Abstract

Empowerment encompasses all values of life including social, economic, cultural and political dimensions. Empowerment of individuals is to be expressed as awareness and exercise of their rights. It is necessary that women are considered equal partners in progress with men. Hence empowerment of women is a holistic concept. Empowerment of women covers social, political and economic aspects. Entrepreneurship development among women is the foundation stone for economic empowerment of women. Entrepreneurship of women is the most powerful tool to eradicate their problems of unemployment and vulnerability. Active participation in economic activate, leads to sound economy of the nation. Entrepreneurship has been the domain of men for a long time. But education among women leads to employment for both men and women. Hence micro entrepreneurship is the best route for eradication of unemployment of women.

The profiles of women in the rural and urban areas differ with respect to educational levels, skills, social and cultural backgrounds. These factors affect the performance of the enterprises based on the level of confidence and support, the risk taking ability, etc that the women possess. Thus an attempt is made to compare the performance of women entrepreneurs in rural and urban areas. Registration of enterprises with any of the government agencies such as District Industrial Centre would advantageous to the women entrepreneurs in providing several support systems. The study compares the performance of women entrepreneurs between registered and un-registered enterprises and it also tries to evaluate the various programs related to the development of women entrepreneurship. Further, it analyzes the growth and trend patterns of women entrepreneurs in India and Karnataka in order to assess the economic empowerment of women through micro entrepreneurship.

The present study is based on both primary and secondary data sources. It is both descriptive and analytical in nature. Secondary data have been collected from Indian Economic survey, Journals, Reports, Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Mysore, Department of Industries and Commerce (DIC), Women and Child
Development Reports and other related sources. The primary data was collected through a structured questionnaire from the women entrepreneurs in all taluks of Mysuru district. The study sample includes 480 women entrepreneurs across seven taluks of Mysore district. Multistage Stratified random sampling was used to select the sample across different categories of enterprises from each of the seven taluks in the study area. The study has been used various statistical and econometric tools like Annual Growth Rate, Co-Efficient of Variation and Compound Annual Growth Rate. And it also used Cramer’s V, Garrett’s Technique and Index.

The study development programmes and schemes for women entrepreneurs in Karnataka through Karnataka State Women Development Corporation (KSWDC). It provides Udyogini, Market assistance schemes and Micro credits for women entrepreneurs. These programmes help development by giving training and financial support to women entrepreneurs. The women entrepreneurs in Bengaluru urban, Belgaum, Mangalore, Dharwad, and Mysuru have maximum micro women entrepreneurs in the registered sector in Karnataka. There are more women entrepreneurs in manufacturing sector and less women entrepreneurs in service sector in Karnataka.

The study reveals that majority of women entrepreneurs run manufacturing business. More women entrepreneurs belong to the age group of 31-43 years. School and College level educated women are more in entrepreneurial activities. Majority of women entrepreneurs preferred tailoring, beauty parlor and retail shop business. Number of women entrepreneurs in Non-registered sectors is more than registered sector. The performance of registered women entrepreneurs is better than non-registered women entrepreneurs. Further, majority of women entrepreneurs get financial assistance from their Bank, SHGs and their husbands. More women entrepreneurs undergo skill development training programme from other women entrepreneurs. Women entrepreneurs soled their products at local and district level. Regarding performance of women entrepreneurs, the urban women entrepreneurs’ performance is better than rural women entrepreneurs. It is found that there is low level of index in empowerment of women entrepreneurs before starting enterprises.
But after starting enterprises the level of index is increased to moderate level. The performance of business of women entrepreneurs is at low level because they are unaware about the government entrepreneurship development programmes. In total the micro women entrepreneurship have played an important role in poverty alleviation and it has been recognized as the key tool to increasing family welfare.