

Age - A Predictor For Growth Of Indian Women Entrepreneurs

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Abstract:

Entrepreneurial development in the present global scenario has become very noteworthy; in view of its being a pathway to economic development. The objectives of industrial development, regional growth, and employment generation depends on entrepreneurial development. Women entrepreneurs in all sectors consider the business world outside is huge and scary. Until the women are willing to get themselves out there and take a risk, women entrepreneurs will never able to achieve professional success and realize their potential.

Demographics is one of the most important factors affecting women entrepreneurship, job creation, and innovation. Demographic change shapes all issues that occupy most economic discussions — education, age employment policy, taxes, technological changes, and more. Demographic analysis anticipates future trends, helping decision makers to prepare policy interventions accordingly. Growth of women-owned-businesses is not at the same pace as their male counterparts. This research paper examines the role of the demographic profile - age of women-owned businesses at the inception of business, in the rate of growth of their business. The study using quantitative and qualitative research methods was conducted in two districts of Karnataka, a state in India.. It was found that the growth factor of business started by women younger than 35 years of age was significantly higher [3.51] than those who were older than 35 years [3.07] when starting business [$\alpha = 0.00$] The case study analysis also showed that 90% [9 out of 10] of young achievers [< 35 yrs. At inception] are on the growth path and none of them have disengaged on reaching the success stage as against block factor [1 out of 4] and finance driven [1 out of 6] entrepreneurs who have disengaged. The significance of age of a woman entrepreneur at the time of starting a business as an indicator of growth makes it imperative that focus on early start to an entrepreneurial career will see many more women-owned businesses planning the growth of their businesses.

Keywords: Growth of business, women-owned businesses, age at inception of business, risk attitude, stages of business growth, typology of women-owned businesses

I. INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship plays a vital role in economic development which essentially means the process of upward change whereby the real per capita income of a country increases over a period of time. [Schumpeter, J. 1954] Entrepreneurs through their contribution have the potential to increase the per capita income, standard of living and the quality of life of people in the country. They serve as catalysts in the process of industrialization and economic growth. Schumpeter, J. [1954] stressed the role of the entrepreneurial function in economic development. Entrepreneurial growth brings economic development. According to two experts, Mier and Baldwin [1967], a catalyst is needed to bring about development and this requires entrepreneurial activity to a considerable extent.

Women constitute almost half of the total population in the world, but their representation in gainful employment and entrepreneurship is relatively low. For a country to achieve sustained economic growth it is crucial that women are equal partners in the process of development. Entrepreneurship offers tremendous opportunities for women by providing prospects for economic independence, self-esteem, education and growth – not only for the women themselves, but also for their families and employees. [Julie R. Weeks, 2000] Worldwide, many women are entrepreneurs who provide a different perspective to entrepreneurship because their thinking is different from men. Their growth in this field will provide different solutions to problems and their innovations may not be like those of men. [Asghar Afshar Juhanshahi, 2010]

A number of global indices with a component of women empowerment rank, India ranks very low. The Global Entrepreneurship and

Development Index 2014 ranks - India is in 75th position in 120 countries, Gender GEDI 2014, India is in 26th in 30 countries. This indicates the need for augmentation of economic and social contribution of women. In India, the number of women owned businesses is increasing, but very few appear in the top 100 businesses. Most women entrepreneurs are necessity based entrepreneurs and are not looking to scale up their businesses [GEM 2018 Women's Report]. There is a need to focus on the entrepreneurial environment of the country with attention on factors which will motivate and facilitate growth of women owned businesses towards their increased contribution in economic development; improving India's standing in global entrepreneurship and gender-gap indices.

Studies have demonstrated that entrepreneurship does not emerge and grow spontaneously. Rather, it is dependent upon several economic, political, social and psychological factors. These environmental factors may have both positive and negative influences on the growth of entrepreneurship [Gupta C.B. & Srinivasan N.P. 1997]. Attention must be given to the positive influences or facilitating factors to ensure growth in entrepreneurship in general and women-owned businesses in particular. Several variables have been identified as triggering factors of entrepreneurship – contextual factors and inherent factors [Moren Le'vesquea, Maria Minniti, 2006] Contextual factors, such as education or taxation are features of the socio-economic environment. Inherent factors, such as age or alertness are characteristics of the individual. Age is a triggering factor for entrepreneurship and has an inverse correlation with entrepreneurial attitude. [Moren Levesque & Maria Minniti, 2006]

