

# Upskilling Rural Women for Toy Making through Skill India Movement: With Special Reference to Channapatna Toy Making

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## Abstract

Upskilling women by empowering them through Women Entrepreneurship. Women Entrepreneur is a person who accepts a challenging role to meet her personal needs and become economically independent. Many women have this quality, but they never got a platform to show their talents and hence, their real abilities are not revealed. Women in India are taking more responsibilities in bringing up children and maintaining a better home with love and affection. At the family level, the task of coordinating various activities in a more effective manner, without feeling the pinch of inconveniences, is being carried out by the women folk. This paper focuses on toy making through upskilling women entrepreneurs in India, especially in toy making industry with special reference to Channapatna toys. Women are equally competent in running businesses but lacks behind, in spite of the women empowerment movement in our country. There are social, cultural, and economic hurdles in the way of women entrepreneurship and the major problem is lack of entrepreneurial environment. In spite of their potential and talent, women are deprived of opportunities, information and education. Some of the major problems identified are women's family obligations, gender inequality, financial problems, low-risk-taking attitude and the male-female competition. The problems of women entrepreneurs can be eradicated by appropriate training, incentives, encouragement and motivation, social recognition of their entrepreneurial abilities, and family moral support. Women are also given proper training on the upliftment of the knowledge regarding the toy making.

**Keywords:** Channapatna Toys, Upskilling, Women Empowerment, Women Entrepreneurship

**JEL Classification Code:** J00

## 1. Introduction

Women were only allowed to serve in the conventional Indian family structure, men serve as executors of choices produced by male family members. The conventional configuration is changing in the modern day. The social fabric of Indian society was changing due to women's improved educated status and different desires for a better life. Forcing Indian women are attempting to alter their lifestyles in both urban and rural locations. Females who start their businesses, sometimes, take on challenging jobs in order to satisfy their desires and become financially independent. Entrepreneurial women

are capable of enhancing both home and social life and have a strong desire to make a difference. The news is quite good. However, some regions of the country still do not see women as powerful. India, historically, had a male-dominated social structure. Most often via unpaid labours and expertise, women have a vital role in the management of family companies. Both the families who take this effort for granted and scholarly research undervalue its importance. Women coordinate numerous tasks at the household level in the most efficient way possible without experiencing any problems. Every country needs the contributions of female entrepreneurs. Men and women should participate in all activities

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equally, if there is a competition with developed nations. Although males perform well as entrepreneurs, women should also develop successfully. A woman entrepreneur does a variety of tasks, similar to men. They should think about alternatives for starting a new business, take risks, introduce radical concepts, plan, organize, and manage their operations, and show great leadership in all areas of their business. Women typically have to balance many duties, such as working and taking care of the home, and as a result, their stress levels unavoidably increase with time. Even though they enjoy performing two parts, it will be stressful for them to manage both roles at once. The Indian government defines women entrepreneurs as individuals who control and direct a business or project with at least a financial stake of 51% of the capital and who employ at least 51% women. Resources in terms of people, land, and money determine the nation's economic growth and development. India's economic development includes women's entrepreneurship. An economy can reach higher levels of growth either by getting a bigger amount of the factors of production or by technical innovation. Women's entrepreneurship has two distinct facets: the roles that women play in society and the place that women entrepreneurs occupy within that same society. Women face certain obstacles that has to be removed to access the same opportunities as men which include familial obligations. In addition, having property and executing contracts might be difficult for women in some countries. The status of women in society, as well as among independent women will improve as more women participate in the workforce. For a number of reasons, the contribution of female entrepreneurs to the nation's economic growth must be taken into account (Victoria and Nicholas, 2010).

