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Women entrepreneur's inception and initiation of enterprise

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Abstract

Entrepreneurship is a creative and economic activity. It starts with a push or pull factor. Men and women entrepreneurs are two sides of the same coin. Both cannot be studied as one individual. Women entrepreneurs have different roles and family ecology than men entrepreneurs. The study aims at exploring the women entrepreneur's initiation and inception of enterprise. The locale of the study was Aligarh. The sample size of the study was 100 women entrepreneurs. It was mixed research. The semi-structured interview schedule was used for data collection. It was found that the majority of women were forced entrepreneurs. It was also revealed that the most women who incepted the idea of entrepreneurship during their search for employment were forced, entrepreneurs. The reasons, motivation, and initiation of the enterprise were explained with the help of Maslow's theory of motivation and theory of imprinting. So, for better participation of women in entrepreneurship, it is suggested that a conducive family and societal environment should be provided.

Keywords: Women entrepreneur, imprinting, motivation, inception, initiation

Introduction

Every woman entrepreneur is a unique individual. She has a journey of her own and stories to motivate. They are like each other yet different at the same time. Their social, biological, or any other kind of role does not define their identity. Their journey as woman entrepreneurs defines them. In this pursuit, they have an effect and get affected. Gradually, they start playing an important role in the socio-economic nexus of their family, community, and country. The initiation and inception of the journey of a woman as an entrepreneur are explored in this study.

Women Entrepreneur

There are several ways to define a woman entrepreneur. The definition depends upon the nature and perspective of the study. Like, Richard Cantillon (1959)^[9] defined an entrepreneur as an individual that can equilibrate supply and demand with uncertainty and risk. Kirzner (1985)^[22] identified it as being alert and arbitrageur towards profit opportunities for the creation of equilibrium in the economy. Say (1767-1832) and Alfred Marshall (1964)^[30] saw entrepreneurs as managers innovatively seeking opportunities to minimize the cost of production. Cole, Herbert, and Link (1989)^[7] distinguished entrepreneurs with their functions of initiation, maintenance, and aggrandizing profit-oriented business units. The functions also include making decisions that affect the location, form, and use of goods, resources, or institutions.

Joseph Schumpeter (1934)^[43] and Peter Drucker (1985)^[17] characterized entrepreneurs as innovators, makers of new combinations, seekers of change, responders, and innovative exploiters of opportunities. Sivaprakasam defined an entrepreneur as an optimizer of profit through innovative means (Sivaprakasam, 1998)^[48]. Entrepreneurship broadly is the discovery, evaluation, and utilization of future goods and services (Patrick, Jianwen, & Harold, 2006)^[38].

The above definitions are majorly based on economic and business perspectives. Scholars like Schultz (1975)^[42] on the contrary gave importance to non-market activities. He characterized entrepreneurs with the ability to deal with disequilibria in the market and nonmarket activities. Non-market activities included household decision-making, energy, and time allocation. Like, laborers reallocate their labor services; students, housewives, and consumers reallocate their resources (time, energy etc.).

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Hisrich (1986) ^[19] defined entrepreneurs through sociological and psychological perspective. Accordingly, they are first born, generally male, college educated, in their thirties at the time of their first successful venture, highly motivated, creative, energetic, and willing to accept risk.

National Plan of Action (1976) defines women entrepreneurs based on equity shares of the enterprise. Accordingly, they should be 51% shareholders and the same percentage of women employed as workers. Singh (2006) ^[56] pictures them as confident, innovative, and creative women with the capability of achieving economic independence, generating employment opportunities, and keeping pace with personal, family, and social life. Pardeshi, Sheikh, and Lokhanvala's (2007) ^[37] definition focuses on the management aspect of work whereas, Tan (2008) ^[50] identifies them as an agent of change in society and the environment. Rahman and Thakur (2009) ^[52] describe woman entrepreneur as a conceptualizer, initiator, organizer and manager of business and risk bearer.