The primary aim of this research study is to assess the influence of the age at business

inception, of women-owned businesses, on the rate and scale of growth of their enterprises. Additionally, it provides a model of young achievers demonstrating a high potential for growth in their business

II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Research studies on women entrepreneurs are scarce and those specifically on their growth very rare. The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor studies have included a component of women entrepreneurs and their description in a number of surveys conducted by them. GEM [Global Entrepreneurship Monitor] 2018 Women's Report shows that women's participation in entrepreneurship varies around the world, as does their impact on job creation and innovation. Still, in nearly every economy there are fewer female than male entrepreneurs, and they appear to show reluctance to scale their businesses or enter new or less tested markets. It was also found that women have a lower capability perception than men, and, on average, a greater fear of failure than men; growth projections are consistently lower for women-owned businesses compared to their male counterparts. Erin Kepler & Scott Shane [2007] showed that certain gender differences exist between male and female entrepreneurs – differing expectations, reasons for starting a business, motivations, opportunities sought and types of businesses – and these result in differing outcomes.

Moren Levesque and Maria Minniti [2006] in their study on "Effect of ageing on entrepreneurial behavior" provide a model which allows age, risk-propensity and wealth to be time dependent. In their model, individuals select a career path according to the dynamic interplay of these variables. Thus, they provide a way to study new firm creation as the outcome of a complex system, whose dynamism emerges from the

interaction of a broad set of psychological and socioeconomic variables. They argue that the effect of age on entrepreneurial decisions is analogous to that of an inherent factor and that age influences an individual's decision with respect to entrepreneurship in ways that are related to perception of self-efficacy and that do not depend on socioeconomic incentives. They treat age as a crucial characteristic in the thought process of the decision maker.

Recent entrepreneurship literature focuses on the importance of risk attitude, risk propensity and risk perception of entrepreneurs in a firm's business performance. Risk attitude can be defined as a broad description of the way the decision maker deals with risk, of which risk propensity and risk perception are two main aspects [Blais and Weber, 2006]. Risk propensity could effectively be conceptualized as an individual's orientation towards taking chances in any decision-making scenario. [Landquist and Stalhandske, 2011] In their conceptual study on Entrepreneurship Orientation [EO], Lumpkin and Dess [1996], stress that entrepreneurs are 'venturing into the unknown'. The most closely related construct to this is risk propensity. Most empirical studies in this field only take into account risk propensity, leaving out the complementary concept of risk perception [Martin Boermans and Dean Willebrands, 2017]. Sitkin and Pablo [1992] define risk perception as "a decision maker's assessment of the risk inherent in a situation". It is broadly thought to impact business outcomes through underestimation or overestimation of the risks. Indeed, it is how the entrepreneur perceives the opportunity rather than the opportunity itself that matters [Dana and Dana, 2005]. Lower risk perception may be the result of entrepreneurs framing the business situation too positively (Norton and Moore, 2006; Palich and Bagby, 1995).

Willebrands et al. [2012] argue that this could lead to a lack of risk mitigation. In turn, poor risk mitigation is thought to reduce performance [Murmman and Sardana, 2013]. Robinson and Marino [2013] argue that overconfidence can deteriorate firm performance. They show that risk perception is an important moderator for overconfidence, thus making an indirect positive contribution to entrepreneurial outcomes. Studies in the field of entrepreneurship also highlight the importance of risk perception for an entrepreneur's start-up choices [Arenius and Minniti, 2005; Forlani and Mullens, 2000; Simon et al., 2000]. Hormiga and Bolivar-Cruz [2014] show that among immigrants in Spain, the perception of risk influences the decision to become an entrepreneur.

Given the importance of risk attitude in entrepreneurial decision making and the fact that risk attitude is seen to be negatively related to age of the entrepreneur, risk attitude with its three interrelated factors- risk propensity, risk perception and risk mitigation, need to be studied. There is a need to assess the environment which supports growth of women-owned businesses with emphasis on age and risk attitude of women-owned businesses.

