

Role of woman in an international context essay sample

[Sociology](#), [Women](#)



A research approach to role of women in business, women in entrepreneurship and gender values in an international context and an examination of culture, gender inequality and women and family values as they venture and participate in business on an international context.

Introduction

The role of women in an international approach is consistently changing. There is a dynamic change of attitude in communities about women roles in business and family. More women are joining the labour market becoming very apt managers, and better corporate executives.

However on an international context, more women do not take up international and long distance jobs based on the fact that women in foreign countries experience abuse, sexual advances by their male counterparts, miss their families and become emotionally receptive to the extent that all this prevents them from being effective on their jobs (Stroh, Varma & Valy-Durbin 2005)

Gender inequality in modern society is still rife. Gender inequality has contributed to a decline in women socio-economic growth contributions. There is a need to understand the basic methodologies of helping women, both through active participation in the society and through legislation so as to help the women to become active in social-economic activities and leadership in business. Men and society have biased women roles and have for a long time sidelined the women as family care takers and the maids of

all sorts of community based issues. Women are integral units of the society, family and social stability.

On a cross cultural context communities have dwelt on the importance of educating the girl child into top level education distinctions. This hypothetical approach to capacitating the woman has led to more women becoming empowered through education. As such more women have been able to join the labour industry in high number during the past two decades in both developing and the developed economies. More educated women are becoming participants in liberation of women from gender violence and bias in the business front. Participation in business management, engineering, teaching and computer science are courses and careers being taken up by women nowadays, (Burke R, 2001).

Internationally there are different perceptions on role of women in the socio-economic activities. Oppressive social values and policies in social level inhibit women from active participation and ventures in these socio-economics activities. It is seen that women are sidelined from taking up senior position in corporations. Most corporate executives in most developed economies are men and women play second fiddle. Societal factors including family leadership and parenting inhibit women from becoming active business entrepreneurs. There are so many women who have learnt and attained distinction in many entrepreneurial fields and have developed skills and management abilities which can help steer business to higher levels.

Participation of women in formal business practices has significantly grown and more women have rose in ranks to become successful business leaders and corporate executives of multinationals. More women will become successful entrepreneur's who will subsequently help and become community empowers and capacity builders through enterprising in other women and make a socio-economically stable society throughout the world.

Transition of woman's roles compared with old generation 1950-1980 and now 1990-2007

The entry of women into active business practice and has been going on over the years. Establishment of businesses owned and managed by women while still actively and responsibly taking care of their families has been a key issue in the successful maintenance of the family values and the business. These transformations in women activities and their participation in business began in the early 1920's with a significant number of women entering the labour market in senior level capacities.

Checking the participation and assessing the impact on family and community perception has been researched on especially on a perspective of women participation in management. This is because management is the principal and key element of institutions and all clusters of business.

The entry of women in high profile entrepreneurship shows the proficiency and ability, skills and much potential in women. Over the 50's women began to become middle level executives with active roles in institutions.

They showed a different approach to family and entrepreneurship whereby, it was possible for them to become mothers and good parents while they could still manage a business without complicating ethic of management. Its within this context it became apparent men and women can work together for a common goal, but gender bias, stereotyping problems and social responsibility, norms and values made these achievements problematic.

Over the mid 70's and the mid 80's more institutions were optimistic that giving women a chance would help improve productivity as well as empower women socio-economically (James 2003)

How women act in business and family

Life expectancy and decreasing wages as well as poor background of men and their families has led to women becoming more dynamic in their search for secure life for their children. Most women in the informal employment and business are in such activities because of decreased social welfare and poor amenities for their children which through participation in these activities can transform these situations in the family. On cross cultural approach, women are violated and left to strife to help their children because of societal values as well as religious norms which reflect on them negatively.

The main problem in the society is the question of how a woman can be able to offer proper parenting and other social responsibilities. Women have created schedules and programs in their working programme. They seek to address their family issues and make them priority so as to maintain a

balance of competency at work and consistency in good parenting and having amicable relation with the husband.

