the Kolmogorov - Smirnov test (p<0.05) indicated that the dataset doesn't adhere to a normal distribution. As a result, instead of using traditional parametric tests, a non - parametric statistical test is chosen for the current research.

Table 1.2: Normality Statistic (Kolmogorov - Smirnov^a and Shapiro - Wilk)

Statements	Kolmogorov - Smirnov ^a		Shapiro - Wilk			
Statements	Statistic	Df	Sig.	Statistic	Df	Sig.
I am valued member in my household	.248	340	.000	.891	340	.000
I provide a valuable economic contribution to the household	.239	340	.000	.893	340	.000
Everybody in my family recognizes my contribution to the household	.230	340	.000	.885	340	.000
Everybody in my family is satisfied with what I do	.241	340	.000	.877	340	.000
Everybody in my household takes care of me	.227	340	.000	.884	340	.000
My spouse and children look after my needs and requirements	.220	340	.000	.879	340	.000
I can make interaction with my trader and suppliers	.267	340	.000	.799	340	.000
I can make interaction with any officials	.228	340	.000	.822	340	.000
I can bargain	.240	340	.000	.850	340	.000
I able to manage the organizational work	.226	340	.000	.857	340	.000
I am able to manage my household	.320	340	.000	.797	340	.000
I can face any future eventualities	.297	340	.000	.828	340	.000
I have been recognized by my neighbours	.270	340	.000	.858	340	.000
I have a position in the society	.240	340	.000	.865	340	.000
I have a position in my peer group	.212	340	.000	.875	340	.000
I am respected by my friends and relatives and community	.255	340	.000	.869	340	.000
My peer group ask my views in group discussion	.254	340	.000	.857	340	.000
a. Lilliefors Significance Correction						

Source: Field Study, 2022 - 23

As the present paper examines perceptual shift in attitudes among the women entrepreneurs of Arunachal Pradesh by examining their attitudes both before embarking on their entrepreneurship journey and afterward, accordingly the appropriate statistical tool is the Wilcoxon signed - rank test.

The Wilcoxon signed - rank test serves as a nonparametric statistical hypothesis test suitable for assessing repeated measures designs involving the evaluation of the same subjects under two distinct conditions ("Fundamental Statistical Principles for the Neurobiologist," 2016). In the current context, this test is applied to compare pre - and post - entrepreneurship journey assessments. It serves as a nonparametric alternative to both the 1 - sample t - test and

the paired t - test, offering various advantages over these t - tests. Notably, the Wilcoxon signed - rank test allows for the analysis of ordinal data and mitigates the influence of outliers (Rey & Neuhäuser, 2011).

5. Analysis and Interpretation:

This section presents an overview of the demographic characteristics of the participants of the study and also examines perceptual shift in attitudes among the women entrepreneurs of Arunachal Pradesh by examining their attitudes both before embarking on their entrepreneurship journey and afterward.

Table 1.3: Profile of the Respondents

Demographic Variables	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age	18 TO 30 YEARS	50	14.7
	31 TO 40 YEARS	148	43.5
	41 TO 50 YEARS	111	32.6
	51 YEARS & ABOVE	31	9.1
	Total	340	100.0
Education	NO EDUCATION	85	25.0
	PRIMARY	114	33.5
	HIGHER SECONDARY	97	28.5
	GRADUATE	31	9.1

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	POST - GRADUATE & ABOVE	13	3.8
	Total	340	100.0
Marital Status	MARRIED	291	85.6
	UNMARRIED	49	14.4
	Total	340	100.0
Family Structure	JOINT FAMILY	164	48.2
	NUCLEAR FAMILY	176	51.8
	Total	340	100.0
Number of Earning Members	ONE	148	43.5
	TWO	172	50.6
	THREE	11	3.2
	FOUR AND ABOVE	9	2.6
	TOTAL	340	100.0

Source: Field Study, 2022 - 23

Table 1.3 provides an overview of the demographic characteristics of the 340 study participants. The study investigated various demographic factors, including age, education level, marital status, family structure, and the number of earning members in each family. The largest portion of respondents, constituting 44% of the total, falls within the 31 to 40 years age group, totalling 148 individuals. Conversely, the smallest group consists of individuals aged 51 years and above, comprising only 9% of the respondents, with a count of 31 individuals.

