

To cite this article: Dr. J Preetha Zazjnay and Dr. Santhosh V.A. (2025). FOSTERING WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN MSME: UNVEILING MOTIVATIONAL INFLUENCE AND ECONOMIC IMPACT, International Journal of Research in Commerce and Management Studies (IJRCMS) 7 (2): 398-414 Article No. 371 Sub Id 692

FOSTERING WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN MSME: UNVEILING MOTIVATIONAL INFLUENCE AND ECONOMIC IMPACT

Dr. J Preetha Zazjnay¹ and Dr. Santhosh V.A.²

¹Assistant Professor, Department of Business Administration,
University Institute of Technology, Kollam-12, Kerala.

²Professor & Dean, TKM Institute of Management,
Karuvilil, Ezhukone (P.O), Kollam, Kerala.

DOI : <https://doi.org/10.38193/IJRCMS.2025.7229>

ABSTRACT

Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises in India were found to play a pivotal role in the socio-economic advancement bringing out both the economic and non-economic benefits to individuals, to the economy and more over to the society. Government's initiatives in increasing the number of women entrepreneurs and creating favourable conditions for them to succeed is essential to improve the economic opportunities and thereby enjoy better standard of living. Purpose of the study was to identify how far the motivational factors have influenced women entrepreneurs to succeed in their business. A descriptive study was conducted among the women entrepreneurs of micro, small and medium enterprises in the highly literate state of India, that is Kerala, using sample survey. The study provides a futuristic view to make strategic decisions regarding women entrepreneurship, which lead to economic development.

KEYWORDS: Entrepreneurship, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Motivation, Women Entrepreneurship, Women Development

1. INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship, being defined as the ability to combine knowledge, skills and experience to create value (Gary Becker) is also regarded as a means to meet self-sufficiency and poverty alleviation (Patil & Mathu, 2007), and its definition has undergone several fold metamorphoses. In the present era, entrepreneurship has emerged as a critical input for socioeconomic development along with the advancement of science and technology (Mohanty, 2012) further resulting into global economic development (Ramadani et al., (2015); Rao et al, (2012)). Entrepreneurship plays a vivid role in helping eminent strategists and policy makers to support the entrepreneurial process which need to be applied specially to create wealth for individuals, firms and add value to societies (Jones et al., 2020) as a whole effectively. In this modern era, a paradigm shift in terms of trends in the global

entrepreneurial arena could be witnessed where Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) played a pivotal role in the socioeconomic advancement and sustainable development bringing out both the economic and non-economic benefits to individuals, to the economy and more over to the society (Shepherd & Patzelt, 2011) as a whole. In the Indian economic scenario, there have been an impressive growth in the small business sectors. They have become seedbed for entrepreneurs who are the key contributors towards a better quality of life for millions of people who envisages new opportunities, techniques, products and mechanism by coordinating all the allied activities (Desai, 2011). It has been proved beyond doubt that the employment opportunities in small enterprises and a decentralized contribution to income with strong local economy are expected to reduce the disparity between income and wealth (Mathew, 2000). This may provide an ancillary support to large enterprises, promote balanced industrial growth, develop rural industries and enhance development in the regional and back ward areas (Charantimath, 2014). Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises have now emerged as dynamic power centers attracting a large number of countries. In India they are playing a crucial role by providing large employment opportunities through industrialization of especially rural & backward areas, by reducing regional imbalances and assuring more equitable distribution of national income and wealth (MSME Annual Report 2021-22).

