Chapter 4

ICT and Its Role in Women Entrepreneurship With Special Reference to Kudumbashree Group of Malappuram District

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ABSTRACT

Starting a new firm is a very important decision to an individual, which has become the focal point in the investigation of entrepreneurship regarding an individual's qualities as an entrepreneur. The Kudumbashree is a project under the state's aegis comprising women's self-help groups (SHGs). KS women leaders seem to be able to enter the panchayats more readily and thus form an important section of lower-level leaders of the state's political parties. The main objective of this chapter is to understand the role of ICT for Kudumbashree group in the economic upliftment of women the factors for it being education, work, financial ability, collective action, social relationships, and unpaid care and work burden. The Purpose of this study is to know how ICT helps in achieving economic upliftment by the most successful women's self-help group: Kudumbashree.

INTRODUCTION

The rapidly changing Information and Communication Technologies landscape, the influx of new innovations, infrastructure development and their interaction with socio-cultural values, institutional & systemic norms have changed. The consistent improvement in ICT can be attributed to the ongoing Industrial Revolution 4.0 which could be possible due to the advancement in cyber - physical systems. This represents entirely new ways in which technology becomes embedded within human beings and societies, encompassing machine learning, artificial intelligence and genome editing etc. This breakthrough makes digitalization beneficial to human beings irrespective of any field of business and society. In developing countries, information and communication technologies (ICTs) are becoming increasingly valuable commercial tools for the entrepreneurs right from ideation to successful launch of product/service. The perspective with regards to business is changed due to the digital revolution and encourages entrepreneurs to bring innovation & creativity to the table in a practical manner that leads to empowerment (Singh and Archana, 2018). With the advent of cyber infrastructure, various digital tools and social media platforms there is an emergence of new type of entrepreneurial ventures and jobs and sometimes difficult to classify unambiguously in the traditional categories of employment, self-employment, freelance, or growth-oriented entrepreneurial undertakings (J.-M Sahut et al., 2019). Digital platform gives an edge to entrepreneurs to showcase their business ideas. Recently during Covid 19, digital platforms helped all of us stay connected, conducting business activities, placing order for essentials and even online teaching learning.

WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Women entrepreneurship is gaining importance and is now considered significant to global development (Brush and Cooper, 2012; Patil and Deshpande, 2018). Women entrepreneurs are playing a conduit role in creating ample employment opportunities that led to wealth generation, poverty elimination, education awareness and better health services and thus improving the living standard. There are many success stories of women entrepreneurs which have been discussed in the literature and illustrated the main constraints on their way (Byrne et al., 2019; Neumeyer et al., 2019). Without women entrepreneurs, economies could not achieve complete and sustainable success. Socio-economic development, which is itself a holistic measure can be achieved when women are empowered through entrepreneurship (Sajjad et. al., 2020). They also face constraints in developing countries due to education and socio-cultural factors and their representation is still low (Suriyamurthi et al.,

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