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Candidate's Name : **P.DEVI BHUVANESWARI**

Candidate's Address with email : 100 C/76 Cheran Nagar, Rackiyapalayam, Tirupur.
devibhuvaneshwarimphil@gmail.com

Title of the thesis : ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF DALIT
WOMEN THROUGH ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN
COIMBATORE DISTRICT

(i) In Roman Script -

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Name of Supervisor : **Dr.R.ANNAPOORANI**

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University's Name & Address : AVINASHILINGAM INSTITUTE OF HOME
SCIENCE AND HIGHER EDUCATION FOR
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Abstract within 300 words:

Entrepreneurship plays an important role in the discovery of knowledge and the turning of that knowledge into future goods and services through industrial innovations. In today's World, women entrepreneurs are playing very vital role and they have become important part of the global business environment and it is really important for the sustained economic development and social progress. (Amit Kumar and Rahul varma, 2002). Entrepreneurship development among women can be considered as a possible approach to economic empowerment of women.

Entrepreneurship among dalit women is a recent phenomenon and dalit women entrepreneurship has been recognized as an important source of economic growth. By establishing their new ventures, dalit women entrepreneurs generate new jobs for themselves and others (Vijaya Kumar and Naresh, 2013). However, status of Dalit women entrepreneurs in India is poor. Though these people have commitment to hard work, they have failed to attract the upper caste people or the upper caste people are not ready to accept the economic empowerment of dalit women entrepreneurs.

As per 2011 Census, in Tamil Nadu dalit women constitute 2,02,051 accounting for 12.5 percent of total population. (Primary Census Abstract, 2011) and there were 18.12 thousands dalit entrepreneurs accounting for 15 percent of the total entrepreneurs (Dalit Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, 2011). At the District level in Coimbatore there were 5,58,727 dalit people of which 3,27,791 were men and 2,30,936 were women in 2011 (www.coimbatore.nic.in). Dalit women in Coimbatore are involved in various enterprises like manufacturing, business and service and there were 821 dalit women entrepreneurs registered with District Industries Centre in 2011-12 (Annual Report of Coimbatore District Industries Centre, 2012).

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the socio economic profile of dalit women entrepreneurs;
- To identify the motivating factors of dalit women entrepreneurs;
- To find out the strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats of dalit women entrepreneurs;
- To analyse the entrepreneurial economic success of dalit women entrepreneurs;
- To analyse the economic empowerment of dalit women entrepreneurs;
- To identify the constraints faced by dalit women entrepreneurs and
- To recommend measures to promote dalit women entrepreneurship.

METHODOLOGY

Selection of the sample:

The study was related to Coimbatore District in Tamil Nadu. According to 2011 census, Coimbatore District had 15.5% of scheduled caste population of Tamil Nadu. Coimbatore District occupied 6th rank in scheduled caste women population of Tamil Nadu (Primary Census Abstract, 2011).

The study was related to dalit women entrepreneurs registered with District Industries Centre and dalit women entrepreneurs of self help groups.

In Coimbatore District there were 821 dalit women entrepreneurs registered with District Industries Centre in 2011-12. By adopting proportionate random sampling method, the study covered 50 percent of dalit registered women entrepreneurs in various blocks of Coimbatore District. Every alternate women entrepreneur among 821 registered dalit women entrepreneurs formed the sample for the study. Based on the response of registered dalit women entrepreneurs, the study finally covered 410 registered dalit women entrepreneurs.

With regard to selection of self help groups dalit women entrepreneurs, the study adopted proportionate random sampling. The study concentrated on 5 percent of dalit women self help group members in various blocks. The study concentrated on 365 dalit women self help groups entrepreneurs in 11 blocks of Coimbatore District.

HYPOTHESES FORMULATED IN THE STUDY:

- The motivational factors of dalit women entrepreneurs are independent of their age, education, choice of ownership, location of enterprise and nature of activity;
- There is no significant difference in strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the respondents in the registered units and self help groups;
- Years of experience, age of enterprise, labour employed, capital invested, type of enterprise and location of enterprise are insignificant determinants of entrepreneurial economic success of dalit women entrepreneurs;
- There is no significant difference in economic empowerment index of the respondents of registered units and self help groups women entrepreneurs;
- There is no significant difference between personal factors, enterprise related factors and Government related factors and economic empowerment of dalit women entrepreneurs and

- There is no difference in rank assigned for the problems faced by dalit women entrepreneurs in registered units and self help groups.

Estimation of Entrepreneurial economic success index:

Following Akhouri (1979) modified entrepreneurial economic success index the current study tried to calculate Entrepreneurial Economic Success index as follows:

$$\text{Entrepreneurial Economic Success Index} = \left[\frac{OC^2}{OCTY} + \frac{BC^2}{TI} + \frac{RC^2}{TI} \right] X \left[\frac{NP}{PR} + \frac{PR}{NP} \right]$$

where,

EESI= Entrepreneurial economic success index

TI= Total investment

NP= Net profit (After tax and interest deduction)

PR= Profit reinvested

OC= Own capital

OCTY= Own capacity to invest

BC= Borrowed capital and

RC= Raised capital

Estimation of Economic empowerment index:

By adopting the method followed by Ramananda Singh and Dhaneshwar Singh (2008) for estimation of economic empowerment index, the current study tried to calculate economic empowerment index as rating score of economic parameters measured in terms of own source of income, contribution to family income, ownership of assets, own savings and proportion of income spent on her and children. The value of economic empowerment index ranges from 0 to 1.

