

A Case Study On Women Empowerment

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Abstract

Shri Mahila Griha Udyog Lijjat Papad society is one of such drive which is established to aim at women entrepreneurship and empowerment which creates and enlarge sisterhood and to promote development protecting and carefulness. The objective of present study is focused on contribution of SMGULPS on women empowerment. It was found how the spirit of 7 semi-literate women wins. It was concluded that SMGULP is a symbol of progress. The managers can pick up an interesting lesson from SMGULP which is holding its core values from the past 56 years.

Keyword: - Shri Mahila Griha Udyog Lijjat Papad (SMGULP), Women, Empowerment, Lijjat Papad, Entrepreneurship

1. Introduction

Traditionally, our society was male dominated and women were not considered as equal partners and they were restricted to the four walls of the house for doing all the house hold works. But now in Modern era, the shade of ignorance has lifted. The changes are creeping in slowly and precisely. Women have stepped out the house to participate in all sorts of activities. They are growing and blooming as successful person in their own right. They have proved that they are not less than men in capability, efficiency, intelligence and hard-work.

The establishment of Lijjat Papad-Woman Entrepreneurship is an example of successful entrepreneurial venture build up by seven semi-literate women from a small community in rural India. "Our objective is to maximize employment opportunities for women through activities connected with village industries, while, at the same time, not sacrificing basic business principles and quality consciousness. We are a full-fledged commercial, self-reliant organization and not a charitable society. Any such benefits that occur are incidental to our business." - Vimalben M Pawale, Ex President, Sri Mahila Griha Udyog Lijjat Papad (SMGULP).

"Lijjat Papad works because there are no barriers to entry such as skills; making papad is like a birthright to the Indian woman. And the model is scaleable unlike a crafts-based cottage industry." - Haresh Shah, Member, Khadi and Village Industries Commission

Shri Mahila Griha Udyog Lijjat Papad, (SMGULP) popularly known as **Lijjat**, is an Indian women's cooperative involved in manufacturing of various fast moving consumer goods. It symbolizes 'Strength of women'. Only women can become the members of this institute. The organization's main objective is empowerment of women by providing them employment opportunities. Started in the year 1959 with a seed capital of Rs. 80, Lijjat has an annual turnover of around Rs. 650 crore, with Rs. 29 crore in exports (As of 2010). It provides employment to around 42,000 people Lijjat is headquartered in Mumbai and has 67 branches and 35 divisions all over India.

Lijjatpapad started with a need of 7 women, it has become a one of the leading brands of most crispy breads of India. Along with a known and growing brand it is even known for its social service to women. The Lijjatpapad institute is started by women, for the women. It needs no qualification or specific skills for any woman to join the institute. This institute accepts the women employees without any discretion of her religion or caste. Over the years it's proved that the story of LijjatPapad is one of the incredible stories of India. It evolved as a business and along with business it has now even well known for have in a way implied corporate social responsibility by providing employment to the needy women.

Rahman and Sultana (2012) focused on contribution of Shri Mahila Griha Udyod Lijjat Papad Society on Women Empowerment. The data was collected by conducting a survey of 60 respondents from Shri Mahila Griha Udyod Lijjat Papad Society in Hyderabad District through structured questionnaire. It was found that it has positively contributed in the psychological, social and economic factors in empowerment of women through Shri Mahila Griha Udyod Lijjat Papad Society. Further, it was concluded that women empowerment means a lot, but the ultimate goal is materialize only when her complementary role is recognized by the society. Lijjat's contribution is only a step towards empowerment, but more such organizations should come forward. Jennings and Brush (2013) conducted a study to document the development of the body of work known as women's entrepreneurship research. In this study through the broader entrepreneurship literature the contributions of this work was assessed and discussed how this broader literature poses challenges (both difficulties as well as opportunities) for scholarship on female entrepreneurs. It was found that this sub-area has come a long way in a very short period of time, surpassing many of the developmental milestones as the broader field of entrepreneurship despite its more recent origins. Mahajan (2013) attempted to identify the status of women entrepreneurs in India and also studied the success story of Hina Shah the most successful women entrepreneurs of India in plastic packaging and Founder of ICECD. It was revealed that a major change in traditional attitudes and mindsets of people in society is required for the elimination of obstacles for women entrepreneurship rather than being limited to only creation of opportunities for women and it is imperative to design programmes that will address to attitudinal changes, training, supportive services. Sanchita (2013) analyzed the socio- economic profile of the woman entrepreneurs and interpreted the management problems of women entrepreneurs of small-scale sector in Haryana. The study was based on primary data which was collected by the researcher by conducting a survey of 210 women entrepreneurs of small-scale sector in Haryana (out of the list of 321 made available by the directorate of Industries Haryana, Chandigarh) by personal interview method by using a comprehensive interview schedule. It was recommended that to harness the potential and continued growth and development of women entrepreneurs and to formulate appropriate strategies for stimulating, supporting and sustaining their efforts to run smooth functioning of enterprises, we need to provide them level -playing- field for healthy competition. Nandini (2014) studied the profile of famous women entrepreneurs in India and analyzed the sectors preferred by women entrepreneurs in India. It further studied the promotional efforts of government for the growth of women entrepreneurship. It was suggested that empowering women with the entrepreneurial skills, information technology, micro and macro finance options will foster economic growth of the nation.

