ABSTRACT

The women of 21st century are contributing towards the growth of economy and improvement of their socio-economic conditions. They have shown incredible impact on all sections of the economy. The women are entering in the business world due to improved education level, standard of living and privileges at par with their male counterparts. In developing country like India, most of the studies have been carried out on male entrepreneurs as comparison to women entrepreneurs. With this in mind, this study was carried out on 276 sample respondents of five districts (Mandi, Kullu, Hamirpur, Kangra and Bilaspur) of Himachal Pradesh. This study examined the profile of women entrepreneurs, current status (financial status, social status and decision making status) and various problems, such as financial problems, marketing problems, manufacturing problems and labour problems faced by the women entrepreneurs. The results exposed that majority of women entrepreneurs were married and undertaken business enterprises, such as food processing, textiles/garments and manufacturing units. They were selling their products at state, national and international level. Moreover, majority of women entrepreneurs had not taken any formal training in their respective areas prior to the establishment of business enterprises and key reason for staring business enterprises was their poor financial condition. Their decision making power in terms of manpower recruitment, marketing and financial decisions was quite good. They were having moderate awareness about various government agencies, financial institutions and schemes of women entrepreneurs. They were facing various financial problems, such as low credit facilities, shortages of working capital and high competition from various men managed big business enterprises. Problem of shortages of raw material and non-availability of skilled labour were also major problems of the women entrepreneurs.

Even though we have many successful women entrepreneurs in the different states of the country, but there are many challenges which women entrepreneurs face from family and society. There is a need of exceptional efforts in the field of women entrepreneurship to boost their morale and instilling self-confidence in them.

Keywords: Women Entrepreneurs, Decision Making Status, Financial Status, Marketing Problems, Labour Problems