Conclusively, entrepreneurs have been defined with numerous approaches. These approaches can be grouped into functional and indicative. The functional approach describes the functions of entrepreneurs whereas indicative approach identifies and describes the entrepreneur's ability (Casson, 2003) ^[10]. A woman entrepreneur is identified as a manager of a firm (Marshall 1964; Pardeshi, Shaikh & Lokhanvala, 2007) ^[30, 37] and home (Schultz 1975; Pardeshi, Shaikh & Lokhanvala 2007) ^[42, 37], uncertainty bearer (Cantillon 1959; Knight 1921) ^[9, 23], risk taker (Cantillon 1959; Marshall 1964; McClelland 1971) ^[9, 30, 32] of market and nonmarket situations, the good decision maker (Casson 2003) ^[10], innovator (Marshall 1964; Drucker 1985; Schumpeter 1983; McClelland 1971; Rahman & Thakur) ^[30, 17, 44, 32, 52], equilibrator of market and non-market activities (Schultz 1975; Cantillon 1959; Singh 2006) ^[42, 9, 56], alert (Kirzner 1985) ^[22]. They are also arbitrageur (Kirzner 1985) ^[22], initiator (Cole 1959; Pardeshi, Shaikh & Lokhanvala, 2007) ^[12, 37], opportunity seeker (Marshall 1964; Drucker 1985) ^[30, 17], thinker and doer (Bula, 2012) ^[8], leader (Sharma & Singh, 1980) ^[45], creative problem solver (McClelland; Haggen as cited by Cruz, 2003) ^[13], change agent (Wayne; Tan) in society, disequilibria force (Kirzner 1985) ^[22] of market and goal oriented (Rao & Pareek as cited by Cruz, 2003) ^[13] in approach.

Classification of women entrepreneurs

Entrepreneurs are classified on numerous bases. The most popular is the Danhof's classification which is based on the study of American Agriculture. The categories comprise of *innovative, imitative, Fabian* and *drone* (Mohanty, 2013; Charantiramath, 2009; Kumar, 2008) ^[35, 11, 25]. Arthur Cole categorized them into *empirical, rational, and cognitive* (Kumar A. S., 2008) ^[25]. According to ownership, entrepreneurs could be public or private (Mohanty, 2013; Kumar, 2008; Bhaskaran, 2008) ^[35, 25, 6] and sole proprietors, partners, joint stock companies (Kumar, 2008; Bhaskaran, 2008) ^[25, 6].

Charantiramath (2009) ^[11] grouped entrepreneurs according to their personalities (improver, advisor, superstar, artist, visionary, analyst, fireball, hero, healer), business (manufacturing, wholesaling, retailing, Service), developmental angle (prime mover, manager, minor innovator, satellite, local trading), and school of thoughts (intuitive, driver, innovative, organizer, adaptive, intrapreneurs).

According to Mohanty (2013) ^[35] entrepreneurs can be classified according to gender (male, female), evolving

(intrapreneur, ultrapreneurs), behavior (solo, active partner, inventor, and challengers), generations (first generation, entrepreneur by inheritance) and product (technical, non-technical; agriculture, industrial and service). Also, on the basis of social concept, entrepreneurs can be classed as independent or modal, elite, and ubiquitous or corporate, corporate social, social, ecopreneurs and sustainopreneurship. Push and Pull factors can also act as the basis of grouping entrepreneurs into chance, forced, created or pulled (Lewis, Henry, Gate wood, & Watson, 2014; Das, 1999) ^[29, 57]. The classification also varies with terms of national and regional laws. Like, in India, the Ministry of Medium and Small-Scale Industries (2013) catalogue entrepreneur in terms of size of their enterprise (large scale, medium scale, and small scale) and gender (women and men) (Kumar A. S., 2008) ^[25]. The classification varies depending upon the perspective through which entrepreneurs are being analyzed. In the present study women entrepreneurs are classified into chanced, forced, created, and pulled.

The objectives of the study

- To study the time period of inception of women entrepreneurs.
- To analyze the reasons of initiation of enterprise.

Methodology

The present research is a mix of qualitative and quantitative approach. It provided liberty for adoption of deductive or inductive approach as per the need. It was supported by data and statistics. The locale of the study was Aligarh. The study population comprised of women who were entrepreneurs. The following criteria for selection of sample for the present study were made for its specification and identification:

1. Women entrepreneurs with three or more than three years of experience.
2. Women entrepreneurs, who conceptualized, initiated and are actively involved in management of the enterprise.
3. There should be one or more employees under her enterprise.
4. Enterprise location should be Aligarh City.
5. They could be of any marital status.
6. No specific age group was ascertained.

