

Chapter V : Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

5.1. Summary

India is a male dominated society and women are assumed to be economically as well as socially dependent on male members. The absolute dependence seems to be diluted among the high and middle-class women as they become aware of personal needs and demand absolute equality.

Women entrepreneurs face lots of problems at their personal as well as entrepreneurial development. Technological advancement and information technology explosion have reduced the problem of women entrepreneurs to a great extent. But the mental revolution of the society is needed to change the attitude of the society and provide women with democratic and entrepreneurial platform.

Moreover, with increasing assistance from Government, Non-Government and other financial institutions for various women entrepreneurs, there can be significant increase brought about in the growth of women entrepreneurship process. Still efforts are being made to coordinate with the enterprise activities of women providing them with utmost financial, morale, psychological support by various institutions working within the country and world-wide.

The small-scale industries are considered as ideal nurseries for the rapid growth and development of women entrepreneurs. The need of the hour is the growth of women entrepreneurs in the country to accelerate the process of economic growth. From the point of view of long-term perspective, however, the capacity of small scale industries to become economically viable, technically progressive and efficient and to develop competitive strength shall be the only justification for their continuance. In the present study, an attempt

has been made to assess the personal and occupational profiles, various developments, various constraints and perception on banking services of women entrepreneurs on small scale industries in Thane District and Mumbai.

The present study will help the planners and the decision makers who are involved in the development of women entrepreneurs in small scale industries to review the existing policies and to make suitable suggestions to amend the provisions of the act which governs the small-scale industries. Based on the experience of the researcher the following important issues have been identified for an in-depth study. The researcher will feel amply rewarded if the present study helps to undertake similar studies in the areas suggested below.

1. A study on the impact of Government Schemes for the development and promotion of women entrepreneurs in Small Scale Industries.
2. Constraints on Women Entrepreneurship Development in Maharashtra: An analysis of familial, social, and psychological dimensions.
3. A Study on Quality of Service of Banking Sector as a Tool for Enhancement of Women Entrepreneurs in Small Scale Industries.
4. An analysis of the factors responsible for the slow growth of women entrepreneurs in Small Scale Industries.
5. A study of the factors causing sickness of women entrepreneurs in Small Scale Industries.

It is hoped that the suggestions forwarded in the study will help the entrepreneurs in particular and policy-planners in general to look into this problem and develop better schemes, developmental programmes and opportunities to the women folk to enter into entrepreneurial ventures. It is also hoped that future research will feature an extensive quantitative survey of

entrepreneurs in different locations throughout Maharashtra.

It is believed that women have the potential and the determination to set up, uphold and supervise their own enterprises in a very systematic manner. Appropriate encouragement from the society in general and family members in particular is required to help these women scale new heights in their business ventures. The right kind of assistance from family, society and Government can make these women entrepreneurs a part of the mainstream of national economy and they can contribute to the economic progress of India.

The study is concluded with the words which emphasize the development of women entrepreneurs. Individually, business ownership provides women with the independence they crave and with economic and social success they need. Nationally, business ownership has great importance for future economic prosperity. Globally, women are enhancing, directing, and changing the face of how business is done today. Ultimately, female business owners must be recognized for whom they are, what they do, and significantly they impact the world's global economy.

Out of the eighty examples of good practice identified by the research, the network members were asked to select those practices which would best meet their regional needs. It was clear that this decision depended on the particular organisation's operational framework, as well as the local conditions and economic/political objectives in the region. For instance, support organisations having to achieve certain objectives within a given budget, might have a different opinion on this question than decision makers who seek an activity that creates strong publicity. In this-regard, through open discussions and group analysis, the JMCCI members jointly selected three to four examples for each of the thematic areas.

Acknowledging that second-level female students do not pursue careers in science and technology, WITS instigated Role Model Days. Such days provide

transition fifth and sixth year female students with an opportunity to meet working women scientists, technologists and engineers. These women are not expected to be 'over-achievers'; rather, they demonstrate 'normality' to the young women in attendance (Kavanagh and Richardson. 1997).

Major influencers for students making career and subject choices are peers, parents, teachers and role models, not necessarily in that order. Research has shown that many girls considering scientific, technological or engineering careers can be put off by people who are just not familiar with current careers and hold stereotyped views, perhaps of an engineer in oily overalls, with filthy hands who, of course, is male - the 'mad scientist' of Hollywood fame. Thus, a lack of suitable role models has been identified as one of the main reasons why female students do not pursue careers in science and technology (Murphy, 1996). In a study of Indian women in management, 47 per cent of respondents quoted lack of female role models as a reason for the failure of women to break into managerial ranks (McGann. 1996). Similarly, in 1990, a study sponsored by the American Association of University Women concluded that one of the major problems with attracting and keeping women and minorities in computer science is the lack of role models at all levels, particularly senior levels (Pflegger and Mertz, 1995). During a study compiled with fifty members of WITS in Thane District (Maharashtra) by Allan (1995), 88 per cent of those interviewed identified the need for interaction between schoolgirls and people working in science and technology careers. These studies indicate the importance of role models to schoolgirls when making their career choices. This is consistent with findings of research previously referred to by Goodbody Economic Consultants (2002). Who found that the lack of role models was a barrier to the encouragement of female entrepreneurs?

At one of the Role Model Days, the 126 attendees were asked to complete a questionnaire before they left. Overall, the comments were very positive, with 87 per cent of respondents saying that they would recommend the day to

others. This also resulted in requests for more information on careers and courses, as well as requests to visit schools. Students found that the role models were supportive and encouraging, providing them with recognition that what they would have perceived as 'male' careers are indeed available to them as young women.

