CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

This chapter attempts to present a summary of the study and major findings of the study. Based on the findings a few suggestions have also been made for improving the present state of affairs of women entrepreneurship units in Malappuram district. The objectives of the 'Study on women Entrepreneurs in Malappuram district' is to examine the problems of women Entrepreneurs in Malappuram district at the time of starting the business and while running the business. In particular the study analyses the socio-economic status of women Entrepreneurs in Malappuram district, the reasons prompted women to start industrial units in Malappuram district, to study the profile of the women industrial units in the district and suggest measures for improving the present position.

The study has been divided into six chapters. Chapter I is introductory in nature and covers the importance, scope, objectives, methodology of the study and provides a review of available literature. Chapter II is devoted to show an overview of the economy of Malappuram district. Chapter III deals with the socio-economic status of women entrepreneurs in Malappuram district and the locational preferences of such entrepreneurs. Chapter IV examines the major problems of women entrepreneurs while starting the units, compelling reasons for starting the units and factors influenced to choose a particular line of activity. Chapter V deals with the problems of women entrepreneurs in running business units.
FINDINGS

The study reveals a steady decline in the number of women Entrepreneurs in Malappuram district over a period last 5 years. The total number of women Entrepreneurship units registered in the year 1999-2000 was 235, 2000-2001-175, 2001-2002-153, 2002-03-73 and 2003-2004 38.

An analysis of the social status of the women entrepreneurs reveals that muslim women show no reluctance in starting business units.43% of the sample units selected are run by muslim women. It is also noticed that young women belonging to the muslim community show equal entrepreneurship skill as compared to their senior counterparts. 56% of the women entrepreneurs covered under the study were in the age group of 20-40 and 44% in the age group of 40-60 years. It was noted that their educational status varied from secondary level to graduation. Majority of them (87.5%) were married, and they dominated in all categories of units, irrespective of their return of units.

PROFILE OF UNITS

76 % of the women Entrepreneurs covered under the sample belong to the sole proprietorship. 7.8% belongs to the partnership and rest belong to co-operative sector.

It was noted that 82.81% of the units provided employment to workers ranging from 1-5, while 14.06% engaged workers ranging from 5-10 service units, food processing units, provided employment to more workers, where as tailoring units and DTP centres provided lesser number of employment.
ENTREPRENERIAL SKILL

Majority of the women Entrepreneurs (71.87%) of the sample belonged to the backward communities. The study reveals that the present occupational structure in relation to the women Entrepreneurs in the district was based on non-traditional skills, and not on traditional skills. This is indicated by the shift from the traditional family occupations to modern lines of activities.

MOTIVATING FACTORS TO START BUSINESS

75% of the women Entrepreneurs has remained unemployed until they started their units. They had no previous experience or contact with the business world before venturing in to Entrepreneurship. The major reason for conceiving the idea of starting and enterprise was stated to be unemployment and the desire and need to make money. However gaining an independent job was the most influential factor for certain others, Easiness to setup was the favourable factor in many cases for selecting the line of industry by the women Entrepreneurs on a particular location.

PROBLEMS IN STARTING THE UNIT

The main problem related to funds confronted by the women Entrepreneurs was that they were charged highest rates of interest. Lack of finance was the major reason for under utilisation of capacity for readymade garments units and service units, competition, and lack of demand were the prominent reasons for failure cited by food processing units.

Non-availability of raw materials at cheaper rate is the main problem faced by
majority of women Entrepreneurs. None of the majority units covered under the sample imported raw material. Majority of the women Entrepreneurs covered under the sample didn’t face any problem in managing labourers. The non availability of labourers at cheaper rate is their main problem. Almost all the respondents in the study were facing problem relating to electricity connection at the time of starting the units. High electricity charge is another major problem faced by majority of the women Entrepreneurs.

All the units had been effecting sales both on cash and credit basis. Credit sales were more for readymade garments units. Service units carried out sales mainly on cash basis.

Only a small number of the units realised reasonable prices for their products. Competition and intention of pushing up sales compelled the remaining units to quote low prices. The women Entrepreneurs of the sample units marketed major portion of their products within the district or state. There was negligible export of products. Competition from large units was found to be the main problem faced by the woman Entrepreneurs in marketing their products. A small number of the women Entrepreneurs did not face any peculiar problem as women. Travel for canvassing order was their most prominent problem. Travel for purchasing raw materials and distributing the products was the problem for readymade garments units and manufacturing units.

Only 12.5% of the respondents belong to families having business background. 67.18% of the women Entrepreneurs are from nuclear families.

49% of women Entrepreneurs of sample units under study started their units owing to unemployment. Majority of the women Entrepreneurs are basically from
backward communities. They are induced by the educational qualification and supported by availability of government incentives offered to the industrially backward district

Product identification is found to be a problem at the time of starting the unit by 13.74 per cent of women Entrepreneurs. Finding suitable location is a problem for 11.73 per cent of respondents

Analysis reveals that there is no perceptual difference between Muslim women Entrepreneurs and other women Entrepreneurs with regard to the problem at the time of starting the business.

13% of the respondents perceives registration of units is the major hurdle. Contact with officials was a problem for only 8.37 per cent respondents. Selecting a brand name and getting a trade mark was a problem for 7.21 per cent of women Entrepreneurs under study. Gender based discrimination is faced by 2.73 per cent, non availability of experienced employees is the important problem faced by software and DTP centres.