III. LIFE CYCLE THEORY OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP

A LIFE CYCLE THEORY TYPICALLY STARTS WITH THE ASSUMPTIONS OF BIRTH, GROWTH, MATURITY AND DECLINE. IN ONE OF THE THEORIES THE ENTREPRENEUR SUSTAINS IN THE BUSINESS DESPITE CRITICISM(BIRTH ORDER THEORY.)THE LIFECYCLE THEORY OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP HIGHLIGHTS THAT FEAR OF FAILURE STOPS WOMEN FROM SCALING UP THE BUSINESS(BRAIN PARASITE THEORY). FINALLY, GREAT MAN THEORY STATES THAT ENTREPRENEURSHIP IS NOT REALLY ABOUT INDIVIDUALS, RATHER IT IS ABOUT GROUPS OF

INDIVIDUALS WHO FORM A NETWORK TOGETHER IN THE PURSUIT OF COMMON GOALS (DRAKOPOULOU AND ANDERSON, 2007). THUS, OVER-EMPHASIZING INDIVIDUALS DOWNPLAYS THE IMPORTANCE OF NETWORKS. IT CAN BE SEEN THAT, WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS VIEW COMMENCING A BUSINESS AS A FORM OF ASSET ACCUMULATION. THIS MEANS THAT AN INDIVIDUAL'S DECISION TO BECOME AN ENTREPRENEUR IS PART OF THE LIFE-CYCLE CONSUMPTION-SAVING DECISIONS OF INDIVIDUALS, INCLUDING ADDITIONAL INCOME TO THE FAMILY, HUMAN CAPITAL INVESTMENT, OCCUPATIONAL CHOICE, AND ASSET ACCUMULATION. AN INDIVIDUAL'S AGE IS A IMPERATIVE ASPECT OF CONSUMPTION-SAVING DECISIONS, THE LIFECYCLE FRAMEWORK Implies that demographic trends such as population growth and age can affect aggregate asset accumulation. On the basis of these ideas, the life-cycle of entrepreneurship suggests that demographic trends affect aggregate rates of entrepreneurship because the age affects individual entrepreneurship decisions.

The woman entrepreneur makes a decision whether or not to establish a firm. Because entrepreneurs usually face financing constraints, their business decisions in commencing a business and business sustenance are intertwined with their age on personal consumption-saving decisions. In the early stages, the entrepreneur and the business are unified. As a result, entrepreneur does not separate his or her own personal characteristics and the prospects for the business.

IV. THE BOTTOM LINE

In India where only 3% of women entrepreneurs envisage their businesses to stand among the medium or high technology

sectors, there are 8% of male entrepreneurs are leading the space. Following the pattern, only 3% of female entrepreneurs, start information and communications technology businesses, compared to 11% of male entrepreneurs[Susan Price 2017]. Gender perceptions of opportunities seem to be constricting and ability to take risk varies with age .

Today, the impact of more women entrepreneurs engaging in the professed male-dominated world of business is certainly massive. The current growth of women entrepreneurial initiatives and how women-led startups are scaling up at an agreed pace, challenges like lack of funds and fear of investments are sure to become less of perennial challenges in the coming time. Women entrepreneurs who of the older age group, tend to fear taking risks in business and indirectly it reflects in the growth of the business and their self-esteem. Entrepreneurship contributes fundamentally to economic growth. It is well established that net new job creation comes primarily from young and growing companies. Innovation, too, depends heavily on entrepreneurial firms

The individual characteristics focus on the influence of resources, in particular the level of education, occupation of parents, age, managerial skill, previous entrepreneurial experience and industry experience levels affecting entrepreneurial firm performance. Age and years of formal education have been shown to correlate positively with the business performance of women entrepreneurs. Dolinski et al. (1993) reckon that less educated women may face financial or human capital constraints which limit their business pursuits.

V. WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS ECOSYSTEM

The entrepreneurial progress contributing to development for women in India is gradually being acknowledged as significant unexploited source of economic growth since women entrepreneurs create new jobs for themselves and also provide society with different solutions to management, organization and business problems. It seems likely that the future will favor women entrepreneurs to a better extent. NITI Aayog has launched a Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP) for providing an ecosystem for budding an existing women entrepreneurs across the country. As an enabling platform, WEP is built on three pillars- Iccha Shakti, Gyaan Shakti & Karma Shakti.[Government of India –Nitiayog]

Even though we recognize that the journey of a woman entrepreneur is laid with huge challenges, the major one of them is the availability of finance at different stages of the life cycle of the enterprise. There is a need to plan an endeavor creating awareness about the contribution of women enterprises to the economic development and also the need for creation of a vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem for women entrepreneurs

VI. WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS AND PERFORMANCE

The performance of women entrepreneurs in their businesses has developed as an significant area of recent policy and academic debate. as distinguished from merely possessing it. However, performance seems to be conceptualised, operationalised and measured in different ways [Srinivasan et al., 1994], thus making cross-comparison difficult. Among the most frequently used operationalisations are survival, growth

in employees, and profitability [Lerner, Brush, & Hisrich, 1997].