At a follow-up feedback session held with fourteen students (9 per cent of attendance at the Role Model Day) specific outcomes were discussed. Since the Role Model Day these students were required to make subject choices, or even make college choices within the three months that followed. Seven (50 per cent) of the students had since requested information from other sources, either about or like those careers discussed on the day. Three students changed the careers that they were originally considering to science or technology options. Examining why students have decided to pursue a career, be it in science, technology or otherwise, the role models were found to have directly influenced nine (64 per cent) of the students. Although a small sample, this figure supports the rationale for students to meet with women who have pursued careers in the non-traditional areas, as indeed has been emphasised by other researchers (see, for example, Trauth et al., 2004). Unless we pursue activities of this nature, we will not influence younger women to embark on engineering and technology careers. This ultimately will have a negative effect on the numbers of women entering high-technology entrepreneurial careers.

The Certificate in Foundation Studies in Science, Engineering and Technology for women is a joint initiative run by two third-level institutions - the University of Mumbai and Institute of Technology. This course was originally run during the academic year 1999/2000 and, due to its success and the funding received from the Indian Government's National Development plan, is now in its fifth year. This initiative in third-level access was targeted at women aged twenty-two and over who were unable to avail of third-level education through the traditional routes for a variety of reasons. Provision of a third-level foundation course is central to the strategy for improving access to

third-level education for the targeted group, and students who successfully complete this course are able to progress through the Certificate, Diploma or Degree route into courses in either of the two third-level institutions involved. The Foundation course was designed and developed by an ad hoc working group, consisting of four women and one man, drawn from key departments in both institutions. The aims of the course are to:

- Introduce female students to a third-level environment;
- Equip them with requisite knowledge for moving into third-level education; equip them with skills which help to further their knowledge;
- Build up their confidence in their ability;
- Expose the female students to the basics of science and technology.

Upon completion, students were expected to be confident about progressing directly into one of the institutions in order to embark on a longer-term course. Since the course began, forty-five women have successfully completed it, with a dropout rate of 10 per cent from the initial enrolment numbers. The number progressing to third-level mainstream education justified the running of the Foundation course. During this time, approximately 60 per cent of students have commenced studies within third-level institutions, and a further 30 per cent have commenced either full-time or part-time employment.

Based on the progress of the students who have completed the course, the following issues have emerged.

- It is important for students to be able to attend the course on campus, particularly in light of the aim of students to continue into third-level education.
- Further research into the effectiveness of this, and other similar programmes, is needed.
- The level of computing skills among the participants can be disparate.
- Science, computing and engineering facilities in the third-level institutes (particularly for science) are inadequate.

Notwithstanding the above, the following outcomes were noted:

Education (in its broadest sense) should stimulate enterprising behaviour, as it provides individuals with a sense of autonomy, independence and self-confidence (Garavan and O Cinneide, 1994). These qualities are particularly important when starting a business (Deakins and Freel, 2003). Education broadens the horizons of individuals, thereby making the student better equipped to perceive opportunities in the environment around them. Education should make people aware of alternative career choices, one such alternative being self-employment. Findings reported in GEM (2004) suggested that the Indian educational system did not have a developed or focused strategy to expose students sufficiently to entrepreneurship as a career alternative.

Entrepreneurship education should also adopt an integrated approach and make enterprise courses available across disciplines (Hynes, 1996; Fleming, 1999). This interdisciplinary approach encourages the use of interdisciplinary student teams comprising of non-business and business studies students working together. This interaction provides students with a very 'real life' experience, and enhances not just knowledge acquisition, but also skills development in the areas of communication, negotiation and conflict management, as well as in project and people management. Furthermore, entrepreneurship education is process driven, and the process needs to consider three central players - the students, teachers (trainers) and the business community (Hynes, 1996; Daly, 2004).

Entrepreneurship education programmes at the University of Mumbai have been designed with a number of objectives in mind, focusing not just on knowledge accumulation but on skills acquisition, increasing awareness of alternative career options, enhancing personal and professional skills and competency base and, more specifically, providing the students with the knowledge and experience of the entrepreneurial process through the generation of a new business idea and the completion of a business plan.

Women Community though equal to men in population, are subject to a lot of deprivations even, in this modern sophisticated world. Women are

still treated as subordinate to men in all major fields of life i.e., social, economic and political. Though various efforts are being made to improve the status of women, women folk could not make maximum use of them and hence remain backward. In almost all countries, the Government is providing special provisions for women's development and efforts are being made to extract maximum use of women's talent. It has been clear for decades that women in many parts of the world make key contributions in areas of development such as agriculture, health, education and water resources management.

In India, the shift from "welfare" to "development" of women took place in the sixth five-year plan (1980-85). The eighth five-year plan (1992-97) promised to ensure that the benefits of development from different sectors do not bypass women. Raashtriya Mahila Kosh was set up in 1993 to meet the credit needs of the poor and the asset less women. The ninth five-year plan (1997-2002) made two significant changes in the strategy of planning for women.

In India woman comprise 48% of the population. Yet they have a secondary position in the society. Their role is confined within the four walls of the household activities. In the male dominated society discrimination against the fair sex is still being practised in different forms.

In yester-years the life of Indian women was like a well-defined predictable master plan. It began with a girl playing with dolls and built up to the crescendo of marriage. However, in this modern age things have changed a lot. Spread of education coupled with a revolutionary change in the field of information and technology brings a significant change of the status of women in the society. The modern woman has realized her values. She wants to make use of her intelligence, knowledge and education. She can enjoy all the comforts of life being economically independent. Throughout the world, women's participation in economic

activities is increasing. The role of women entrepreneurship is also increasing. In the past ten years the women of India have taken the bold step of invading the hitherto area of entrepreneurship. They are ready to take risks, face challenges and prove to the world that their role in society is no more a passive one. Women have become more independent and achievement-oriented.

