



A Study on Women Entrepreneurs in Madurai Region – With Reference to Smes (Small and Medium Enterprises)

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ABSTRACT

Women entrepreneurship has been recognised as an important source of economic growth. 'High potential' women entrepreneurs are those who through job creation and widening of markets can boost economic growth. Women entrepreneurs create new jobs for themselves and others and also provide society with different solutions to management, organisation and business problems. There are several schemes of the government at central and state level, which provide assistance for setting up training-cum-income generating activities for needy women to make them economically independent. However, they still represent a minority of all entrepreneurs. The present study thus focuses on the economic and social aspects of women entrepreneurs.

KEYWORDS : Women, Entrepreneurs, Economic, Social.

Introduction

Women entrepreneurship has been recognised as an important source of economic growth. 'High potential' women entrepreneurs are those who through job creation and widening of markets can boost economic growth. Women entrepreneurs create new jobs for themselves and others and also provide society with different solutions to management, organisation and business problems. There are several schemes of the government at central and state level, which provide assistance for setting up training-cum-income generating activities for needy women to make them economically independent. However, they still represent a minority of all entrepreneurs. For many women entrepreneurs like her, access to external funds and business networking remain major challenges to growth.

The challenges and opportunities provided to the women of digital era are growing rapidly that the job seekers are turning into job creators. They are flourishing as designers, interior decorators, exporters, publishers, garment manufacturers and still exploring new avenues of economic participation. Although the number is still small as compared to businesses owned by men, this is encouraging as it shows that women no longer adhere to the stereotype that only men can be wage earners in the family. Besides numerous obligations assigned to women including reproductive chores, such as childcare and doing house work, women can find success through their own businesses.

It is estimated that presently women entrepreneurs comprise about 10% of total entrepreneurs in India. Further this is growing as in recent times, women have begun to participate in different economic activities including business and industry. Elite women in cities and urban areas are entering the modern fields of economic activities such as consultancy, marketing, advertising, export of garments, interior decoration, handicrafts, dyeing and printing, food processing etc. (Babu T.D. and Farah Sulaiman, 2007).

Today, women have entered into all fields and also have got acceptance in the family as well as society. However, their entry into fiercely competitive business world has a great challenge. Besides, family and social problems they face problems in raising both working capital finance and long term finance. Rao, 2002, in his study gave higher rank to financial problems followed by marketing, production and social problems. Thus the present study focuses on the economic and social aspects of the women entrepreneurs.

Review of Literature

Mahaboob Basha A.M. et.al., (2013) their findings depicts that 43% of the respondents are opined that life partner (husband) support a lot to become an entrepreneur, where as 26% of the respondents are opined that they are self-decision makers regarding to become an entrepreneur, where as 19% of the respondents opined that they will be motivated by parents, remaining 12% respondents will be motivated

by friends and others.

Syed Shah Alam. Et.al. (2011) the results suggest that family support, social ties and internal motivation affect positively and significantly to the success of women entrepreneurs in the small business. The survey result also shows that women entrepreneurs having problem when they enter into the business. The implications of this study are discussed along with some recommendations.

Subhash Chander and Arora D.D. (2013). There are number of obstacles faced by women entrepreneurs during start-up stage and running up of their enterprise. These obstacles need to be addressed so that women can make a significant contribution in sustained economic development and social progress of our country. The present study tries to examine the financial problems faced by women entrepreneurs in Haryana during start-up stage and running up of their enterprise. The study brought out that lack of adequate information about the schemes of financial institutions for women entrepreneurs and reluctance of officials to finance women entrepreneurs are the main problems.

Upadhye Jayashree, (2012). the study conclude that the self-confidence and self-esteem and educational level, and knowledge make them to handle different tasks in life. Male dominance towards women should change. There should be support from government and institutions and agencies to develop women entrepreneurs. Already there are certain schemes for women entrepreneurs, these schemes should be properly implemented and make them to familiar to use every scheme.

Objectives

1. To study the demographic profile of the respondent's.
2. To study the economic aspects of the entrepreneurs.
3. To study the social aspects of the entrepreneurs.

Methodology

Descriptive design was adopted for the present study. The women entrepreneurs' registered in District Industrial Centre (DIC) Madurai District and the selected NGOs (Centre for Entrepreneurial Development(CED), People's Association for Rural Women Development(PARWD) and Association for Rural Development(ARD) who are giving training to the women entrepreneurs in Madurai region serve as the universe of the study. The researcher collected a sample of 197 women entrepreneurs from the universe using convenience sampling. Self prepared questionnaire was used to collect the data. The questionnaire consists of three sections namely demographic profile, economic aspects and social aspects of the women entrepreneurs. The data were analysed using simple percentage analysis.

Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1: Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Variables	Particulars	Percentage	Frequency
Age	20 to 30 Years	112	56.9
	31-40 Years	72	36.5
	41-50 Years	12	6.1
	51 to 60 Years	1	.5
Education	Primary	22	11.2
	Secondary	114	57.9
	Graduate	45	22.8
	Post Graduate	16	8.1
Marital status	Married	176	89.3
	Unmarried	14	7.1
	Widow	4	2.0
	Others	3	1.5
Religion	Hindu	178	90.4
	Muslim	15	7.6
	Christian	4	2.0
Caste	SC	21	10.7
	ST	27	13.7
	OBC	96	48.7
	Others	53	26.9
No. of earning members	0-1	72	36.5
	2-3	122	61.9
	More than 4	3	1.5
Family type	Joint Family	46	23.4
	Nuclear Family	151	76.6
Family Income (Annual)	Below 100000	68	34.5
	100001-200000	60	30.5
	200001-300000	58	29.4
	Above 300001	11	5.6
No. of Children	One	62	31.5
	Two	109	55.3
	Three	20	10.2
	NIL	6	3.0

The table 1 depicts that 56.9 percent of the respondent's age group was between 20-30 years and 36.5 percent of them was between 31-40 years. The table shows that 57.9 percent of the respondents had secondary level of education, majority (89.3 percent) of them were married, majority (90.4 percent) of them were Hindus, 48.7 percent of them belong to OBC, 61.9 percent of them had 2-3 earning members in the family, majority (76.6 percent) of them belong to nuclear family, 34.5 percent of the respondents family had an annual income below 100000 and 55.3 percent of the respondents had two children.

Table 2: Economic Aspects of the Entrepreneurs

Variables	Particulars	Percentage	Frequency
Income from Entrepreneurship (Annual)	Below 50000	56	28.4
	50001-100000	62	31.5
	100001-150000	28	14.2
	150001-200000	45	22.8
	Above 200001	6	3.0
Finance resource	Family Members	52	26.4
	Loan	135	68.5
	Others	10	5.1
Received Loan	Yes	178	90.4
	No	19	9.6
Source of loan	Private sector	3	1.5
	Bank	166	84.3
	C-operative Society	6	3.0
	Others	22	11.2
Problems related to getting loan	Slow processing	46	23.4
	Too many documents are required	96	48.7
	High rate of interest	29	14.7
	Others	26	13.2

Accounts maintained	By your self	100	50.8
	Husband/family members	64	32.5
	Accountant	24	12.2
	Others	9	4.6
Duration of accounting	Daily	91	46.2
	Weekly	44	22.3
	Monthly	56	28.4
Type of accounting	Others	6	3.0
	Computerized	18	9.1
Turnover	Non-computerized	179	90.9
	Increased	128	65.0
	decreased	37	18.8
Profit margin	Stable	32	16.2
	Up to 10%	78	39.6
	11to 20%	55	27.9
	21-30%	29	14.7
	Others	35	17.8

The table 2 depicts that 31.5 percent of the entrepreneurs have earned an annual income between Rs.50001-100000 from their business, 68.5 percent of the respondents source of finance was loan, majority (90.4 percent) of them have received loan, majority (84.3 percent) of them have received loan from banks, 48.7 percent of them have stated that too many documentation was the problem faced during getting loan, 50.8 percent of them maintained the accounts by themselves, 46.2 percent of them were maintaining their accounts daily, 90.9 percent of them of them were maintaining their accounts manually, 65 percent of them have stated that their turnover have increased and 39.6 percent of them have stated that they had up to 10% margin profit from their business.

Table 3: Social Aspects of the Entrepreneurs

Variables	Particulars	Percentage	Frequency
Husband helps	Yes	147	74.6
	No	50	25.4
Cooperation from Family	Yes	179	90.9
	No	18	9.1
Support from Family	Yes	87	44.2
	No	110	55.8
Encouragement from Family	Yes	102	51.8
	No	95	48.2
Type of encouragement	Reward	15	14.2
	Recognition	10	9.5
	Appreciation	29	27.3
	Others	52	49.0
Community support	Yes	81	41.1
	No	116	58.9

Table 3 shows that majority (74.6 percent) of the respondents husband helps them in their business, majority (90.9 percent) of the respondents had cooperation from family members in their business, 55.8 percent of them had family support in their business, 51.8 percent of the respondents were encouraged by their family in their business, 49 percent of them have received some type of encouragement from their family members and 58.9 percent of them had stated that they receive support from their community.

Summary of the Salient findings

Majority of the respondents belong to young age.

Majority of respondents were married

Majority of the respondents have completed their secondary level education.

Majority of the respondent's source of finance was loan from banks.

Majority of the respondents were maintaining their accounts daily but manually.

Majority of the respondents had increase in turnover and marginal

profit up to 10%.

Majority of the respondents received cooperation, support and encouragement from their family, friends and community.

Conclusion

Entrepreneurship is an important task for women in India but if carried successfully can inculcate confidence among them and making them more conscious about their rights. Development of women entrepreneurship is very low in India in comparison to developed countries. There are number of obstacles faced by women entrepreneurs during start-up stage and running up of their enterprise. These obstacles need to be addressed so that women can make a significant contribution in sustained economic development and social progress of our country.

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