Box et al. [1995] suggest that there are 4 elements which have positive relationship with the business performance of women entrepreneurs, that is, previous experience as a member of an entrepreneurial management team, number of previous starts, age and scanning intensity. Thibault et al. [2002] suggest personal factors such as demographic variable and business factors such as amount of financing, use of technology, age, operating location, business structure and number of full-time employees as important factors in examining the performance of entrepreneurs.

VII. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

7.1. Respondents:

An exploratory study was conducted to examine the significance of age of women at inception of business in growth. The study was conducted in two districts of Karnataka, a state in India. The respondents in the study were urban women-owned businesses with an initial investment more than Rs.1, 00,000 but less than Rs.500, 00,000 and who have been in business for more than 3 years. These entrepreneurs were classified on the basis of the nature of business – Trading, Manufacturing, Service and Profession.

7.2. Objectives of the study:

- To assess the growth of women-owned businesses
- To study the significance of age of women-owned businesses at inception of business in their growth
- To analyze the importance of risk attitude of women entrepreneurs in the growth of their business.

7.3. Hypothesis

Hypothesis: Ho: Growth of women-owned businesses are equal irrespective of the age of women entrepreneurs at inception of business.

Hypothesis: H1: Growth of women-owned businesses are not equal irrespective of the age of women entrepreneurs at inception of business

7.4. Sample Design: A list of women-owned businesses was obtained from Association of Women-owned businesses in Karnataka [AWAKE] – a premier organization in Bangalore, guiding women entrepreneurs to establish business and also from a similar organization of women entrepreneurs in Belgaum, AVISHKAR. From this statistical frame a random sample [5% of the population] was drawn to constitute the sample of the study. Case studies of 20 women entrepreneurs [a convenient random sample drawn from the statistical frame] were also compiled to authenticate and supplement the findings from analysis of data collected using questionnaires.

7.5. Research Instruments: A well designed questionnaire was administered to the respondents to collect quantitative data to test the hypothesis. An interview schedule was used to collect information through personal interview for framing case studies.

7.6. Calculation of growth factor: The variables considered to arrive at growth factor include the performance of the business on the following parameters:

- A = Investment [Own funds/Loans] in Rs.
- B = Sales/Turnover [Annual] in Rs.
- C = Profits [%]
- D = Number of employees

Parameters A to D are considered to calculate Growth Factor of each woman-owned business in the dataset.

The following steps are followed to arrive at the Growth Factors

- Step1 -Log conversion to reduce the difference from one data point to other data point: Finding Log for Present Position of [A to D] and log for Position when business started [A to D]
- Step 2 -Difference between Present with Past business performance: Finding Difference between Log of the present position [A to D] and Log of Position when business started [A to D]
- Step 3 -Weighted by Number of years in business as per literature support: The outcome of step 2 is weighted by the number of years in business
- Step 4 -Z score conversion to remove the unit effect of variables: From A to

D outcome of Step 3, Z score is applied to remove unit of the variables.

- Step 5 -Arriving Growth Factor: Summation of Z score of A to D is made. Since Z score ranges from negative to positive values, in order to nullify that, Scale conversion is used.
- Scale Conversion formula = $\frac{(\text{given observation} - \text{minimum of old scale})}{(\text{maximum of old scale} - \text{minimum of old scale})} * (\text{maximum of new scale} - \text{minimum of new scale}) + \text{minimum of the new scale}$.