It is believed that economic strength is the basis of social, political and psychological power in the society. Thus, the lower status of women mostly stems from their low economic status and subsequent dependence and lack of decision-making power. Therefore, if women gain economic strength, they gain visibility and voice. Empowerment which means “becoming powerful” is a process by which individuals, groups and communities can take control of their circumstances and achieve their goals. It enables them to work towards helping themselves of empowerment such as educational, economic, psychological, social and political which are all interlinked.

The emergence of women as entrepreneurs and their active participation in enterprises is seen as one of the most effective ways of initiating positive changes in their lives, homes, society and ultimately the economy.

5.2 MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

This study addresses an important issue by investigating the role of women entrepreneurship in Thane District. The major findings are:

- The age group 30-40 constitutes 178 persons (i.e.) 51% of the total respondents.
- Hindu religion dominates as 319 (i.e.) 91% of the respondents followed by Christians and Muslims.

- More than 60% of the respondents belong to backward class. Only handful of respondents belongs to other categories.
- In the analysis 97% of the respondents are married. Out of this very few are widows.
- It is found out that 85% of the respondents live under nuclear setup. The male is being the only bread winner of the family, the Female (wife) has to support the family with an additional family income.
- In the study area 48% of the respondents have studied up to higher secondary level. Very meagre per cent of the respondents are illiterates.
- It is found out from this study that 48% of the respondents own a house and 45% live in rental houses.
- It is found out that 54% of the houses of the respondents are fully terraced followed by tiled ones with 39 per cent.
- It is inferred that 72% of the respondents are first level generation.
- The fact that parents, in-laws, husband of majority of the respondents are rendering all helps at any time to enable the respondents to be a successful entrepreneur. 85.14% of the respondents opined positively towards the degree of support from the family members.
- Out of 52% of the respondents, one half of the respondents are not supported by the parents and husband due to lack of time.
- It is interesting to note that majority of the respondents opined that, the father (107 respondents) and husband (230 respondents) is strongly supporting their entrepreneurial activities.

- It is very surprising to note that 63% of the respondents themselves have been the pioneering force to set up the business of their choice.
- It is known from the study that more than 32% of the respondents engaged in production process followed by food processing activities (20%).
- It is evident from the study that 37% of the respondents have set up their ventures before 5 years.
- In the analysis whopping 313 respondents (89%) have started their business as informal sole proprietorship.
- It is found out that 71% of the respondents have started their business with an initial investment of below Rs.50,000.
- Procurement of raw materials at affordable cost results in increase in Profit. 78.86% of the Respondents purchase their raw materials from the Local Market.
- In the analysis 62% of the Respondents use machinery for their production while rest of the 38% is Labour Intensive in nature.
- Among all factors quoted by the respondents, economic compulsion ranks first in the list of factors 169 respondents i.e., (48%) to enter into business.
- The study indicates that about 72% of the first-generation respondents are facilitated by their acquired skills like Training, Technical skill and professional skill to become entrepreneurs. Only very few percentage of the respondents are third and fourth generation entrepreneurs and the only facilitating factor for them is that the business is a family activity.
- It is evident from the study that 97% of the entrepreneurs are

married. They have undertaken these business activities mainly due to economic compulsion and unemployment. Among them, very few percentages of the entrepreneurs belong to female headed family which had made them to become entrepreneurs.

- It is clear from the study that 97% of the entrepreneurs are productive labour force whose age lies between 20-50 years. The entrepreneurial quality is stimulated by flexibility in time, work experience and support from family members among these productive respondents.
- It is evident from the study that 99% are literate entrepreneurs who have completed starting from school education to college education and this education have created self-confidence which psychologically developed their entrepreneurial quality among these educated entrepreneurs.
- It is clear that religion is not a constraining factor to carry out their business activities for the women entrepreneurs in the study area. Irrespective of the religion more than 70% of the respondents are I generation entrepreneurs. The study reveals that majority (91%) of the entrepreneurs are Hindus followed by Christians and Muslims.
- It is evident that more than 70% of the I generation entrepreneurs who have undertaken business activities requires business knowledge, family support and training to start various entrepreneurial activities like production process, tailoring and opening of beauty parlours.
- More than 60% of the entrepreneurs is self-motivated entrepreneurs. Among them 49% of the entrepreneurs started the business due to their poor economic conditions and unemployment who are earning a profit of below 20,000 per

month.

- More than 80% of the entrepreneurs have undertaken the business activities like production process, food processing, tailoring and beauty parlour which requires basic education to set up. This shows that nearly 99% of the entrepreneurs are educated in the study area.
- Nearly 99% are educated entrepreneurs among them more or less half of the percentage of them has completed school level and college level education respectively. There is no correlation between education and profit earned by the respondents.
- In the study area more than 80% of the respondents are sole proprietors. Irrespective of the nature of the organisation women entrepreneurs are able to earn a normal profit of Rs.20,000/- per month.
- In the study area, women entrepreneurs are engaged in various entrepreneurial activities like production process, food processing and tailoring. Among these activities majority of the entrepreneurs are involved in production process followed by food processing.
- It is evident that to start a business woman required atleast Rs.50,000/-, 9% of the entrepreneur's initial investment is above Rs.1,00,000/-. Whatever be the initial investment, the respondents in the study area are able to earn a normal profit of Rs.20,000/- per month.
- More than 50% of the respondents earned less than Rs.20,000/- per month from their business which are established within 10-14 years. It is known from the fact that the longer the period of establishment, larger will be the amount of profit.

- Nearly 60% of the respondents underwent training programme to upgrade their business work and most of them are able to earn upto Rs.50,000/- as their profit.
- More than 50% of the respondents belong to the age group of 30-40 are mainly affected by financial problems. In the study area, financial and family problems are their main problems for the women entrepreneurs while indulging in the business activities.
- We find specific obstacles to women's entrepreneurship: type of education, lack of role models in entrepreneurship, gendering of entrepreneurship, weak social status, competing demands on time and access to finance.

