Entrepreneurial Growth through Micro Enterprise -A study On North Bank Plain Zone

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Abstract

Entrepreneurship is a very important means for development of a country. For women, entrepreneurship is a journey from poverty to prosperity, total dependence to equality, agricultural labour to entrepreneurs in industry and in service. On the other hand,micro enterprises aim at developing and utilizing the entrepreneurial talent and potential of women entrepreneurs to meet the local needs. It has been also accepted that entrepreneurship development through micro enterprise is an economic venture by which a large number of people can be changed within a short period of timeespecially from the point of view of employment generation. This study was conducted in three districts of Assam.The total number of sample was 120 which included both registered and unregistered women.Simple random sampling method was adopted for selection of the districts and proportionate random sampling method was adopted for selection of the respondent's.The CRD analysis highlighted the significance difference among the selected aspects of empowerment in thesector of weaving.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship; Micro enterprise; Women empowerment;

INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship is considered as an engine of growth for an economy.It is the central force of economic activity and prime mover of economic development. Moreover, it is very much for businesses' and economies' growth. It has a creativity that promotes the foundation of new organizations. Entrepreneurship happens to be one of the best way towards self-sufficiency and poverty alleviation for women in a country where employment is not guaranteed. Moreover, involvement of women in entrepreneurial activities would ensure effective utilization of labour, generation of income and hence improvement in quality of life. Empowerment of women by entrepreneurial activities led to the empowerment of women in many things such as socio-economic opportunity, property rights, political representation, social equality, personal right,

family development, community development and at last the nation development. The role played by an entrepreneur is of vital importancein developing country like India, where there are ample opportunities for using innovations to exploit the available resources, particularly in all fields that includes weaving and food processing and preservation sectors also. There is a large scope for entrepreneurial involvement as it provides employment, generates income, wealth and act as a key force for economic growth of a region. So it is necessary to encourage women to enter in the gainful profession of entrepreneurshipto develop socially, economically and technologically to enable them to stand in society on their own with confidence. Becauseentrepreneurship plays an eminent role in creating an employment opportunity for rural communities, providing self-employment for those who have started-up a business of their own and enhancing the economic status of the rural sector as well. Now women are also interested to establish their own business as professionally both in the urban and rural areas due to overcome poverty, generate family income and toincrease standard of living.In this context, the Government of India has enacted the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development (MSMED) Act, 2006 in terms of which the definition of micro, small and medium enterprises is as -a Micro Enterprise is an enterprise where investment in plant and machinery does not exceed Rs25 lakh, a Small Enterprise is an enterprise where the investment in plant and machinery is more than Rs 25 lakh but does not exceed Rs 5 crores and medium enterprise is an enterprise where the investment in plant and machinery is more than Rs5 crore but does not exceed Rs10 crore.

The increasing presence of women in the business field as entrepreneurs or business owners in the last decades has changed the demographic characteristics of entrepreneurs. Moreover, North East is seen as a region where more women are involved in income generating activity than women of the other parts of the country. Different research studies have shown that more number of women are involved in micro enterprise than small and medium enterprises.Therefore, an effort has been made to study “Entrepreneurial Growth through Micro Enterprise -A study of North Bank Plain Zone”.

The investigation was carried out with the following objectives:

1. To study background characteristics of women entrepreneurs engaged in weaving sector.

2. To assess the effect of micro enterprise on social and political empowerment of women entrepreneurs.

METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted in three districts namely Kamrup district, Lakhimpur district and Jorhat district of Assam. A list of women entrepreneur was collected from District Industrial and Commerce Centre (DICC)of the selected districts which contained the names of registered entrepreneurs only. Since,Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise (MSME), Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship (IIE) are other organizations engaged in promoting and support of entrepreneurship development among women, another list of entrepreneur was collected from these organizations which included both registered and unregistered women entrepreneurs. Then a final list wasprepared including theentrepreneurs listed under all these institutions namely DICC, MSME, and IIE which reflected that majority of the micro enterprises were in the area of weaving. Thismight be due to the fact thatwomen can run their enterprises being at home along with their household activities in this area. Thecriteria for selection ofwomen entrepreneurs was decided as entrepreneurs musthave completed at leastthree years of their enterprise and employed at least two or more regular employees of either sex. Then, a total of 120 numbers ofwomen entrepreneurs engaged inweaving sector were selected.

Effect of micro enterprise onsocial and political empowerment of women entrepreneurs was assessed through development of women empowerment indices.For finding out the difference between before and after, data was collected from entrepreneurs after starting the enterprise through personal interview method which was supplemented by records and documents. The collected data was coded, tabulated and analyzed in accordance with the objectives of the study. The statistical techniques used for analysis of data were-frequency and percentage andPaired ‘t’ test.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

For easy interpretation, the results and discussion were grouped in the following sub-heads:

The data presented in the Table 1 revealed that a large majority (75.00%) of the respondents engaged in the area of weaving were from lower middle age group (31-50 years), followed by young with 14.17 per cent upper middle with 10.83 per cent.