The outcome of the new scale is 1 (Min) to 10 (Max)

Descriptive statistics of GF

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Dev.
Growth Factor	430	1.00	10.00	3.3852	1.26506

7.7.Variables used in the research study:

Variables	Source
Factors facilitating growth of entrepreneurs: Personal characteristics – age, education Family background – belonging to business family Economic factors – financial assistance, marketing assistance, training, support services	Gupta C.B. & Srinivasan N.P. (1997), 'Entrepreneurship Development in India, Sultan Chand & Sons
The five stages of growth of business: Stage I – Existence to Survival Stage II – Survival to Success Stage III – Success to Growth / Disengage Stage IV – Growth to Take-off Stage V – Take-off to Resource Maturity	"A Conceptual Model of Entrepreneurship as Firm Behaviour" Harvard Business Review 61, 1983 (Neil C. Churchill and Virginia L. Lewis)
Typology of women entrepreneurs: Young Achievers Block Factor Entrepreneurs Family Driven Finance Driven	Mitra, R. "The Growth Pattern of Women-Run Enterprises: An Empirical Study in India", Journal of Developmental Entrepreneurship: Aug; Vol.7, No. 2, 2002
Risk attitude, Risk propensity, Risk perception and Risk mitigation	Martijn Boermansab Daan Willebrandsc 'Entrepreneurship, risk perception and firm performance' at Utrecht School of

	Economics, Utrecht University, Discussion Paper, Series 17-04, February 2017
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In the study among all the demographic factors facilitating growth of women entrepreneurs, age at inception of business has been selected for this study because of its Coefficients^a

relative importance amongst the personal characteristics [A unit increase in age leads to decrease in .291 on growth factor]

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	4.629	.211		21.900	.000
A4.Marital status	.081	.081	.046	.999	.318
A8.Education	-.106	.040	-.121	-2.636	.009
Business family	-.154	.088	-.082	-1.747	.081
A2.Age started	-.291	.044	-.306	-6.576	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Growth Factor

$$Y = a + b_1 * X_1 + b_1 * X_2 + b_2 * X_3 + b_3 * X_4 + b_4 * + e$$

$$Y = 4.629 + .081 * X_1 - .106 * X_2 - .154 * X_3 + -.291 * X_4 + e$$

7.8.Statistical techniques: Percentages, Arithmetic Mean, Geometric Mean, Standard Deviation, Linear Regression, t-test with level of significance: $\alpha = 0.05$ was applied for the purpose of the study.

VIII. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION:

8.1. Findings

The distribution of respondents on the basis of age at inception of business, education and types of business is tabulated below.

Nature of business	Education	Age at Inception of business		Total
		<35	>35	
Trading	< Graduation	66	16	82
	Post Graduate	22	8	30
	Total	88	24	112
Manufacturing	< Graduation	46	6	52
	Post Graduate	32	4	36
	Total	78	10	88
Service	< Graduation	69	19	88
	Post Graduate	45	7	52
	Total	114	26	140
Profession	< Graduation	26	6	32

	Post Graduate	46	10	56
	Total	72	16	88
Total	< Graduation	205	141	346
	Post Graduate	53	29	82
	Total	258	170	428

A large proportion [70% to 81%] of respondents is < 35 yrs. age at inception of business. The distribution on the basis of education shows that most of the respondents [60% to 75%] are educated up to graduation

Finding 1: Assessment of growth of women-owned businesses

Calculation of growth factor of women-owned businesses

The growth factor of women-owned businesses calculated on a scale of 1 to 10 indicates that the growth of women-owned businesses in Karnataka (a state in India) is on an average 3.39. Table No. 1 highlights the distribution of sample of women-owned

and little above graduation. Of the 20 women who were interviewed personally and formed case studies of the research study, only 3, i.e. 15% were educated beyond graduation and 17 women, i.e. 85% were graduate

businesses on the basis of nature of business business and the growth factor of women-owned businesses in different forms of business. The growth factor of women-owned businesses in Karnataka [3.39] is below average [<5] with those in the manufacturing line of business showing the highest growth factor [4.43]

Table No.1 Distribution of respondents on the basis of different lines of business and growth factor

Nature of Business	No. of Women-owned businesses	% of Women-owned businesses	Growth Factor
Trading	112	26%	3.74
Manufacturing	88	21%	4.43
Service	140	33%	2.68
Profession	88	21%	3.02
Total	428	100%	3.39

Assessment of stage of business reached by the women-owned businesses:

The case study analysis shows that 10% of the women-owned businesses reached Resource Maturity stage, 25% reached Take-off stage, 35% reached Success-Growth stage and 10% disengaged on reaching Success

stage [Table No. 2]. It is observed that only 35% of the women-owned businesses went past the growth stage to reach Take-off and Resource Maturity stage. Disengagement on reaching the Success stage [10%] indicates lack of initiative to accept the growth path.