Gender inequality is a problem felt by Indian society, especially in rural areas, from time immemorial. Any step towards attaining gender equality must be in the line of inculcating and developing women entrepreneurship and thereby ensuring women empowerment.

Keeping this idea in mind, this study aims to evaluate the performance and problems faced by the women entrepreneurs for which the analysis of social and economic factors of the respondents is essential. Following are the significant findings of their socio-economic background, which paves the way for the investigator to understand the performance and problems faced by the women entrepreneurs in Thane District.

5.2(a) Socio-Economic Factors

The present study clearly shows that a majority (51%) of the women entrepreneurs in the sample belong to the age group of 30 years which is a welcoming feature as it reveals that they are mature enough to take

independent decisions and better suited to venture into entrepreneurial activity. This age group also realises its responsibility towards family and society.

A large proportion (i.e.) more than 90% of the respondents is married literate women and belongs to the Hindu Religion. It is significant to note that the majority of the women entrepreneurs (78%) belong to backward and scheduled communities branded as depressed sections of society.

More than 80% of the respondents belong to the nuclear families. It is inferred that in the small and compact families, women who have a lot of leisure can contribute more for the development of entrepreneurship and majority of the respondents have 3 children.

5.2(b) Motivational Factors

Motivation plays a major role in the better performance of the women entrepreneurs. The family members of the respondents are the driving force for the success of their entrepreneurship. The support received by many of them from their husbands is very significant (66.44%). The motivation given by the friends and relatives (24%) is equally praise worthy.

Nearly 40% of the respondents have ventured into various entrepreneurial activities out of their economic compulsion, mainly to render financial support to the family.

5.2(c) Performance of the Women Entrepreneurs

In this study the performance of the women entrepreneurs has been

analysed by taking into account four parameters namely the amount of savings made by the respondents, the credit availed by them, income earned and the repayment of loans on their part. Majority of the respondents have deposited their savings with the banks and post office.

Nearly 55% of them have borrowed from the commercial banks and Maharashtra industrial investment corporation. 9.14% of them have mobilized their own resources to start their business.

In this study, the profit earned by the respondents is considered to be the income of the entrepreneur. Activities wise, there are differences in the average annual income of the respondents. The respondents engaged in production process earn the highest annual income. While the lowest average income is earned by those who engaged in product sales.

This study has observed that women are more prompt in repaying the loan they have borrowed from commercial banks and Maharashtra industrial investment corporations. In spite of the variations in income, all the respondents are paying their dues regularly.

5.2(d) Problems faced by the Respondents

It is observed that among the various categories of problems, 55% of the respondents suffered by lack of sufficient funds in the category of financial problems 48% of them suffered by stiff competition in the marketing problems and it is quite interesting and surprising to note that 47% of the respondents expressed that they do not have any problem in running their business. Compared to other problems an insignificant proportion (27%) of the respondents is affected by health-oriented problems due to double burden of household and business task.

5.3 Recommendations

- Emphasis must be made by the governmental and non-governmental

organisations on not just learning 'what' to do but also 'how' to be done.

- ***Financial Cells:*** Special cells must be opened for providing easy finance to women entrepreneurs in various public financial institutions and banks. These cells should be manned by women officers and clerks. Efforts should be made to provide finance at the local level.
- ***Marketing Cooperatives:*** Encouragement and assistance should be provided to women entrepreneurs for setting up cooperatives. These cooperatives will pool the inputs of women enterprises and sell them on remunerative prices. Such co-operatives will help to eliminate the middlemen.
- ***Supply of Raw Materials:*** Scarce and imported raw materials may be made available to women entrepreneurs on priority basis. A subsidy may also be given to make the products manufactured by women entrepreneurs as cost effective measure.
- ***Training Facilities:*** Training and skills are essential for the development of entrepreneurship. Training schemes should be so designed that women can take advantage. Family members do not like women to go away to far off places for training. Training should be provided at suitable and easily accessible locations.
- ***Education and Awareness:*** efforts were taken to improve the position of women by increasing the literacy rates. Now, both government and non-government organizations are taking steps to promote entrepreneurship among women. But the results do not commensurate with the efforts. A recent study of the Town and country planning reveals that self-employment is a powerful motivating factor. It should motivate her to set up an enterprise.

It is necessary to change negative social attitudes towards women. Elders particularly, mothers and mother-in-law need to be made aware of the potential of girls and their due role in society. There shall be compulsory education for women. When she is educated, she can manage here dual responsibility of home and work.

- ***Seminars:*** More seminars, conferences and workshops on women should be organized. They should be encouraged to participate in them and express their views.
- ***Change the Attitude:*** The attitude of the husband and family members should change towards the working women. Husband should come forward to share her burden. Women should change their attitude about themselves. They should be self-confident in their approach.
- ***Baby Care Centres:*** Baby care centres should be opened at the work place where she can leave her child.
- ***Constitutional and Legal Rights:*** Women should be made aware of their constitutional and legal rights both in their work and in the social sphere.
- There should be more governmental schemes to motivate women entrepreneurs to engage in small scale to large scale business. Government should take proper efforts to promote women entrepreneurship, so that women entrepreneurs should have complete freedom and autonomy in their works.

- To promote entrepreneurship changes in educational system are required where focused strategy is needed to expose students to entrepreneurship as a career alternative.

5.4 Regional networks

While men have always used their 'old boys network' to initiate business, to generate business contacts and to collect information, women often have reservations about using networks for the benefit of their enterprises. They tend to think that being a network member means permanent active collaboration, and they often underestimate the strategic aspect of networking. However, support organisations have a need for regional and trans-regional networking in order to build up competence and to back up and strengthen their activities. Successful networks need clearly defined objectives, target groups and organisational structures. Visions, strategies and openness for changes are crucial elements of thriving networks. Good examples in this context can be found in some of the networks, such as 'WIN' (Women into the Network - see: www.networkingwomen.co.in), and ' Jagatik Marathi ' (described below), as well as virtual 'Women Entrepreneurs' Portals' in the Maharashtra state.

