

RURAL WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP WITH SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO MICRO ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT IN COIMBATORE

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ABSTRACT

Women entrepreneurs' play a significant role in building the social economies and a major percentage of micro-enterprises in developing countries are managed by women. Rural women contribute significantly to their family businesses which is not been acknowledged. They always have had the primary responsibility for agricultural production, domestic duties and childcare in the rural areas. In developing rural like India where economic status of women is very pathetic, especially in rural, where earning opportunities are also very less, the evolving Micro enterprises have paved the way for the economic independence of rural women. Despite this, educated Indian rural women have to go a long way to attain equal rights in a male dominated society. This paper reviews precisely the literature in the field and addresses in particular the opportunities and challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in rural areas. It has also briefly examined the impact on women empowerment through micro entrepreneurship development.

Keywords: Women Empowerment, Rural Entrepreneurship, Women Entrepreneur, Micro Enterprise and Self Help Groups.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Micro enterprise is considered as a compelling instrument of a nation's financial advancement. Enterprise among Women is an ongoing marvel which is set up and constrained by a Woman, which helps the financial development, yet in addition has colossal results. As indicated by 6th Economic census, Women comprise around 14% of the all the entrepreneurs where 8.05 million out of the total 58.5 million business visionaries. A considerable lot of such Women possessed firms, for example, organizations set up by Women business visionaries, for example, tailoring unit and small scale family ventures which are enhancing their family pay. Women' dynamic investment positively affects the wellbeing, work and social assurance. Women' strengthening has a multiplier impact on their own lives as well as on the family and the general public. The Micro finance helps in engaging Women in the current scenario. They are having an arranged procedure for adjusted advancement of the economy of the rural women. Rural Women' investment in agro-based exercises additionally stays unrevealed. They do that as the piece of their day by day errands. Accessibility of technology and adaptable work give more opportunity to rural women to develop with new business enterprise adventures. A few reviews led in various pieces of the world in regards to Women business demonstrate that women have end up being acceptable business visionaries in light of the common capacities¹.

Business enterprise is a centre answer for the provincial women. It assists with creating work for various individuals inside their own social standards. This is seen as increasingly gainful for women in provincial territories as it helps them for the family earning opportunities. Rural Women have copious assets and chances to take up miniaturized scale undertakings. Women undertakings are an ongoing wonder in India and right now they face different problems like insufficient fund, promoting work place offices, social compels and so on. It is maybe that

¹ *A Hand Book on Forming of Self Help Group, NABARD, India.*

administration bodies, NGOs, social researchers, analysts and global offices have begun indicating enthusiasm for the issues identified with business enterprise among Women in India. Development of Women business visionaries can be a vehicle of their financial strengthening. Further, there has been a lot of progress in the preparation and advancement of Women business people in academic projects. Women business people can assume incredible job in motivating other women to gain confidence².

Micro enterprise women assume a significant job in nearby economies, and an enormous level of smaller scale ventures in developing nations is attempted by Women. Progressively Women in urban and rural territories are effectively going to self-produced work in micro enterprise undertaking in the area to help their family units. Women often have essential duty regarding agrarian duties, domestic chores and childcare. These duties place substantial requests on Women's time, and microenterprise activity can conceivably build the outstanding task at hands of Women. Improving access to work sparing advancements in any of these territories can save time for money producing micro enterprise units. In numerous nations, Women are most of labourers in nonstandard work like non permanent labour, part time employment and contractual labour and family business activities. SHG is advancing small scale undertaking through smaller scale credit intercession. Micro enterprise is considered as an effective instrument of a rural economic development. Entrepreneurship amongst women is a phenomenon which is established and controlled by a woman, which not only boosts the economic growth, but also has enormous outcomes³.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Self- help groups (SHGs) play today a major role in poverty alleviation in rural India. A Growing number of poor people (mostly women) in various parts of India are members of SHGs and actively engage in savings and credit, as well as in other activities like income generation, natural resources management, literacy, child care and nutrition, etc. The savings and credit focus in the SHG is the most prominent element and offers a chance to create some control over capital, albeit in very small amounts. The SHG system has proven to be very relevant and effective in offering women the possibility to break gradually away from exploitation and isolation. Almost all major donor agencies support SHGs in India in one way or another and many Success stories are available, describing how membership in a SHG changed the life of a particular individual or group for the better. Many NGOs in India are promoting the SHG mechanism and linking it to various other development interventions. Whereas there is ample evidence that the SHG approach is a very effective, efficient and relevant tool for organizing and empowering the poor, problems do arise