Based on the score, economic empowerment index was calculated as follows:

$$\text{Economic empowerment Index (En)} = \frac{_Ei}{_Ei(\text{max})}$$

Where,

$_Ei$ = ith economic indicators

$_Ei(\text{max})$ = Maximum scores for ith economic indicators

Based on the calculated economic empowerment index, dalit women entrepreneurs were classified as follows:

Economic empowerment index	Type of entrepreneurs
0.1-0.3	Less empowered
0.3-0.5	Moderately empowered
0.5-0.7	Highly empowered
0.7-0.9	Very highly empowered

QUANTITATIVE TOOLS USED

Chi-square analysis, Likert rating scale, Cronbach's alpha, Discriminant analysis, Structural equation model, Garrett ranking technique and Kruskal Wallis test

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

A. Socio economic profile of the selected respondents

- Majority of the respondents (39.87 percent) were in the age group of 35-45 years. With regard to educational level, of the total respondents, 25.42 percent have completed primary education and only 10.71 percent have completed college education. Majority of the total respondents (52.26 percent) had small family size. Of the total respondents, 50.58 percent have undergone training in entrepreneurial activities.

B. Details about enterprise owned by the selected respondents:

- Of the total units, 19.35 percent were of new origin- started two years back. More than 40 percent of the enterprises set up by selected respondents were of sole proprietorship.
- Of the total respondents, 37.03 percent were involved in manufacturing, 34.70 percent were involved in business and 28.26 percent were engaged in service.

C. Motivational factors for dalit women entrepreneurship:

- The major motivational factors for selected dalit women entrepreneurs were to satisfy economic needs, to lead an independent life, to share the family burden, to utilize leisure time and skills, to avail Government support and to avoid the threat of unemployment.
- The selected dalit women entrepreneurs have received family support relating to ideas of business, choice of ownership, finance, marketing and for getting Government assistance.

D. SWOT analysis of dalit women entrepreneurs:

- The major strength identified were motivation to succeed due to ownership, commitment, accessibility of place of work and recognition in the family.
- The major weakness identified were over dependence on intermediaries, non acceptance by the other community, dual responsibility, lack of previous idea of business, lack of education, lack of confidence and inadequate capital.

- The major opportunities identified were Government support, easy to manage, cheap labour and help from family members.
- The major threats identified were urbanization, change in consumer taste and preferences, social constraints, male domination and fluctuating markets.

E. Analysis of entrepreneurial economic success of dalit women entrepreneurs:

- The average entrepreneurial economic success index for the total respondents was 0.55. On an average, the entrepreneurial economic success index for the self help group respondents (0.58) was higher than that of registered units respondents (0.53).

F. Analysis of economic empowerment of dalit women entrepreneurs:

- The average economic empowerment index for the total respondents was estimated as 0.58. On an average, the economic empowerment index for the self help group respondents (0.59) was higher than that of registered units respondents (0.56).
- Majority of the registered units respondents (56.58 percent) have high economic empowerment index in the range of 0.5 – 0.7. However, majority of the self help group respondents (40.27 percent) had very high economic empowerment index in the range of 0.7 – 0.9.

G. Analysis of relationship between personal factors, enterprise related factors and Government related factors and economic empowerment of dalit women through entrepreneurship through structural equation model:

Personal factors include educational status, training and family size. Enterprise related factors include type of enterprise, profit earned and capital invested. Subsidised raw material, subsidised loan and subsidised power constitute Government related factors.

- For total dalit women entrepreneurs, among the personal factors, education has got more significant impact on economic empowerment since one unit of change in education brings about 0.78 change in economic empowerment index. With regard to enterprise related factors, type of enterprise has more significant impact and one unit change in type of enterprise is expected to bring out 0.72 unit change in economic empowerment index. With regard to Government related factors subsidised power has got more impact as one unit change in subsidised power brings about 0.69 unit change in economic empowerment index.

H. Analysis of constraints faced by dalit women entrepreneurs:

The major constraints faced by dalit women entrepreneurs were inadequate finance, non-availability of raw materials, inadequate market, lack of co-operation from family, unfair treatment from other community and lack of awareness about Government facilities for dalits.

I. Measures required to promote dalit women entrepreneurship :

The measures required by dalit women entrepreneurs to promote entrepreneurship were social acceptance by the people, provision of marketing facilities, availability of skilled labourers, availability of subsidised raw materials and provision of more incentives by Government.

Examiners

Internal Examiner : Dr. Vishwanatha

Prof. of Economics

Mangalore University

Mangalore

External Examiner : Dr. Arumugam Seetharaman

Dean, Academic Affairs

S.P. Jain School of Global Management

Singapore