5.4(a) Good practice example: Jagatik Marathi Chamber of Commerce & Industries (JMCCI), Thane District (Maharashtra)

Although several organisations have been working for many years that the policy environment has been conducive to a coordinated national approach. In 2014/2015, women's enterprise practitioners and researchers across the Thane District (Maharashtra) were brought together for the first time in events organised by the Women's Unit (now the Women and Equality Unit) and the DTI (Department of Trade and Industry). These included consultation meetings around the development of the DTI Small Business Service (SBS). By sharing knowledge and experience, it became clear that provision of support for the start-up and development of women's businesses was evolving in a patchy and non-strategic manner. The need for a structured network to help share and develop good practice and to promote a coherent web of support structures for women's enterprise within the Thane District (Maharashtra) was identified.

The need for an organisation like Jagatik Marathi Chamber of Commerce & Industries (JMCCI), therefore, became increasingly evident; particularly as the Thane District (Maharashtra) government had already made a commitment to increasing the numbers of women starting businesses and had acknowledged that a more cohesive strategy was needed at both regional and national level. Major cities in the district are Kalyan-Dombivli, Mira-Bhayander, Bhiwandi, Ulhasnagar, Ambarnath, Badlapur, Shahapur and Navi Mumbai were included in this strategy, but the devolved nature of their administrations means that each region is responsible for its own strategic delivery. Jagatik Marathi Chamber Of Commerce & Industries (JMCCI) has been able to support policy development based on the experience and expertise of its members, and is playing a key role in ensuring that good practice is identified and disseminated nationally.

Jagatik Marathi Chamber of Commerce & Industries (JMCCI) can be

described as a Thane District (Maharashtra)-wide trade association for organisations providing business support to women. It started its activities early in 2012 and is structured as a non-profit making company limited by guarantee. Jagatik Marathi Chamber of Commerce & Industries (JMCCI) has seed funding from the Thane District (Maharashtra) Mahila Arthik Vikas Mahamandal (MAVIM) Development Fund and the Thane district Social Fund. It generates income from membership fees and events, and it has also attracted corporate sponsorship. The administration headquarters of the organisation are situated in Thane District (Maharashtra), but Jagatik Marathi Chamber of Commerce & Industries (JMCCI) operates as a virtual company with key personnel located around the state. The Jagatik Marathi Chamber of Commerce & Industries (JMCCI) vision is to create an environment where equal numbers of women and men are starting and growing businesses. As an umbrella organisation Jagatik Marathi Chamber of Commerce & Industries (JMCCI) aims to achieve this by promoting and raising awareness of women's enterprise and the organisations that support this key area of economic growth, lobbying on their behalf to create a policy environment and opportunities which support the development of women's enterprise. The key objectives of Jagatik Marathi Chamber of Commerce & Industries (JMCCI) include:

Promotion and awareness raising to raise the profile of women's enterprise and the organisations that support women entrepreneurs, bringing women's enterprise into the public arena and providing strong role models for future entrepreneurs.

Policy development and research as an independent organisation. Jagatik Marathi Chamber of Commerce & Industries (JMCCI) plays a leading role in educating and influencing policy makers about the economic impact of women's business ownership, coordinating research and disseminating results on the subject of women's enterprise.

- Quality. To improve the quality of women's enterprise support throughout the Thane District (Maharashtra), and to provide appropriate advice and information to women on the best possible business support.
- Consultancy and development to assist business support agencies and development organisations to review and develop women-friendly services.
- Networking and sharing best practice among members through networking and good communication links wherever possible.

Jagatik Marathi Chamber of Commerce & Industries (JMCCI) is directed at organisations that work directly with businesses and want to develop and improve their services for women entrepreneurs. Members include:

- business support and enterprise agencies, women's enterprise initiatives, associations and networks of women entrepreneurs, banks and other financing organisations, business centers and business parks including incubators.
- Chambers of Commerce,
- Economic and regional development agencies.
- Science and education institutions.

Before Jagatik Marathi Chamber of Commerce & Industries (JMCCI) was established, a national consultation exercise was carried out in May 1993, and the feedback of more than 30 organisations who responded to the questionnaires showed there was strong support for a Thane District (Maharashtra)-wide 'umbrella' organisation. The original name proposed for

the network was NAPWE - the National Association for the Promotion of Women's Enterprise. But Jagatik Marathi Chamber of Commerce & Industries (JMCCI) emerged as a more appropriate and user-friendly name, and after a successful bid to the DTI's Mahila Arthik Vikas Mahamandal (MAVIM) Development Fund , a steering committee representing the five founder members (organisations supporting women entrepreneurs) was formed. The company was formally constituted, as a Company Limited by Guarantee and the steering members became interim directors. Jagatik Marathi Chamber of Commerce & Industries (JMCCI) appointed its first Executive Director and an operations office was established in Dadar and Thane, in addition to its small, professional team. Jagatik Marathi Chamber of Commerce & Industries (JMCCI) contracts with specialists in other parts of the Thane District(Maharashtra) to provide a truly 'virtual' national network. Jagatik Marathi Chamber of Commerce & Industries (JMCCI) works at both a strategic and an operational level. The strategic level involves consulting and influencing key government bodies concerning the promotion and support of women's enterprise development.

Jagatik Marathi Chamber of Commerce & Industries (JMCCI) continues to cooperate closely with the SBS, and the collaboration includes a part-time advisors to the SBS, working as an intern. This arrangement helps to ensure effective sharing of information and communication and provides additional experience and expertise which is of mutual benefit to both organisations.

