

Empowerment of Women through Entrepreneurship a Study on Tinsukia District of Assam

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Abstract: Empowerment of women is a dynamic process through which women gets strength and social stability. Empowered women should have the equal power to take decisions in domestic and social matters and also must have the knowledge about education, health, safety, social and political issues, financial inclusion, skill development and most importantly women have the quality to participate in every field. Economically empowered women are highly inspired by entrepreneurship. Through the entrepreneurship women are able to engage and grow various skills development units which provide self-establishment as well as self-dependence. Entrepreneurship provides ample opportunities to the women to reduce unemployment and to improve their financial status. This study attempts to focus how the women get economically empowered through entrepreneurship. The socio economic status influences on women for engaging entrepreneurship in an effective manner. The findings of this study state that by getting involved in entrepreneurship women is able to improve their financial condition and make themselves as economically empowered women.

Keywords: Women, Entrepreneurs, Empowerment, Entrepreneurship.

INTRODUCTION

Women empowerment changes the traditional scenario of our society. Empowerment of women is only possible when there is no gender discrimination, no woman will be mentally, physically, spiritually and financially weak.

Women have the equal power to take decisions in domestic and social matters and also must have the knowledge about education, health, safety, social and political issues, financial inclusion, skill development and most importantly women have the quality to participate in every field. In this regard economic empowerment of women through entrepreneurship is a very challenging task. Entrepreneurship is the innovative and risk taking process through which women get opportunities to establish their venture by their skills and abilities. Entrepreneurship provides ample opportunities for the women by utilising their skills which makes themselves self-development, economically empowered, produce employment opportunities and reduce poverty.

EMPOWERMENT

The World Bank defines empowerment as “The process of increasing the capacity of individuals or groups to make choices, and to transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes. Central to this process is actions which both build individual and collective assets, and improves efficiency and fairness

of the organisational and institutional context which govern the use of these assets [1].”

Empowerment of women requires a set of assets and capacities at individual level (such as health, education and employment), and at the collective level, for instance, the ability to organise and mobilise to take action to solve their problems [2].

Women entrepreneurs

Women entrepreneurs, as persons who have shown enterprise, having an eye for opportunity, willingness to take risk, a commercial acumen, and through their enterprising skills and innovativeness generate employment for others, and create wealth, have set a new trend in the country in the efforts directed at entrepreneurship development in varied walks of life, in particular in industry, service and business in the small and medium enterprise (SME) sector [3].

According to Government of India, women entrepreneur is defined as “an enterprise owned and controlled by a woman having a minimum financial

interest of 51% of the capital and giving at least 51% of the employment generated in the enterprise to women [4].”

REVIEW OF LITERATURES

Sharma, Ajay & Dua, Sapna & Hatwal, Vinod in their study on “Micro Enterprise Development and Rural Women Entrepreneurship: Way for Economic Empowerment” state that rural women can do wonders by their effectual and competent involvement in entrepreneurial activities. Micro finance is playing a vital role in the success of SHGs; particularly the entry of rural women in micro enterprises will be encouraged and aggravated. This paper examined the impact on women empowerment through micro entrepreneurship development and SHGs [5].

R. Lakshmi & G. Vadivalagan in their study on “Impact of Self Help Groups on Empowerment of Women: A study in Dharmapuri District, Tamilnadu” state that the SHGs have had greater impact on both economic and social aspects of the beneficiaries. The objective of this paper is to study the socio-economic profile of SHG women and the impact of SHGs in women. The study shows that the main reason for joining SHG is not be merely to get just credit, it in an empowerment process; the women are economically and socially empowered after joining the self-help groups [6].

Mazumdar, Manashi and Ahmed, Marjina in their research paper “Empowerment of Rural Woman Through entrepreneurship-An Overview” tried to focus some important aspects of women empowerment through micro entrepreneurship development and SHGs. These aspects include status of women SHGs, advantages of micro enterprise in building women empowerment, scope of micro enterprise development etc. Through entrepreneurship development self

confidence level of women are increased and gave them a prosperous future. The researchers observe that micro enterprise is the best tool for rural women as it enables them to add to the family income [7].