2. WOMEN IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Entrepreneurial spirit is not confined to be a male dominion. Women across the world are showing greater interest in business and are eagerly struggling to be economically independent and quite obviously choose the right platform for their business and concentrate on that. They are trying hard to come up to the top of the important players in the entrepreneurial landscape (Pages, 2005) by building their business besides numerous family obligations (Syed Shah et al, 2011) still excelling in their business especially in the micro enterprises sector (Salfiya & Gunapalan, 2012). It's really interesting to note that women entrepreneurship has gained momentum from the last few decades and it is evident from increasing trend in the number of enterprises run by women and their substantial contribution to the economic growth. Several studies and statistics have shown that the women owned enterprises are also growing at a faster rate worldwide (Charantimath, 2014) and also, they have garnered recognition from many parts of the world, calling attention to the value women offer to their society. Globally women entrepreneurs' level has been found to have an upswing creating a positive impact on the economy and development. Owing to the global megatrends, which may dramatically alter the landscape for the technology and business industry, the expectation of new avenues to be opened up among a sizable untapped segment in the micro, small and medium enterprises sector, invites governments, academicians and researchers to throw light towards the growing recognition of the important role played by the micro, small and medium sectors enterprises in the economic development of the nation.

Women in Kerala has topped not only in terms of her population, education and literacy rate but also in terms of increasing percentage of women employed in both governmental and non-governmental organisations compared to that of the previous year's trends. The Annual Report (2021-22) of MSME development organisation states that about 21 percent of the business enterprises of MSMEs in Kerala are owned by women and it has been calculated to be 13 percent among the registered and 87 percent among the unregistered enterprises in Kerala. Apart from that, Kerala State Women's Development Corporation incorporated in 1988, was being established with the aim of enhancing and expanding the socio-economic opportunities of women in the State. The Corporation, aimed at empowering the marginalised and downtrodden sections of the society, have been helping them to overcome several constraints and face the challenges. Overall, in India and particularly in Kerala, in spite of several strong backups, a dismal growth is being accessed in the women entrepreneurial arena. Indian Government has brought up new and improved measures to include women in the developmental process which has to be very seriously dealt with. The study has been conducted in the state of Kerala, which is one of the highly literate states in India. Percentage of women in the entrepreneurial segment is subpar even though among women in Kerala, the inequality in education lies in a declining stage. The main challenge is to increase the number of women and maintain a balance in gender. Despite all the initiative from the government, still gender gaps exist in the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

3. MOTIVATION FOR WOMEN IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Several authors and researchers have made several studies sought the influencing factors of entrepreneurship among the women entrepreneurs in order to build a strong base which support more women to rise up and enjoy the prospects of entrepreneurship. Each study on women entrepreneurship would facilitate the researcher in determining the reasons for the slow pace of growth of women entrepreneurs in India compared to the growth worldwide. Lalitha Iyer (1991) in her studies analysed the constraints faced by women in her business systems and the study reflects upon the need for entrepreneurial development (Singh, 1992) which may turn essential to contribute directly to the family income (D'Cruz, 2003). Despite the women have been economically empowered, majority of women entrepreneurs still comes forwards to start their enterprises in micro and small-scale sectors and informal sectors (Ganesamurthy, 2007). Women empowerment are considered to be a powerful forerunner to the women economic development and this may itself happen as an impact on their enhanced social status which can be acquired as a result of their increased literacy level, educational level of their children and spouse and also the wellbeing of their family (Ghosh. et. al., 1998).

Though several researcher's examinations on entrepreneurs tended to focus on industry and the business environment, Venkataraman (1997) through his study states that understanding of entrepreneurship will not be complete unless one understands the motivation of individual involved and it's important to determine the success (Stewart & Roth, 2001). Several studies conducted by