Table No. 2 Distribution of women-owned businesses on the basis of Stages of Growth reached

Stages of Growth	Survival	Success-Disengage	Success - Growth	Take off	Resource Maturity	Total
No. of women-owned businesses	4	2	7	5	2	20
% of women-owned businesses	20	10	35	25	10	100

Finding 2: Significance of age of women-owned businesses at inception of business in their growth

For the purpose of assessing the significance of age of women-owned businesses at inception of business in the growth of their business, the respondents were classified as those who were < 35 yrs. at inception of business and those who were > 35 yrs. at inception of business. It was found that 81% of the respondents/women-owned businesses were < 35 yrs. at inception of their business and had a growth factor of 3.51, which was higher than the average growth factor (3.39) of the women-owned businesses who constituted the sample. The women who were > 35 yrs. at inception of business constituted 19% of the sample and had a lower growth

factor of 3.07 [lower than the average growth factor of the women-owned businesses]. This difference was found to be significant ($\alpha < 0.05$) for women in all lines of business except manufacturing and service. [Table No.4]. Thus, the null hypothesis [Ho: Growth of women-owned businesses are equal irrespective of their age at inception of the business] is rejected and it can be inferred that age of women-owned businesses at inception of business has a role in the growth of the business; younger the woman entrepreneur at the inception of the business, the higher the potential for growth in business. [Statistical significance was not reached for manufacturing and service businesses]

Table No. 3: Significance of growth factor and age of starting a business across types of businesses

Nature of Business	Age Started Business	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t value	sig value
Trading	< 35 yrs	82	3.94	1.10	2.16	0.03*
	>35 yrs	30	3.38	1.35		
Manufacturing	< 35 yrs	78	4.46	1.47	0.55	0.58
	>35 yrs	10	4.19	1.29		
Service	< 35 yrs	114	2.78	0.74	1.28	0.20

	>35 yrs	26	2.56	0.51		
Profession	< 35 yrs	72	3.16	0.78	3.62	0.00*
	>35 yrs	16	2.42	0.46		
Total	< 35 yrs	346	3.51	1.23	2.84	0.00*
	>35yrs	82	3.07	1.17		

*Significant at 0.05 levels

Amongst the 20 women-owned businesses who were interviewed personally, 10 (50%) were young achievers, 6 (30%) were block factor entrepreneurs and 4 (20%) were finance/family driven entrepreneurs. Of the young achievers 40% reached the success-

growth stage, 40% reached the take-off stage and 10% reached the resource maturity stage. None of the young achievers [< 35 yrs. age at the inception of the business) disengaged on reaching the success stage. (Table No, 4). Thus, the findings of the case studies support the results of the analysis of the quantitative data.

Table No. 4. The distribution of women-owned businesses on the basis of Typology and Stages of Growth reached

Stages of growth	Types of women-owned businesses				
	Young Achievers (< 35 yrs. at inception)	Block Factor Entrepreneurs	Family/Finance Driven Entrepreneurs	Total	Percentage
Survival	1 (10)	2 (33)	1 (25)	4	20
Success-Disengage	-	1 (17)	1 (25)	2	10
Success-Growth	4 (40)	2 (33)	1 (25)	7	35
Take Off	4 (40)	-	1 (25)	5	25
Resource Maturity	1 (10)	1 (6)	-	2	10
Total	10 (50)	6 (30)	4 (20)	20	100

(Figures in parenthesis are percentages)

Finding 3: Analysis of the importance of risk attitude of women entrepreneurs in the growth of their business:

On an average, the main reasons for lack of growth of women-owned businesses have been averse to risk and fear of the problems of large sized business. Lack of family support is a factor that ranks last amongst all factors for lack of growth in business. It has been

observed that the cause for low growth has been largely attributed to the fact that women are averse to risk. [Table No. 5] The findings of the case study analysis also confirm this fact, in that young achievers have scaled heights by reaching the take-off and resource maturity stage, unlike the block factor entrepreneurs and family/finance driven entrepreneurs. The young achievers, not

being risk averse equip themselves in the path of growth.