Saudi Arabia is known for its male abuse on women and lack of proper legislation on women rights. In a Muslim perspective, the Sharia laws have not undermined women potential in entrepreneurship. There is the traditional belief that there is no greater role a woman can play apart from maternal responsibilities in the family, the rest are a mans tasks. However Islamic concepts as within the Sharia stipulate that a woman is a partner who deserves opportunity and participation. Islam does not prohibit women from working, as it says women should be treated well since they are partners and helpers in the family.

Married women may seek employment although it is often thought in patriarchal societies that the woman's role as a wife and mother should have first priority. Islam unequivocally allows both single and married women to own property in their own right. Today's woman is able to traverse various corporate requirements in a timely manner and at the same time go home after work and take care of her family properly. In the past, women were seen as unable to become over-involved in day to day activities.

Most notable is the women's perspective in making a difference in management. According to Davidson & Burke, women have become important role models in work and family. They have made a difference in providing quality products or services, being part of the community, looking

after clients and other more socially-oriented objectives as opposed to male preferred pure economic objectives of social growth and wealth creation.

Women take seriously all aspects of necessities in life like a stable family, good education for the children, good relations with the husband as well as good friends. (Davidson & Burke 2006) argue that women's businesses are not homogenous enterprises; neither are women small business operators a homogenous group. This diversity means that women do not necessarily follow same growth trajectories as men in business because some of these attributes and conditions. This concludes that women have conserved their abilities as managers both at the home front, social level and in corporate level.

The family values might have worried the community making it feel not contented to allow women to actively participate in business. More than 60% of women in the societal level practice indigenous businesses to raise their standards of lives and to support their families. This shows that women, though active and dynamic still respect family and espouse the virtue of family. Dior needs in family life and a passion to achieve more status and significant roles in family and society has prompted this active practice of entrepreneurship. Initiatives to improve women's economic situations demonstrate the need for indigenous solutions to women's problems. It is paramount that women need access and opportunities, not paternalism (Howells 1993, p. 22)

According to Toyne, women find themselves in tight position when in business as well as when in management positions. The problem within is that, women especially those who have families have to show discipline in addressing family needs as well as showing the management command. This isolation feeling is demoralizing and women are gradually making through it.

Balancing between work and family is not easy and so many men have developed attitudes towards their wives participation and practice in business and business related positions. Many men perceive the role of women in these economic activities as not compliant with family values and they tend to distance the woman from being obedient and loving and instead transform her into a receptive and abusive leading to a broken family. However many women are showing a different approach to their active participation in business activities. They show they can handle family and business and perform in both responsibly.

A continental comparison on the transition of women in business activities

Gender based shift in household composition has led to different perceptions on women roles in business and their abilities in maintaining a compact family shows diversity in public support on women achievements as managers. Also, empirical research shows considerable diversity. Lazreg argues that, higher percentage of economically active women is informally employed.

Over ninety percent of women working outside of agriculture in India and Indonesia, nearly three- quarters of women in Zambia, four-fifths of those in

Lima, Peru and more than two-thirds of those in the Republic of Korea work informally (WIEGO, 2001). In Turkey, 30 percent of the women are engaged in home-based work in traditional crafts (UNDP, 1997). Secondly, in addition to constraints faced by informally employed workers with regards to assets, markets, services and regulatory frameworks, women face additional gender-specific barriers. These restrictions involve difficulties to entering into contracts, insecure property rights, household and childcare responsibilities.

Europe and America lead in women entrepreneurship and active family participation and propagation of family principles. Africa has begun opening up to gender equality and women participation in economic affairs and being included in socio-politics. Asia and Latin America have deficits in establishing ethics and leaving cultural trends that inhibit integration of women in active participation in socio-business and socio-politics. Eunice (2006) argues that, in 1983 countries like Australia legislated to promote equal opportunity for women to eliminate gender and women discrimination in socio-economics. (Lazreg 2007) says that, Women in the Europe and Central Asia region complain about loss of employment, sexual harassment, and violence, poor enforcement of the law, poor political representation, and poor health care.