researchers all over the world highlights different aspects of motivation regarding women entrepreneurs and women entrepreneurship. The word motivation comes from the Latin word 'movere' which means, to move. An entrepreneur, whether men or women, cannot succeed without motivation (Robertson, et al., 2003). Motivation has been defined as a cognitive decision-making process that influences the effort, persistence and direction of voluntary goal directed behaviour. Certain studies have pointed out that as there are limited options for women in the mainstream labour market, entrepreneurship can be considered as a positive route of escape. Whereas Shane, et al. (2012) in their study suggest that human motivation have a significant influence in their entrepreneurial process which is related to how well they recognize their entrepreneurial opportunity and develop ideas to pursue that opportunity. Several factors like motivation from own family members including father and husband (Vargheese & Edwin, 2011), or education acquired (Hannang, 2012) or the interest and desire for self-achievement of financial fortunes (Amran Daud, 2004) can motivate women into entrepreneurship. The influence of motivational factors along with cognitive factors (Locke, 2000) like knowledge, skills and abilities (Shane, et al., 2012) can result in favourable entrepreneurial performance. Entrepreneurial motivation has been analysed as a determinant challenge for women in their business by several studies (Poonam (2012); Chinonye & Roy (2010)).

4. SCOPE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

While conducting study in one of southernmost state of India, it was found that amidst the un-proportional radical increase in the level of work participation, the proportion of women in the entrepreneurial sector hasn't scaled up. The Government's initiatives which include various training and financing programs have been found not sufficient enough, to tackle the problems which restrict industrialisation for women. We are nowhere near the 50:50 proportion of men and women in the entrepreneurial arena, where women population is more than men and they are highly literate also. Women have been remaining as the untapped source of economic growth and has been largely neglected by our societies and families. Supporting entrepreneurship is undoubtedly positive and practical choice appropriate to encourage and support the women fraction which can scale up the MSME sectors that is equally important to sustain our economy, create jobs and foster growth. Increasing the number of women entrepreneurs and creating favourable conditions for them to succeed is essential to improve the economic opportunities and thereby enjoy better standard of living which can be helpful in nurturing a bright future for the next generation. Hence the study on the women entrepreneurs in Kerala pursuing business in MSME sectors was found to be significant to analyse their backwardness in the entrepreneurial field.

5. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Women in Kerala, being more privileged than the rest of the states in India, enjoys a very distinctive position with a sex ratio favourable to them which is 1054 women for 1000 men as against the national

average of 940 women for 1000 men (Census Report-2011). Also, in Kerala women have the high literacy rate which accounts to 92.07 percent against the national average of 65.46 percent (Census Report-2011). Since the declining inequalities in education are the promising signs of economic transformation and the important indicators of development, then obviously Kerala should have retained the top most position in the statistics of percentage share of women in the entrepreneurial field also when compared to other states in India. Even though more opportunities could be tapped in the MSME sectors by women with their overwhelming specialities, the annual report of MSME sectors gives the statistics that women participation in registered organisational set up in India accounts to only about 13.77 percent. Unfortunately, in Kerala where there is highest population of highly educated, talented and innovative women, only about 5.2. percent of the enterprises are registered and run by women under MSME sectors in Kerala (MSME Annual Report, 2020-21) and that too which is much lower than the national average. Women in Kerala has been considered as just an extension of men in this male dominated society where better education not leading to better opportunities for women along with lesser percentage of women in the entrepreneurial field of MSME sector compared to other states of India even though there are some exceptional cases.

6. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following research objectives were being framed for guiding the study.

- 1) To study the women entrepreneurs of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise sectors registered in the state of Kerala by analysing the influence of motivational factors in determining success.
- 2) To analyse the influence of motivational dimension on the success of women in the entrepreneurial field.

7. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

One of the basic forms of research design, the '*Descriptive Research Design*', which is equally important, worthy and scientific and which involves a description of the phenomenon in our world has been used in this study. Sample survey was conducted from women entrepreneurs registered under micro, small and medium enterprise sectors in the state of Kerala. The sample size calculated for the research survey was 375 respondents from a target population of 15079 women entrepreneurs in Kerala which included the women entrepreneurs who were in the business arena in MSME sector in Kerala with at least 2 years' experience. This target population was divided into three strata based on the demographic division of the state government such as North, Central and South Kerala. Calculated sample were to be selected from these strata in a particular proportion randomly. Hence a '*Proportionate Stratified Random Sampling*' design was proposed in this research work for sampling where samples were obtained from the three strata. The researcher conducted the pre-test of the survey questionnaire to ensure that the questions are being properly articulated and to determine whether the response options were relevant, comprehensive and unambiguous. Here judgement of some experts was chosen for pretesting the questionnaire constructed for survey and pilot study was conducted with