On an operational level, Jagatik Marathi Chamber Of Commerce & Industries (JMCCI) as an umbrella organisation, promotes and supports targeted and mainstream initiatives. It has also developed best practice criteria for business support organisations and networks and is delivering practical events and workshops aimed at improving the quality of services provided to women entrepreneurs. Its best practice mark or 'Flagship' status is typically awarded to those organisations which provide established women-friendly services at

the very highest level. Flagship status entitles organisations to become voting members of. Jagatik Marathi Chamber of Commerce & Industries (JMCCI). The assessment for the best practice mark takes place following the receipt of application according to the criteria. If members fail to meet the criteria, they are informed of the areas in which they have weaknesses and are encouraged to apply again. They continue to receive membership benefits and to play a full part in member consultations and activities. . Jagatik Marathi Chamber Of Commerce & Industries (JMCCI) members are entitled to the following benefits and services:

- Free introductory half-day seminar on women's enterprise (held regionally).
- Free monthly women's enterprise e-mail newsletter,
- Regular policy briefings.
- Access to dedicated membership section on the Jagatik Marathi website, reduced rates for events and annual conference organised by Jagatik Marathi, access to Jagatik Marathi specialist consultancy services (first half-day free of charge),
- Discounts on associated economic development seminars and events throughout the Thane District (Maharashtra).

Jagatik Marathi Chamber Of Commerce & Industries (JMCCI) has established a team of consultants which includes former CEOs of women's enterprise organisations, accomplished researchers, programme development and women's business training and counselling specialists as well as consultants with track records in organisational capacity building, business planning and fund-raising.

Within a year, Jagatik Marathi Chamber Of Commerce & Industries (JMCCI)

has attracted more than 100 full members from across the Thane District (Maharashtra). These include enterprise agencies, Business Link Operators, academic institutions, banks and networks. Client evaluations of events and services are consistently positive and Jagatik Marathi Chamber Of Commerce & Industries (JMCCI) is recognised as the Thane District (Maharashtra) 'lead' organisation in terms of awareness raising, policy development and dissemination in the area of women's enterprise. Jagatik Marathi Chamber Of Commerce & Industries (JMCCI) has had fewer problems than anticipated in terms of influencing the women's enterprise agenda in the Thane District (Maharashtra). Given the current government's commitment to this area, the timing of Jagatik Marathi's establishment has been fortuitous, and, in the main, it has been 'pushing at an open door'. The organisation's biggest challenge is how to satisfy the many demands on its resources. It has to be careful to retain a strategic, national approach, along with a facilitating role in terms of regional development.

Education and training

It is generally agreed that entrepreneurship education should be a long-term objective and must start as early as possible in the education process. 'School firms' and business games support entrepreneurial thinking and acting, promote personality development and help to reduce gender-related problems in an early stage. When preparing for the actual start-up, women require specific training. Training activities are based on an interdisciplinary approach that builds on both hard facts and soft skills, and also involves successful women entrepreneurs. In this context, imparting theoretical knowledge and sharing hands-on experience is equally important. The 'PriManager' competition in Thane District (Maharashtra) and the 'DREAM' project are good examples of school initiatives. Modular training schemes in Badlapur, Shahapur and Navi Mumbai and Thane District (Maharashtra), as well as the 'TWIN' mentoring project in Kalyan-Dombivli, Mira-Bhayander, Bhiwandi, Ulhasnagar, Ambarnath, can offer practical ideas for the design of qualification activities.

5.4(b) Good practice example: the TWIN mentoring project, Thane District

TWIN is essentially a mentoring project which aims to support young women entrepreneurs with the help of experienced entrepreneurs. The idea behind the project is to bring the inexperienced into contact with experienced entrepreneurs through a mentoring process. The young entrepreneur can apply for the programme as soon as her company is set up (for entrepreneurs with companies between one and three years old).

This one-to-one relationship is the element which makes this initiative different from all the other existing networking frameworks. For this purpose, the project managers organise meetings for the exchange of experience between the experienced entrepreneur and the 'beginner', as well as different possibilities for further professional training. This gap was specially noticed among female entrepreneurs who had started their own business within the last few months. The help they were looking for could not be found within networks of other business start-ups or from consultants.

TWIN started in September 2001 and is promoted as a model project by the Ministry of Economy and Labour of the state of Maharashtra and the Thane district under the Thane district Social Fund with the goals of:

- Bringing together a young woman entrepreneur (mentee) with an experienced woman entrepreneur (mentor),
- Giving young women entrepreneurs and start-ups the possibility to meet experienced entrepreneurs who could share their positive and negative experiences.
- Supporting young women entrepreneurs in the growing process and help with their business development and growth potential,
- Attracting the attention of the public to the competency of women entrepreneurs. Complementing the existing advice services by the

provision of experience and know-how of the mentors.

The mentees should be young entrepreneurs who have been active in their own company for at least one year but no longer than three years. If possible, before participating in the project. The young entrepreneurs should have participated in start-up consultation. The business can be from any sector. The mentors should be experienced women entrepreneurs who have been self-employed for at least five years. They should agree to work on a voluntary basis, support the mentees with advice and services, open doors for them and help in establishing contacts. Mentees should be aware of the difference between mentoring and consulting, they must possess the earnestness to enter into a relationship of one- year duration, they should aim at full-time employment and their company should be growth-oriented.

The concept behind this project is the intensive exchange of professional experience between mentors who know how to avoid the problems which are faced by nearly all women who start a business.

The process of matching mentors and mentees starts with the presentation of TWIN during regional information sessions which are held in offices for business development as well as Chambers of Commerce. The information sessions are directed at both business start-ups looking for a mentor, and women entrepreneurs wishing to act as mentors. Interested young entrepreneurs can apply by providing the following details on herself and her business:

- General background information about the mentee and her company,
- Profile, objectives and goals of the company,
- Reasons for starting the company and the rationale for the chosen industry sector,
- Past experience of managing a company,

Whether any type of consultation services have been approached or availed of,

- The economic situation of the company,
- Personal expectations from TWIN,
- The kind of mentor they would like to have.