The sample size of the study was 100. The absence of a list of registered women entrepreneurs suggested the sample belonged to an unorganized and unregistered sector. It was dispersed all over the city. So, the purposive random sampling technique (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009) ^[51] was adopted. Data sample was collected by adopting the division of Aligarh as suggested by urban health initiative (Urban Health Initiative, 2010) ^[53]. Firstly, it was divided into four zones then 25 respondents from each zone were randomly selected.

Results

Women entrepreneurs were classified based on their initiation motives. They were grouped into chanced, forced, created, or pulled women entrepreneurs. It was found that 45% were women entrepreneurs who were forced to become entrepreneurs due to familial, personal, or financial circumstances. Further, 34% women entrepreneurs opted for entrepreneurship by chance due to their hobbies and interests that were aligned to their enterprise. While, 21% women entrepreneurs were created or pulled due to their personal psychological reasons, prior training, and education (Fig 1).

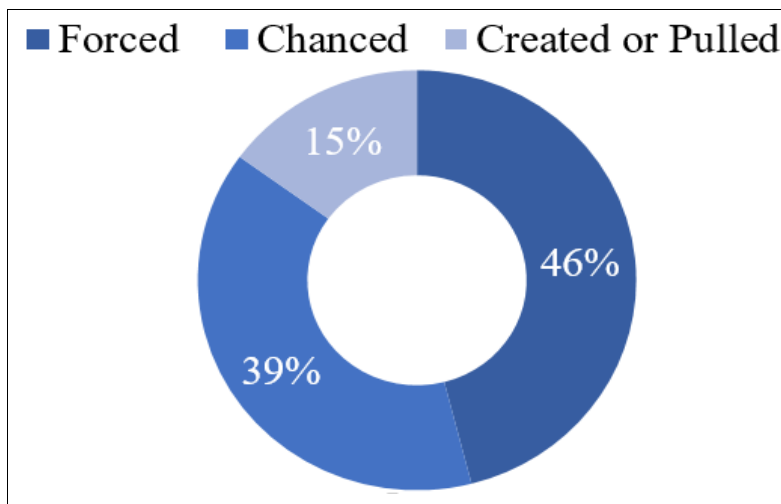


Fig 1: Distribution of women entrepreneur's classification on the basis of their initiation motives

Inception of Entrepreneurial Intention

The time of inception of woman entrepreneur of becoming an entrepreneur was grouped into phases as reported by the respondents. This timeline of inception of entrepreneurial intention is presented in Figure 2. Maximum number of

women incepted the idea of entrepreneurship during their search of employment (52%); while 8% during their initial years of employment, 12% during their years of education and 8% in their childhood years.

