

A Case Study on the Role of Women as Entrepreneurs Ema Keithel's (Woman Market)

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Abstract

This document summarizes the history and details of the Ema Keithel market in Manipur, India, which is one of the world's oldest and most significant all-women markets. To accomplish these objectives, this study is particularly interested in discovering the social and economic ramifications of this market, as well as learning the factors influencing the creation of this market. It's only a matter of time before all the stores in this market are owned by women. The whole market is run by women, starting with the acquisition of raw materials all the way to the fabrication of final items. Ema Keithel is where more than 5000 women gather every day to do their business. Over the last many decades, this market has played a key role in improving the lives of Manipuri women and helping them acquire economic independence. Together, these factors have the capacity to build a better and more inclusive society. A sample survey consisting of 110 point was done and it had a significant number of outliers. When considering all 88% of these women business owners, it is discovered that the single main spot where they generate money is through Ema Keithel. Over a third of these women are the single or primary bread earners for their families. This study also discovered that the majority of these women earn profits of between Rs 1000 and Rs 2000 every day. Besides the fact that this market helps to empower the women of Manipur monetarily, it has also acted as a centre of unparalleled social significance. all of the ladies were absolutely positive about their role in helping to protect society from drug usage, violence against women, and other societal issues

The primary objective of this study is to accurately depict the importance of women's creative, progressive thinking, innovation, and self-confidence when doing so impacts their ability to sustain their livelihood. Contrary to the general state of affairs in most parts of the world, where men tend to predominate in terms of entrepreneurship, it has been found in Manipur that women are the main driving force and have been carrying out their duties justly and are positively contributing to the overall development of the nation.

Keywords: - *Entrepreneurship, Women Entrepreneurship, Socio Economic Development*

INTRODUCTION

In any country, training and development of human resources are critical to the long-term health of the nation. Proper investment in the development of this critical resource provides a great deal of opportunity for growth and gives the country a great foundation for future progress. However, creating a competitive work force through funding human resource development does not always favour one gender over the other. According to the census, half of the total population of the United States is female. No country can reach its goals of prosperity unless both genders are given the opportunity to grow and succeed. As a result, women's growth is critical to the nation's progress.

One must appreciate the achievements that occurred in India during the 1994 to 2012

period since a total of 133 million people were lifted out of poverty. Of the Indian women population who were between the ages of 18 and 64, just a measly 27% were either employed or actively looking for work in 2012. Compared to the 79% of Indian adult male population who were employed or actively looking for employment, this is an extraordinary level of disparity. a larger-than-life personality Concerns over safety need the involvement of rural women in urban working environments to be extremely limited, especially with the drastic reduction in rural employment. Between 2005 and 2012, almost 20 million women had to give up employment because of pregnancy or caring for young children. In terms of female labour force participation, India is ranked 120th, yet it continues to rank first

in terms of gender-based violence. If even 50% of our female population is included in the labour, our country's growth might be increased by between 1.5% to 9%. (Photo credit: Annette Dixon)

The concept of nation building and countrywide development is based on the idea that the betterment of women is just as important as that of the general population. The great number of strategies, regulations, and policies that are put in place are all aimed towards advancing women in the country. From the first through the fifth five-year plans, the measures enacted were aimed primarily at assisting women in performing their home roles more effectively. Welfare of women came to play a more significant role in the second, third, and fourth plans, and then became increasingly important as welfare moved from the second to the sixth plan forward. As well as having examined all of the government intentions and programmes to bring about the well-being of women, Seema (2013) also went through and described the wide range of services and facilities that women in India have access to.

In the last 30 years, the trend of entrepreneurship among Indian women has grown by leaps and bounds. However, it is

still a relatively young movement that requires a lot of planning and policymaking on the part of the government and local governments. A study conducted by Yadav (2016) has shown that even though a lot of theoretical and research papers have been published on women entrepreneurship in the 12 established entrepreneurship journals from 1990 to 2016, there is still a long road ahead, since we do not have a theoretical database of all the relevant research on women entrepreneurship. It was also mentioned, that the lens of feminist theories may be used to a different set of previously existent ideas called entrepreneurial theories to boost advancement. Several proposals were also made to conduct these researches in regions that are part of a developed economy throughout the world.