² *Rural women empowerment in India in Empowerment of Rural Women in India. Kanishka Publishers, New Delhi.*

³ *Women Entrepreneurship and Economic Development, New Delhi, Sarup & Sons, www.zenithresearch.org.in – 195.*

with design, development and introduction of programmes to promote income generating activities (IGAs) that will generate sufficient, sustainable and regular income. There are few documents available that critically reflect on the role of SHGs in the wider rural economy⁴.

III. NEED OF THE STUDY

Micro finance through Self Help Group (SHG) has been recognized internationally as the modern tool to combat poverty and for rural development. Micro finance and SHGs are effective in reducing poverty, empowering women and creating awareness which finally results in sustainable development of the nation. Micro-finance programmes not only give women and men access to savings and credit, but reach millions of people worldwide bringing them together regularly in organised groups. Although no 'magic bullet', they are potentially a very significant contribution to gender equality and women's empowerment, as well as pro-poor development and civil society strengthening. Through their contribution to women's ability to earn an income these programmes have potential to initiate a series of 'virtuous spirals' of economic empowerment, increased well-being for women and their families and wider social and political empowerment. Micro finance services and groups involving men also have potential to question and significantly change men's attitudes and behaviours as an essential component of achieving gender equality⁵

IV. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

- 1. Rana and Masood (2011)** mention that during the last two decades, Indian women have entered the field of entrepreneurship in increasing numbers. With the emergence and growth of their businesses, they have contributed to the Indian economy & society; these women entrepreneurs have entered many industries and sectors. Many of the earlier obstacles to their success have been removed, yet some still remain⁶.
- 2. Suguna (2006)** SHG provides an opportunity to improve their financial social and political status by their involvement as a team. It promotes the quality of life by motivating female human potential. No doubt SHGs will replace commercial/cooperative lending institutions and the villages or atleast supplement rural financing⁷.

⁴ Chen.1997. Cited in Linda Mayoux, *Gender and empowerment concepts*, September 2005, available at <http://www.genfinance.info/Documents/GenderConcepts.pdf>.

⁵ Kabeer, Naila.2005. *Is microfinance a magic bullet for women empowerment? Analysis of South Asia*, *Economic and Political Weekly*, 40(44), 4709-4718.

⁶ Masood Rana Zehra Masood 2011, *Emergence of women-owned businesses in India*, *Journal of Arts Science & Commerce* ISSN2229-4686.

⁷ Suguna B 2006, *Empowerment of Rural Women Through Self Help Groups*, New Delhi Discovery Publishing House.

