
The Evolving Role of Women in Veterinary Profession

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ABSTRACT

In the modern era, women are shattering glass ceilings across every professional landscape, and the veterinary field is no exception. Today, a growing wave of aspiring female veterinarians is not just entering the profession but redefining its boundaries and reaching new heights of clinical excellence. This article explores the evolving prospects for women in veterinary medicine, providing a comprehensive briefing on their expanding roles. By examining the unique strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) facing female practitioners, we highlight how their increased contribution is shaping the future of animal healthcare.

INTRODUCTION

India is a country with an agrarian economy. The livelihoods of most people in India depend on agriculture and its allied sector, animal husbandry. This sector, though scattered across small-scale operations, is truly nourished and enriched by Indian women. Their involvement spans a wide range of activities, from backyard poultry to dairy husbandry. While women's contributions to animal husbandry have existed for ages, their role as professional Veterinarians has gained significant impetus. In 1952, Dr. Sakkubhai Ramachandran, the first female veterinarian in India, broke societal barriers to enter this field, setting a benchmark for future generations. Today, aspiring young women from all social backgrounds are choosing the veterinary profession as a viable career path.

GALAXY OF OPPORTUNITIES

A wide array of prospects awaits women veterinarians in several key sectors which include,

- **Veterinary Clinical practice** - though the large animal sector in India specifically in Maharashtra remains scattered, pet clinical practice is paving its own way. The concept of pets as therapeutic animals is coming up where lady veterinarians can mark their significant existence.
- **Food industry** - as you see food of animal origin is a staple in global brands, production, value addition and marketing of milk, meat and other animal based product is gaining importance where the veterinarians have an opportunity
- **Research and Development** - No medical breakthrough is complete without lab animal trials. Female veterinarians are increasingly leading high-level research in biotechnology and tissue engineering.
- **Education and Extension** - Since the livestock workforce is predominantly female, women veterinarians act as the perfect bridge for "lab-to-land" technology transfer, communicating more effectively with rural stakeholders.
- **Entrepreneurship** - Subjects of Veterinary profession is associated with entrepreneurial interventions. They include range of theme like dairy husbandry, small ruminant husbandry, poultry sector, meat processing, animal nutrition and feed industry. Most of these industries dominate the Indian economy and have reached horizons through their turn over. Women Veterinary entrepreneurs are much needed in the field.

SWOT ANALYSIS

SWOT analysis of the contributions made by women veterinarians highlights several critical issues that warrant further attention.

STRENGTHS

Women are often naturally skilled counselors with a high degree of empathy toward animals and can prove to be better service providers as veterinary clinicians. We look forward at women as better negotiators and so good entrepreneurs. Their sincerity can be reflected in the teaching and research sector thereby enhancing the research standards in the Veterinary field. They play a crucial role in raising the quality of the profession and so the major strengths of women Veterinarians can be highlighted as,

- **Empathy & Counseling:** Natural aptitude for animal welfare and client communication.
- **Negotiation:** Strong potential for entrepreneurship and leadership.
- **Sincerity:** High dedication to academic and research excellence.

WEAKNESS

Many female graduates currently prefer "white-collar" 9-to-5 jobs over the challenges of self business. There is also a heavy concentration in urban pet practice rather than large animal clinics highlighting following weakness.

- **Preference for "White Collar" Roles:** A tendency to seek stable 9-5 jobs over high-risk business ventures.
- **Clinical Concentration:** A heavy lean toward urban pet practice rather than rural large animal medicine.

OPPORTUNITIES

For women veterinarians, the opportunities that are generally overlooked, include their role as consultants, specialized entrepreneurship and counseling. The field of veterinarians as consultants has largely being male dominating and women counterpart needs to take up this challenge where they can really excel.

- **Consultancy:** Breaking into the male-dominated field of livestock consulting.
- **Emerging Tech:** Roles in pharmaceuticals and specialized diagnostics.

THREATS

The low average livestock holding per farmer in India means large animal practice is often decentralized and rural. The large animal clinical practice is not restricted to hospitals but extends beyond and that too is scattered. With current scenario it is a challenging for the women clinical practitioner to reach the stakeholders. In nutshell following are threats associated.

- **Fragmented Holdings:** Small-scale livestock ownership makes reaching rural clients logistically difficult.
- **Safety & Mobility:** Challenges in providing on-call services in remote or scattered rural areas.

CONCLUSION

Female veterinarians must step into leadership roles and explore unconventional career paths. Accepting equal responsibility within the profession is essential for achieving true gender parity and excellence.