Table 1further reflected that respondents in the present investigation were from different caste with higher in general caste category which might be due to the study area selected under this investigation was dominated by general caste people.

The data presented in the Table 1 indicated that women in the study area had varied level of educational qualification. With education women entrepreneurs learn some business tips thus decided to enter in the area of enterprise development as a source of business for their livelihood.

Table 1 further highlighted thata large majorityof the respondents (84.17%) were married. Only a small percentage (2.50%) were widower in the area of weaving which might be due to the fact that being married the financial liability of the respondents increases such as education of the children, health security of family, so they are inclined to set up a weaving unit as a source of assured income.

The findings also reflected that nuclear family is replacing the joint and extended family in our society which might be due to the disintegration of joint and extended family systems in the present day society in rural areas.

The data with regard to the size of family is presented in the Table 1 showed that more than half of the respondents were from small family . The findings were contrast with the findings of *Ram et al. (2013).*The findings also indicated that young generation mostly preferred small families as it provides golden opportunity for everyone to utilize their spare time efficiently in any areas of enterprises.

The data on main occupationof family is presented in Table 1 indicated that business was the main occupation for 63.33 per cent of respondents in the area of weaving. Majority of the respondents belonged to the business family which was a great influencing factor for the respondents to take up entrepreneurship as a profession due to the prevailing of business to establish their own identity as well as to reach success in the area of weaving.

Table 1. Distribution of respondents according to background characteristics

Characteristics		Category	Weaving N=120	
			F	%
Personal factor	**Age**	Young (below 30 years)	17	14.17
		Lower middle (31years to 50)	90	75.00

Characteristics		Category	Weaving N=120	
			F	%
		Upper middle (51 years and above)	13	10.83
Socio-economic factors	**Caste**	ST	33	27.50
		SC	24	20.00
		OBC	27	22.50
		General	36	30.00
	Educational Qualification	Upto class X	23	19.16
		H.S.L.C. Pass	48	40.00
		H.S.Pass	24	20.00
		Graduate	18	15.00
		Post Graduate	5	4.17
		Certificate course of Fashion designing	2	1.67
	Marital Status	Unmarried	16	13.33
		Married	101	84.17
		Widow	3	2.50
	Family structure			
	a)Family type	Nuclear	76	63.33
		Joint	30	25.00
		Extended	14	11.67
	b) Family size	Small (up to 4 members)	74	61.67
		Medium (5-7 members)	29	24.17
		Large (8 and above)	17	14.16
	Family occupation	Service	2	1.67
		Business	76	63.33
		Farming	42	35.00
	Type of House	Katcha	1	0.83
		Mixed	29	24.17
		Pucca	90	75.00

The data with regard to type of house possessed by the respondents is presented in the Table1indicated that majority of the respondents had pucca houses. This could be due to the reason that respondents in the present investigation are able to contribute to the family expenditure and supplement the family income that aided to improve the housing condition by converting katcha house to mix and mix house to pucca house.

Impact of micro enterprise on empowerment of women entrepreneurs

The data presented in the Table 2 revealed that there is an improvement in all aspects of the entrepreneurs in the area of weaving which was reflected through the mean difference in the obtained score before taking up enterprise and after becoming an entrepreneur.

The probable reason of change between two stages in the area of weaving might be due to interaction with successful entrepreneurs, active participation in expo/mela which inspired them to change their perspective regarding social and political aspects of empowerment which a true reflection of women empowerment.

Table2.Impact of micro enterprise on empowerment of micro women entrepreneurs

Aspects of empowerment	Stages	Weaving	
		Mean index value	t-value
Social	Before	19.14	9.78**
	After	24.70	
Political	Before	19.82	8.12**
	After	49.23	

CONCLUSION

It becomes necessary to adopt some measures for better development of entrepreneurship among women. Promotional and government agencies should launch awareness and publicity campaigns about differentgovernment schemes available for women entrepreneurs. The banks can play an important role by lending money to women entrepreneurs. They should provide loan to the women who are willing to do business by simplifying their procedures. The findings highlighted that there is improvement in the selected two aspects of the entrepreneurs in the area of weaving.The study concludes that there was an increase in self-confidence, self-reliance and independence of rural women due to involvement in the entrepreneurial activities.Therefore,

entrepreneurial awareness among the people in general and educated in particular is perhaps an urgent need to generate more income and reduce the acute problem of unemployment.

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