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A SUCCESS STORY OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEUR AT GARAGE: AN ICON OF INSPIRATION

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ABSTRACT

The Case study focuses on the journey of Ms. Vidyanambirajan, a woman entrepreneur who took challenges as stepping stones to her success by entering into the automobile Industry. Being from the science field but motivated herself to face the social expectations, struggles, and fear from neighborhood business people. But her self-confidence, commitment, hard work made her today a successful woman entrepreneur.

INTRODUCTION

Success is a dream for everyone irrespective of gender, but success will come to those who only work hard. Lalitha Rani (1996) revealed that both men and women of working age constitute the nation's economic development's main strength. But every dream should have clarity and also have to pass many hurdles to accomplish the goal. Many successful women entrepreneur stories reveal that they have not achieved success in a single day. They have faced many struggles and did not stop themselves from facing challenges. Women have to balance their lives, manage their household works, manage corporations with patience, a risk-taking attitude, hard work, etc.

Success will come to those who take steps ahead irrespective of failures, pass all struggles, and achieve massive success in their field. In India, women have been considered a significant human resource since women constitute 60 percent of the rural unemployment and 56 percent of the total employment (Kala et al., 2002). The percentage of women who decide to pursue an entrepreneurial career is lower than that of men (Elam et al., 2019). Among

the countries with similar economic conditions (Minniti, 2010; Dheer et al., 2019), the difference continues to exist between men and women when it comes to starting a business, which has led to calls to expand further the scope of explanatory factors (McGowan et al., 2015). According to a study by Guzman and Kacperczyk (2019), females are 63% less likely than males to obtain external financing in terms of risk capital, and the most significant part of the gap derives from gender differences.

Life Before Entrepreneur

A woman with aspiration, self-confidence, and commitment is none other than Ms. Vidya. Born in Chennai did her schooling at Keyes high school and graduated within-subjects zoology, botany, and chemistry. She has studied in Government College and was a distinction student.

A girl with good academics started her career as a teacher. Still, she always had a zeal to achieve something in life and moved to Chennai in 1991 November on a transfer as area manager Annapurna foils. But this dint gives her any satisfaction. In 2001 she relocated to Hyderabad with her father's illness, as both her brothers moved to U.S.A.

Her father, Mr. Nambirajan, an electronic engineer, started his civil aviation career and later, with various assignments, finally settled in Hyderabad to work for ECIL. As he was very passionate about automobiles, he started Paramount.

For a few months, she thought of taking care of the workshop as her father had a skin allergy, but today it is 18 years. She fell in love with this profession and developed a passion for it. It was so difficult for her to accept this initially as she was used to a corporate lifestyle, but she is a woman who doesn't readily accept defeat. She faced challenges from the same people who once used to address her as didi during her visit to the garage, but the whole scenario changed when she took over her father's business. She never thought that it would be difficult for a woman to run a business with male egoistic chauvinist mechanics who were her subordinates.

She has to face not only her subordinate's customers but also changing technology. When she took over the business models of cars, she changed from traditional to software-enabled cars. But she can't let her father dream down, and also has to prove herself, took everything as a challenge, and proved herself.

Career Opportunity, Innovation, and Diversification

From a science background, she made herself well equipped with the automobile industry. She worked in the garage to learn and also become a role model for others. The automobile service industry is the most unorganized sector, so she wanted to change that, and for this, she had to change herself. She wants to be the change that the industry wants to see. She began with in-house washing by installing high-pressure washing equipment. Then she

bought an engine scanner, which was the turning point for her. She started scanning cars, tried to understand the car's systems, worked on the floor, formed her team, hired a girl, and trained her to service cars. Women lack physical strength, so they bought many pneumatic tools and kept updating her workshop as technology changed. She also tied up with various companies for breakdown service and got trained on new cars. As years passed, she has gained confidence so much that she has started training youth and women. She found women very good in the industry, as they are committed and accountable for their work, unlike the male counterpart.

She set many processes in her garage, got it Iso Certified, followed the 5s principle, and improved the quality. She has trained her mechanics in self-esteem, and she can proudly say they don't take tips from Customers. She has always wanted to bring dignity to her profession. She always says that Men are result-oriented and women are process-oriented as this is an inborn quality woman are more productive, be it any Industry.