3. **Sidhu and Kaur (2006)** revealed that entrepreneurship is the only solution for the growing employment among rural youth. It helps to generate employment for number of people within their own social system. This is more beneficial for women in rural areas as it enable them to add to the family income while taking care of their farm, home and livestock centred tasks. Rural women possess abundant resources to take up an enterprise. Hence she can effectively undertake both production and processing oriented enterprises. But to be a successful entrepreneur, women should process certain fundamental qualities beside the support of the family and government organisations⁸.
4. **Pattanaik (2003)** reveals that SHGs are continuously striving for a better future for rural women as participants, decision-makers and beneficiaries in the domestic, economic, social and cultural spheres of life. But due to certain constraints like gender inequality, exploitation, women torture for which various SHGs are not organized properly and effectively, women entrepreneurs are in trouble⁹.
5. **Das Gupta (2000)** observed that micro-financing through informal group approach has effected quite a few benefits like savings mobilized by the poor, access to the required amount of appropriate credit by the poor, matching the demand and supply of credit, reduction in transaction cost for both lenders and borrowers, tremendous improvement in recovery, heralding a new realization of subsidy less and corruption less credit, and remarkable empowerment of poor women¹⁰.
6. **Khanka (2000)**, a women entrepreneur is a confident, innovative and creative woman capable of achieving economic independence individually or in collaboration generates employment opportunities for others through initiating establishing and running an enterprise by keeping pace with her personal, family and social life¹¹.
7. **Mallika Das (2000)** observed in her study that most common reasons for success of women entrepreneurs are personal qualities such as hard work and perseverance. Some independent factors are market opportunity, family background, idea, challenge, and dream desire of status and economic independence¹².

V. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are

1. To explore the demographics of women entrepreneurship in the study area

⁸ Kiranjot Sidhu, Sukhjeet Kaur, (2006) .Development of Entrepreneurship among Rural Women ,J. Soc. Sci., 13(2):147-149

⁹ Pattanaik, Sunanda, Smaranika 2003", Empowerment through SHG: A Case Study of Gajapati District.

¹⁰ Das Gupta 2000. An Informal Journey through SHG's, Indian Journal & Agricultural Economics, Vol.56 (3), July-Sept., 2001.

¹¹ S.S. Khanka 2000, "Entrepreneurship Development, publishers Chand & company Ltd. India.

¹² Mallika Das 2000 Women Entrepreneurs From India: Problems, Motivations and Success Factors, Journal of Small Business and Entrepreneurship, vol.15, No. 4, Winter 2000- 2001:67-8.

2. To study the challenges faced by rural women entrepreneurs
3. To explore role of Self Help Groups (SHGs) in micro enterprise development of rural women.

VI. METHODOLOGY

The paper attempts to explore the concepts, obviously it's an exploratory research where earlier studies on the subject matter has been readdressed to give in sight to phenomenon through Primary and Secondary data. Primary data is collected from the respondents through questionnaire method. A total of 150 women entrepreneurs were selected through convenience sampling method in Coimbatore. Secondary data is collected through journals and websites.

VII. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- ❖ The study is confined to the respondents (Women entrepreneurs) in Coimbatore.
- ❖ The primary data were collected through interview method which is subjected to recall bias.
- ❖ Information collection turned out to be tedious since respondents responded only after regular follow-ups and frequent reminders and is also subject to recall bias.
- ❖ Time and money factors have been constraints and the research exercise was conducted within a limited time.

VIII. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

Profile of respondents

Table 1
Distribution on Demographic profile of respondents (Sample size: 150)

Sl.no	Profile	Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
1	Age	Below 20	17	11
		21-30	30	20
		31-40	48	32
		41-50	33	22
		Above 51	23	15
2	Marital status	Married	95	63
		Un married	56	37
3	Qualification	Upto HSE	9	6
		Upto UG	99	66
		Upto PG	23	15
		Professionals	11	7
		Diploma	9	6
4	Annual income	Below 3,00,000	71	47
		3,00,001 – 6,00,000	48	32
		6,00,001-10,00,000	24	16
		Above 10,00,001	8	5

Source: Primary Data

Major challenge faced by the Rural Women Entrepreneur

Table 2
Distribution on Major challenge faced by the Rural Women Entrepreneur

Sl.no	Particulars	SA	A	N	DA	SDA	M.S	M.R
1	MC - 1	288	194	100	15	2	1.19	3
2	MC - 2	385	211	51	3	2	1.31	1
3	MC - 3	347	201	64	10	4	1.25	2
4	MC - 4	288	194	100	15	2	1.19	3
5	MC - 5	232	224	78	25	9	1.13	5