Establishing a new business to take advantage of fresh prospects is referred to as entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship is the fundamental component, and women are now successful in it because they possess traits that are advantageous to the growth of entrepreneurship. Women would be more suited to entrepreneurship than to traditional employment. Nowadays, more women than ever before are interested in entrepreneurship. The mental growth of the ladies has been enormous. There are several prospects for women due to the country's growing reliance on the service industry. In the past two decades, more and more Indian women have started their own businesses and changed the way that business is conducted. Recently,

women have been more interested in starting their businesses. Due to their combined responsibilities as wage earners and homemakers, women in the entrepreneurial process encounter a variety of challenges. The majority of housewives in India desire to launch their businesses, but they confront several obstacles. Their dual function frustrates them. The government launched a number of programs to train women entrepreneurs. Training programs pique the attention of women and aid in developing their abilities as well as their social attitudes and levels of confidence.

### 1.1 Women Entrepreneurs

Women entrepreneurs are referred to as those who launch, assemble and run a company. According to the Indian government, women business owners are individuals who "own and control an enterprise with a minimum financial interest of 51% of the capital and give at least 51% of the employment generated in the enterprise to women." Female entrepreneurs launch their companies as a result aspects that promote women establishing independent jobs and standing on their feet, including both push and pull influences. To be able to make independent decisions about their lives and jobs is what motivates this urge. Women who are weighed down by household responsibilities and housework long for freedom. These traits influence the job choices made by female entrepreneurs who are looking for a challenge and want to attempt something new. Pull factors are employed to describe this situation. Women work in the economy under duress because they owe it to their families and are expected of them.

The toy manufacturing sector in Channapatna has not been in great shape. Nevertheless, it needs to be promoted and protected for a number of reasons. Its products have established a solid reputation on the national and international levels, so selling them should not be too challenging. A workforce with a high level of competence is not necessary. Unskilled and semi-skilled labourers will suffice. The sector encourages innovation as well. The items can be priced reasonably, which is crucial since it should appeal to a large client base, both current and future.

Channapatna, which is situated around 80 kms from Mysore and 60 kms from Bangalore, is also known as "Toy City or Gombegala Nadu", since it produces lacquerware

and wooden toys. The Channapatna toy business once produced exquisite toys out of ivory wood, but nowadays, they create them out of rose and sandalwood, a trade that has a long history in the town of Channapatna. When Tippu Sultan was the monarch of ancient Mysore, he encouraged and supported toy makers, and they began to produce toys during his reign. Since the craft of toy making is practiced in the toy city of Channapatna, Tippu Sultan summoned toy manufacturers from Persia to train the local Channapatna craftsmen. The Channapatna Craft Park on Channapatna town's Santoor Road is the specific location the government has designated for the Channapatna toy industry. The toy industry does not exist in this park, nor is there any opportunity for the sector to engage in export business to other nations. The government also offers the toymakers at Kalanagara, Channapatna town, with site facilities.

## 2. Literature Review

Panda, (2017) conducted research on "Women Empowerment in India: Rational and Present state." He has discovered that while women's empowerment may not be essential for our country, it is essential for the long-term growth of a country. So let's start empowering women right away for our future security. It is necessary to alter Indian society's mentality about women. The man ought to believe that justice and equality are becoming more prevalent in the globe. Therefore, empowering women will result in prosperity for the next generation.

Shettar (2015) conducted research on "A Study on Issues and Challenges of Women Empowerment in India" expressing the opinion that women's empowerment could only be attained if their social and economic condition improved. This could only be done by putting into place clear social and economic policies aimed at advancing women's entire development and teaching them about their resilience as people. A significant percentage of the population has seen some relief as a result of globalization, liberalization, and other socioeconomic influences. However, there are still a number of areas in which India's empowerment of women is seriously deficient.

Khatri (2016) has done research on "The Role of Education towards Women Empowerment in India", focusing on how education and literacy affect women's empowerment. She also makes improvements to the modifications that

should be taken into account for women's empowerment and economic growth.

Suresh and Sivakumar (2007) in their work "Women Empowerment in India – A Changing Scenario" noticed that empowering women primarily involves raising their status, who historically have poor conditions in society in terms of economy, society, and politics. It means defending children from all forms of harm.

