Socio-Economic Status of Micro Women Entrepreneurs in ERODE District, Tamilnadu

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ABSTRACT

Social and economic development of women is necessary for development of any country. Every women wants to start their own business but cannot success in our Indian environment in way in which it should be. This paper focuses on exploring the socio-economic status of micro women entrepreneurs in Erode District, Tamilnadu. The purpose of this study is to find the socio-economic barriers effecting women in doing business. It also reveals the investment pattern of their earnings.

The study was conducted in the Erode district, Tamilnadu. In which 4 taluks under that 5 blocks were selected. 138 samples were selected for the study. As a part of socio-economic analysis, the age, caste, educational level, debt position, type of family, size of family were considered and responses are analyzed

Keywords—, Erode district, socio-economic status, women entrepreneurs

I. INTRODUCTION

The origin of the basic word “entrepreneurship” is from a French word “Entrée” “To enter” and “Prendre” “to take” and in general sense applies to any person starting a new project or trying a new opportunity. According to Government of India, “Women entrepreneurship means an enterprise owned and controlled by a women and having a minimum financial interest of 51% of the capital & giving at least 51% of the employment generated in the enterprise to women”.

Women have been successful in breaking their confinement within the limits of their homes by entering into varied kinds of professional and services women entrepreneurs have proved to be on par with their men counterparts in business acumen and are emerging as smart and dynamic entrepreneurs. Today, a network of institution exists in the country to promote women entrepreneurship.

Entrepreneurs are examined from various perspectives, such as attitudes, backgrounds, personality traits, economic factors, contextual circumstances, and aspect of social and financial marginality, gender and geographical location. But, there is no unified model for entrepreneurial activity and development. An attempt is made to study the socio-economic life of sample women entrepreneurs in the Erode District in Tamilnadu.

Women took their carrier as an entrepreneur in order to be economically powerful than men and to face the environment. Their motive is to be an independent and successful in the life. Women owned business are highly increasing in the economics of almost all the countries. The hidden entrepreneurial potentials of women have gradually been changing with the growing sensitivity to the role and economic status in the society.

Today’s world is not static it is dynamic, more women are deciding to launch their own business for a variety of reasons.
1. To achieve for independence & flexibility.
2. To better balance work & family.
3. To make optimum use of technical education & qualifications.

CATEGORIES OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN INDIA:

There are 3 categories of women entrepreneurs in India. They are:
1. First category:
   - Established in big cities
   - Having higher technical qualifications.
   - Sound financial positions
2. Second category:
   - Established in cities and towns
   - Having sufficient education
• Undertaking women services- kinder garden, crèches, beauty parlours, health clinics, etc.

3. Third category:
• Illiterate women
• Financially week
• Involved in family business like agriculture, dairy, handlooms, power looms, horticulture etc.

In our study, we are concentrating on second category of women entrepreneurs and few of third category women entrepreneurs.

WOMEN’S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT:
A woman is economically empowered when she has both the ability to success and advance economically and the power to make and act on economic decisions.
• To succeed and advance economically, women need the skills and resources to compete in markets, as well as fair and equal access to economic institutions.
• To have the power and agency to benefit from economic activities, women need to have the ability to make and act on decisions and control resources and profits.

Economic empowerment is comprised of two inter-related components:
1) Economic advancement and
2) Power and agency.

Both components are connected, and both are necessary to achieve better lives for women and their families. At the same time, when a women is able to control and share in resource use (power) and to define and make choices (agency), she is better able to advance economically.

DETAILS OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS ASSOCIATION IN INDIA:
• Federation of Indian Women Entrepreneurs (FIWE)
• Consortium of Women Entrepreneurs (CWEI)
• Association of Lady Entrepreneurs of Andra Pradesh
• Association of Women Entrepreneurs of Karnataka (AWAKE)
• Self-Employed Women’s Association (SEWA)
• Women Entrepreneurs Promotion Association (WEPA)
• The Marketing Organisation of Women Enterprises (MOOWES)
• Bihar Mahila Udyog SanghBihar Mahila Udyog Sangh
• Mahakaushal Association of Women Entrepreneurs (MAWE)
• SAARC Chamber Women Entrepreneurship Council
• Women Entrepreneurs Association of Tamil Nadu (WEAT)
• Tie Stree Shakti (TSS)
• Women Empowerment Corporation.

II. METHODOLOGY
The study was conducted on the Erode District, Tamilnadu, India. In which 4 taluks were taken. They are Erode, Gobichettipalayam, Sathyamangalam and Perundurai. From the 4 taluks, 5 blocks were taken for the convenience. They are Erode, Perundurai, Chemnimalai, Gobi and Sathy. Erode District were located at the Western Region of Tamilnadu, in south India. In the present study, micro women entrepreneurs were selected from the study area. The micro women entrepreneur includes cloth merchants, beauty parlour, boutique shops, Tailoring and running petty shops. The reason for choosing the area of the study is economically backward and it is Semi-Urban region. Total a sample of 138 respondents were selected based on the convenience sampling method. The reason for using convenience sampling was lack of availability of data relating to women entrepreneurs in the Erode District. Primary data were collected through questionnaire and interview techniques were followed. The secondary data were also collected from the published or unpublished documents related to women empowerment and micro enterprises development. Descriptive statistics and charts have been used to analyse the survey results in contextual manner. The collected data were subjected for analyzing by using appropriate statistical tools namely, percentage, simple correlation coefficient and ANNOVA.