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To find out the socio economic status of women entrepreneurs.
- To find out the income of women entrepreneurs.
- To observe how the women get economically empowered through entrepreneurship.

RESEARCH QUESTION

- Is the socio economic status of women entrepreneurs in the study area facilities women entrepreneurship?
- Is the income status of women entrepreneurs in the study area promotes economic empowerment of women?

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The area of the present study is Tinsukia district of Assam. The methodology of the study is based on primary and secondary data. There are 83 numbers of women entrepreneurs in the year 2009 to 2013 registered under District Industries & Commerce Centre, Tinsukia. On the basis of availability of respondent, judgemental sampling is adopted for the primary data collection. Primary data are collected through personal interview from those respondents who are available.

Secondary data are collected from District Industries & Commerce Centre, Tinsukia. The other sources of secondary data are books, related literatures and internet etc.

Analysis of the study

Table-1: Showing the educational qualification and category of women entrepreneurs of Tinsukia district of Assam

Educational qualification		Category	
Class 5-10	30%	General	16.66%
H.S.L.C. & H.S. pass	43.33%	OBC	66.67%
Graduation	26.67%	ST/SC/OTHERS	16.67%

Source-Field survey

Table 1 shows the educational qualification and category of women entrepreneurs of Tinsukia district of Assam. 30% women entrepreneurs read in between class 5 to class 10. 43.33% represents in

between H.S.L.C. & H.S. pass and remaining 26.67% women entrepreneurs have done graduation degree. Majority women entrepreneurs are in OBC category that is 66.67%.

Table-2: Showing the age group and marital status of women entrepreneurs of Tinsukia district of Assam

Age group of women entrepreneurs		Marital status of women entrepreneurs	
21-30	43.33%	Married	53.33%
31-40	33.33%	Unmarried	40%
41-above	23.34%	Others	6.67%.

Source-Field Survey

Table 2 shows the age group and marital status of women entrepreneurs of Tinsukia district of Assam. 43.33% women entrepreneurs are in between 21 to 30 age group, 33.33% women entrepreneurs are in between 31 to 40 age group and 23.34% women entrepreneurs are in between 41 to above age group.

From this table it is shows that majority women entrepreneurs are married that is 53.33%. There are 40% unmarried women entrepreneurs and 6.67% women entrepreneurs represents others because these women entrepreneurs' marital status are widow and separated from husband.