randomly chosen 50 women entrepreneurs from the list of women entrepreneurs provided by the industries department in Kerala, Internal consistency of the instrument was being estimated by Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, were a reliability measure accounted to an average value of 0.844 which ensures the appropriateness of the instrument and a full-fledged survey process was on wheels. Questionnaires were sent to 880 samples; 417 feedbacks were received and of them 402 feedbacks were finalised from the three strata for analysis purpose and after discarding 15 incomplete feedbacks. The study was conducted using multiple methods of documentation like personal conversation and questionnaire method for collecting primary data and with different sources of secondary data.

8. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

8.1 Analysis on the demographic profile

To begin the data analysis the descriptive statistics was needed to be used in the study as they make the mass of research material easier to read. These descriptive data regarding the demographic variables related to the women entrepreneurs of the MSME sectors in Kerala were collected, classified and tabulated and were been used to give a concise, comprehensive and clear presentation of the information regarding the women entrepreneurs of Kerala.

Analyzing the demographic profile of women entrepreneurs registered under MSME sector in Kerala, the study showed that majority of the women who were in the entrepreneurial field were between the age group of 31 years and 50 years. Women in their thirties or forties were those who have come forward into the entrepreneurial field in Kerala. Only 3.0 percent of women entrepreneurs surveyed were below 30 years of age, which needed a greater concern in Kerala, being a state with highest literate population of India. Also, it was found that a large majority of women entrepreneurs surveyed were found to be Hindus (61.9%), followed by Christians (23.9%) and only a small percentage of women who responded to the survey were Muslims which constituted to only 12.4 percentage which was found to not going with the Government statistics which showed women of Muslim community who holds the highest position in the entrepreneurial arena in Kerala. Regarding marital status, what so ever, most women got an opportunity to enter into the entrepreneurial field after their marriage only. Only a small percentage of enterprises were occupied by unmarried women, that is, 3 percentage and the widows and/or the separated had a 7 percent participation in the entrepreneurial field. Regarding the responsibility of child care, which is traditionally considered to be solely as a mother's duty, 74.4 percent of women in the entrepreneurial field had two kids to take care of. These major sections of women entrepreneurs opined that, they had the dual responsibility as care givers for their children and managers to their business which they had to take hand in hand.

While analysing the educational status of women entrepreneurs of MSME sector in the state of Kerala, responses from the women entrepreneurs showed a very surprising fact that 53.7 percent of women

entrepreneurs surveyed had an educational qualification below graduation. Only the rest were having a graduation or a post graduate degree. Also, there was an alarming statistic in the percentage of years in business of women. Only 13.9% had a business experience between 10 to 15 years, only 4.7 percent had experience between 15 years to 20 years and a meagre 1.2 percent with more than 20 years of business experience in the MSME sector registered in Kerala were there among the respondents. This brings to light that the retention rate of women in business registered under MSME sector in Kerala was very low.

About 59.7 percent of women registered under MSME sector in Kerala had business in rural areas. More women in the rural areas have come forward with their business units and it was a positive sign of wider opportunity for rural development. Again, here it should be noted that most of the women entrepreneurs surveyed were not aiming towards a bigger project to be taken over or going for a relatively higher investment in their business. Majority wished to be in a safer zone with small units and with very low investment that too in any type of business from manufacturing to service or to the retail business. The researcher learned that most of the women entrepreneurs who responded to the survey were found to be comfortable with a single person owned proprietary business, but the second largest percentage showed that they were also performing well as such with the group endeavours by forming self-help groups. These women entrepreneurs of MSME sector in Kerala State were not found utilising the facilities of industrial estates for their business purpose. The national and international markets or reach for their products in different States in India and abroad were yet to be tapped for the women entrepreneurs in the MSME sectors in Kerala and as to the present position it was about 9.5 percent and 7.2 percent respectively.