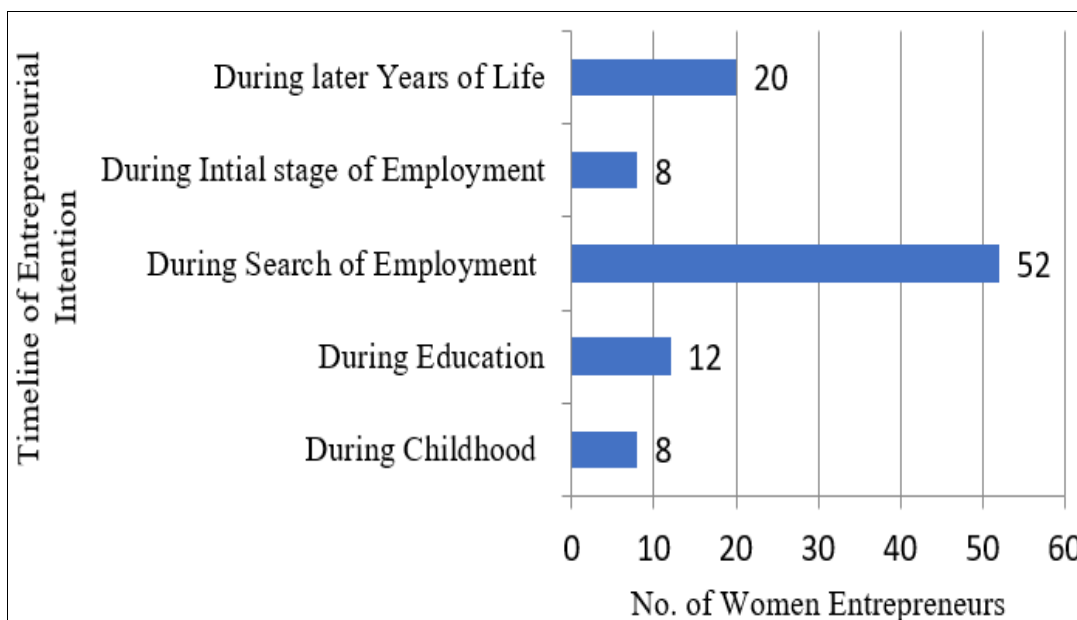


Fig 2: Distribution of inception of women entrepreneur through life phases

The age of formation of entrepreneurial intention was cross tabulated with motives for opting entrepreneurship (Table 1). It was revealed that majority of women who incepted the idea

of entrepreneurship during their search for employment were forced entrepreneurs.

Table 1: Distribution of women entrepreneurs according to their age of formation of entrepreneurial intention and motives for opting entrepreneurship

		Motives for opting entrepreneurship			Total
		Forced	Chance	Created or pulled	
Age at Formation of Entrepreneurial Inception	During childhood	0	0	8	8
	During education	0	0	12	12
	During search of employment	44	1	7	52
	During employment	1	0	7	8
	During later years of life	0	20	0	20
Total		45	21	34	100

Discussion

The initiation journey is important to understand for the explanation of their behavior, choices, and management style.

Their initiation journey starts when they decide to become an entrepreneur i.e., age or phase and their need to become one i.e., motive.

Classification of a Woman Entrepreneur

A woman entrepreneur can be classified in many ways. It depends upon the perspective of research and the researcher. From an individual's perspective a woman entrepreneur can be classified on the basis of their personality, developmental angle, school of thoughts (Charantiramat, 2009) [11], decision making style, innovativeness (Kumar AS, 2008) [25], gender, and behavior (Mohanty, 2013) [35]. According to enterprise perspective, they can be divided by ownership, proprietorships (Bhaskaran, 2008) [6], types of business (Charantiramat, 2009) [11], generation, products, profit (Mohanty, 2013) [35], equity and size of enterprise (Micro Small & Medium Enterprise Development Institute, 2013) [34]. The present study focuses on the perspective of a woman and its role in family development. So, for this purpose, push and pull factors were considered appropriate for a woman entrepreneur's classification (Lewis, Henry, Gatewood, & Watson, 2014) [29].

Accordingly, women entrepreneur's reasons of initiation of enterprise were grouped into chance, forced, and created depending upon push and pull factors. Chance entrepreneurs were those who initiated enterprise without any clear goals or plans. Their enterprise evolved from their hobbies with time. Forced entrepreneurs were those who were pushed into entrepreneurship by prevalent circumstances, like, death of the spouse, divorce, financial difficulties, inflation, increase in expenditure of the family, non-availability of government jobs, higher monetary returns, and insufficient family income. Created or pulled entrepreneurs were those who had prior work experience and training in that particular enterprise, or due to some psychological reasons were lured into starting their own enterprise, like, achievement motivation, need for a challenge, urge to try something on their own and to show others that they are capable of managing an enterprise and need for independence. Das, (2000) [14]; Tambunan, (2009) [49] and Lewis, Henry, Gatewood, & Watson, (2014) [29] also classified women entrepreneurs into chance, forced and created entrepreneurs. Hence, reasons as reported by them were divertimento or self-fulfillment in case of chance entrepreneurs, financial in case of forced entrepreneurs and psychological belongingness in case of created or pulled entrepreneurs.

The findings revealed that there were more of forced women entrepreneurs than chance and created or pulled. Beena & Sushma, (2003) [4], Motha (2004) [36], Tambunan (2009) [49], and Yassin, Ali, & Mahamud (2013) [55] also found the dominance of financial reasons. The reason behind similarities could be the socio-economic conditions of the locale. Beena & Sushma, (2003) [4] and Motha (2004) [36] conducted their studies in rural and semi-urban areas of India. Tambunan (2009) [49] and Yassin, Ali, & Mahamud (2013) [55] studied the scenario in developing countries. So, the respondents were more in need of physiological satisfaction specifically financial supplementation than psychological. Secondly, their societal norms did not allow them to work outside of their homes and it was also not considered socially appropriate for them to earn while an earning male member is present in the family. Therefore, it could be said that social norms control their employment and choice of work. As a result of which they did not defy social norms until they were pushed to do so.