Table No. 5: Table showing the ranking of factors contributing to low growth and its significance

Rank	Factors for lack of growth	N = 428 Response %	Chi-square value	Df	Sig
I	Averse to risk	72	19.110	3	0.00*
II	Fear of problems of large sized business	68	16.791	3	0.00*
III	Lack of support from banks	62	11.304	3	0.01*
IV	Lack of managerial skills	47	15.708	3	0.00*
V	Lack of marketing skills	38	5.370	3	0.15
VI	Lack of family support	32	14.251	3	0.00*

*Significant at 0.05 levels

IX. DISCUSSIONS

The findings of this study conform to research studies which have proven the influence of age of entrepreneurs at inception, in the creation of new business. In their paper titled 'Effect of aging on entrepreneurial behavior', Moren Levesque and Maria Minniti (2006) argue that the percentage of individuals attempting the creation of new firms are highest among people between the ages of 25 and 35 yrs. because with increasing age the present value of future returns from business reduces. According to them, everything else being the same, the age effect reduces the relative return to entrepreneurship as individuals become older. The finding of the present study that 81% of the women entrepreneurs were < 35 yrs. at inception of the business corresponds with this literature. The reducing growth factor of business with increasing age can also be explained by the fact that the present value of future returns from business will reduce as the woman entrepreneur grows older. Research studies conform

conventional wisdom that risk-taking decreases with age or the age-risk profile is downward sloping [Nancy Ammon Jianakopols and Alexandra Bernasek, 2006]. Thus, women who start business after the age of 35 yrs. will have less scope for growth.

The reasons for lack of growth of women-owned businesses in comparison to their male counterparts in business is found to be mainly - risk averseness and fear of large sized business. Studies show that the reason for this lack of growth lies in the very nature of women-owned businesses – their motivation to start a business, their expectation of business and their risk preferences. Women are more likely than men to start businesses to achieve a work-family balance (Brush et al., 2006, Boden 1999, Carter et al., 2003, DeMartino and Barbato [2003]. Lyberaki and Smyth [1990] observe that many women-owned businesses decide not to expand their enterprises so as to avoid visibility. They do not want to get involved in various regulations, taxes, etc. associated with larger

businesses. Managing employees, finance and other aspects of business is more complex in a large business which requires effective management skill. Thus to avoid these problems of large business women-owned businesses avoid growth of business. Women also start businesses that are smaller than those started by men. Studies of the surviving businesses show that those that are women-owned are smaller than those that are men-owned [Kalleberg and Leicht, 1991, Brush, 1992; Carter et al., 1997]. Female entrepreneurs tend to start types of businesses that have lower growth and income potential than male entrepreneurs [Brush 1992, Anna et al, 2000]. Research in sociology and psychology shows that women are more risk averse than men across a wide variety of settings [Arch, 1993; Byrnes et al., 1999]. In particular, women display a greater financial risk aversion than men [Jianakoplos and Bernasek 1998]. Some studies suggest that this greater risk aversion carries over to female entrepreneurs. In fact, one study shows that female entrepreneurs have lower risk propensity scores than male entrepreneurs on a psychological scale [Sexton and Bowman-Upton, 1990]) The greater risk aversion of female entrepreneurs also leads them to engage in greater amounts of risk minimizing activity (Mallette and McGuinness 2004).

Growth is after all a risk [Clare Brindley, 2005), a risk which may be financial or social and may come from exogenous or endogenous sources. Goffee and Scase (1985) identified that women regard growth as 'very risky' because it would deter them from achieving their goal of developing an employer-employee relationship based upon trust and mutual respect. Cliff [1998] believes that female business owners are more careful and conservative, striving for a controlled and manageable rate of growth. She goes on to argue that "deliberately chosen slower pace reflects a concern about

the risks and negative outcomes associated with expanding too quickly." The risks and negative outcomes tend to be personal rather than economic, such as the belief that fast-paced expansion will place inordinate demands on the entrepreneur's time and energy",

In the manufacturing and service lines of businesses [difference in growth factor not significant], there are factors in addition to age, which have an influence on the decision making regarding growth of business and on the risk taking ability in the growth phase. It is observed that risk perception of the entrepreneur influences the risk taking ability. Education and appropriate manufacturing/service skills create confidence in the woman entrepreneur to face the challenges of a business enterprise. These also enhance the risk assessment ability, improve the risk perception in a given business situation and thus facilitate decision making towards growth. Thus, well calculated risk assessment and risk perception [neither optimistic, nor pessimistic] will lead to the planned approach towards risk mitigation and thereby facilitate improved business performance [Sitkin and Pablo, 1992; Norton and Moore, 2006; Palich and Bagby, 1995; Willebrands et al. 2012; Murmann and Sardana, 2013]. Young women entrepreneurs with information and skills/knowledge in their area of business will be better equipped in risk management [risk assessment, risk perception and risk mitigation] and decision making in crucial stages of growth in their business.

