

Sheaf of Development Issues

Women, Agriculture, Human Resources

B. Lilly Grace Eunice

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SHEAF OF DEVELOPMENT ISSUES
Women, Agriculture, Human Resources

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WOMEN EMPOWERMENT



1

A Study of Women Empowerment in Chennai City

R. Balasubramaniyan

SECTION - I

Indian Society is a developing society. It is passing through a transitional stage. The attitude towards women is not so rigidly unfavorable as it was in the past. Women are trying hard to establish themselves as most sensible entrepreneurs. But many women faces challenging constraints which include chorus household duties, the atmosphere or living conditions and burden of debt were actually keeping them away from the active work of entrepreneurship. Today, the changing attitude, outlook and attributes of women and the ever rising economic needs has led women to work outside the families and to financially support their families. When women moves forward, the family moves, the village moves and the nation moves. These are the golden words of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru which are often repeated because it is an accepted fact that only when women are in the main stream of progress can make any economic and social development be meaningful.

Women have a good combination of entrepreneurial spirit, ambition, discipline and restrains. All these help them to

succeed in these highly volatile markets. There has been an almost 10-15 percent increase in women investors during the last five years in beauty parlour industry. Most of these investors are married. The spurt in women investors started from 1997. Since then markets have been providing an easy opportunity to make fast money. Education levels among women are also going up. Women are endowed with a spirit of entrepreneurship, common sense, empowered trade and financial support of their family. A women entrepreneur is a person, who is an enterprising individual with an eye for opportunities and an uncanny vision, commercial acumen, with tremendous perseverance and above all a person, who is willing to take risks with the unknown because of the adventurous spirit she possess (Medha, 1997). Women entrepreneurs represent a group of women who have been broken away from the beaten track for exploring new avenues of economic participation (Gopalan, 1981).

The purpose of this paper is to explore these issues by considering primary data. Specifically, the paper examines the determinants of women entrepreneurial changes in beauty parlour industry in chennai city by taking into account of the following: a. motivating factors, b. age, educational level and marital status of women entrepreneurs and c. Choice of location of business unit, monthly family income, usage of beauty products / parlour, investment profits and hours of work put on by the women entrepreneurs. The rest of the paper is organised as follows: Section II gives a prelude concerning beauty parlour industry. Section III specifies the objectives and methodology of the study. Section IV explores an account of the results and discussion by considering the plausible determinants of women entrepreneurial changes in beauty parlour industry in chennai city. Finally, Section V underscores the summary, conclusion and major findings of the study.

SECTION - II

The Profile of Beauty Parlour Industry

The beauty parlour industry in our country is contributing about Rs.5000 crores (2005). It generates employment

opportunities to 1 million of our population per annum. It consists of six broad categories, namely, Skin preparation, Hair preparation, Shaving preparation, Dental Preparation, Toilet soap preparation and fragrance preparation. There are about 40 big companies and 500 small scale units. The term cosmetics applies to all substances which are intended to promote the attractiveness, appearance and to impart a mixed feeling of beauty, glamour and liveliness. The field of cosmetics is very wide and extensive. It includes aerosols, colour, perfume formations, pharmacology and toxicology. Not with standing the fact that today's, women are much more interested and spending their time and most of the income in Beauty Parlour industry. In classifying cosmetics, the texture, consultancy, colour, odor, packaging and general appearance are far more important than the chemical properties of the ingredients on the finished product. Cosmetics are generally classified on two basis; 1. On the basis of end-use and 2. On the basis of their physical characteristics.

Women are increasingly seeking entrepreneurship as an avenue for economic growth. The government and the self-help groups (SHG) are playing an important role in mobilizing women to become entrepreneurs through different programs. Setting up of an enterprise is in itself a great task for women entrepreneurs but running the same successfully is an uphill task. Running the enterprise successfully is a Herculean task for the women entrepreneurial capability as it determines the profitability and survival of the unit (Renukadevi, 2005). Women got exposed to new ideas through media about their personalities, roles and rights. Women have to perform multiple roles as per the level of their education and professional expectations. They try their best to cope up with these multiple role of expectations and prove themselves worthy of success. Emotional incompatibility with husband, in-laws and relatives, explosive habits of men at work place and antagonistic attitudes, generation gap and gender discrimination create role conflicts on women even now and then. In general, women are positioned themselves to pay the price for the benefits of economic independence, equal status and position of self-respect.

SECTION - III

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the socio- economic status of women entrepreneurs.
2. To analyse the essential factors that contributed women to start their own business in Beauty Parlours in Chennai City.
3. To find out the Problems faced by the women entrepreneurs.

Methodology

The study is predominantly based on primary data. The city of Chennai is taken as the primal unit for the study. The major land use of Chennai are Residential, Commercial, Institutional, Industrial and Recreational. There are Ten Zones in Chennai. Among the Zones, Tondiarpet (zone 1), Mint (zone 2), and Ayanavaram (zone 3) were chosen because these zones were considered to be the popular ones in Beauty Parlour industry. A random sampling method was adopted in this study. The addresses of the respondents (beauty shops) were collected from the corporation of Chennai. Based on the addresses furnished by the corporation of Chennai, the sample size was chosen at random in selected zones. Accordingly, 50 women entrepreneurs¹ (Sample size - zone I (16), zone II (18) and zone III (16) were selected at random out of 150 women entrepreneurs. The study considers only women entrepreneurs running beauty parlours in the city of Chennai. To make the study more meaningful and comparative, percentages and ratio analysis have been used in order to interpret the results. The study was conducted during the month of May - August 2007.

Specification of the Survey

The primary survey contains valuable information on prime motivators and motivating factors, the choice of location, initial investment, demand for beauty products and

services, family income, profits and number of hours of work put by the women entrepreneurs in beauty parlour industry. Information on age of women entrepreneurs, educational level (technical / Professional) and marital status are considered to examine the entrepreneurial changes among women in beauty parlour industry. Responses recorded with respect to prime motivators and motivating factors could be used to determine the following:

- (a) To what extent the women entrepreneurs are influenced by prime motivators?
- (b) Does motivating factors matter in determining entrepreneurial changes contributing to success of the unit or not?

A rapport was first established with the respondent with the help of sharing some personal experience and confidence building measures. It was noticed that most of the respondents were free in sharing their experiences about beauty parlour industry. Based on the information collected from the respondents, the study was structured using qualitative and quantitative research methods.

SECTION - IV

Results and Discussion

Table 1 shows the age distribution of the women entrepreneurs when they started their business enterprises.

Table 1
Age Distribution of the Women Entrepreneurs

Age Group	Number of Women Entrepreneurs	Percentage
20-25	22	44
25-30	12	24
30-35	7	14
35-40	7	14
40 and above	2	4
Total	50	100

Source: Primary Survey.