

## DOON HOME CHEFS: CHANGING TRENDS OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP

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**DOI No. – 08.2020-25662434**

### Abstract

Being **Home Chef** has transformed the women's world. In the present era where lots of issues are going around related to women, there are some good and major points that must be discussed and bring forward to mass audience. Home chef is a growing business opportunity, catering to the millennial's need for 'ghar ka khana'. Many women are setting up roadside food trucks which are an inspirational task in breaking gender taboos. **Women entrepreneurship** is growing these days. There are some successful real case studies in this field that should be penned down to encourage the doers and ambitious people. A home delivery application like zomato and swiggy is playing a vital role for enhancing taste buds and employment opportunities. People working from home have their own unique **kitchen stories** spreading food aroma whether related to bakery, pickle or tiffin services.

This research study will help in understanding the progress of women working as home chefs, achieving heights and balancing household responsibilities at the same time. We can consider that women are all-rounder as they manage work & family equally with full dedication. Each home chef makes dishes unique to their culture & cuisine. The biggest benefit is the **health factor** as home chefs don't use preservatives and use less oil and masalas, just like they would, when cooking for their families. Case Study method will be used for this research paper and main focus will be to bring real stories of women home chefs from Dehradun forward. Home chefs too must be facing some hurdles in their journey of survival and being successful.

**Keywords:** Home chef, women entrepreneurship, kitchen stories, health factor, real stories

### METHODOLOGIES AND APPROACHES

The research is made for making an investigation about Changing Trends of Women Entrepreneurship being Home Chefs in Dehradun. Case study method is used under this research in order to know what hurdles are being faced by home chefs throughout their journey of commencement as women.

Four case studies of real stories are focused in this research with an implementation of an interview method of the four. The study is mainly based on primary data collected by respondents with the help of structured questions. All questions were open ended with the motive to collect data focused on kitchen stories, health factor, women entrepreneurship and customers' feedbacks.

The analysis through case study will give us a clear image of how Doon Home Chefs are working as the changing trends of women entrepreneurship.

Data for this study is also collected from the secondary sources. The secondary data includes books, magazines, journals, blogs and different websites for discussing the scope and digital

promotions in this particular field of home chefs.

### MAIN SUB HEADS

- Introduction
- Statement of problem & Significance of Research
- Review of Literature
- Case Study I: Deep's Kitchens
- Case Study II: Kya Khaoge Ji
- Case Study III: R Foods
- Case Study IV: Shree Krishna Gujrati Sweets & Namkeen
- Data analysis
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### INTRODUCTION

A woman being the kitchen in-charge at home has now stepped into the hospitality industry. Home Chef is becoming a profession for females to work and manage household responsibilities equally. In the present era of digital age where people are busy in jobs, students are equipped in accomplishing good grades and live far from home; they miss 'Ghar ka Khana'. Therefore it came forward as the rise of Home Chefs' profession.

Health and hygiene is the main factor that people are looking for because purity is lacking in food products and trust factor is decreasing. Through home chef profession house wives got an opportunity to show their immense love for food making and it came out as their passion. Building up business is not easy but women are breaking taboos. They have adopted the path of being an entrepreneur, also they are struggling and growing in the field of hospitality.

India is a place where diverse culture exists and diverse taste buds too. Dehradun is developing with a large number of food lovers as bloggers, home chefs, café, food joints, hotels & restaurant owners. Four case studies of women home chefs are being discussed in this research study which will explain the changing trends of women entrepreneurship in Dehradun.

### STATEMENT OF PROBLEM & SIGNIFICANCE OF RESEARCH

The scope of women as home chefs is growing these days as females feel managed to work simultaneously with household responsibilities. There are certain hurdles that chefs are facing and at the same time they are growing as women entrepreneurs with felicitation and recognition.

It is also important to bring transparency in the matter that if home chefs are caring about health factor and hygiene? How internet is benefitting to grow their business? What type of target audience prefers food orders by home chefs?

There are several real stories all over the globe which could come forward as an inspiration and motivation but have lacked behind. Therefore this research is very significant to bring those real stories forward through research work focusing on the changing trends of women entrepreneurship in the field of hospitality industry.

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

From leaving secure full-time jobs to pursue their passion, to fighting uphill battles to get to

where they are today, these women are making a positive impact in the foodservice industry. According to a McKinsey & Co's Women in the food industry report, women are underrepresented at all levels in the food industry. With 49% of entry-level employees being women and only 23% represent at the top. But, more and more women within this industry are working together to create new opportunities for one another, whether it's through mentorship, jobs, support groups, you name it. They are empowering one another every day and it's amazing to see. In the new eco system of businesses spawned from the travel, tourism, hospitality and culinary industries, there are an amazing number of careers and opportunities for students and young professionals. According to the Founder & CEO Indian School of Hospitality, recently hosted the India competition for women and it was a delight to be able to give the contestants our cutting-edge infrastructure to work with, and seeing their ease in creating some truly out of this world dessert, chocolate and sugar creations. Last year, two British living legends shared their views on women working in the culinary field. The outcome, which should have been inspiring, was, sadly, the exact opposite.