The main aspect of the gender diversity and the cross cultural perspective on business and women participation in business, the fact that people adhere strongly to customary practices of familiar obligation, women have to contend against social ethics and prove their commitment to family, Segal, Layne (1995)

In Central and Eastern Europe women's informal employment has been taken up as a strategy to escape poverty. It reflects on women's informal employment, at different stages of their life cycle, in a region with growing poverty resulting from the transition to market capitalism and global economic integration.

In Africa inroads on gender sensitive policies in business has seen significant rise in women in micro-enterprising and community level business activities. In various countries poverty levels and industrialization have let down economic growth dwarfing opportunity and scope of aggressive women participation and practice in business.

Poor housing in low income families has seen most of the mothers in these families seek employment or take up informal business. A chunk of households in urban settlements are women headed due to this problem. Also more women are now joining self help groups which are playing significant roles in building better housing for the women (Larson 1989). The ideology is that, more women in business are creating sustainable development and creating stable families. They save more and invest wisely than men (Segal, Lyne 1995)

Possible opportunity in business or responsibility in family for women

Enterprising and small scale business practices have become the commonplace opportunities for most women seeking entrepreneurship. Women have taken up micro-businesses. Informal opportunities include hawking, vending, street food selling activities, and stall based business.

Women who run these businesses keep records of their sales so as to know their income and capital base. Another cluster of informal business opportunities include: candy makers, seamstresses and hairdressers. On cooperative aspects, the women are involved in production of handicrafts like in the Turkish society, food processing and small scale manufacturing operations Buzzard, Edgcomb(1992)

The deficiencies in the current demanding society contribute to this aggressive approach of women into business, within the urban setting, much of the business activity is informal, home-based due to discrimination in formal employment. Success of these ventures is dependent on the woman's skills, education and experience. The international perspective on reason of active participation being that; Women increased involvement in income generating activities is due to financial pressure on household due to economic restructuring, rising prices of goods and services, falling wages and rise of male unemployment (Chant, 1996)

In the present, banks have not yet opened up to more lending opportunities to women entrepreneurs, this has caused difficulties in start up capital availability subsequently making competent start up a difficult exercise or initiative. Micro financing enterprises have taken active roles in lending women capital to initiate businesses. Some NGO'S also are using capacity building and empowerment principles to help women in venture start up capital. This trend is meant o keep the women at their toes and make their desire to be equal partners be defunct (Abbott, Wallace & Tyler 2005).

Informal business form the basis of successful ventures especially in start up type of business. This is because the setting offers a broader view on the demographics making accessibility of products and services easier while the business woman is able to identify opportunity and customer-clientele needs more comprehensively (Punnett 2004)

According to UNDP report it's apparent in many developing countries, informal employment accounts for large share of output and employment. For instance, it accounts for more than half of non-agricultural employment in Latin America and the Caribbean, nearly half in East Asia and as much as 80 percent in other parts of Asia and Africa. It is also responsible for 93 percent of new jobs in Africa and 83 percent in Latin America and the Caribbean. Almost three-fourths of manufacturing in South East Asia is done by informally employed workers.

For those countries where estimates exist, the informal sector accounts for 45 to 60 percent of non-agricultural GDP. A majority of the world's workers are in informal employment and their households generate low incomes which maintain most of them under the poverty line. Their numbers are growing under the impact of globalization: the mobility of capital, the restructuring of production of goods and services and the deregulation of labour markets is pushing an increasing number of workers into informal employment. (UNDP 2003)

UNDP cross-national survey on informal business practices by women shows that women are increasing their participation in entrepreneurship. It shows

that Over ninety percent of women working outside of agriculture in India and Indonesia, nearly three-quarters of women in Zambia, four-fifths of those in Lima, Peru and more than two-thirds of those in the Republic of Korea work informally. In Turkey, 30 percent of the women are engaged in home-based work in traditional crafts (UNDP, 2004)

There are numerous problems faced when investing or doing business in other countries. Entrepreneurs in developing countries face frequent changes in laws and regulations. Entrepreneurs complain of unpredictability. And governments complain of reform fatigue, blaming the development aid agencies. Yet reforms in developing countries are rare. Many have been stuck with the same laws and regulations for decades: Mozambique's company law dates from 1888, Angola's from 1901. No legal change there. The difficulties businesses face come from a lack of information and from discretion in enforcement (The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development / The World Bank 2005)

5 countries where it's easy for a woman to do business based on culture and various reasons.