In India, seven sister states: Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, and Mizoram, which are known in India as the "seven sisters" alongside its larger and geographically identical sibling state, Sikkim, makes up the north-eastern states of India. The territory to the north of the Eastern-most point of India has borders with Tibet, Bhutan, Nepal, Bangladesh, and Myanmar

on all sides save for a short corridor that connects the region to other areas of India. Indulging in India's natural riches, the region has a huge supply of minerals, jewels, and resources such as oil, gas, and minerals. It is estimated that this is one of the global hotspots for biodiversity, and it features the world's first floating national park on Loktak Lake, Keibul Lamjao, which is situated on the biggest phumdi of the lake.

North East India is vastly wealthy in natural resources, yet it does not do as well in terms of economic development compared to most states. North East India accounts for less than 2.5% of India's GDP (North East Advisory Regional Council). Over 70% of the population is involved in agriculture, with agriculture making up the primary sector for the country.

The Indian government has introduced a wide range of new policies and legislation to help the development of the north-eastern portions of the country. To stimulate industrial investments and the growth of entrepreneurship in this region, the Indian government instituted the North East Investment Promotion Policy in 1997. Under this programme, investors in the region were offered several advantages.

Previously, a North East Industrial and Investment Promotion Policy (NEIIPP) was established in 2007, and it is a more sophisticated and reformatted version of the previous laws and policies that have been implemented to serve investors better (North East Advisory Regional Council).

Chingtham (2014) conducted a detailed study on one of the most important economic hubs in Manipur and on the trades that are done in it: the Ema Keithel market in Manipur. Additionally, a detailed and detailed examination of the economic and social implications of this market was also undertaken. This study found that each day, daily income as well as the difference in daily income of the educated and illiterate sellers was calculated. The results of this study uncovered the flaws in these women's marketplace dealings and highlighted approaches that may help those challenges and deficiencies be solved.

Manipur is located in the north-eastern section of India, situated in the middle of verdant green mountains and rocky terrains. Imphal is the capital city of Manipur and is surrounded on all sides by mountains. The living in Manipur is not as comfortable as it may be in the plains of

mainland India due of the fact that the state is positioned on the border and has additional obstacles such as the altitudes and physiographic features. The activities that women of Manipur have engaged in over the years have always been critical to both their local and regional communities and the national economy. Even though patriarchal societies consider males to be the primary authority figures, these women have proven their competence by supporting and safeguarding their families and the community as well.

Women are very involved in politics, in scientific research, in sports, and in the startup and small business world. Although women's organisations like "Meira Paibi" play an active role in fighting drug misuse, drinking, and speaking out against corrupt government practises that destabilise Manipuri society, their efforts go unnoticed due to their relative inactivity.

"Ema" is a word for mother, "kei" indicates storage, and "thel" means to sell. Ema Keithal is therefore a market dominated by the "Emas" or the moms. Women carry out everything needed to acquire and provide these goods: acquiring, manufacturing, and selling

anything from garments, kitchenware, animals, fruits, handicrafts, and basic needs. This market not only serves as the heart of commerce and business, but it is also a public gathering place where women from over the state come together to debate politics and state issues.

Although the actual period of inception of this market place remains uncertain, it is thought from the available evidences that it goes back to the 16th century. This female-only market was caused by the implementation of the King of Manipur's "Lallup-Kaba" forced labour programme, which required all the males to perform difficult work in faraway countries and to engage in frequent conflicts. While the women used to stay behind in their communities and grow tiny paddy fields, harvest the crops, and create the food and cash they needed by selling their harvest in informal marketplaces, the males now tend to venture far from home. After the construction of "Ema Keithel" market, which was in Imphal, there were several further marketplaces created by women, the largest of which was the Imphal "Ema Keithel" market.

The state of Manipur is one of the hotspots of natural diversity, and there are many fruits, vegetables, and crops which

originate in the area. There are certain very vital crops, one of which is the "black rice," which is found in large quantities across Manipur. Most of the local crop need was left unsatisfied as a result of British colonial authority, which allowed much of the country's agricultural produce to be shipped to England. As a result, this caused demonstrations which were organised by the "Emas" of Manipur. In order to go out of business, the movement's enemies did all in their power to allow foreign investors to buy the "Ema Market". However, the ladies of the "Ema Market" valiantly fought to safeguard their market with all their might.

Post-independence, this market became a focal point for interchange of ideas in social and political spheres. Over time, the state economy of Manipur found itself in a better financial position, enabling it to emerge as the most significant economic sector in the state.

