

# **THE ROLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION CURRICULUM IN PROMOTING WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS- A CASE STUDY ON BENGALURU UNIVERSITY'S CURRICULUM**

**Janaki.J**

(Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, Mount Carmel College, Autonomous, Bengaluru, India)

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## ***Abstract***

An Economy can grow and develop when it is set to innovate and identify opportunities. Higher education system plays a significant role in inculcating and promoting women entrepreneurship intuitions among the female students and to encourage the outgoing students to venture and brave the male dominant market. The purpose of this study is to verify the effectiveness of the higher educational curriculum followed at Bengaluru University and the educational program recognised by students and graduates. This paper aims at improving the curriculum and educational programs operated by the Bengaluru University. This study was conducted on students and graduates collecting data for the period 2018-2019. Data are compiled from a sample of 100 graduate students of Bengaluru University, and analysed using ANOVA to determine any correlation between independent (pull factors) and dependent variables (push factor). The results indicate that higher education curriculum has an impact on the women entrepreneurship. The study suggested for the improvement of curriculum to empower women entrepreneurship.

**Keywords:** Higher Education, Curriculum, Women Entrepreneurship

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Enterprise is a crucial engine of economic growth. Without enterprise and entrepreneurs, there would be little innovation, little productivity growth, and few new jobs. OUT OF 137 countries India has been ranked 68th in 2018 Global Entrepreneurship Index rankings.

Entrepreneurship refers to the act of setting up a new business or reviving an existing business so as to take advantages from new opportunities. Entrepreneurship has been a male-dominated phenomenon from the very early age, but time has changed the situation and brought women as today's most memorable and inspirational entrepreneurs. It is estimated that women entrepreneurs presently comprise about 10% of the total number of entrepreneurs in India, with the percentage growing every year<sup>1</sup>.

Women entrepreneurs are a modern phenomenon of economic and social life.

According to the Global Gender Gap Index, India is ranked 108th out of 144 nations, which indicates dismal participation of women in the workforce, as well as low wages for women (World Economic Forum, 2017).

High failure rate of female entrepreneurs can be explained by women's inability and incompetence to deal with the barriers that they face in their way of doing a business.

We can achieve economic development and shared prosperity only with the full economic participation of men and women in the globalised and liberalised India. In recent years, support programmes for women entrepreneurs have gained traction and prominence as a mean to empower them, create jobs and boost productivity at the national and regional levels. In developing economies, the role of women is most significant as workers and job creators.<sup>1</sup>

In India, female entrepreneur's activity is concentrated in the informal sector with limited potential for growth in income and employment.

The World Bank estimation on the working-age population (15 to 59) is set to increase by more than 200 million in India in the next two decades, while it is expected to decline in most developing economies of the world including China. The era of globalisation has enhanced the role of women entrepreneurs. However, India may fail to obtain benefits without the participation of women, who form a significant mass of society.<sup>2</sup>

Higher Education system in India has recorded an impressive growth since independence. UGC, by designing programmes and implementing various schemes through academic, administration and financial support has contributed in the growth and development of Indian higher Education System.

Twenty-five Indian institutions figure in the 2019 ranking of top 200 in 43 emerging economic countries

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<sup>1</sup> Verma. S.B, "Entrepreneurship and Employment", Deep and Deep publications Pvt Ltd, New Delhi, 2005.

<sup>2</sup> Giustina Secundo, May 2017, Activating entrepreneurial learning processes for transforming university students' idea into entrepreneurial practices. International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behaviour & Research

The Times Higher Education Emerging Economies University Rankings shows that the Indian Institute of Science retains the highest spot for India (14th), followed by the Indian Institute of Technology Bombay (27th). However, each slips a place this year, mainly due to increased competition. The Indian Institute of Technology Indore (61st) and the JSS Academy of Higher Education and Research (joint 64th) are the highest new entrants for India this year.<sup>3</sup>

The under-representation of women in higher education management is well documented and serves to demonstrate that the pool of managerial talent within each country is not optimally utilised

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND HYPOTHESIS**

Women entrepreneurship has become inevitable in the society for the economic development, they are not only in a selected profession but moved across varied industry in the economy.