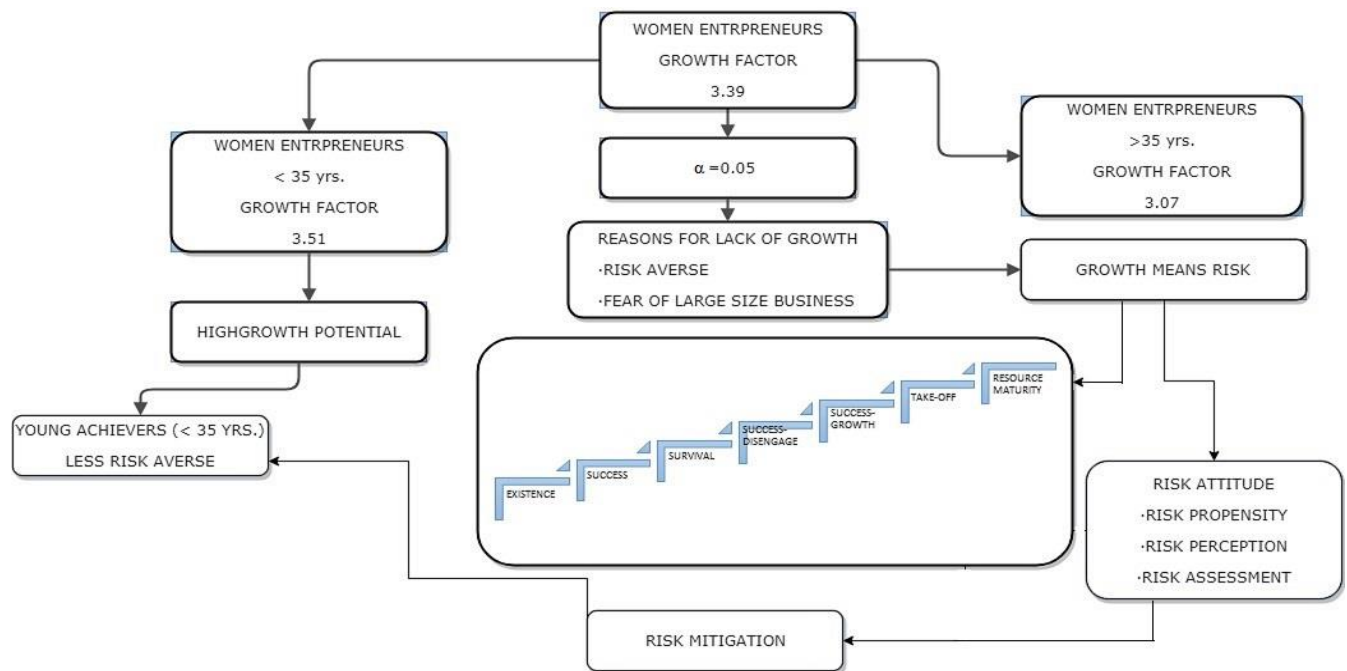
X. CONCLUSION

The findings of the research study and studies worldwide, clearly indicate the significance of age of a woman entrepreneur at inception of business. Age and risk attitude, being

negatively related, young achievers or women who start business at age < 35 years have a higher growth potential compared to those who start at age > 35 years. Growth means risk and women entrepreneurs fear the risk associated with large sized businesses. Risk attitude comprising risk propensity, risk

perception and risk assessment, influence decision making related to the growth of business. Women who opt for a career in business at a young age (young achievers) have the right risk attitude and have successfully taken the growth path.

AGE AT INCEPTION OF BUSINESS – AN INDICATOR OF GROWTH IN BUSINESS



Thus, recommendations to policy makers and educationists towards promoting the growth of women-owned businesses towards sustainable development of nations are:

- Focus on developing entrepreneurial skills among young girls by making necessary changes in the syllabi of High School, Under Graduate and Post Graduate Programs.
- Training programs for aspiring young women-owned businesses on relevant technical, legal, financial, marketing and management skills to improve their confidence and risk assessment proficiency.
- Formulation of policies and schemes to facilitate growth of women-owned businesses through tax incentives, subsidies and financial /marketing assistance.

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