Kenya is becoming one of the most women compatible countries in business though not on the political front and human rights. Over four women are involved in business activities throughout the country and outside the country due to their expanded business networks and the success of their business. This rapid growth of gender disparity and women business practices is based on industrialization trends and a more civilized culture

(Stroh, Varma & Vally-Durbin 2005) . Other factors include poor male performance in providing the family with basic necessities.

Tanzania, India, New Zealand, Turkey, UK and USA also have numerous women involved in the labour market and entrepreneurship. Tanzania has embraced gender equality. Many women have risen to major roles in nation building and international positions including top United Nations jobs. Anna Rose Migiro works as a UN top official which is a great milestone to women achievements worldwide.

USA offers a broader chance of business opportunities for women due to increased economic growth, information technology growth and diversified service industry growth. Consultants, writers and lawyers and many other service industry professionals are now women who offer these services through their own companies.

In Turkey, women have ventured into production business and have become the major players in the informal sector. Their contributions are very important in the national economic growth. The hand craft industry in Turkey is heavily dependent on women. Other home based businesses thrive under the leadership of women.

In the UK gender equality has been addressed and women are aggressive in both politics and economic activities. The UK has attracted thousands of women entrepreneurs from all over the world. Indian businessmen and women, Islamic community and African women have ventured into capital markets real estate and export and also commodity trading

5 countries where it's difficult for a woman to do business based on culture and various reasons.

Congo in Africa is the most dangerous country to conduct business in for women. It is also the most risky country for a family due to constant war and community conflicts. Companies that have invested in mining activities are involved with rag tag militias which rape, abuse of children and killing of innocent lives making life and productivity completely impossible.

Japan: Japanese understand that it is very difficult for foreigners to work in Japan. They will not expect one to speak or read Japanese, or be conversant with their strict cultural nuances and protocol. Mistakes are allowed as long as genuine respect is shown at all times. They will usually try to help you but often feel embarrassment at their own lack of understanding or English language ability. This ends up frustrating business women and related subjects due to these socio-cultural barriers. Women cannot be able to venture into such environment since it will victimise and put them into risky situations.

Saudi Arabia is top with huge women abuse cases and demoralization of women ambitions. It is readily apparent that many women in the Middle East are not treated well, and this may well explain some of the problems in the region. In some Arab countries women can not vote, or can not drive, or can not own a business, or can not even work outside the home (N Dahan 2007)

Sub-Saharan Africa make up the list of economies with the most difficult business conditions for both women and general business men and

investors. (The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development / The World Bank, 2005)

Slovakia, Columbia, Jamaica are also countries which have very difficult principles when women are involved in business

Women views about men's attitudes to women entrepreneurship

Women have struggled against many factors coming on the way of their success. There is the societal view of women being unequal to men and traditional relationships of exploitation that need to be overcome. These factors have been very debilitating to the efforts of these women to break free from their traditional role as the oppressed. Women and family have been viewed as one inseparable unit, a reason why their participation in business has elicited divergent perceptions. This is seen in the divergent views of men towards women in business. Women view men in with suspicion, especially their husbands. In a generalised family perspective, women view men as liars and opportunists. They are on the look out for every possible opportunity to take advantage of their women's little resources and misappropriate these resources.

In most homes in Kenya, Islamic nations and in the West, men have been blamed for taking away money belonging to their wives or using their women's money and business resources. The reason is meant to demoralize a woman so that she can stop doing business and be dependent on the man as is in tradition. Saudi Arabian and Japanese women report high rates of abuse when they make money through legitimate business by their men who

want them to be confined at home working in building their family. Saudi Arabia has the highest rates of women abuse cases. Women here are tasked to be men's slaves.