Anita Soni , Dr. Rajesh Rathor(2017) stated that women are in par with men folk in the field of business and are equally competent in running the business. K.S.Reddy(2016) examined the current state of higher education and world rankings in an emerging market of India and found that world rankings and research metrics of Indian universities are far behind those of other universities. Ghulam nabi(2016)article examined the role of learning and inspiration in developing students entrepreneurial intentions in the first year in higher education. N.Arranz(2019) The paper studied the entrepreneurial intentions in undergraduate students and the obstacles perceived by the students in the process of starting their own business. Using a sample of 1053 undergraduate students from Andalusia universities, this study explored attitudes, capacities and social environment to determine the profile of university's entrepreneurs. Olof Zaring, Ethan Gifford, Maureen McKelvey. (2019) An explorative study of Swedish higher education institutions proposed entrepreneurship education with the aim of enhancing the understanding of how higher education contributes to society and how entrepreneurship programs have become a prominent feature in the curriculum of many universities and business schools. David Higgins, Deema Refai, Diene Keita. (2019) studied that traditional instructional pedagogical methods are not sufficient to adequately prepare and educate entrepreneurship students. The growing need is to consider alternative pedagogical perspectives in terms of how we engage with and study entrepreneurship from diverse perspectives.

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3. The Times Higher Education Emerging Economies University Ranking, 2019

## **HYPOTHESIS**

**H1 a :**There is a direct influence of knowledge inputs on encouraging women entrepreneurship among students

**H1 b :**There is a direct influence of teaching skills on encouraging women entrepreneurship among students

**H1 c :**There is direct influence of women leadership on encouraging women entrepreneurship among students.

## **SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

- 1.The study has covered only ten colleges affiliated to Bengaluru University.
2. The study has taken the sample under Bachelor of Commerce.
3. The student samples were college alumnus.

Due to the limited coverage of the study, the results of the study cannot be applied to the entire fraternity of students, as female students are vast in India and varied in their specialisations. Thus there is scope for further research which can be conducted among Autonomous colleges, Private Universities and extent the study among other specialisations.

## **OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

1. To determine the impact of various aspects of university's curriculum on encouraging female entrepreneurship.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **Sample Design and Data Collection**

For hypothesis testing the present study used random sampling technique to collect the data from a sample of 100 students during the academic year 2018-2019. The data was gathered from 10 colleges affiliated to Bengaluru University under the faculty of Bachelor of Commerce. The targeted samples were passed out B.com graduates, collected data from 10 alumni as per each college records. The 10 alumni from each 10 colleges were picked on scale of preference as per the student's achievements data. The required data was collected through four point likert scale questionnaire and also used interview Schedule to collect data from the college management.

## Measures

To analyse higher Education curriculum's impact on empowering women entrepreneurship in Bengaluru University three dimensions of entrepreneurial skill oriented curriculum were adopted - Knowledge Inputs, Teaching Skills, (Olof Zaring, Ethan Gifford, Maureen McKelvey. 2019) Growth Leadership for women (News and views ETF community. 2013) which are further measured by three items under each dimensions except for growth leadership for women with two items were used to measure. For the purpose for analyses ANOVA technique was used to determine if there are any correlation between independent (pull factors) and dependent variables (push factor).

## ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

### Pull Variables

Knowledge Inputs

(Entrepreneurship Content Syllabus)

Teaching skills

(Activity based teaching)

Growth Leadership for women

(Training Women to be entrepreneurs)

**Push Variable: Empowering women to become entrepreneurs**

**Table 1 Summary of Research Questionnaire Validity and Reliability**

No.	Variable	No	Indicator	P-value	Validity	Reliability
1.	Knowledge Inputs	1	Latest concepts of entrepreneurship	0,000	Valid	0,722
		2	Business opportunity Identification	0,001	Valid	
		3	Small Business Management	0,004	Valid	
2.	Teachings Skills	4	Class room Activity	0,001	Valid	0,811
		5	Field Study	0,000	Valid	
		6	Collaborations - Industry Tie-ups	0,002	Valid	
3	Growth Leadership for women	7	Mentoring and Network support	0,001	Valid	0,814
		8	Role Models and Story telling	0,003	Valid	