8.2 Analysis of Correlation between Motivation and Success.

Applying the Hackman-Oldham model, the influence of job-related motivational factors towards success were studied by analysing the five job characteristics such as skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy and feedback. Pearson Correlation analysis was computed to determine how far motivation in their job has influenced the success of women of MSME sectors in Kerala. The correlation was tested at a 5% significance level with 95 % confidence level by setting the hypothesis.

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between the motivation of women entrepreneurs and their success.

A positive correlation was found to exist between the motivational factors and success in women entrepreneurs with a significant p- value of .003. Hence the researcher failed to accept the null hypothesis and need to state that there was statistically significant relationship between motivation of women entrepreneurs and their success. (Table.2).

Table.2 Correlation between Motivation and Success

	Success	
Motivation	Pearson Correlation	.146
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003
	N	402

Source: - Primary Data

2.1. Correlation between job characteristics of motivation and success

Table.3 Correlation between job characteristics of motivation and success

Null Hypothesis	Pearson Correlation (r-value)	Sig. (2-tailed) (p-value)	N	Decision
H ₀₂ : There is no significant relationship between the job characteristics 'skill variety' and 'success'	.087	.083	402	Accept the Null Hypothesis
H ₀₃ : There is no significant relationship between the job characteristics 'task identity' and success	.097	.053	402	Accept the Null Hypothesis
H ₀₄ : There is no significant relationship between the job characteristics 'task significance' and success	.146	.003	402	Reject the Null Hypothesis
H ₀₅ : There is no significant relationship between the job characteristics 'autonomy' and success	.152	.002	402	Reject the Null Hypothesis
H ₀₆ : There is no significant relationship between the job characteristics 'feedback' and success	.158	.002	402	Reject the Null Hypothesis

Correlation analysis was computed between each of the job characteristics of motivation with success of women entrepreneurs by testing hypothesis at 5% significance level and 95 % confidence. The correlation analysis values obtained regarding the job characteristics ‘skill variety’ and ‘task identity’ the higher than significant p-values, indicates that no significant relationship exists between these two job characteristics ‘with the success of women entrepreneurs and hence the researcher found it appropriate to go with the null hypothesis.

The Pearson correlation analysis computed for determining the relationship between the other job characteristics like ‘task significance’, ‘autonomy’ and ‘feedback’ in the motivational model together with the significant p- values obtained for these three job characteristics, such as .003, .002 and .002 respectively, indicates that there existed a statistically significant relationship between the motivational factors ‘task significance’, ‘autonomy’ and ‘feedback’ in women entrepreneurs and their success and hence the researcher failed to go with the null hypothesis.

9. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The demographic profile of women entrepreneurs registered under MSME sectors in Kerala, an Indian state, showed that less percentage of young women were found to be in business. Hardly few women below the age of 30 years had a registered business unit under MSME sector and this needed a greater concern especially in a highly literate state of India. Contrary to the available statistics of the government departments, it as found that there was lesser participation by the Muslim women community who owned and run the enterprise during the survey process when compared to other religious groups like Hindus and Christians in the entrepreneurial field in Kerala. Also, it was found that majority of women had an opportunity to enter into the entrepreneurial field after their marriage. Only a small percentage of enterprises were run by unmarried women, that is, 3 percent and the widows and/or the separated had a 7 percent participation in the entrepreneurial field.

Here another major concern was that, women entrepreneurs had to bear the dual burden of work and childcare. Most of the women entrepreneurs were being working under high level of pressure and constraints. The culture prevailing in Kerala among majority of the families is that child care is supposed to be the responsibility of women. More constraints were found to be in families having just two children. Where as in nuclear families and big families, the situation was some more conducive for women to carry over their business.