Both stated that women were less adept to work in a professional kitchen due to 'difficulty lifting heavy pots', with one stating women were fighting their career countdown against their 'biological clock', and the other saying women are 'too emotional and take things too personally' and that 'men handle pressure better'. A bold statement from a chef who would throw unhappy customers out of his restaurants, or, even more, get into physical fights with them.

Now let's step into the shoes of female culinary students and professionals. The women who spend hours studying tirelessly to achieve their dream. The women who toil away in kitchens, carving out their own niche. These same women have followed the struggles and stories of male chefs and have pushed themselves more, telling themselves they too can reach the same success if they just work harder. Comments like these reveal the murkier side of the gender disparity within the culinary world. In the United Kingdom, the origin country of the two aforementioned chefs, the number of female chefs is just 17%. In India, it's even more evident. India, with its skyrocketing F&B sector, has female chefs making up a miniscule 3% of the workforce.

While times are changing and rise of home chef is taking place – it's also time for more change and growth for women as entrepreneurs.

### **CASE STUDY I: DEEP'S KITCHENS**

Based in Dehradun, Ms. Deepa Chawla is working as Home Chef since 1994 by the name of Deep's Kitchens. At the age of 42 she is heading the Department of Hotel Management in Dev Bhoomi Group of Institutions. She is also General Secretary at Chef Association of Garhwal.

She commenced her journey of being home chef with love and passion for food after marriage. Initially she started home classes for ladies and interested students. She worked in the sector of bakery items, jams, pickles and food catering for kitty parties or small gatherings. Further she participated in Master Chef India Season I and got selected in top 50 which has been one of the great achievements for her. Later she also got into food blogging where the era of internet was utilized fully.

By qualification Chef Deepa has done Masters in Hotel Management. She has been also awarded with the Diploma in International Development of Culinary Profession & Gastronomy.

Further, Chef did an innovation of new recipes and the recipes which has been lost. She brought up the lost recipes through cookery shows in Dehradun. She joined 'Rasoi Queen' cookery competition as a host since 2016. She always have an eye on the health factor and hygienic food

that must be served to people.

The achievement of Deep's Kitchen is that her pickles are in demand in the South region of India. She supplies her food items in Trivandrum, Chennai & Kerala at large scale on orders. It's been 25 years, Ms. Deepa is working as Home Chef and is recognized as an inspiration by other women entrepreneurs in the field of hospitality. She has also motivated several women to come forward and work for themselves by providing them relevant platforms and opportunities.

"Sometimes it's okay to start fresh, regardless of your age. Life is too short to do what you don't want to do. This has been an amazing journey that I've just embarked on", Chef Deepa says.

### **CASE STUDY II: KYA KHAOGE JI**

Due to financial crisis in the year 2012 after two years of her husband expired, she started to work as home chef. She faced a lot of hurdles to maintain her living. Time management with household work and children was a tough task. Initially customer finding and food payment was not easy. People used to take for granted because work was done from home.

She also served into tiffin food service, buffet lunch, and government offices. Her forte is North Indian cuisine. And it is inspiring to know that she is a double Masters & Ph.D holder.

She has done Mastery in South Indian and Chinese cuisines as it is more in demand according to her feedback from business. She is a motivational speaker too and has earlier worked as a teacher in schools.

Her name is Ms. Annu, she is based in Dehradun. She is 53+ by age and achieving rewards and recognitions for making efforts as home chef. We're contributing to the food economy and I'm so grateful for it!

She says, "I'm part of a female entrepreneur group and we get together to discuss our businesses, challenges and wins. I've always believed that I could do it, and being surrounded by so many amazing, supportive women really validates those feelings. We help each other when needed, give sanity checks when needed; there's always someone else in the same boat as you so you're never really alone!"

### **CASE STUDY III: R FOODS**

At the age of 33 & with the name of R Foods, Ms. Rosy Kaur is an owner of Food Truck in Dehradun since 2018. Five years before, she started work from home preparing Chinese and Indian cuisines. She also prepared food for parties and stalls. Her roots belong to Punjab Ludhiana, and got married in Dehradun.

Due to the challenges of life after marriage, she identified and came forward with her talent of good food cooking. She wanted to stand out and therefore ended up with an idea to start a food joint in a roadside truck.

Rosy Kaur started her journey as a small home chef where she faced a lot of hurdles in between and currently she is identified as the first lady of Dehradun to start a roadside food truck. She offers snacks, Chinese food and beverages at her food joint.

She shared her problems that working as a home chef is not an easy task. Customers start expecting the food items to be served at very low cost because the food is prepared from home itself, business is not regular initially and a lot of bargaining comes in your way.