Subrahmanyam (2011) contrasts the education of women in India today and in the past. The author emphasized that there has been excellent development in the enrollment of girls in general. To empower implies to grant legitimate authority or power to act. It involves acquiring certain feminine behaviours.

According to Rao (2011), the health of the SHG's female members has unquestionably improved. It is evident that the health of the women in the group discusses issues relating to their health as well as the health of their children and other members, and they also inform them about the numerous government benefits designed especially for them.

Doepke (2011) – 'Does Women's Empowerment Encourage Economic Growth?', is an empirical investigation that contends that giving moms money helps their kids. To better understand the kind of frictions that could result in the observed empirical link, a range of non-cooperative family bargaining models were developed for this study.

The toy village of Channapatna located 60 kms away from Bangalore draws tourists with its vibrant and distinctively made wooden toys (Maya & Anisha (2020)). The invention of these toys, also known as Gombegala Nagara or "town of toys" in Kannada, is a result of Tipu Sultan period. Tipu invited the Persian artisans to his hamlet and requested that they instruct the native artisans in the method. Only wood is used in the construction of the toys. Vegetable dyes, which are fully innocuous and completely safe, are used to colour the toys.

According to Roshni (2019), the handicrafts industry cries out for government assistance since the livelihood of craftsmen across India is suffering as a result of low demand, insufficient marketing support, and middlemen's abuse. Nearly all of them have been destroyed by contemporary industry that originated in the West,

including wooden toys from Channapatna in Karnataka with strong carvings, the gorgeously weaved ikat from Odisha and Andhra Pradesh, and the geometrically designed Sholapith idols from West Bengal. There are more than 68 lakh craftsmen in the country according to the 2011 Census of which over half are women.

According to Dhanya and Samudhyata (2019), the Channapatna toymakers employ ivory wood, which grows profusely in arid regions. It only needs a small amount of input. It is a typical agroforestry plant that is cultivated in and around Channapatna town. For the people who live in the town and nearby villages, the toys created in Channapatna are much more than just toys, as Chithra (2017) points out. To a large portion of the population, they are the only thing standing between life and death. A geographical identification tag has been assigned to the practice of creating toys.

Rashid and Hassan's (2010) research identified the weak economy and a stereotypical culture as additional issues that might harm female entrepreneurs. The primary obstacles that impede women from starting their own enterprises include prejudice against women, a lack of social support, limited information availability, insufficient education and training programs, lack of funds as well as lack of confidence in one's talents. Themozhi has discussed the position of women and motivating variables in connection to socio-economic backdrop in her work, "A Study on Women Entrepreneurship in Coimbatore District." She has talked about how women succeed as entrepreneurs as well as the different barriers they face.

The majority of the women entrepreneurs who own beauty parlors are having financial difficulties, based on Chandra's research, "Women Entrepreneurs - A Study with Special Reference to Beauty Parlours in Virudhunagar District." Nisha Ashokan examined the financial stability and efficiency of businesses operated by women in her research, "Measuring the Performance of Enterprises run by Women Entrepreneurs in Chennai."

According to Ashwaq (2016), some toymakers carry on the tradition of producing lacquer toys even though many give up due to the fierce competition offered by Chinese toys. When their boys from Channapatna town realized they were not interested in conventional schooling, several parents made them take up toy making. After all, Channapatna town was known for classic lacquer toys,

including rocking horses, dolls, and carts. It used to be a thriving business in the past. Around 5,000 people in the area were employed in toy manufacturing in 1987. There were a thousand lathes, and every toymaker was profitable. They first made drapes, napkin rings, and little toys like rattles. However, there weren't many of the designs. However, the order book dried up and toy exports stopped in the early 1990s. However, the sector returned to toy production in the late 1990s. The technique of creating toys is said to have come to Channapatna in the 18th when Tipu Sultan was given a Persian lacquered-wood toy in the 18th century. At that time, the Maharaja of Mysore was so enamored by the toy that he dispatched Persian artisans to instruct the natives. In the fiscal year 1996–1997, India exported toys worth INR 245 crore and imported toys for INR 52.88 crore. After 2006–2007, the country's imports of toys outpaced its exports of toys. The exports-imports ratio fell sharply from a stellar 4.63 in 1996-1997 to a dreadful 0.76 by 2007-2008.