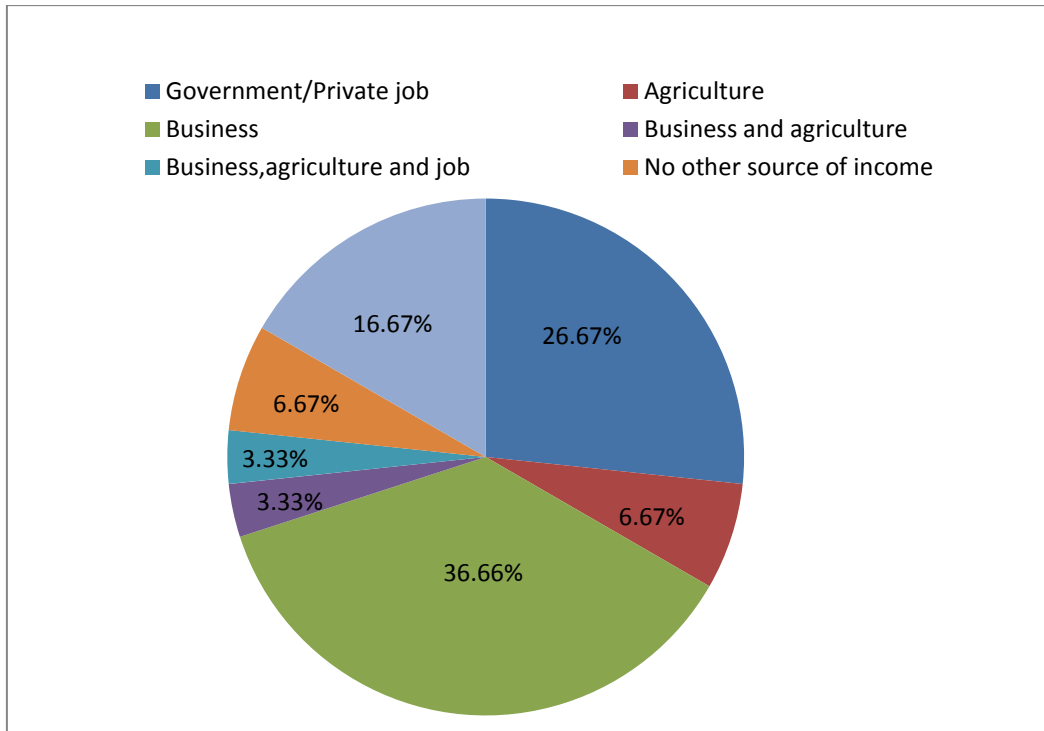


Fig-1: Showing the source of family income of women entrepreneurs of Tinsukia district of Assam
Source: Field survey

The figure 1 shows the source of family income of women entrepreneurs. Among them 26.67% women entrepreneurs' families engage in Government/private job, 6.67% women entrepreneurs' families source of income is agricultural works, 36.66% women entrepreneurs' families are engaged in business, 3.33% women entrepreneurs families are

engaged in business and agriculture and again 3.33% women entrepreneurs families source of income is based on business, agriculture and job. 16.67% women entrepreneurs' families are engaged in any other activity and 6.67% represents no other source of income.

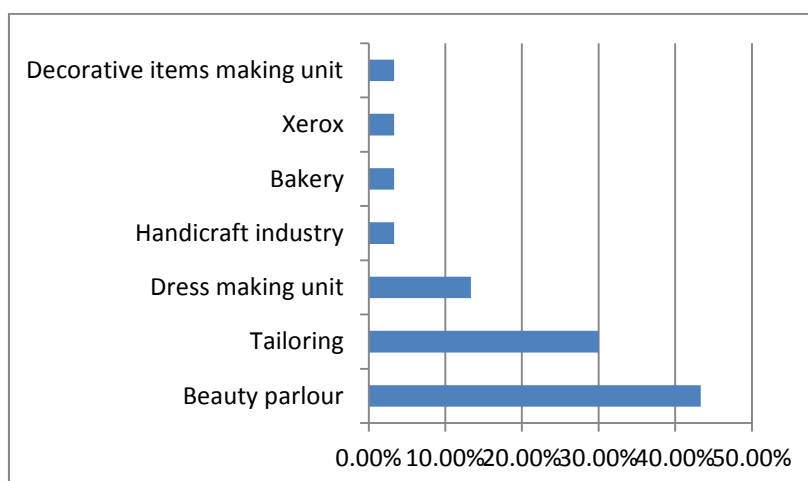


Fig-2: Showing the types of enterprises of women entrepreneurs of Tinsukia district of Assam
Source: Field Survey

The figure 2 shows the types of enterprises of women entrepreneurs as percentage wise. The highest percentage of women entrepreneurs are engaged in beauty parlour units that is 43.34%.The second highest percentage of women entrepreneurs are engaged in

tailoring units that is 30% and 13.34% women entrepreneurs are engaged in dress making units. In case of handicraft industry, bakery unit, Xerox and decorative items making unit represent the same percentage that is 3.33%.