Those who do not obey have been raped and prosecuted. Women participation in business is under the guardianship of the men and the relatives. Women are confined in their homes and have to take care of families and help in bringing up children. It is very dangerous to practice business in Saudi Arabia. Women are not allowed to move or relate freely. Many rape cases, abuse and battering in the streets when women are on their own have made it impossible for women to do business at all.

Japan ranks as one of the countries where gender equity is highly questionable. There are various issues across the cultural and industrial façade of Japan that make it a very unequal nation even with its diverse industrial and economic diversity. Japanese culture has completely blanketed progress of women entrepreneurship even after their efforts to lay bare their frustrations under the cultural bias. There is no legislation on women equity in the labour market or even in the social circles.

Society believes women have to channel their efforts through men. Men are blamed for their overtly aggressive behaviour, this they extend to the workplace where the working conditions are relatively poor further intimidating women (Yvone et al). These attitudes towards women mean oppressive values (De Mente). There are no women chances or legislation that supports women participation in entrepreneurship making Japan another

backward country in women development and participation in socio-economics. The M-curve in Japan shows more dynamism in oppressive virtues and chauvinistic features of its society (Yamamura et al 2004). This oppressive and negative socio-economic culture pits even Western entrepreneurs in a very bad stead..

America has fewer numbers of oppressive doctrines which women view as negative attitudes towards them. In general women do not trust men with finances gained from their business activities and do their business with a lot of secret. Only feminists and hardliner women are able to thrive in the hostility and pull through the family barrier which women view s their inspiration as well as their main problem with men

Increased poverty levels in Latin American have seen a transition in women activities. Their participation in informal businesses is viewed sceptically. The women fear that their families are under threat of extreme poverty and disease due to expensive healthcare and life. They have to practice business to fill the deficit in the family budget; they view men as threats to their business activities. The general perception is that men are not ready for successful women entrepreneurs. Men want the women to practice business informally and remain at home most of time to take care of the family.

Men views about women in business

There are diverse feelings about women in business in these countries. In Kenya women have been respected and given chances to develop their potential. This is seen mostly in the metropolitan areas and the capital. In

the rural areas women practicing business have found themselves in problems. Men want them to be closer to family work. Men in these rural areas have traditionally been the sole bread winners and are not yet ready for active women and women participation in business (David 2006).

In the American way of life nowadays, the projections about women is generalised with little left for men to chip in and control women. Only in the Caucasian, Blacks and Hispanics do men have more expounded views on family and women. Many men want their women in the house with the children not in the streets doing business with amorous men and other bad people. Men see women as vulnerable and better off in the family circle and at home rather in the offices and in any informal activities.

In UK and majority of developed Europe, women are still grappling with gender inequality in a depressed manner. The cold war stereotyped gender and made women roles seem like supposed to be in silence. There are minimal number of prominent big business women on the lime light though they are active in business. The men virtues reflect on being bread winners and the sole business practicers. They value family and want their women to be close to the family that in the informal environment. The important thing, however, is resilience and efforts to continue to pursue this goal. (Dawdle 2003 p 3)

Going back to the 50's fashion and informal businesses like vending and informal areas commodity and merchandizing was set into motion by women entrepreneurs whose families were having problems due to absentee fathers

who either had died in the world war or had become incapacitated. The necessities that the children and the obligations that face women then forced them to seek ways to raise money to cater for cost of bringing provisions which would cater for these family obligations.

Over the 50's throughout to the 70's and early 80's a shift in the labour market and commodity trading from the traditional male monopoly and stereotyping perspectives changed. Women gradually began taking entrepreneurial roles more seriously. Gender inequality began being highlighted and was subject to scrutiny in organizations and organizations change. Women began making significant contributions in the labour market. More women were employed in sewing factories in Europe and Asia. China and much of South East Asia did not open up to this organization change. There was culture change in the workplace and women were given bigger roles. In the late 70" s it was clear that women seemed to advance in medium size businesses as well as important and skilled workers.