Source: Computed Data

Types of Micro Enterprises covered under SHG's

Table 3
Distribution on Types of Micro Enterprises covered under SHG's

Sl.no	Particulars	Mean	S.D	Rank
1	Dairy farming	4.88	2.17	1
2	Candles/incense sticks	3.66	0.65	4
3	Vegetable business	3.66	0.65	4
4	Small scale industries	4.81	1.76	2
5	Provision shops	3.66	0.65	4
6	Tailoring	4.40	1.79	3
7	Cottage industries	3.45	2.43	8
8	Catering	3.66	0.65	4

Source: Computed Data

Testing of Hypothesis – Chi-Square test

Table 4
Chi-square distribution on overall result of hypothesis testing @5% level of significance

Sl.no	Independent variable	Dependent variable	p-value	Result
1	Age	Problems	0.023	Significant
		Types	0.049	
2	Education	Problems	0.000	Significant
		Types	0.016	
3	Marital status	Problems	0.000	Significant
		Types	0.048	
4	Annual income	Problems	0.001	Significant
		Types	0.003	

Source: Computed Data

IX. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Profile of respondents: Majority of the respondents that is 32% of the respondents belong to age group of 31-40 years, Majority of the respondents that is 66% of them were Under Graduates, Majority of the respondents that is 63% of the respondents are Married, Majority of the respondents that is 47% of the respondents are earning an income below Rs. 3, 00,000.

Weighted Average Score (WAS): For the purpose for ranking using Likert scaling technique the particulars identified for Major challenge faced by the Rural Women Entrepreneur are MC-1: Lack of Information and assistance, MC-2: Lack of Training and development, MC-3: Lack of Financial aids, MC-4: Lack of awareness about government schemes, MC-5: Lack of family support. In this content it is found that MC-2 is ranked first and followed by MC-3, MC-4 and 1 and last rank MC-5.

Simple Ranking: The factors identified for ranking are Dairy farming, Candles/incense sticks, Vegetable business, Small scale industries, Provision shops, Tailoring, Cottage industries and Catering it was found that dairy farming was ranked first followed by Small scale industries, Tailoring, Candles/incense sticks, Vegetable business and Catering ranked 4th and finally Cottage industries.

Chi-Square test: with regard to the chi-square test at 5% and 1% level of significance, it is found that the p-value is less than 0.05 thus it is concluded that each variable had significant relationship, that is the null hypothesis H₀ was rejected and the alternative hypothesis H₁ was accepted.

X. SUGGESTIONS

Women entrepreneurs are contributing a lot in rural development and growth of economic but their potential is still untapped. Right efforts on from multi direction are required in the development of women entrepreneurs. There are various schemes and plans of government for the encouragement of women entrepreneurs but on ground level their execution is poor, there should be a strong monitoring of these policies at different levels of execution. Government should organize training programmes to develop skills, professional competencies, leadership, and information of marketing and financial at village level. Making provisions of microcredit system and enterprise credit system to the women entrepreneurs.

XI. CONCLUSION

Women entrepreneurs can play a role of catalyst in social and economic development of rural like India. They faced many obstacles specifically in finance and marketing of their produce. Micro finance is playing a vital role in the success of SHGs, particularly the entry of rural women in micro enterprises will be encourage and aggravated. Rural women can do wonders by their effectual and competent involvement in entrepreneurial activities. The rural women are having basic indigenous knowledge, skill, potential and resources to establish and manage enterprise. Now, what is the need is knowledge regarding accessibility to loans, various funding agencies procedure regarding certification, awareness on government welfare programmes, motivation, technical skill and support from family, government and other organization. More over formation and strengthening of rural women Entrepreneurs network must be encouraged. Women entrepreneur networks are major sources of knowledge about women's entrepreneurship and they are

increasingly recognized as a valuable tool for its development and promotion. This will motivate other rural women to engage in micro entrepreneurship with the right assistance and they can strengthen their capacities besides adding to the family income and national productivity¹³.

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