On the contrary, researchers like Robichaud, Cachon & Haq (2010) [40], Ismail, Shamsudin & Chowdhury (2012) [21], Douglas & Shepherd (2002) [16], Aravinda & Renuka (2001) [1], Dhillon (1993) [15] and Hisrich & Brush, (1986) [19] found

women started their business for self-fulfillment. Here, locale of the studies were United States of America (USA), Canada and Malaysia which have a better socio-economic environment. In India, places like Chennai and Delhi which have a better socio-economically developed society are in accordance of the universal findings. It was further supported by Robichaud, *et al.* (2013) [41], who studied three countries USA, Canada and Mexico. It was found that there was dominance of pulled entrepreneurs in USA and Canada whereas more forced women entrepreneurs were found in Mexico.

So, it was observed that socio-economic environmental factors play a key role in the initiation of women entrepreneurship. The studies that were conducted in developed countries found that more women started entrepreneurship because of their personal fulfillment while studies conducted in developing countries found dominance of financial or pushed factors. The differences in the reasons of initiation could be explained by Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Figure 3). By integrating theory of motivation with reasons of initiation of enterprise, it could be said that women are motivated to achieve certain needs through entrepreneurship and that some needs take precedence of other needs. Like physiological needs are basic needs for survival and is the first thing which would motivate women to take up entrepreneurship. Further, women whose physiological needs are satisfied would opt entrepreneurship for the fulfillment of belongingness and self-actualization can only be fulfilled only if previous basic needs are met.

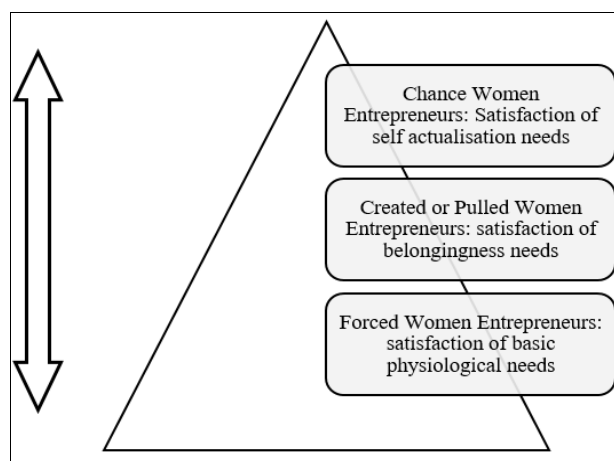


Fig 3: Representation of women entrepreneurs' hierarchy of needs (Adaptation of Maslow theory) and their classification

There could have been a possible difference among the needs of women in developed and developing countries/ societies/ families. In developing countries/societies/families women would focus more on fulfillment of basic physiological needs which would result in starting enterprises for financial reasons. On the contrary, women living in developed countries/societies/families are more likely to satisfy themselves primarily. The need of belongingness could be found in both kinds of families. Because, women in developed countries/societies/families after satisfaction of basic needs might aspire for belongingness while in developing it could have been the ground basis of their needs. So, it is possible that a woman entrepreneur's reason of initiation was the result of her state of hierarchical satisfaction of her need at the time of initiations of enterprise. Hierarchical position could not be fixed. She could either move up or down depending upon her stage of life and socio-

economic conditions.

It was suggested by Beatrice (2012) ^[3] that women entrepreneurs are not homogenous group. So, their needs differed as per their socio-economic conditions. In places where social conditions were conducive, along with physiological and belongingness needs were satisfied, women initiated entrepreneurship by chance. On the other hand, where physiological needs were met as well as social conditions were conducive, but there was a need to prove themselves or to prove their belongingness, women became created or pulled entrepreneurs. But in the places where social environment was not conducive and there was a dominance of physiological need, they became forced entrepreneurs. Lee & Peterson (2000) ^[58] and Azad (1988) ^[2] also recommended the need of formation of conducive environment for the purpose of motivating more women to take up entrepreneurship. This could result in better self-development and family development. Hence, their motives of imitation were dependent upon the satisfaction of hierarchy of needs which were influenced by social environmental conditions. Further, formation of conducive social environment is recommended for better development of women and their families.