### 3. Research Design

#### 3.1 Objectives of the Study

1. To understand difficulties faced by female business owners while making and marketing Channapatna toys.
2. The government offers a number of programs and incentives to encourage women business owners to invest in rural entrepreneurship.
3. To recommend actions based on the findings of the research.

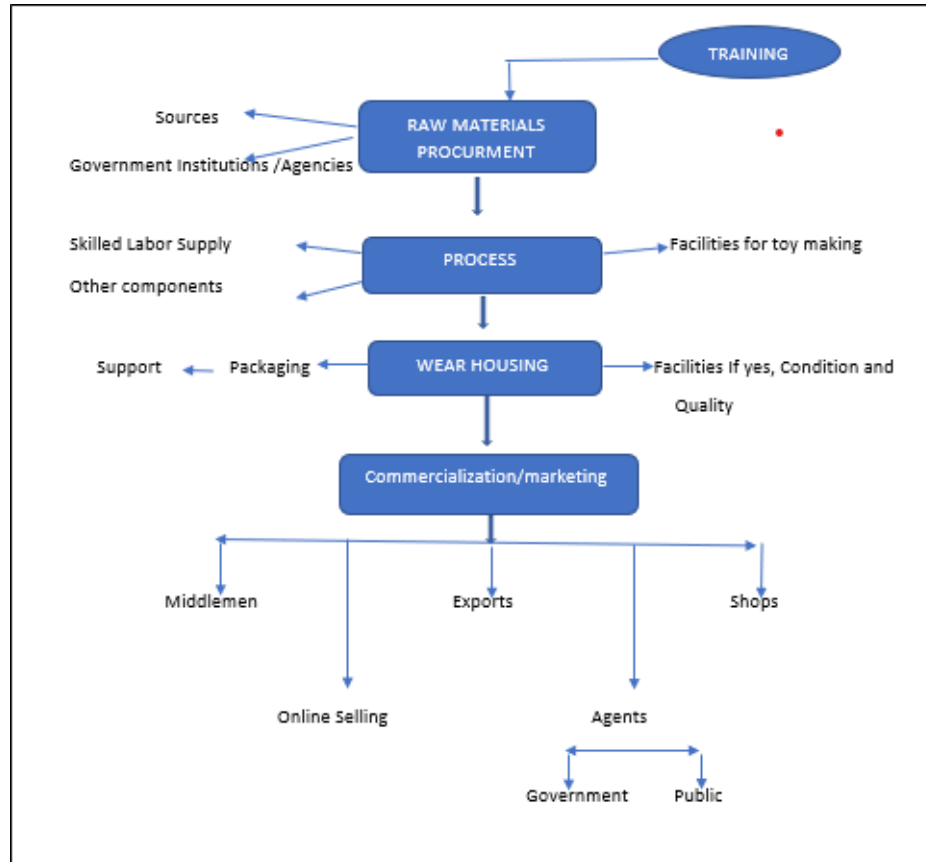
#### 3.2 Research Methodology

Research methodology is solving the research problem systematically and scientifically. The main aim of the research is to gather information about toy making and the female business owners in Channapatna.

The study is purely based on observation. It is also based on the unstructured interview schedule and also based on literature reviews.