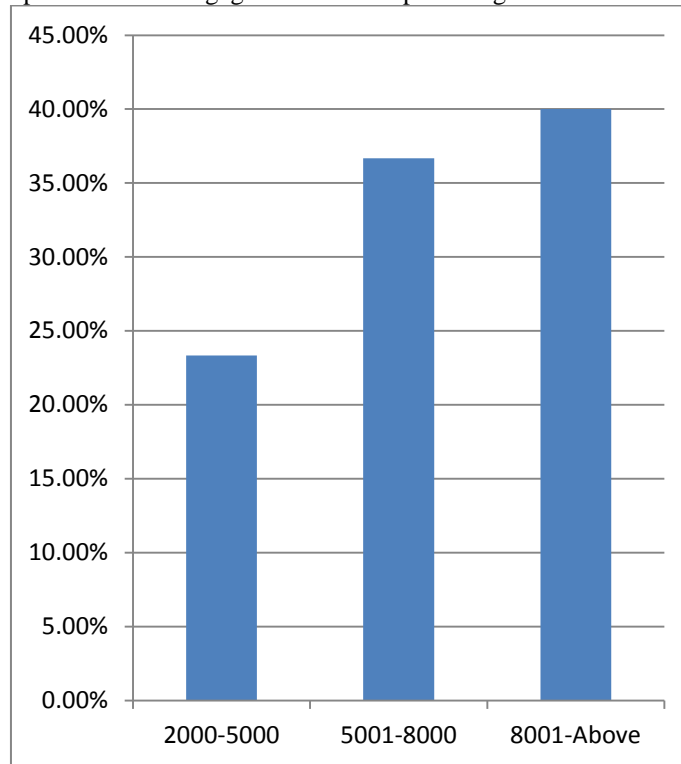


Fig-3: Showing the monthly income of women entrepreneurs of Tinsukia district of Assam
Source: Field survey

Figure 3 shows that women entrepreneurs' monthly income is divided in between 2000-5000, 5001-8000 and 8001-above range.23.33% women entrepreneurs earn monthly income in between 2000-

5000, 36.67% women entrepreneurs earn monthly income in between 5001-8000 and 40% women entrepreneurs earn monthly income in between 8001-above.

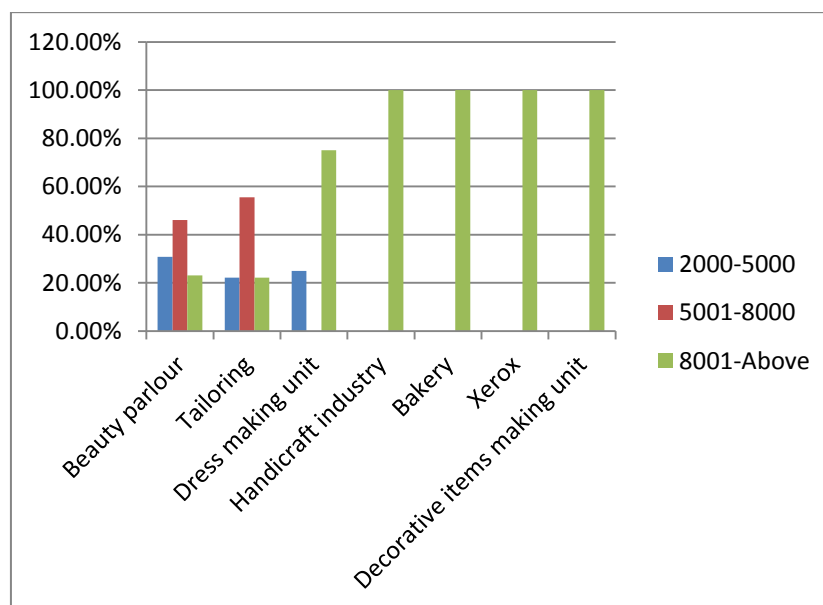


Fig-4: Showing unit wise monthly income levels of women entrepreneurs

Source: Field survey

The figure 4 shows unit wise monthly income level of women entrepreneurs. In case of beauty parlour unit there are 30.77% women entrepreneurs earn monthly income in between 2000-5000, 46.15% women entrepreneurs earn in between 5001-8000 and 23.08% woman entrepreneurs earn in between 8001-above.

