

RURAL WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS – CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS

¹ P. Bharathi

¹ Assistant Professor

¹ Department of Commerce PA,

¹ KG College of Arts and Science, Coimbatore- 641035

Abstract : Entrepreneurship refers to a process of action; an entrepreneur undertakes to establish the enterprise. In a developing country like India, small scale entrepreneurship plays a significant role in economic development of the economy. It has emerged as a dynamic and vibrant sector of the economy. Now a day's women entrepreneurs are spread in all over the India. They are facing lot of challenges in their routine business life. This study is focus "Rural women entrepreneurs – challenges and prospects .

IndexTerms- Entrepreneurs, Economy, Business, Challenges

I. INTRODUCTION

The rural economy of our country remains stagnant and as per the recent estimate, almost 41 percent of the rural population lives below the poverty line. In India women constitute 60 percent of the rural unemployed and 56 percent of the total unemployed. It means that a very substantial portion of rural women is unemployed though they have the ability to undertake varied activities including industrial activity. In this context, it is essential to develop rural women entrepreneurs in order to expose them to various employment and profit-generating avenues. And it is a fact that in some part of our country. Women have promoted and established their talents as successful entrepreneurs. But this development has taken place in cities only. But since rural women are caught in the cobs of poverty, social traditions and restricting customs, it is very necessary to emancipate them and bring them into the hold of entrepreneurs.

II RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Rural women are having all qualities to be entrepreneurs, but they lack the confidence on their ability to run the enterprise especially at the beginning stage. To change the social and economic structure and to uplift the disadvantaged section of the society like women, greater emphasis has to be given to entrepreneurial development programs more particularly directed to women and 30 percent women should be the beneficiaries in rural development programs run by the Government.

THE MAIN RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS ARE THE FOLLOWING

2.1 Training Of Rural Youth for Self –Employment (TRYSEM)

It is a sub-plan of integrated rural development program. It gives training to the young unemployed men and women for self employment. The trainees are given a stipend of Rs. 150 per month during training period. In this program 40 percent of the total seats are reserved for women.

2.2 Norwegian Agency For International Development (NORAD)

It was established in 1982 -83 to help the educated and uneducated women financially in nontraditional areas of business like electronics, computer programming, manufacturing of watches, printing, ready-made garments, etc.,

2.3 The National Bank For Agriculture And Rural Development (NABARD)

It has started a rural women development programme called ARVIND. It provides loan up to Rs.10 lakhs to the women who work collectively in agriculture for their economic development.

2.4 Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA)

It is the rural development scheme to support women's income generation activities through a group of 15-20 women each. The government of India has launched this women and children development programme to strengthen the economy of rural women by giving them loan and economic assistance to develop their skills, efficiency and ability to meet their liabilities effectively.

2.5 Rashtriya Mahila Kosh (RMK)

It was established in 1992 with a fund of Rs 31 crore to meet the needs of poor women by providing them with loan. RMK is also organizing training, apprenticeship and orientation programmes for trainers under the Indian Mahila Block Societies (IMBS). The objectives of RMK is that credit becomes a widely known and used facility for enhancement of the daily income of poor women.

III OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- ✿ To study the socio –economic condition of rural women entrepreneurs
- ✿ To find out the reasons for starting the business
- ✿ To highlight the various problems encountered by the rural women entrepreneurs in Theni District.

3.1 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Rural women entrepreneurship is a process where women take lead and organize a business or industry and provide employment opportunities to others. Development of women will become a reality only when the rural women are developed. The speed of development in an economy cannot be accelerated unless the women do come forward and are made to play significant role in the society. It has been realized that the rural women too have entrepreneurial talent which would be harnessed to create employment opportunities. In this context , an attempt has been made to study the challenges and prospects of rural women entrepreneurs.

3.2 METHODOLOGY

The present study has been taken Theni District. This study is based on both primary and secondary data. The primary data is collected by using interview schedule, and secondary data is obtained from books and journals. 50 sample respondents were selected from the district.

IV SOCIO ECONOMIC PROFILE OF SAMPLE RESPONDENTS

The socio –economic profile portrays the age, composition, educational status, occupational status and income of the respondents, and

36 percent of rural women entrepreneurs falls in the age group of 21-30 years,

40 percent of women are illiterate,

50 percent of the sample respondents are doing tailoring and embroidery, 30 percent of the women are doing small retail shop,

And 50 percent of rural women entrepreneurs are earning and income between Rs 1000 and Rs. 1500

Table 1
Reasons for starting the business

Source	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	Total
To earn money	17	21	8	1	2	0	2	1	50
To continue family business	1	7	5	5	6	10	12	4	50
Compulsion of parents	1	2	3	9	3	8	14	10	50
Educated on the line	8	3	2	4	6	10	5	12	50
Unemployment	12	6	5	3	2	7	5	8	50
Have interest in the business	7	5	8	6	9	5	6	4	50
Profitable business	4	5	15	11	11	2	0	2	50
Less competition	0	1	4	11	9	8	8	9	50
Total	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	

Table 2
Garret Ranking

Source	Mean Square	Rank
To earn money	68.54	I
To continue family business	45.24	V
Compulsion of parents	39.58	VIII
Educated on the line	45.12	VI
Unemployment	50.32	IV
Have interest in the business	51.70	III
Profitable business	55.30	II
Less competition	41.32	VII

Source : Primary Data

While applying Garret ranking test, the researcher concluded that the main reason for starting the business is to earn money as it scored 68.54 getting first rank. Next reason is profitable business as it scored 55.30 points and getting second rank.