### 4. Analysis

Figure 1 explains the process followed in Channapatna toy making industry. First, training is given to women who are working in the industry, collection of raw materials



Source: Authors' work

**Figure 1.** Model of the study.

like different types of woods, and making organic colours from fruits and vegetables, which are used by some of the toy making industries. The raw materials can be procured from different sources of lenders, through the government or the agents, depending on the material and the industry. After the procurement of raw materials, cutting, shaping and colouring of the toys takes place with the help of skilled labours or other components like machinery. The finished toys are moved to warehouses that are set up within the industry or through Government support providing warehousing facilities. Packing is done according to the size, shape, design and the quality of the product used to manufacture the toys. The selling of these toys are carried out directly through the middlemen who visit and purchase from the factory and then reach the customers for a good price. Another way is by selling online. Online shopping facilities help customers anywhere to choose the products and reach them in less time. There is a great demand for the Channapatna toys in the world. According to the quality of products, it is been exported. There is a

huge demand for the organic coloured toys as they are safe for children. The exporting is carried out through agents like the government agent or a private agent, according to the toy makers. Finally, the manufacturer can start up his outlets to sell the finished products directly to the happy customers.

#### 4. Challenges Faced by the Women Entrepreneurs

Entrepreneurship was previously seen as the domain of males, but every year more and more women embark on the path of founding and managing their businesses. These knowledgeable business women encourage other women to launch enterprises, yet many female business owners still encounter major barriers due to their gender. Female CEOs discussed some of the main obstacles that female business owners now face in the Channapatna toy manufacturing industry, as well as solutions for these issues.



1. **Women business owners believe they must behave like men:** Majority of female entrepreneurs engage in networking. It may be relevant to events or circumstances. For female company owners, talking shop with predominantly male CEOs may be daunting. Women frequently believe they must adopt a stereotypically masculine mentality toward business in the toy manufacturing sector in order to compensate and protect themselves.
2. **Emotions and maternal qualities can have an impact on women's companies:** A female entrepreneur's success is not guaranteed by attempting to act like a man, but it also isn't necessarily advised to let her feminine traits get in the way of getting things done. Women tend to be more loving and sensitive which can occasionally make it difficult to operate a toy manufacturing company.
3. **Women frequently the absence of support from other female business executives:** Diverse female business leaders yearned for greater support and companionship from female colleagues in their disciplines in the carving and producing the wooden toys because they felt uneasy about being a minority of successful female scientists and mathematicians.
4. **Many women must juggle operating their businesses and raising kids:** While many entrepreneurs strive for work-life balance, moms who start enterprises must manage both their family and their toy manufacturing firms at the same time.
5. **Women business owners fear failing:** Global Entrepreneur Monitor claims that women entrepreneurs are more fearful of failure. Failure is a very real risk in every company initiative, but it shouldn't be seen as a bad thing. It also affects the toy industry, which is sometimes limited in its marketing prospects because it is both a conventional industry and an MSME sector.
6. **Links to family:** The emotional depth of Indian women connected to their households. They are required to take care of household duties, as well as their kids and other family members. They spend most of their time and energy on family chores including caring their husband, kids, and in-laws in addition. It will be quite tough to focus on the toy manufacturing sector and successfully operate the business in such a condition.
7. **Male-dominated culture:** Existing male chauvinism rules the day, notwithstanding the constitution's mention of gender equality. Women are not given the same rights as males. The family patriarch must provide his or her consent before they may start a business. Entrepreneurship has always been associated with men. All of them hinder the development of female entrepreneurs, particularly with regard to the toy manufacturing sector.
8. **Inadequate education:** Majority of Indian females still lag greatly in terms of education. About 60% of women are illiterate. Because of early marriage, sons' better education, and poverty, those who are educated receive either less or inadequate education than their male counterparts. Due to lack of proper training in toy manufacturing, including the choice of wood, cutting and carving techniques, and colour schemes to be used, female business owners are unaware of advancements in technology, production techniques, marketing, and other governmental initiatives that help them to succeed.
9. **Self-Confidence:** Indian women are unconfident in their physical abilities and cognitive capacity. Family members and society as a whole are hesitant to support their organizational development. This scenario is changing somewhat for Indian women, but there is still more that needs to be done to increase the rate at which entrepreneurship is growing. Since we now have extremely excellent access to everything, the desire for toys may be decreasing, thus we need to raise awareness of them.
10. **Barriers that are social and cultural:** Personal and familial responsibilities may on sometimes serve as a significant obstacle to women entrepreneurs' success in the corporate world. Only a small percentage of women are able to successfully manage their homes and businesses while still

finding the time to prioritize manufacturing toys as one of their top priorities.