Inception and initiation of enterprise

Inception is the moment of intent when a woman decides to become an entrepreneur. It is the resultant phase of a woman's environment that act as push or pull factors and is a significant phase which is most likely to affect her later in her pursuit of entrepreneurship. It was revealed that it may occur in any life stages namely, during childhood, education, college, search of employment, during employment or later years of life. This timeline of women entrepreneurial inception was in accordance with Michael B Arthur, Douglas T Hall, (1989) ^[33]. It was also found that majority of women entrepreneurs' entrepreneurial intent was formed during their search of employment followed by later years of life, education, employment, and childhood.

It was observed that women decided to become entrepreneurs during their search of employment opportunities and were inspired and motivated by the success stories of other people, exposure to innovative employment options, flexibility, feasibility, religion, guidance and interest. This phase was usually found in adulthood. Like Mrs. Zeba (owner of a boutique) said: "I discussed my issues and economic needs with my relatives and they suggested me to start my own enterprise." On the contrary, Mrs. Rafat (A shop owner) was inspired by other women "I visited Middle East and there I saw women owning different enterprises and so I thought if they can do it, why can't I". Shastri & Sinha, (2010) ^[46] and Yassin *et al.* (2013) ^[55] had similar findings. The motive was to satisfy economical and physiological needs of the family. So, women who usually opt for entrepreneurship during this phase were forced entrepreneurs. Their sources of motivation were family, relatives, friends and neighbors. Their reason for selection of a particular enterprise was either family pressure or motivation.

The second group comprised of women who initiated an enterprise in their later years of life. In the case of Mrs. Shazia (Owner of a salon) there was a need to engage herself. She got an idea while watching a commercial on TV as stated by her, "I was very much interested in personal grooming, hair and make-up. One day I was watching a program on television and I realized that I could do it better. So, I decided to start my own salon." The results of Shastri & Sinha (2010) ^[46] were in accordance. It was claimed that women who do

not have prior experience usually start an enterprise in their middle age. It was found that they become free from their household responsibilities and in order to utilize their time they opted for entrepreneurship. The study of Evans & Bartolomé (1984) ^[59] also provided a perspective on both conditions. The reason behind this was during the early phase of a woman's life family becomes priority whereas in later years, work life or engagements become more important. Their sources of motivation were technology, changing environment and media. This group comprised of chance women entrepreneurs who took entrepreneurship for self fulfilment.

The third group was of women who incepted the idea of entrepreneurship either during their childhood, education or employment. This group was comprised of three categories of women but all had similar motivation that was to satisfy their need of belongingness. This group was of pulled or created entrepreneurs. The first category comprised of women who were inspired during childhood. According to Berk (2009) ^[5], during childhood, learning of skills, formation of attitude and development of personalities takes place. Theory of Bowlby's also explains the child's learning of adaptation and survival in the environment. Dr. Lubna (owner of a clinic) explained her source of inspiration and motivation, "My idol was my mother. She was a doctor. I liked the way she used to help and serve people. I used to treat my dolls and toys. So, it was my childhood dream" It was observed that women entrepreneurs who incepted the idea during childhood were influenced by their family members, friends and/or relatives. This was in accordance with Mathias, Williams, & Smith, (2015) ^[31]. The factors that influenced their decision were lifestyle, fantasies, media exposure, social perception regarding jobs and economic benefits.

In the second category women incepted the idea of being a woman entrepreneur during their school and college years while they were exploring the pros and cons of different job profiles. Like, *Ms. Sushma* (Owner of a clothing shop) who said, "My mother was working. I could see the positive effects of dual earnings. But I was not comfortable with 9 to 5 timings and working under somebody. So, I decided to work but on my own terms." Even, Mrs. Zeba who is a Scientist stated, "There was a chapter in my English book on Steve Jobs. I was so moved by his success story that I wanted to invent something because of which I wanted to become a scientist." Also, Mrs. Sabiha (owner of a school) gave an account of her motivation, "My father died when I was in school and my mother was not working. We faced a lot of problems which I think would not have been there if only my mother was educated and working. So, I decided to study and become independent and rich." The influencing factors could be gendered congregation of employment options, curriculum, household problems, experiences and need. Kusmintarti, Thoyib, Ashar, & Maskie (2014) ^[27] in their study found that entrepreneurial attitude is a mediator of entrepreneurial characteristics which influences entrepreneurial intentions of individuals during school age. These factors might form the attitude to do something and make their life better.