This analysis reveals that the majority of the rural women entrepreneurs have started the business with the target of earning maximum amount of money.

Problems faced by rural women entrepreneurs

Table -3
Socio personal problem

Source	No of respondents	Percentage
Lack of self confidence	06	12
Weak collateral position	20	40
Lack of family support	10	20
Want of special recognition	04	08
Multi responsibility	10	20
Total	50	100

Source : primary data

On the basis of collected data Table 3 shows that most of the respondents stated that they have weak collateral positions followed by the problems of lack of self confidence , lack of family support want to social recognition and multi- responsibilities.

Table – 4
Managerial problems

Source	No of respondents	percentage
Lack of skilled labour	14	28
Lack of management ability	20	40
Labour absenteeism	08	16
Lack of systematic planning	06	12
Labour turnover	02	04

Total	50	100
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Source : primary data

On the basis of collected data table 4 shows that , majority of the respondents faced lack of managerial ability followed by lack of skilled labourers , labour absenteeism , lack of systematic planning and lack of labour turn over.

Table -5
Technical problems

Source	No of respondents	Percentage
Poor record keeping and control	18	36
Lack of management experience	14	28
Inadequate availability of land , plots and premises	10	20
Non availability of agency to guide	06	12
Inadequate facilities and equipments	02	04
Total	50	100

Source : primary data

On the basis of collected data Table 5 shows that the majority of the rural women entrepreneurs faced poor record keeping and controlled followed by lack of management experience inadequate availability of land, plots and premises, non availability of agency to guide , inadequate facilities and equipment.

Table -6
Marketing problems

Source	No of respondents	Percentage
Lack of idea on marketing	24	48
Poor inventory management	16	32
Lack of sale promotion avenues	10	20
Lack of idea on modernization	04	18
Total	50	100

Source : primary data

On the basis of collected Table 6 shows that , the majority of the rural women entrepreneurs stated that they have lack of idea on marketing followed by the problems of poor inventory management, lack of sale promotion avenues and lack of idea on modernization.

Table -7
Financial problems

Source	No of respondents	percentage
Lack of working capital	14	28
Lack of idea of the availability of loans and subsidies	08	16
Price fluctuations in raw materials	24	48
Price fluctuations in finished products	04	08
Total	50	100

Source: primary data

From the analysis of the data , it can be concluded that most of the rural women entrepreneurs faced with the problem of price fluctuations in raw materials, followed by the lack of working capital , lack of idea on the availability of loans and subsidies and price fluctuations in finished products.

V FINDINGS

1. About 36 % of the rural women entrepreneurs are in the age group of 21-30 years special attention should be given to these entrepreneurs to improve their entrepreneurial qualities.
2. About 34% of the rural women entrepreneurs in this village are education up to SSLC while 40% respondents are illiterate.
3. About 50% of the women respondents are doing tailoring and embroidery while 30% of the respondents are doing small retail shops
4. About 50% of the total rural women entrepreneurs are earning an income of 1000-1500 while 30% of the respondents are earning an income of 5900-10,000
5. The main reason for starting the business is to earn money as it scores 54 percentage getting first rank, next reason is profitable business. This analysis reveals that majority of the rural women entrepreneurs have started the business with the main target of earning maximum amount of money.
6. Majoring of the rural women entrepreneurs have weak collateral position (14%), lack of managerial ability (40%) , poor record keeping and control (18%) and lack of idea on marketing (48%)

VI SUGGESTIONS

Better educational facilities and schemes should be extended to rural women entrepreneurs.

1. Adequate training programs on management skill to be provided to rural women.
2. Vocational training should be provided to rural women regularly to develop their practical skills and knowledge
3. Banks should simplify their procedures about lending money more liberally to rural women entrepreneurs.
4. Government has stressed on women education and special programmes to increase the number of professional schools for women.

VII CONCLUSION

As rural women constitute more than half of the population, their contribution to business is vital for the economic development of the country. This study makes an attempt to know about their socio- economic conditions, reasons for starting the business and to know about their problems. The main reason for starting business is to earn money and profit. Financial problem is the major problem faced by the rural women. They pins that they have good status in society. Medium and small size of the business is their performed size of business. Valuable suggestion is made in this study for women entrepreneurs.

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