In case of Tailoring unit there are 22.22% women entrepreneurs earn monthly income in between 2000-5000, 55.56% women entrepreneurs earn in between 5001-8000 and 22.22% women entrepreneurs earn in between 8001-above. In case of dress making units there are 25% women entrepreneurs earn monthly income in between 2000-5000 and 75% women entrepreneurs earn in between 8001-above. Women entrepreneurs who are engaged in handicraft industry, bakery unit, Xerox and decorative items making unit earn monthly income in between 8001-above.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- From the study it is found that the women get the way for empowerment through entrepreneurship. They are able to explore their skills and qualities by giving services to the society. Women entrepreneurs are ready to accept all types of risks and problems in their entrepreneurial career.
- It is observed that women in different age limit come effectively to provide their services in their respective field. All the women entrepreneurs are active in nature and they are belonging in different categories.
- It is found that women having minimum school level qualification are able to engage in entrepreneurship and run their enterprises. Due to their limited educational qualification they have not enough job opportunities. They have engaged in entrepreneurship to earn money by utilising their skills.
- Through the study it is observed that married women entrepreneurs have started their entrepreneurial career before their marriage and hoped that they will be continuing entrepreneurship after their marriage. Unmarried women entrepreneurs engage in entrepreneurship for self-dependence and self-establishment. Woman entrepreneur separated from her husband is the chief income earner of her family.
- The financial status of majority women entrepreneurs' families is not so highly satisfactory. Though highest percentage of women entrepreneurs families are engaged in business but it does not represent sound financial status of women entrepreneurs' families.
- It is found that highest numbers of women entrepreneurs are engaged in beauty parlour unit and after that second highest numbers of women entrepreneurs are engaged in tailoring unit. Limited

capital is required for establishing the beauty parlour and tailoring unit. Both the units are running, useful and customer friendly.

- Women entrepreneurs get involved in entrepreneurship through which they provide employment for other women and also provide services to the society.
- From the study it is found that women are highly attracted towards beautician profession. It is seen that majority women entrepreneurs earn monthly income in between 5001-8000.
- Through the study it is found that women entrepreneurs get directly involved in family matters. They contribute their earnings to their family in a supportive manner. The women entrepreneurs spent their money in household expenses, family education and to take lead part as a chief income earner of the house.

SUGGESTIONS

- Women need to focus to upgrade their educational level for effective involvement in their own field. More educated women entrepreneurs are needed for promoting entrepreneurship under the research area.
- There is need to encourage the women entrepreneurs to adopt up-to-date trainings and techniques, innovate new ideas and increase their knowledge about market demand and the choice of customers.
- Women entrepreneurs need to expand their business outside their area in order to improve their earnings. In this regard means of transport and communication should be improved in remote areas.
- Government should implement special schemes for the remote and rural women entrepreneurs.
- There is need to organise frequent entrepreneurial awareness camp among the women in schools, colleges, villages, wards, societies etc.
- Government should provide maximum financial support to the women entrepreneurs to make themselves as financially empowered women.
- There is need to support from families, positive responses from society for promoting entrepreneurship effectively.

With regard to research question number one is the socio economic status of women entrepreneurs in the study area facilities women entrepreneurship, it has been found that socio economic status influences on women entrepreneurship in the area under study in an encouraging manner. Women entrepreneurs having different educational qualification were engaged in entrepreneurship. Women from different economical background are still engaging their units; therefore it is

a positive sign for promoting entrepreneurship development under the study area.

With regard to research question number two is the income status of women entrepreneurs in the study area promotes economic empowerment of women, it has been found from the study that women entrepreneurs are able to run their enterprises successfully. Women entrepreneurs have come to earn something; they have started their entrepreneurial career with a small amount of earnings and have increased their earnings gradually. After engaging entrepreneurship women entrepreneurs are able to provide financial support to their families. Therefore income of women entrepreneurs makes themselves economically empowered women.

CONCLUSION

Empowerment of women through entrepreneurship is a very challenging task. Women who are naturally empowered will be possible economically empowered by their skills, abilities, will powers and efforts. Entrepreneurship plays effective role to encourage a women as a well-established person in the society. Women entrepreneurs are able to provide services and financial support to their families as well as to the society. Improvement of financial status of women uplift their social status which makes them empowered.

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