The entrepreneurs who wish to act as mentors can apply by presenting themselves through a company portrait. Before a female mentor can be found for a business start-up, a detailed discussion will be carried out with the mentee. The women introduce themselves and discuss the background to their enterprises, while expressing their expectations concerning the type of mentor. The project managers then select matching mentors and invite them to a joint discussion in the office of the mentee. At the end of this meeting, both parties can decide if they would like to start working together. It is advisable that the mentor and mentee do not work in the same business sector, as they may become competitors. It is also beneficial if the personal situation of the mentee is considered when choosing a mentor.

As soon as both parties decide to work together they sign an agreement. The mentor agrees to accompany the mentee on a voluntary basis for a period of one year. At least four meetings are planned, for which time and content are discussed by the entrepreneurs themselves, as well as aspects of confidentiality. At the end of the relationship, the Project Manager of TWIN will interview the mentor and mentee to learn about the experiences of the mentorship. Of course, both entrepreneurs can decide to continue their cooperation for longer periods. Where the relationship ends, the mentor has the opportunity to start assisting another mentee.

One of the most important conditions of the successful mentoring process is the trusting relationship between the two parties.

Respect, understanding and fair criticism should be integral parts of the relationship. The expectations of both parties should be realistic - mentoring is not consulting. The mentors should help in personal development and building up a company by supplying their personal knowledge and their experience. They should give advice on how to use relevant networks, offer contacts and know-how. As well as specific strategies e.g. in management, customer service and building-up contacts.

By the end of April 2013, the project had delivered sixty 'twins'. The feedback received from mentees has been very positive. Almost all mentees who received support managed to achieve a better basis for their business.

One factor that makes this initiative so successful is the pre-selection of mentors. Selection is done by someone who, in most cases, knows the mentors personally and also has knowledge of their company. The mentors have also been recruited with the support of Thane District Association of Women Entrepreneurs, an organisation with 1.700 associated women entrepreneurs (450 of who are located in the Navi Mumbai region)

5.4(c) Women's Resource Centre's

Women's Resource Centre's were established by the government through the support.

Good practice example: Women's Resource Centres, Thane District (Maharashtra)

Thane District (Maharashtra) has a strong political movement in supporting women, especially in rural and less developed areas, where the work of organisations such as the Rural Women's Association served to highlight the fact that women were not treated equally and, thus, were not offered the sort of chances and opportunities often offered to men. As a result of their work, several governmental initiatives on female entrepreneurship support were

introduced in the early 2000s. Thane District Business Development Agency - received an assignment from the government to map out obstacles and opportunities faced by female entrepreneurs in sparsely inhabited areas. This was an area never explored before, and at that time, society's understanding of women as entrepreneurs was limited. Ninety women entrepreneurs were interviewed, and the findings from these interviews resulted in twenty proposals being put forward to the Government. The most vital information gained from the interviews was that women who think about starting a business prefer female advisors. Thus, the Government asked to make sure that business consultants for women were hired in sixty-two municipalities all over Thane District (Maharashtra). The municipalities set up their own programmes to achieve this. One example of a very successful programme was the Business Advisors for Women initiative, which was set up between 2004 and 2006. The female advisors were part of their municipality and formed a critical network, keeping in touch through electronic means and county-wide meetings. The advisors worked for between one and three days a week for the project. After three years, not only had 176 new companies been started by women but, more importantly, women and their skills had been made more visible, and women's participation on all levels of trade and commerce had increased.

Their objectives were:

- To draw attention to and make female competence more visible in society,
- To influence the situation for women in the regional/municipal labour market,
- To promote integration of gender equality in regional development by creating positive examples and activities in the region,
- To increase women's participation in regional and local development at all levels.
- To specifically increase women's participation in the labour force in

less traditional areas such as technology.

- To desegregate the labour market.

The resource centre's are targeted at women of all age's backgrounds (e.g. regardless of ethnic and social status), especially existing women entrepreneurs or women who would simply like to start a business or change their job situation. In 2005 the Thane District national rural development agency (TDNRDA) (Women in Rural and Agricultural Areas), together with created the Women's Resource Centre Programme. By 2013 150 Resource Centre's were established and financed by governmental and county administrations, with TDNRDA being the overall coordinator of the programme . The programme became one of TDNRDA's core projects. The project came to an end in 2013, with the political decision to mainstream the work performed within the Resource Centres into the core work of business and regional development in this unstable and insecure situation, the number of Resource Centres was reduced from 150 to about fifty. Some of the Resource Centres then decided to act independently, starting a National Resource Centre Association (NRC) as a non-profit, non-governmental organisation with elected board members and an elected chairperson. The NRC began actively lobbying for the Resource Centres, and eventually, the government asked them to put forward a proposal for a financing budget. This was implemented at the end of 2013 and the Government decided to deliver an annual financing budget for Resource Centre projects over a period of three years. Today, Thane District (Maharashtra) has about 120 Resource Centres in two thirds of its municipalities. The typical activities of a Resource Centre include:

Provision of information (education and business opportunities), support and advice on how to start or develop a business,

- Education of women and women entrepreneurs, networking and information dissemination at the political and operational levels in the region (e.g. seminars to increase knowledge on gender equality in

regional and local sectors),networking with technology-based companies to break down the barriers for women,

- Business advice (on an individual or group basis),offering support with technical resources, such as computers and Internet (mainly in rural areas)
- Creating places for women to meet.
- Initiating and implementing projects to promote and support female entrepreneurship,
- Participating in and cooperating with national and international networks (e.g. WITEC - Women in Science, Engineering and Technology).