Source: Primary Data

**Table 2 Variable that influence Women Entrepreneurship**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Sum of Squares</b>	<b>DF</b>	<b>M e a n Square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Knowledge Inputs					
Pull	17.43	3	5.54	11.683	.120
Push	345.81	96	4.87		
Total	363.24	99			
Teachings Skills					
Pull	4.27	3	0.123	0.234	0.000
Push	373.14	96	3.56		
Total	377.41	99			
Growth Leadership for women					
Pull	14.46	3	4.76	0.424	0.002
Push	356.96	96	335.16		
Total	371.42	99			

Source: Primary Data

## **FINDINGS**

Table 2 shows that pull and push variables relationship with respect to knowledge inputs and empowering women entrepreneurship ( $f=11.683$  and  $\text{sig}.0.120$ ), Teaching skills impact on women entrepreneurship ( $F= 0.634$  and  $\text{sig}. 0.020$ ) and Growth leadership for women empowering women as entrepreneurs ( $F=0.796$  and  $\text{sig}. 0.001$ ), These indicate that there is significant impact of pull variables (independent) on push variable (dependent).

Since the indicators latest concepts of entrepreneurship, collaborations with Industry, Business opportunity identification, small business management, class room activities, field studies, mentoring, role models, leadership talks have less than  $<0.05$  p-value, the Hypothesis are accepted to prove that higher education curriculum variables have direct influence on encouraging women entrepreneurship among the female students in the university.

## **SUGGESTIONS**

As per the Bengaluru University commerce syllabus the concept of entrepreneurship is introduced only in the final year of B.com course. The higher education curriculum syllabus must not only prepare the students to become employable but also inculcate the skills of venturing and risk taking especially among the female students. Thus the study proposes possible ways of im-

plementing the practical outlook of entrepreneurial aspects in the curriculum of Bengaluru University's commerce Graduate syllabus.

**Table3 Suggested improvisation in the Bengaluru Commerce Syllabus with Entrepreneurship skills**

<b>BROAD AREA OF COMMERCE PAPER TITLE IN BENGALURU UNIVERSITY SYLLABUS</b>	<b>SUGGESTED INCLUSION</b>
Languages papers (National and International )	Language papers: Create awareness about translators as entrepreneurs and practical exposure to translators as entrepreneurs – guest lecture by a women translator(by profession)
Accounting Papers	Introduction to Accounting for Entrepreneurship
Management papers	Inter link between HRM , Entrepreneurship and organisational Behaviour
Quantitative Analysis	Digital transformation concepts( Digital Dividends) and Introducing Data Science for Entrepreneurship Research
Managerial Economics	Economic theories of Entrepreneurship
Entrepreneurship and New Venture Creation	Class room Activity/ Role Model/Innovation and Incubation Cell/ Internship with start ups
Finance papers	Financing Constraints and Entrepreneurship
Marketing papers	Entrepreneurial Marketing and hybrid Entrepreneurship

Source: primary Data

## **IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS**

The study suggests the following implications to revamp the university's curriculum where in every course is improvised to include various aspects of entrepreneurship that only introduces the concept but builds a effective entrepreneurship curriculum that brings in the elements of Knowledge inputs, teaching skills and Growth leadership which will encourage the female students.

The widening gap between industry and academia requires education to reflect the changing work profile and promote Entrepreneurship structures. To provide commerce students with experience in real work settings an attempt has to be made to blend B.Com education with needs of the industry and society by providing for conceptual understanding, skill development, competency development and building professional attitude and ethics. The higher Education program should be more application oriented and must aim to give practical exposure to the students through **Industry Internships, New Venture interface, workshops on Emotional Intelligence, power of Resilience and Risk taking**. The study proposes the higher Education Curriculum that gives a blend of Industry Exposure with Academic Knowledge and it must intend to prepare female students ready to be self employed.

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