Challenges

Today we have the technology in place but unable to retain women in the industry as the family doesn't support this line citing security reasons. But she used to counsel them, saying, Is there any security for a girl while she walks on the road? In her opinion, a woman needs to stand up for herself, create her own Identity, and support herself. She has faced many challenges, and people used to discourage her from running the workshop because they think it is not a dignified job.

That's when she took up this profession as a challenge, more so she couldn't let her father down and had to prove that she can do it. She has faced many challenges, not only employees and even customers would not trust at times. Any service or repair that she suggests would be scrutinized under a microscopic lens, whereas when her mechanic tells the same, the customer would immediately approve to change parts. Today she thanks all those who said no to her because she wouldn't be what she is today. Thanks to them as she learned so much, and somebody rightly said knowledge is Power.

Today she is still faced with many hurdles and because of her father's encouragement and perseverance. Many a time, she wanted to run away from this, but again she would motivate herself and come back to work, always wondered who motivates a bird to fly high the bird itself.

She believes that Self-confidence, self-motivation, and commitment is the key to success. It may take time but will come one day. Her dream is to see all women-run workshops one day, and women should help each other by empowering other women, either lead or guide.

Practices in the Workshop

Ms. Vidya has joined hands with the Automotive Skill Development Corporation (ASDC) and the All India Automobile Workshop Association

(AIAWA) for professional recognition and certification for technicians for their improved prospects in the industry. She has also tied up with the Indo-German Chamber of Commerce (IGCC) as the only vocational training partner to train automotive technicians in India and became the First ISO-certified garage A.P./Telangana.

"There is nothing that women cannot do; it is more to do with the mindset of society and individuals. They have scrutinized more than their male counterparts in any job they handle, and that's where their perfection comes in. They learn from the floor but deliver up above expectations," she exclaims. She was the First woman entrepreneur in a garage business and also to train women as mechanics.

She was honored as a Legend in the 'Automobile Service Industry' at the 1st National Conference held in Bangalore in 2017. The Confederation of Indian Industries – Indian Women Network (CII-IWN) recognized her as an I.W.N. woman and appreciated her efforts by conferring an award in 2017. She was honored with Jaycee Udyama Ratna Puraskar by Jaycee, Jijabai Award by Shivaji College Delhi University, and HYBIZ award for women leadership 2020.

Vidya had immense respect and love for her father. She wanted to do something for her father, and this zeal made her path of success unstoppable. Her journey from mechanic to C.E.O. of Nambiraju Foundation is not easy for her daddy's daughter. Still, she made every impossible situation possible by her humble attitude towards employees and customers. She became an inspirational woman entrepreneur today.

Achievements In Paramount

Responsible for multifold growth of the company as a multi-brand garage

Pioneer to start using engine scanner in Hyderabad

First ISO certified garage in A.P./Telangana

First woman entrepreneur in garage business and also to train women as mechanics

Started a training center for Automotive service technicians confirming to the standard of National skill development council

The first batch in India to be assessed by NSDC5

Got a sanction as V.T.P. from the govt for Nambirajan foundation first automotive service technician training in Telangana

Tie up with S.E.S. Germany Hired a German in training on high-end cars to scale up the quality of technicians.

Affiliation to ASDC, Rated as a 4-star training center

Selected as international migration skill training center

First of its kind in cooperation with Indo German Chamber of Commerce for vocational training in Automotive service certified by DUAL PRO.

Trained a lot of B.Tech engineers in mechanical, automobile and successfully placed them in dealer network in India and overseas.

Started a consultancy to set up garages and set up an in-house garage for Delhi public school Nacharam for their fleet service.

Tie up First choice Mahindra as their franchise partner for used cars

State coordinator for Telangana and AP AIAWA {All India Automobile Workshop Association}

Vidya Nambirajan didn't know about the automobile industry, but she broke the gender stereotypes following the footsteps of her father's vision with unwavering passion. Her dream is to stand as a role model for many women who want to get into the automobile industry. Vidya tied up with S.E.S. Germany and hired a German in training on high-end cars to scale up the quality of technicians.

CONCLUSION

Ms.Vidya Nambirajan, a successful woman entrepreneur today, is an inspiration to many women. She has proved that no such field is there where women cannot achieve success. Success always looks ahead of the silly excuses and puts itself forward than the created misconceptions. Hard work, determination, and confidence are enough to build the endless potential to reach the goal of success.

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