1.2 Objectives of study

The objective of the present study is to study the contribution made by SMGULPS towards women empowerment.

1.3 Research Methodology

This study is descriptive in nature and secondary data is used. Literature review has been explored. Annual report, websites, different books and previous research findings has been used as source of secondary data.

1.4 History:

Lijjat Papad is a women organization by the Women, and for the Women. It commenced operations in 1959, in Girgaum, Mumbai, with 7 lady members, as under:

- Jaswantiben Jamnadas Popat,
- Parvatiben Ramdas Thodani,
 - Ujamben Narandas Kundalia,
 - Banuben. N. Tanna,
 - Laguben Amritlar Gokani,
 - Jayaben V. Vithalani,

And one more lady whose name is not known. These women lived in "Lohana Niwas"- a group of 5 buildings in Girgaum. They gathered on the terrace of the buildings for an inconspicuous function of rolling of papads. And they decided to make papads every day. These seven ladies were the pioneers of Shri Mahila Griha Udyog Lijjat Papad. In the long run this institution was increasing- ever with additional sister members. Initially the pioneer batch borrowed Rs 80 from Chhaganlal Karamsi Parekh, a member of the Servants of India Society and a highly successful social worker. They took over a loss-making papad making venture by one Laxmidasbhai and bought the necessary ingredients and the basic infrastructure required to manufacture papads. On March 15, 1959, they gathered on the

terrace of their building and started with the production of 4 packets of Papad. They started selling the papads to a known merchant in Bhuleshwar, a small neighborhood of Mumbai.

1.5 The Success Formula

The vision and principles of *Sri Mahila Griha Udyog Lijjat Papad (SMGULP)* are based on the ideals of trusteeship. The basic principles underlying the philosophy of the organization are;

SMGULP is a voluntary organization.

SMGULP never accepts charity or grants.

SMGULP believes in running the business wisely.

SMGULP is like a family and the sisters run it as if they all belonged to the same family.

SMGULP is like a revered place of worship.

SMGULP is a combination of three concepts, the business concept, the family concept and the devotion concept.

2. The Business Concept

The SMGULP is run on sound commercial principles. The main aim of the organization is to provide self-employment opportunities to women. As most of the women working, come from the disadvantaged sections of society, the organization seeks to inculcate feelings of self-confidence and self-reliance in them. The member sisters share the profits among themselves in a judicious manner.

2.1 The Family Concept

SMGULP works like a big family. It tries to create a sense of family among employees. All the affairs of the institution are handled like a family carrying out its own daily household chores.

2.2 The Devotion Concept

For women working in SMGULP, it is a source of strength; a place of worship where they work for the benefit of all. The organization is for people who have faith and trust in its policies and basic concepts and who regard work as worship. Each branch usually operates from 5.00 am to 10.30 am.

2.3 Role in Women Empowerment:

The growth of the Lijjat is often seen in the larger canvas of women and their empowerment. The organization has undertaken various efforts to promote literacy and computer education for member-sisters and their families. A literacy campaign for sisters began through literacy classes at Girgaum on June 18, 1999. Later, the managing committee decided to start such classes in all its branches. From 1980 onwards, Lijjat started giving ChhaganbapaSmruti Scholarships to the daughters of the member-sisters.

The member-sisters used their organization as a medium to promote their families' welfare. In the Valod Centre, they set up an educational and hobby center for rural women. Orientation courses in typing, cooking, sewing, knitting and toy making as well as other courses like child welfare, first aid and hygiene were taught. The first ever pucca (tarred) road in Valod to be built and inaugurated in 1979 was with the help of the Lijjat Center, Valod branch.

In 1979, Lijjat teamed up with UNICEF to organize a seminar in Mumbai on "Child Care and Mother Welfare", as a part of the International Year of the Child celebrations.

In October 1984, Ms. Bhadraben Bhatt represented Lijjat at the UNESCO sponsored international workshop on "The role of women in the assimilation and spread of 97 Volume V September 2012 SIBM technological innovation" held at NITIE, Powai. Ms. AlkabenKalia represented Lijjat at the national level meeting on women convened by the National Commission on Self Employed Women.

At the behest of Mother Teresa, the member-sisters also took part in some activities of the Asha Dhan, an institution to care for destitute women.

On several occasions, the Lijjat member-sisters have undertaken social service activities such as distributing nutritious food for poor children, donating money for conducting community marriage, instituting prize-money for spread of primary education, undertaking blood donation drive, organizing health camps, plantation drives and even making donations to Government bodies. In 1999, the Mumbai City felicitated Smt. Rukminiben Pawar, the then Lijjat President, for her contribution in the field of social work.

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4. Conclusion:

The Shri Mahila Griha Udyog Lijjat Papad evolved as a papad making business, but it has contributed immensely to the field of women empowerment. The institution paves the way for women to become self-reliant and self-confident. In the process, Lijjat provides them the platform for improving their status in the society, which is their justified right.

The Sarvodaya philosophy proved vital in forming Lijjat's foundation. Lijjat has emerged as an innovative organization in which women from any religion, caste, or class can become members. Transparency in operations and a nonhierarchical structure has helped in establishing organizational accountability among member sisters.

The essential message that Lijjat's success conveys has definitely fired the imagination of women and rural folks. The Lijjat branch management pattern is based on an equal profit and loss sharing principle and the business story of Lijjat, itself proves the righteousness of the concepts it follows.

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