The researcher could find that it is not the adults or the youngsters, but the elderly women, who have come forward to be a part of the entrepreneurial endeavour. Here, on one hand, as women showed their willingness to take an initiative and interest in doing business, here age was never a barrier to them, but on the other hand the highly educated youngsters were not being encouraged to be in the entrepreneurial field. Here the need of the hour is that young graduates need to be attracted towards

the entrepreneurial arena. Another very disappointing fact was that after struggling to about 10 years to retain in business and not able to withstand the threat, competition and difficulties from several areas, women were found to slowly withdraw from their entrepreneurial arena. Hardly few were having a 20years of business experience or above 20 years.

The low retention rate of women in the entrepreneurial field also paved way to consider the need for timely interventions from authorities to take certain necessary measures which are essential for women upliftment and to retain more women in the entrepreneurial field especially among the entrepreneurs from the rural areas. Also, it was found that more women in the rural areas have come forward with their business units and it was a positive sign of higher opportunity for rural development. This indicates that more rural participation was there in the MSME sector in Kerala and hence more scope for empowerment of women in the rural areas were also possible.

The study reveals that most of the women entrepreneurs surveyed were not aiming high towards a bigger project to be taken over or going for a relatively higher investment. Majority wished to be in a safer zone with small units and with very low investment. They had to shrink into the lowest level of entrepreneurial prospects with a micro enterprise in or near to their residence. Very less percentage of women owned a small-scale enterprise or a medium-scale enterprise. Women need to be imparted with support and assistance to encourage them to rise boldly to the higher level of entrepreneurial prospects and expand their market from local and/or regional to national and international level. The survey results indicate that women participation can be expected in any type of business from manufacturing to service or to retail. More than the proprietary business, the group endeavour of self-help groups should also be encouraged as the synergistic effect could be witnessed in group endeavour which need to be promoted giving way for a better forward leap for women in the entrepreneurial arena in an organised format. Women of MSME sector in Kerala were not found utilising the facilities of industrial estates for their business purpose. Also, expecting to run their business comfortably, women entrepreneurs depended on banks and other financial institutions for funding their enterprise. Generating and managing fund for business had been an burning concern for women entrepreneurs of MSME sectors especially in Kerala. It was found that the national and international markets or reach for their products in different States in India and abroad were yet to be tapped for the women entrepreneurs in the MSME sectors in Kerala.

9.1 Discussions regarding the relationship between success and moderate variables.

Discussing over the relationship between success and other categorical variables were made based on results of ANOVA test. The survey findings showed that the religion and success were related. Religious influences were there in the entrepreneurial field and that women had to perform in accordance with the religious requirement. Whereas the extend of influence varied from one religion to another.

Very interesting fact which need to be discussed from the findings of the study was that, while considering the association of success with marital status of women entrepreneurs, the most successful entrepreneurs where of the group including widows and the separated ladies, followed by the unmarried women. This helps us to learn that even though more married women were in the entrepreneurial field, they were supposed to be performing under several constraints and amidst the pressure of responsibilities regarding child care were bestowed upon them. The widows or separated women and the unmarried enjoyed the freedom in their home which might have eased their family constraints and that they could prove that they were more capable of managing their enterprise in a more effective manner. Another important factor which could be related was that the women with two kids to take care of were also the less performers. These findings show that women entrepreneurs with the dual burden of family responsibility and child care were not found to have a conducive climate to excel in business. These married women were actually struggling hard to adjust with several stringent situations and succeed in their business.

Regarding the relationship between educational qualification and success, the ANOVA test results showed that graduate had a high relationship with success. Here also the majority group who had educational qualification below graduation and had been found to be less successful compared to graduates and post graduates. It could be demonstrated that the educated women can contribute much for the national development. Thus, it is the need of the hour to motivate more educated women to enter the entrepreneurial field. Kerala being the state with highest percentage of literacy rate can motivate more women into the entrepreneurial field. If in our university educational system, more importance was given to entrepreneurial education or at least the information and systematic guidance about the basic formalities needed to start an enterprise and operate it well could be imparted formally, it would have been helpful in attracting more educated of women in Kerala into the entrepreneurial field.