Some of the Resource Centre's are organised as NGOs, some operate within a municipality and others act as a network connected to a municipality. Twenty of the Resource Centre's act regionally and cover more than one municipality. Women Resource Centre's usually have at least two people working on a full-time or part-time basis time as business advisors, trainers or 'first contacts' for aspiring women entrepreneurs. The service offered is very much tailored to the local needs, but business advisory services are the easiest to sell and create additional funding for the centre's activities.

On 16 December 2012, the Thane District government officially declared the Resource Centre's as being an important partner within regional development and gender equality. Thus, it is expected that Resource Centre's will be more actively involved in the strategy and implementation of regional development planning.

The impact of these resource centre's is clearly visible. For instance, the Resource Centre in Thane District (Maharashtra) a municipality with 90,000 inhabitants, has been in operation since 2010. In five years, sixty-four training seminars were held with nearly 2,000 women participating. A total of 520 individual business advice meetings were held, resulting in sixty-five jobs being created and fifty new start-ups supported.

5.5 Conclusions

This chapter has sought to further the ongoing debate surrounding the issues and barriers associated with female entrepreneurship in the high-technology sector. It has also discussed how the promotion of engineering and technology educational initiatives can support the development of high-technology female entrepreneurship. The chapter presented a number of suitable interventions that cater for both entrepreneurship and technical disciplines, and these can and should be further developed.

The development of such initiatives should have broad application; should assist in reversing negative trends, as identified, for example, by Fitzsimons *et al.* (2003) and, finally, should ultimately contribute to the pool of Indian female entrepreneurs willing to and capable of starting high-technology companies.

The present study assessed the significance of women entrepreneurship from Indian economic perception and analysed the characteristics of women entrepreneurship and offered a number of suggestions.

There is no sufficient information and knowledge about the entrepreneurial process of women and it is argued that better knowledge about women entrepreneurs and their particular strengths, weaknesses, opportunities is universal.

As low rates of women entrepreneurship are related both to the status of women and the status of entrepreneurship, it is suggested that increasing the abilities of women to participate in the labour force in order to improve the position of women in the society and increase the possibilities to make women as an entrepreneur.

Indian society needs to bring about an attitudinal change with regard to the role of women as an entrepreneur. This will lead to the development of an appropriate environment in which women will come forth and give vent to their entrepreneurial talents. Ultimately women entrepreneurship must

be recognized for what it is. Nationally, it has great importance for future economic prosperity. Individually, business ownership provides women with independence they crave for and with economic and social satisfaction.

To conclude that women have established themselves as entrepreneurs, smashing the age-old perception that entrepreneurship is the domain of the men. Now they are poised to penetrate into the hand core of entrepreneurial activity and some of them are an impressive stride in women if properly educated and trained would enthusiastically take entrepreneurship in the time ahead.

In the process, they can become more efficient and effective in managing their small and handicraft enterprises and act as the critical ingredient for generating employment, earning income, increasing output and enhancing rapid industrialisation for balanced regional development of the country.

An integrated approach is necessary for making the movement of women entrepreneurship a successful one. For this purpose, both the government and non-governmental agencies have to play a vital role. In order to achieve the desired goal, there should be re-orientation of educational system for women.

In the present study it is noted that as per database women entrepreneurs in Thane district and Mumbai are economically and socially empowered after they became entrepreneurs. They are able to take decisions independently. And their status also improved after they became an entrepreneur as compared to their previous status as housewives. Today these entrepreneurs are able to tackle both home management and business activities simultaneously. This has created a way for them to attain self-awareness, self-respect, self-determination as well as self-confidence.

The study conducted by the JMCCI network helped to identify a range of gender-specific support activities, as well as a number of general support schemes with a strong gender mainstreaming dimension, which seek to promote female entrepreneurship. From the data gathered through their international study, the JMCCIAIMS

team reviewed a number of good practice projects in women's entrepreneurship across the network member countries. Using standard project evaluation criteria and discussion groups, a number of projects were selected as examples of good practice within each of the four thematic areas of: problem awareness, instruments of support, regional networks and education and training. Notwithstanding the inherent subjective assessment element of the study, as well as the potential discrepancies in the nature and extent of the information gathered (due as much to the newness of the research topic, as to the data limitations in some regions), it was possible to identify several examples of how to promote female entrepreneurship. This information will be of value to policy makers and enterprise agencies and can easily be transferred across different regions. The good practice examples discussed in this chapter included: Women's Resource Centres in Thane District(Maharashtra), the WIN networking initiative in the Thane District(Maharashtra) and the Information Days for Women and the TWIN mentoring project, both in Thane District.

The JMCCI project has also influenced the creation and implementation of national and other Thane district projects or example, on a national level in Thane District, the three ministries in charge of Economics/Labour. Education Research and Social Affairs joined forces to create a national agency for female start-ups .Since 2014 this agency has offered women a national helpline for all questions relating to business start-up, collects data on statistics and research results, and disseminates information.

In 2012, a Thane district Commission Report on 'Employment - NOW - Business Creation by Women' suggested that SME agencies should take account of

women-specific needs when designing training or support programmes. More recently, the BEST Report (2014:20) stated that: 'Gender awareness in designing and delivering support measures targeted at female entrepreneurs is essential. Agencies must always be aware of the differing characteristics of their female and male clients when designing respective support measures'. The knowledge gained in the JMCCI project is available on the public website. Twenty-two case studies with hands on advice are described in detail.

5.6 Scope for Further Research

In this study, due to lack of time the researcher does not aim to analyse the activities of various Government entrepreneurial development programmes that are supporting for the success of women owned enterprises. So, the forthcoming researchers can analyse the impact of entrepreneurial development programmes on the success of the women owned enterprises. Further, there is also chance to analyse the problems of women entrepreneurs in detail at various dimensions and also find out the ways and means to overcome those problems. So that the women entrepreneurs can be confident enough to run their business without any interruption and became a competitor for others.