In the Ema Market, married women only are permitted to establish a business. Additionally, there is an age limitation which forbids young girls from working as assistants and labourers in the market, which means they can't be employed as child labourers. This age limitation limits

the number of students who may enrol, allowing women to complete their education and helping them reach their full potential in life.

Women from all across Manipur sell their items at the "Ema Keihel", which is why it is known as a hub for Manipuri goods. Thus, this market serves as a meeting place for many different tribes in Manipur, allowing them to gather, converse, and discuss their cultures and languages. There are several kinds of handicrafts for sale here, including handlooms, bamboo handicrafts, dried fish, various kinds of flowers, fruits, and vegetables. Among them are many species of chilli, also known as "Umorok."

For every firm to function and succeed, the most critical prerequisite is finance. Thus, as a result, the "Emas" of this market have created a governing union that has been entrusted with overseeing the market. On a yearly basis, the average profit for each woman is anywhere between 75,000 rupees and 250,000 rupees. The yearly turnover of "Ema Keihel" has a value in the range of 50-60 crore rupees.

Also, they offer financial assistance to other female business owners by loaning them money via a credit-based programme

under this governing union. These people work to assist the creation of more and more self-help organisations and local enterprises. Everything that follows has contributed to the development of a population of women who are more confident and have strong wills, and who are ready to face the difficulties of tomorrow and lead our country into a brighter future.

A devastating earthquake hit Imphal and its surrounding regions on the evening of January 4th, 2006, destroying almost half of the "Ema Market". This brought about a devastating effect on the Manipuri economy. The courageous ladies of Manipur worked hard to rebuild their Ema Keithel and to see their goal achieved with the assistance of the Indian government, they were able to eventually rebuild their market.

OBJECTIVE

The focus of this study is:

- To gauge the impact that women have on socio-economic concerns at the state level

- To evaluate the critical role that the "Ema Market" plays in Manipuri society
- A Society that relies on this approach
- Women who are capable of providing for themselves and their families as self-sufficient and financially independent entrepreneurs
- A significant sociological and economic impact, and we intend to adopt the beneficial concepts into our society.

METHODOLOGY

The survey was conducted by getting a random sample of 110 women who originate from every section of Manipur to take part. The study focused on people who identify as Meiteis, Nagas, and Kukis from the districts of Imphal, Thoubal, and Chandel.

Fig 1 represents the relation of age group and marital status of women of Ema market.

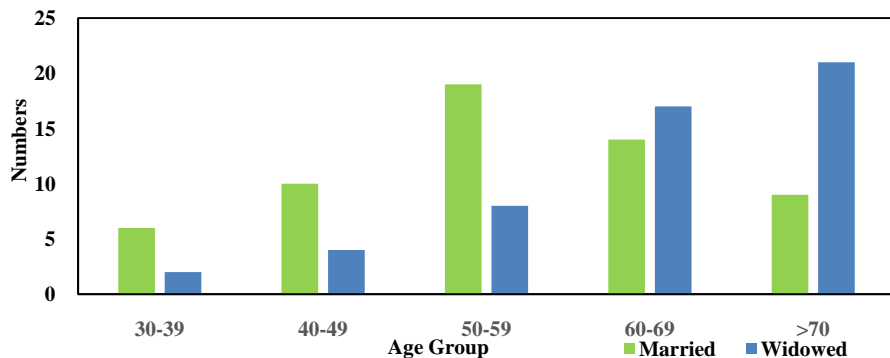


Fig 1: Number of Women in Ema Market in Relation to Age-Group

It is obvious from the survey data that about 7.27% of the women in the age bracket of 30 to 39 are starting their own businesses. Unlike that of age group 40-49, 50-59, 60-69, and beyond 70, the percentage for age group 40-49, 50-59, 60-69, and above 70 are 12.72%, 24.54%, 28.18%, and 27.27% correspondingly. This shows that the strictness of the regulatory body of “Ema Keithal” is enforced by the requirement that the

location must be 21 years old to utilise the facility. The majority of the women-owned small businesses here believe in the significance of contemporary education and have faith in the capacity to be self-sufficient via it. So in other words, the government empowers the young of Manipur to continue their education and takes part in important choices pertaining to the education of the citizens of Manipur.