In terms of education levels, the most prevalent qualification among respondents is at the primary level, with 34% of individuals (114 respondents) holding this educational status. In contrast, the least common qualification is at the post graduate level and above, with only 9% (13 individuals) in this category.

Regarding marital status, the data reveals that the majority, representing 86% of respondents, are married, while the remaining 14% (49 individuals) are unmarried. Further, in case of family structure, the majority of respondents (52%)

come from nuclear families, while the remaining 48% (164 individuals) belong to joint families.

Lastly, in terms of the number of earning members within families, the highest number of respondents (51%) reported having two earning members in their family. Conversely, the lowest number of respondents, a mere 3% (9 individuals), stated that their family has four or more earning members.

5.1. Perceptual change in Attitude of Women Entrepreneurs based on before and after the Entrepreneurship Journey

This section explores the perceptual shift in attitudes among the women entrepreneurs of Arunachal Pradesh by examining their attitudes both before embarking on their entrepreneurship journey and afterward. In the first instance, the pre and post mean value of all the statements measuring the three dimensions viz. Self Esteem, Self Confidence, and Visibility & Respect were assessed. The results are summarized in table 1.4.

Table 1.4: Statement wise Mean value based on Pre and Post Entrepreneurship Journey

Statements	N	Mean (Pre)	Mean (Post)
I am valued member in my household	340	3.33	3.46
I provide a valuable economic contribution to the household	340	3.25	3.43
Everybody in my family recognizes my contribution to the household	340	3.41	3.61
Everybody in my family is satisfied with what I do	340	3.08	3.19
Everybody in my household takes care of me	340	3.24	3.46
My spouse and children look after my needs and requirements	340	2.48	2.62
I can make interaction with my trader and suppliers	340	3.15	3.26
I can make interaction with any officials	340	3.13	3.20
I can bargain	340	3.29	3.39
I able to manage the organizational work	340	3.10	3.25
I am able to manage my household	340	2.99	3.21
I can face any future eventualities	340	3.20	3.38
I have been recognized by my neighbours	340	3.52	3.64
I have a position in the society	340	3.49	3.66
I have a position in my peer group	340	3.34	3.52
I am respected by my friends and relatives and community	340	3.29	3.54
My peer group ask my views in group discussion	340	3.16	3.33

Source: Field Survey, 2022 - 23

It is evident from table 1.4. that the mean value for all statement is higher in case of post - entrepreneurship journey than the mean value for all statements in pre - entrepreneurship journey. Which signifies that there is a positive shift in attitude for all the three dimensions viz. Self Esteem, Self Confidence, and Visibility and Respect.

Further to determine statistical significance of change in attitude (Self Esteem, Self Confidence, and Visibility & Respect) before and after the entrepreneurship endeavour by the women entrepreneurs, the Wilcoxon Signed Ranks test was employed. The results are summarised in table 1.5.

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Table 1.5: Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test for Pre and Post Entrepreneurship Attitudes of the Women Entrepreneurs