III. OBJECTIVES
The primary objective is to access the socio-economic status of micro women entrepreneurs in Erode District, Tamilnadu.
1. To study the characteristics of women entrepreneurs.
2. To find the socio-economic factors affecting micro women entrepreneurs.

IV. LITERATURE REVIEW
Like men, women also have a big role to play in developing the micro-enterprises in developing countries like Nepal, because they are not only the crucial labour force of agriculture but they also have the ability to develop home based micro-enterprises like foods, handicrafts, garments, etc. (MEDEP 2000).

Enhancing women’s economic and social status is crucial for sustainable equitable development. The economic component of empowerment is to provide women with some kinds of productive activity that will allow them some degree of independence. With empowering the women, they take active roles in the household and community development affairs that result into betterment of family status and income (Dhakhwa 2001).

Women enterprises are assumed to innovate and imitate or adapt business activities with a desire for
economic independence. The rising consciousness through education and training among women has led to the growth of women entrepreneurs (Agarwal 2003).

As a result, developing women’s entrepreneurial capacity would go in a long way in harnessing their capability to identify and capitalize on entrepreneurial opportunities within their environment and empower them economically and socially (Shane, 2003).

Entrepreneurial activities make women more independent and allows them effectively balance their roles of wives and mothers (Lincoln, 2012; Woldie & Asersue, 2004).

The major economic factors that affect the performance of women entrepreneurs include finance, market, training, land, information, marginal skills, infrastructures and raw materials (Samit, 2006).

V. ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

The study established that most of the micro women entrepreneurs (39.1%) are under the age group of 31-40. Majority of the respondents are married (51.4%) and having the educational qualification of higher secondary. Most of the respondents (42%) are getting an annual income of Rs.10, 000 –Rs.20, 000 and most of the respondents (54.3%) debt position is below 1, 00, 000. Majority of the respondents (23.9%) running grocery shops and their family type is joint family. Majority of the respondents (37.7%) obtain source of finance from friends/relatives

Majority of the respondents strongly agrees that they are having better access to market (47.1%), access to information (41.3%), access to technology (31.2%), no stiff competition (32.6%), adequate infrastructure (29%), good social relationship (75.4%), and better social acceptability (69.6%) for their products.

Most of the respondents strongly agree that there is a positive attitude towards their products (58.0%), no gender conflict (51.4%), and better network with outsiders (71.0%).

CHI-SQUARE ANALYSIS:

In the category of Economic constraints, 5 attributes were identified

Table 1. Economic characteristics of respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>conclusion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Better access to market</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0.004</td>
<td>No significant*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better access to information</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0.622</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to technology</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0.186</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No stiff competition</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0.013</td>
<td>No significant*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequate infrastructure</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0.255</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Primary data obtained through questionnaire

*5% significance level.

From the above table 1, it shows that there is no significant relationship between better access to market and blocks covered, and no stiff competition and block covered.

ONE-SAMPLE T TEST:

One sample T-test was made, comprising the generation of mean and standard deviation. Face validity of the questionnaire was performed to ensure the relevance of content and interpretation.

Table 2. Likert scale and its interpretation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.45-5.0</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.45-4.44</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.45-3.44</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.45-2.44</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.5-1.44</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From table 3, shows that access to technology for women entrepreneurs in erode district had the highest mean value at 2.78 which implied that there was a very strong agreement in opinion by respondents, and it had a very low values in standard deviation of 0.991.

Table 3. Socio-Economic Characteristics of Women Entrepreneurs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Socio-economic characteristics</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard deviation</th>
<th>Inference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Better access to market</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>1.372</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to information</td>
<td>2.01</td>
<td>1.094</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to technology</td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td>1.480</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No stiff competition</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>1.489</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequate infrastructure</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>1.474</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good social relationship</td>
<td>1.48</td>
<td>0.991</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better social acceptability</td>
<td>1.59</td>
<td>1.044</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive attitude towards product</td>
<td>1.87</td>
<td>1.249</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No gender conflict</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>1.340</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better network with outsiders</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>1.066</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Primary data obtained through questionnaire.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Most of the women entrepreneurs are of the opinion that because of lack of training, they are not able to survive in the market. Hence, the government should conduct frequent training programmes with regard new production techniques, sales techniques, etc. this training should be made compulsory for women entrepreneurs. Finance is the first major problem for women entrepreneurs. Hence, the government can provide interest free loans to encourage women entrepreneurs.
VII. CONCLUSION

Women are very good entrepreneurs, and prefer to choose the same as they can maintain work life balance. There are several factors contributing to the emergence of women as entrepreneurs, the sustained and coordinated effort from all dimensions would pave the way for the women moving into entrepreneurial activity thus contributing to the social and economic development of the members of the family and thereby gaining equality and equal importance for themselves. Women entrepreneurs faced so many problems in aspects of financial, marketing, health, family and problems. Its hope that suggestion forwarded in the article will help the entrepreneurs in particular to look this problems and develop better schemes by the government.

REFERENCE