**PROBLEM IN RUNNING THE BUSINESS**

Regarding the problems faced while running the business, non availability of raw materials at cheap rate occupies the first rank and next comes high rate of interest. The other dominant factors disturbing business are non availability of labour at cheap rate fixing suitable price for the product, family problems, discrimination of society against women etc.

Difficulty in getting raw materials at cheap rate is experienced by 29.69 percent of women Entrepreneurs. The problem of raw materials was intimately connected with
lack of adequate working capital. A common problem which women Entrepreneurs faced was the shortage of finance for working capital. Women Entrepreneurs experienced difficulty in collection of debt. 3.12 per cent of women Entrepreneurs under study recorded lack of training as a problem. 6.25 per cent of women Entrepreneurs faced peculiar problems as women.

At present only a negligible portion of the products of the women units are exported. Low level of favourable family background in the field of family cooperation, education, occupation and Entrepreneurial base are other problems faced by some women Entrepreneurs. Family problems inhibit women Entrepreneurs from the proper management of their units.

Lack of managerial assistance from government to enhance the quality of the units was a problem to 6.25 per cent of women Entrepreneurs under study.

Competition from large firms and street vendors were a threat to women Entrepreneurs especially during festive seasons. Cost of power was a threat to the very existence of the industries in the manufacturing sector.

Women Entrepreneurs under the study covered were less educated. 78.12 per cent of the women Entrepreneurs come under study have educations below higher secondary level. Most of them feel difficulty in preparing their accounts. 9.37 per cent come under study facing the problems in the area of pricing.
SUGGESTIONS

The finding of the study confirm that the women Entrepreneurs in Malappuram which have been facing numerous problems in promoting and running their units. Considering the decisive role they have to play in the industrial development of Malappuram district, it is high time the government to initiate action to improve the performance of women's industrial units. On the basis of the findings the undermentioned recommendations are made that would help solve/reduce the problems faced by women Entrepreneurs in Malappuram district.

1. Women Entrepreneurs in backward areas needs special assistance and initiatives from the government and financial institutions.

2. The government shall set up marketing agencies to ensure the timely marketing of the goods produced by women Entrepreneurs.

3. Besides organising a short-term EDPs for women, continuous training in all management areas should be given to them.

4. Separate industrial estates may be setup for women Entrepreneurs.

5. At the national and state level, there is need to set up WOMEN INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BANK.

6. In the existing banks and financial institutions, it is advisable to start a separate cell called “women Entrepreneur guidance cell” to promote and guide the women Entrepreneurs.

7. More research is to be conducted to identify the problems which are being faced by them.

8. The New entrants may be encouraged by organising the implant visit of successful women Entrepreneurs.
9. To promote and develop the rural women Entrepreneurship, efforts shall be made to get the active involvement of ‘mahila samajas’ or women’s organisations by launching village adoption schemes.

10. Government should take initiative to make aware the people the importance of women Entrepreneurship through press and television media.

11. Encourage women Entrepreneurs by providing subsidy to those who establish enterprises in new lines of units like horticulture, ayurvedic, marine, biotechnology and tourism fields.

12. Take measures to channelise flow of NRI fund in to women Entrepreneurship.

13. As the district is declared as first computer literacy village in India, encourage women Entrepreneurs to IT field as a new shelter for lively hood.

14. Food processing industries have great chances in this district because of the availability of fruits and vegetables abundantly. So the Government and local self governments should encourage women Entrepreneurs for establishing units for food processing.

15. Co-operative Institutions and banks may use a share of their profit for the promotion of women Entrepreneurs by providing free training, loans with subsidy, loans without interest for helping them identify a suitable product, under their jurisdiction.

16. As considerable number of units engaged in manufacturing food products should take measures for remarkable product diversification.

17. 80% of the work force in the coir extraction and spinning sector are women. Hence women Entrepreneurs have a scope to set up value added coir based
industries in this district.

Government should take remedial measures for the specific problems faced by women Entrepreneurs, like marketing and special concessions should be extended to them. Training components should include skill formation, knowledge on different technologies, handling of better equipments, legal aspects of running a business, preparation of feasibility reports, better marketing and communication.

Social recognition and timely reward should be given to successful and innovative women Entrepreneurs. Group Entrepreneurship is ideal for the weaker sections of the society and it is an instrument which helps the poor woman to overcome their poverty. Women Entrepreneurs must have the urge to learn new things and to undergo training on various skills of Entrepreneurship and preparedness to accept changes.

In recent years there has been an increased global awareness regarding the contribution of women to the process of economic development. Although majority of women folk continues to be mute spectators of business activities, enthusiastic women Entrepreneur started leading a silent business revolution across the nation. The efforts are on to uplift the social and economic status of women. The development of women as Entrepreneurs will generate multifaceted socio-economic benefits to the country.

AREAS OF FURTHER RESEARCH

1. At present there are various schemes for providing assistance to women Entrepreneurs. The effectiveness of these schemes in fulfilling the requirements of women needs further research.

2. The role of self help groups, Mahila Samaj and Kundumbashree programmes in Malappuram District needs indepth study.