Statements		Z	Asymp. Sig. (2 - tailed)
I am valued member in my household - I am valued member in my household		- 4.523 ^b	.000
I provide a valuable economic contribution to the household - I provide a valuable economic contribution to the household		- 5.435 ^b	.000
Everybody in my family recognizes my contribution to the household - Everybody in my family recognizes my contribution to the household	steem	- 5.477 ^b	.000
Everybody in my family is satisfied with what I do - Everybody in my family is satisfied with what I do	Self Esteem	- 3.370 ^b	.001
Everybody in my household takes care of me - Everybody in my household takes care of me	• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •	- 5.570 ^b	.000
My spouse and children look after my needs and requirements - My spouse and children look after my needs and requirements		- 4.832 ^b	.000
I can make interaction with my trader and suppliers - I can make interaction with my trader and suppliers	Self Confidence	- 3.870 ^b	.000
I can make interaction with any officials - I can make interaction with any officials	ide	- 3.197 ^b	.001
I can bargain - I can bargain	Ju	- 3.140 ^b	.002
I am able to manage the organizational work - I able to manage the organizational work	ŭ	- 4.793 ^b	.000
I am able to manage my household - I am able to manage my household	elf	- 6.531 ^b	.000
I can face any future eventualities - I can face any future eventualities	9 2	- 6.272 ^b	.000
I have been recognized by my neighbours - I have been recognized by my neighbours		- 5.077 ^b	.000
I have a position in the society - I have a position in the society	ر ئارچە	- 5.318 ^b	.000
I have a position in my peer group - I have a position in my peer group	lity pec	- 4.907 ^b	.000
I am respected by my friends and relatives and community - I am respected by my friends and relatives and community	Visibility Respect	- 6.170 ^b	.000
My peer group ask my views in group discussion - My peer group ask my views in group discussion	_	- 4.673 ^b	.000
a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test			
b. Based on negative ranks.			

Source: Field Survey, 2022 - 23

As the p - value of all the statements at 95% confidence is less than 0.05 it signifies that there is a significant perceptual change among the women entrepreneurs for all the considered dimensions of attitudes i. e., Self Esteem, Self Confidence, and Visibility and Respect. Accordingly, it can be concluded that there is a positive and significant change in attitude of the women entrepreneurs before and after embarking the entrepreneurship journey.

6. Major Finding and Conclusions

The findings of this study indicate a significant and positive perceptual change in attitudes among women entrepreneurs in Arunachal Pradesh, specifically in the dimensions of Self Esteem, Self Confidence, and Visibility & Respect. The analysis of data before and after their entrepreneurship journey demonstrates that these women have experienced a notable improvement in their self - esteem, self - confidence, and the recognition and respect they receive within their households and communities.

In terms of self - esteem, women entrepreneurs reported feeling like valued members of their households. They also acknowledged their valuable economic contributions to their families. Moreover, their family members recognized their contributions and expressed satisfaction with their endeavours. These positive changes indicate an enhanced sense of self - worth and importance among these women.

Regarding self - confidence, women entrepreneurs reported improved abilities to interact with traders, suppliers, and officials, as well as to negotiate effectively. They also felt more capable of managing organizational work and household responsibilities. This boost in self - confidence suggests that entrepreneurship has empowered these women to become more assertive and competent in various aspects of their lives.

In terms of visibility and respect, women entrepreneurs reported being recognized by their neighbours, having a position in society and their peer groups, and earning respect from friends, relatives, and their communities. Additionally, their peer groups started seeking their views in group discussions. These findings highlight a significant shift in the way these women are perceived and respected within their social circles and communities.

7. Future Research Avenues

While this study sheds light on the positive changes in attitudes among women entrepreneurs in Arunachal Pradesh, there are several avenues for future research that can further enrich our understanding of this phenomenon. Some potential areas for exploration include:

- Long term Impact: Investigating whether the perceptual changes observed in this study are sustained over the long term or if there is a need for ongoing support and interventions to maintain these positive shifts.
- Factors Influencing Change: Exploring the specific factors or interventions that contributed to the perceptual changes among women entrepreneurs, such as training programs, mentorship, or access to resources.
- Comparing Regions: Comparing the attitudes and experiences of women entrepreneurs across different regions of Arunachal Pradesh to identify regional variations and unique challenges and opportunities.
- Socioeconomic **Outcomes:** Examining socioeconomic outcomes of women entrepreneurs, including changes in income, financial independence, and the well - being of their families.

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 Policy Implications: Assessing the impact of government policies and initiatives aimed at promoting women's entrepreneurship in the region and their effectiveness in facilitating positive perceptual changes.

By delving into these areas, future research can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the journey and impact of women entrepreneurs in Arunachal Pradesh and contribute to the development of more targeted and effective interventions and policies to support their endeavours.

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Author Profile



Biri Amji has successfully completed her M. com and M. Phil degree from Rajiv Gandhi University, Arunachal Pradesh in the year 2013 and 2015 respectively. At present she is pursuing her PhD degree from the

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