11. **Market-Related risks:** Women are dependent on intermediaries because of the severe competition in the market and their limited mobility. Gaining market share and having their goods recognized and enjoyed by consumers may be quite a challenge for businesswomen. Since They can't completely understand the realities of the shifting market environment since they effectively exploit media outlets and internet services.
12. **Limits on movement:** Because of the persistent rigidity of the society in India, women's movement is severely constrained, and as a result, their professional options are confined within the four walls of the kitchen. Even while women often experienced mobility issues when conducting businesses, this problem has considerably decreased the spread of educational understanding.
13. **Knowledge of business administration:** For women to develop the knowledge and abilities in business enterprise functional areas, education and training must be provided continually. This will inspire women to exercise sound judgment and build up their business abilities.
14. **Financial support:** Most women, especially those who reside in remote regions, are unaware of the financial aid offered by numerous organizations. Company owners in remote and undeveloped areas might not be able to benefit for their hard works.
15. **Training initiatives:** Depending upon demands, duration, intensity and competence, the social and welfare association provides many services like seminars and instruction programs to help entrepreneurs achieve their objectives. Young and upcoming entrepreneurs who want to launch their small- to medium-sized businesses may tremendously benefit from such initiatives.
16. **Cost:** Some companies have high performance and production expenses, which restrict the rise of female business owners. The acquisition of new equipment during the expansion in production,

potential and related circumstances deter female company owners from growing their enterprises.

## 5. Discussion and Conclusion

Based on the earlier studies, business women have a number of difficulties in the areas of family, money, marketing, and health. The law offered women equal rights and opportunities in the workplace and school after independence. Along with financial assistance and government initiatives, the key drivers for women who want to succeed as business entrepreneurs should also enlist the psychological assistance of their partners and families. Despite, without the emotional support of their loved ones and government funding, women may not be successful business entrepreneurs. Everything in business centers on gains, failures, and disputes. Someone should always offer support to avoid problems. Increasing levels of self-assurance, self-esteem, and self-motivation have led to an increase in expectations for women entrepreneurs in recent years. As people become educated, it will be simpler for women to succeed in the future.

If the craft industry is bought under employment regulations, it may have the potential to create entrepreneurs and jobs. To reach all levels of markets that are only absorbed on the domestic market, new marketing tactics must be expanded. Effective implementation of different government marketing and service programs should be provided to craftsmen. It should be considered granting uncompensated advantages to artists from less developed nations. Knowledge adaptation should be given to boost the handicraft industry's competitiveness in the international market. Due to their dependence on domestic clients, they have little opportunity to comprehend the varied needs of various clients.

The production of wooden goods on a modest scale was discovered to be a symbol of tradition and history. Many educated people help their family members run their livelihoods by creating and giving to others. Many expert craftsmen and artisans are dealing with serious health issues like sharp pain, back discomfort, dust allergies, and respiratory diseases as a result of their ritualistic manufacturing methods. As shown, the government would benefit most of the women engaged in this activity through programs for women's empowerment and women entrepreneurs by lowering taxes, increasing subsidies, and

offering low- or no-interest financing options. By providing them with precise market knowledge and vocational and professional training, may help them better integrate into society and adapt their goods to the needs of the market. In international marketing and export operations, the government plays a crucial role. In order to preserve the traditions and heritage of a particular region and religion, it is imperative that the development of rural craftsmen and the handicrafts industry be observed with great sobriety. Due to the sector's importance to aesthetics, global trade might experience significant changes.

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