Nation-states, intermediary organizations and institutions also influence women abilities and roles in business and family. Women have not neglected family and social values but have sought after improving their potential to play larger and more significant roles in these basic units of the society. Since the 80's throughout the 90's women organizations have tremendously made progress in creating opportunities for women.

They have devolved leadership and family roles making family a collective responsibility while making women active providers of food and shelter for

the family just like a man used to. They have begun forming cooperatives which women can borrow money to begin businesses. This capacity building activity has managed to empower so many women and raised family status from a passive and recipient unit which only functions under a man.

In the recent past (80's- 90's) women have shown they are better in business and management of businesses and organizations than men. Corporations in various companies have employed significant number of women as managing directors, human resource managers and in top level corporate executive posts. We can say the 90's have been very productive and liberalizing years for the woman and family in comparison with the early 50's.

Advertising and women enterprising

In Asia, India model clubs of poor most poor women being are now advertised as indicators of participative in enterprising (Adunka blog 2007). SEWA organizes women who work in their homes, in the streets of cities, in the fields and villages of rural India, with no fixed employer, carving their small niches in the economy, day by day, with only their wits to guide them against incredible odds of vulnerability, invisibility, and poverty.

From these common bases, diverse individuality in trades, religious and ethnic backgrounds, and living environments are brought together. The image portrayed by the media does not reflect on the passive male but showcases the passive woman and the children encountering numerous problems. Where these women are individually extremely vulnerable to the

forces of their day-to-day poverty which are compounded by financial exploitation, physical abuse, and general social harassment, they have found that collectively they are able to struggle against these forces and odds to effect change in their lives and work (McLean 2007)

These approaches to portray women contributions and struggle to become financially stable are essential in creating more opportunities and portray these efforts as important in socio-economics. Though the media is biased against women achievements and only has a panache to explicit sexuality of women, advertising has changed a bit from mainstream commercials based on sensual and sexual woman to a corporate and assertive woman.

Country where there are successful women CEO and easy to do business for women

Women chief executive officers are now emerging from all walks of life especially in the West. Various corporations have their CEO as a woman and she is up to the task. In Africa, Kenya has over forty women chief executives officers in various companies including some indigenous banks.

The USA has a significant count of women chief executives. Jennifer Dulski is a veteran exec was made CEO of Fatdoor, a new online neighbourhood community platform. Calvin Klein Jeans was under Suzanne Karkus, she had been the President of that division for womens wear she is now Senior Vice President of Apparel at Under Armour Inc. Lois Juliber (former COO of Colgate-Palmolive) and Anne Busquet (former CEO of Local & Media Services

for IAC/Interactive Corp) are in Boards after long careers in consumer products and media and finance.

What women think about men's treatment of women in business and family in the above countries?

Women have cited amorous ways when dealing with men. They claim men are shrewd but not straight when dealing with a woman. They cite sexual harassment when transacting or trying to win a deal, men ask for sexual favours in return. Though men are efficient and reliable in business, they are still abusing women even today.

Men's perception about doing business with women and their expectations in women in business and family in the above countries

Women are no match to men when transacting or making corporate ventures. Men claim women lack the potential to commit to heavy and risky ventures and rather opt going easy when investing. This delays time to make money unlike men who like risking and making quick money at a short notice.

Women have problems on the domestic front now and then when they are in these activities. Children and their fathers complain of the woman being less supportive and always unavailable to the family. The perception by men and family about women involved in business is that they are unavailable, stressed and independent. These qualities are not liked by majority of men,

Men have found out that women in top leadership in business never help other women in the companies. They note that women are selfish and have personal goals and family as priorities not the corporate objectives. It is apparent Women do well in finance, media, retail, marketing and start-ups, but they are very close to their family feelings than the business and corporate responsibilities ahead of them. (Alice Krause 2007)

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