Rosy took part in Rasoi Queen Cookery competition where she was selected in top 5 finalists out of 75. It was a turning point of her life. She met other aspiring women and found her way out towards achievements. She also won the first position in Youth Festival Cooking Competition. Currently R Foods owner is Joint secretary at the Chef association of Garhwal too. According to

Rosy Kaur, "Being a women entrepreneur is a tough task but worth it".

Rosy says, "'I've always had a very strong entrepreneurial spirit, calling everyone I knew and telling them about all of my business ideas and I finally just decided to take this leap of faith. All of my success to this day validates that I made the right choice. This has been the most fulfilling thing I've ever done, professionally. Its hard work, but this whole experience has given me a tremendous amount of confidence."

#### **CASE STUDY IV: SHREE KRISHNA GUJRATI SWEETS & NAMKEEM**

The owner of Shree Krishna Gujrati Sweets& Namkeen as Home Chef is Ms. Neeta Kansara. She shifted from Gujarat in the year 2009 to Dehradun. Her specialty is Guajarati Food. She believes that people here are not getting authentic Guajarati food taste, therefore she decided to start a business from home since 2018.

Her forte is in authentic in demand Gujarati Food that includes Dhokla, Khandvi, Khaman Dhokla, Gathiya, Gujarati Samosa, Undhiyu, Aam Shrikhand with Mango Salad, Gujarati Kadhi, Bardoli ki Khichdi, Methi ka Thepla, Fafda and much more.

She started getting orders and through home chef profession at the age of 45 her love for food turned into a good earning source. She started getting orders from ONGC Club and Anandam. Feedback has been very positive for her food and still she is growing. Health and hygiene is the main factor she looks up to.

In future she has a desire to open a restaurant dealing in authentic Gujarati Thali and lip-smacking dishes of Gujarati food items in Dehradun.

Neeta Kansara elaborates, "Being an entrepreneur requires an incredible amount of hard work. You'll make mistakes all of the time, some very costly, but you'll learn from them. I think I've been very fortunate because I found something that people want and those people completely embrace it."

#### **DATA ANALYSIS**

Qualitative method is used under this research to collect primary data. Interview was conducted with four home chefs from Dehradun of different stages. Qualitative methods collects data concerned with describing meaning. This method is exploratory in nature and answers how and why decisions are made. The respondents elaborated their journey of being home chef.

The case studies include the Home Chef's stories who have successfully furnished there business from last 20 years. Also, some recent startup who have recently set up their business and are successfully running it with ease.

Financial factor and time management occurred as a hurdle for the profession of home chef. The selected home chef's also expressed that receiving payment of the delivered food was a task even after completing the job.

The positive side of home food was it is made in home and less factor question the food in terms of hygiene. Students or employees away from home prefer homemade food.

#### **CONCLUSION**

The scenario of women home chef as entrepreneurs is a fairly new development, though: we come from a culture where it's perfectly normal for women to be in charge in the kitchen at home. Even after facing hurdles financially home chefs can be said as a successful business that is not only pushing boundaries but also is giving a direction to the people who have lost hopes. The research also concluded that factors like hygiene and home food being popular among

student and employees away from home is booming more and more not only in the metro cities like Mumbai, Delhi but also in state like Uttarakhand. The women we have spoken to are just some of the amazing women who are moving mountains for themselves and others within the foodservice industry. And most importantly, they're paving the way for the next generation.

Its time for Foodpreneurs to shine. These home chefs have the flexibility on how many orders they can fulfill as they have many responsibilities and also since they don't run a commercial kitchen. Earnings is based on their hours of operation and the number of menus being listed. Most of the home chefs will be doing a turnover of Rs 30,000 to 50,000 per month this year. Some are on course to earning one lakh a month.

Through research it is found that Dr Mona Dahiya, keen to help home kitchen chefs that if they had a platform that was able to address their challenges and help them run a business in a professional way. She did consumer research of 2000 correspondents both consumers and homemakers and established that 90 percent of respondents preferred home food over eating outside. Also, 97 percent trusted home food to be healthy and hygienic.

These insights led to Mona Dahiya starting up Homefoodi along with her husband, Narendra Singh Dahiya, with a two-fold mission of having a startup from every home (Ghar Ghar Startup) and Healthy Nation. She claims that Homefoodi is the world's first mobile application for homemade food by home chefs.

Homefoodi was incorporated as an organization in 2018 and enrolled home chefs and went live in Noida in late October, 2019. All chefs are supported in marketing, delivery, packaging, banking needs, online payments, FSSAI registration, food presentation, etc., so that they can focus on just cooking. Homefoodi has a chef app and a customer app on Google Play Store and iOS. The platform currently has over 150 home chefs from Noida. It claims to have received 400 new registrations, and over 20 new submissions every day. This initiative is taken in metro cities. It is important to bring such ideas and implementation in small cities too so that growing home chefs could get an opportunity to come forward and work as women entrepreneurs. Home chefs' challenges could be resolved in a systematic manner if such applications could be launched in here. Awareness is also required to these people as this is the main factor lacking behind in Dehradun.

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