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B.Com Honours

Semester I

Calicut University

Fundamentals of Entrepreneurship

Course Code: COM1MN101 • Module 4 Notes

1. Women Entrepreneurship: Concept, Definition, and Growth

Different socio-economic backgrounds and objectives give rise to diverse dimensions of entrepreneurship. Promoting inclusive growth requires focusing on women, social, and rural entrepreneurs, while encouraging new digital and sustainable business formats. This final module covers the definition, challenges, and support systems for women entrepreneurs, social and rural business formats, and the emerging fields of digital, green, and agri-entrepreneurship.

Characteristics and Significance

- **Definition of Women Entrepreneurship:** An enterprise owned and controlled by a woman having a minimum financial interest of 51% of the capital and giving at least 51% of the employment generated in the enterprise to women.
- **Significance:** Promotes gender equality, boosts household income, leads to social development, and unlocks untapped human talent for the national economy. Successful women-led corporations like Nykaa (Falguni Nayar) and Biocon (Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw) serve as major inspirations.

2. Challenges Faced by Women Entrepreneurs

Despite their capabilities, women founders face unique structural and social challenges:

- **Social Biases and Stereotypes:** Traditional expectations and skepticism regarding women's management and leadership skills.
- **Access to Capital:** Women face higher difficulty securing funding due to lack of personal property registration for collateral.
- **Work-Family Balance:** Balancing heavy start-up operating hours with domestic and childcare responsibilities.
- **Lack of Mentorship & Networks:** Lower access to male-dominated business circles, making partnership building harder.

3. Government Schemes for Women Entrepreneurs

The government offers financial incentives and support systems to encourage women-led ventures:

- **Mudra Yojana (Shishu, Kishore, Tarun):** Refinances loans up to ₹10 Lakhs with lower collateral demands.
- **Stand-Up India:** Mandates bank branches to provide loans between ₹10 Lakhs and ₹1 Crore to at least one SC/ST and one woman borrower.
- **TREAD Scheme:** Provides grant assistance up to 30% of project costs for trade-related training and development.
- **Mahila Co-operative Banks:** Cooperative banks offering specialized micro-credit loans tailored for rural women entrepreneurs.

4. Social Entrepreneurship: Concept and Triple-Bottom-Line

Social entrepreneurship is the process of pursuing innovative solutions to social problems. Social entrepreneurs associate business principles with social change.

- **Triple Bottom Line Focus:** Social enterprises prioritize three metrics: People (social impact), Planet (environmental care), and Profit (financial sustainability).
- **Difference from NGOs:** Unlike charity groups, social enterprises use market-driven mechanisms to generate revenue and become self-sustaining rather than relying solely on donations.
- **Significance:** Resolves market failures in education, healthcare, sanitation, and recycling by designing affordable solutions for marginalized groups.
- **Prominent Examples:** Aravind Eye Care System (providing high-quality affordable eye surgeries funded by paying patients) and Amul (a cooperative dairy model owned by millions of farmers).
- **Social Return on Investment (SROI):** A modern metric used by social startups to measure the social and environmental value created per rupee of investment, validating their societal

impact.

5. Rural Entrepreneurship: Barriers and Opportunities

Rural entrepreneurship refers to the creation of new business units in rural areas, encouraging rural industrialization and reducing migration to cities.

Barriers to Rural Growth

Poor infrastructure (power, roads, internet), lack of local technical skills, limited access to urban markets, and low financial awareness.

Strategic Solutions

Promoting agro-processing units, training local youth through government programs (e.g., PMKVY), developing rural tourism, and establishing micro-finance networks. Using Geographic Indication (GI) tags helps artisans market their craft globally.

6. Digital Entrepreneurship

Digital entrepreneurship refers to the creation of business models based entirely on digital platforms and technologies:

- **Core Characteristics:** Low initial capital overhead, global reach from day one, rapid transaction speeds, and reliance on internet tools.
- **Common Examples:** E-commerce stores, Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) platforms, mobile applications, and digital content creation agencies.
- **The Gig Economy:** Digital platforms (like Swiggy, Uber) enable micro-entrepreneurship for gig workers who manage their own hours and tasks as micro-contractors.
- **Key Challenges:** High technological obsolescence rates, cyber security risks, and reliance on internet accessibility and digital literacy.
- **Tech Ecosystem:** Utilizing cloud services, APIs, and modern payment gateways to scale quickly.

7. Sustainable and Eco-Entrepreneurship

Sustainable entrepreneurship (Green Entrepreneurship) involves building business models that address environmental challenges:

- **Core Scope:** Circular economy models, waste recycling, renewable energy products, and producing biodegradable alternatives.
- **Primary Objectives:** Minimizing ecological damage and resource depletion while maintaining corporate profitability.
- **Prominent Example:** Phool.co, an Indian green startup that recycles discarded temple flowers into organic incense sticks, protecting the Ganges river from pesticide pollution while providing employment to marginalized women. Circular business designs are crucial.

8. Health, Wellness, Food, and Agri-Entrepreneurship

Consumer preferences and technological advancements are driving growth in health and agricultural start-ups:

Health & Wellness Entrepreneurship

Focuses on wellness services, fitness apps, organic foods, mental health platforms, and clean personal care products, satisfying the rising consumer demand for healthy lifestyles.

Food & Agri-Entrepreneurship

Applies technology to agriculture and food processing (Agri-tech), including smart irrigation, vertical farming, farm-to-table delivery logistics, and sustainable food alternatives. Smart storage systems reduce food waste.

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