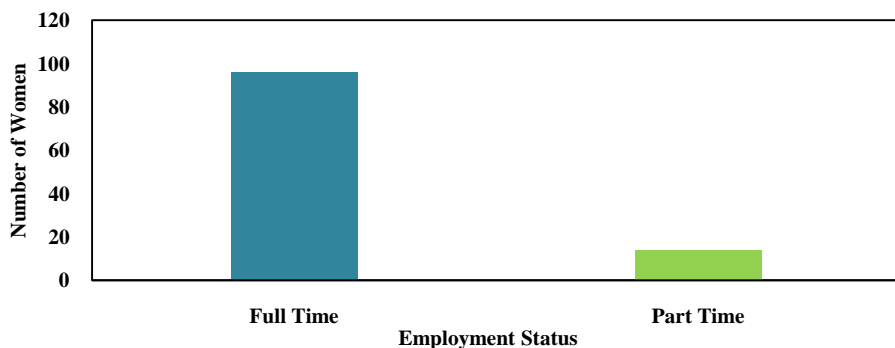


Fig 2: Full Time/Part Time Job

The graph in figure 2 illustrates that the majority of the women employed in the Eme market derive their entire income from working at this location. Of those who are not completely dedicating themselves to being full-time homemakers, about 12% are active in other activities.

The other 88% are doing this as their full-time work.

As we know, a poll conducted earlier on showed that around 33% of these women are the sole income earners in their families.

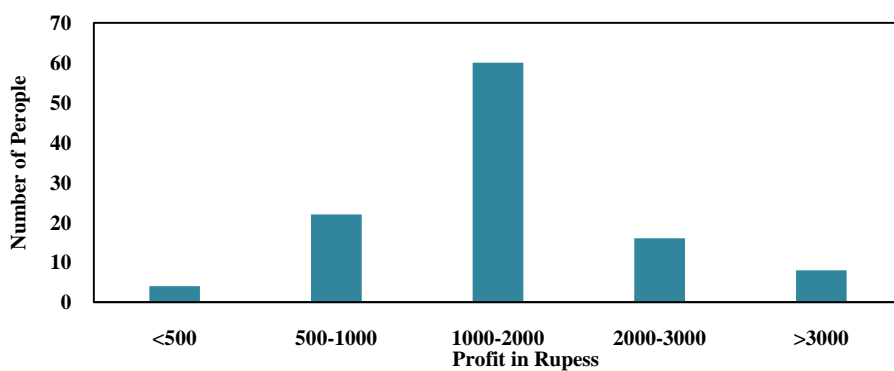


Fig 3: Profit Margin per Person

Fig 3 gives us with the average daily profit margin for female businesses in the Ema market. When it comes to salary, 54% of those who participated are known to earn above 1000 to 2000 rupees per day while just 3% are known to earn less than 500 rupees per day. About 48% of these women say they are capable of providing for themselves.

As for the remaining percentage of these women, over 95% of them are members of various women's organisations, such as "Moira Paibi" and groups like that, which work to address problems concerning the

community and the state. About three-quarters of these women claimed having participated in two or more hunger strikes against the heavy drinking and drug usage of the youngsters in the community.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Women of various ages, age groups, and decades got together to establish an all-women market in the middle of the Imphal city. As far back as time immemorial, this location has served as a focal point of critical significance in commerce and society. Women in this market use their businesses as a source of income by

renting them out and selling things. A proportion of their money is used to fund programmes and projects which contributes to the overall health of the state as well as to the country's economic prosperity.

Ema market acts as a focal point for inter-cultural and inter-religious cultural and intellectual discussions between women of many backgrounds, nationality, and religion.

During their rallies against ASFA, or against drug misuse in Manipur, their active engagement in political concerns of the state has demonstrated their great commitment to building a stable, successful, and self-supporting society, which serves to safeguard our nation's future.

It might be said that "Ema Market" is the narrative of matriarchal supremacy, which in fact, is exceedingly difficult to locate even now in most of the regions. Manipur's women are financially independent, which sets a good example for the rest of the state. This will perhaps motivate their future generations, who will see hope and inspiration, and help instil in

them the strength and desire to be successful in all other aspects of life.

While other parts of India have progressed significantly in terms of development and infrastructure, Manipur still lags behind because of its rugged terrain. The entire nation could benefit greatly by learning about the traditions and values of the Manipuri people and incorporating them to build a nation where both genders have equal say in the development of the nation. Such a model of social growth might be used throughout the rest of India, helping empower our women and providing a path for India to become a country in which both genders are given an equal role in the workforce.

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