Women opted entrepreneurship during employment due to gained knowledge and work experience. Like Mrs. Manju (owner of a girl's hostel) was working as a teacher but had reasons for dissatisfaction as stated by her, "I was working in a school and I had to devote a lot of time. Because of which my family was being neglected and income was not enough. I had a place and location which was good enough for a hostel." Similarly, Mrs. Sabia (Owner of a school) described

her position, "I was working as a teacher in a private school. One day I observed that there was no school in my neighborhood and it was also becoming difficult for me to carry on with my job because of feasibility, set schedule, less increment and distance. So, I decided to start my own school." This was also explained by Hisrich, (1986)^[19] in his study of women executives. It was reported that women's knowledge and work experience act as a pull factor for entrepreneurship.

The motivations, age of inception and reasons for selecting a particular enterprise could be explained by the theory of imprinting. According to which individual are impressed by others in phases. These are sensitive phases when imprinting occurs. Learning that occurs during these phases has a larger impact on their personality. The intensity of impression forms the pathway of entrepreneurship. Heredity sows the seed for the development of entrepreneurial personality. Social agencies or sources create conducive environment for development. In childhood, roleplays, exposure, and family environment could stamp them with entrepreneurial aspirations. Further, during college years it should become clearer for them. Accordingly, it would be helpful for women to acquire knowledge, train themselves and learn about important courses required for setting up and managing an enterprise and their lives. This would even help them during search for employment as they would have knowledge and prior experience. It would help them to make proper career decisions rather than complain about their destinies. So, the characteristics that are required to become an entrepreneur could be inherent or environmentally acquired. The formation of an enterprise is the result of interaction between imprinting, socio-demographic characteristics, and family environment (Figure 4). Inception of entrepreneurial intention can occur in any sensitive stage of life. Although, life stages are universal, there are individual differences. This could result in difference of pursuit and experience.

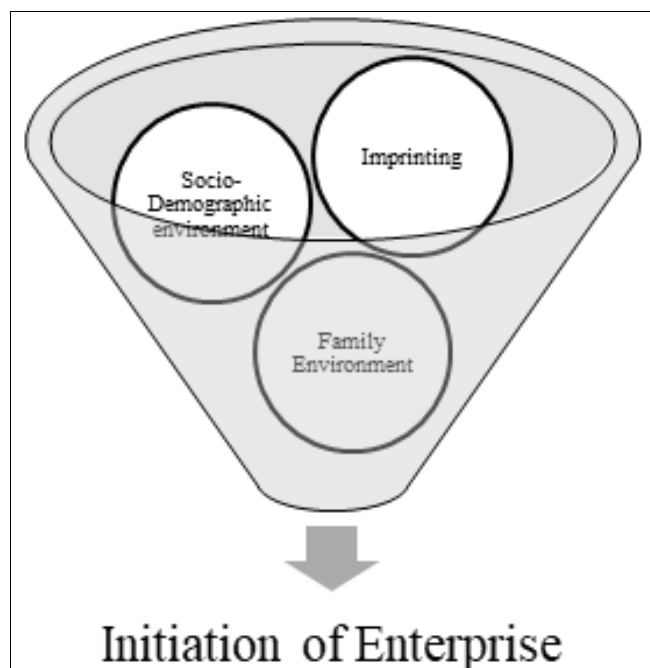


Fig 4: Imprinting, family, socio-demographic environment, and initiation of enterprise.

Conclusion

- It was found that 45% were forced, 34% were chance while, 21% were created or pulled.

- Maximum number of women incepted the idea of entrepreneurship during their search of employment (52%); while 8% during their initial years of employment, 12% during their years of education, 20% during later years of life and 8% in their childhood years.
- It was revealed that most women who incepted the idea of entrepreneurship during their search for employment were forced entrepreneurs.

Women entrepreneurs are the women who initiate an enterprise to fulfill their personal or family demands. The prejudice they face is similar but the motives are different. Their reasons to start an enterprise and the time of taking a decision varies. The variance can be explained with the help of the theory of Maslow and Imprinting. These discreet circumstances and family ecologies of women make their journey unique. During their whole journey, they influence their family environment and get influenced by the gains of entrepreneurship. This helps them to realize their worth and empower them to become a better version of themselves. Entrepreneurship is a boon for society and women themselves. So, to increase their participation, there is a need to make the familial and ecological conditions more conducive for them.

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