Also, the study demonstrated that success of women entrepreneurs was related to the area of their operations. Even though more women enterprises were from the rural areas, success were found to happen more with the women enterprises in the urban areas than that in the rural areas. Here more rural enterprises need to be nurtured in the right manner so that the rural development could be made possible in the right sense.

9.2. Influence of Motivational factors on Success of Women Entrepreneurs

The research objective, which was to measure the influence of motivational factors on the success of women entrepreneurs of micro, small and medium enterprises in Kerala helped to bring out the following aspects which need to be discussed. It was observed that statistically significant correlation existed between the motivation of organisational job-related characteristics with that of success. Analysing deep into the organisational job characteristics which might have motivated the women

entrepreneurs leading to success, the study showed that the job characteristics like task significance, autonomy and feedback had a significant influence on the success of women entrepreneurs. of MSME sectors in Kerala, where as other job characteristics like skill variety and task identity didn't have a significant influence on the success.

The positive correlation with 'task significance' indicated that the women entrepreneurs through her business could make a substantial impact on the lives or work of other people, whether immediate to the organization or in the external environment. This could be related to the need and worthiness in developing more women entrepreneurs who could impact societal growth which further could lead to the national development which our nation eyes to achieve by 2030.

Similarly, the autonomy enjoyed by women in their organisation had also influenced the success of women and it indicates that the autonomy in job provided substantial freedom, independence, and discretion to the entrepreneurs in scheduling the work and in determining the procedures to be used in carrying it out at their best possible way and to their satisfaction.

The job characteristics 'feedback' indicates that the women entrepreneurs tried to obtain a direct and clear follow-up regarding the business to analyse the effectiveness of the performance which helped the women entrepreneurs for self- analysis which was very essential for individuals to excel in her endeavour in the right manner.

Whereas the other job characteristics like skill variety didn't had a statistically influence on the success of women entrepreneurs. The characteristics 'skill variety' required the women entrepreneurs to have a variety of different skills and talents to carry over different activities. Even though women entrepreneurs had a complete knowledge of the activities in her business and efficiently managed all the activities, they were found of lacking the skills needed to weather out the ups and downs in their business, foresee the future and courageously deal with the failure. More training to enhance skills in decision making need to be imparted to women entrepreneurs.

Other characteristics 'task identity' required women entrepreneurs of MSME sector in Kerala to perform their activities or job from beginning to end with a visible outcome. Here women entrepreneurs were found to lack the capability of setting deadlines and assigning work modules in advance and thus adopt a pattern for effectively achieving the set goals. The need of increasing the cognitive capabilities of women has to be considered with high priority to develop women entrepreneurs.

10. IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The findings of the study have certain far-reaching implications for many of the entities interested in uplifting the marginalised sections of the society especially concerned with educated women in Kerala. The study identifies several areas which need careful development of measures which are more likely to positively influence the targeted segments of women entrepreneurs of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises sectors in Kerala. This study offers an insight into the aspects which not only need to be analysed in detail but also develop and implement constructive measures to bring about visible and accountable changes in the women entrepreneurial development initiatives.

One of the factors which invites high concern was that younger and educated women need to be inspired and motivated to come into the entrepreneurial field. For this, our educational system should focus on entrepreneurial development in their curriculum and should provide with continuous and systematic training and development programmes and workshops to build up an entrepreneurial culture among young graduates and help them come forward to start business. Apart from that proper training and orientation programmes must be given to faculties in educational institutions, to make them aware, to choose the appropriate way to enhance entrepreneurial culture among youths. Also, a continuous monitoring and evaluating process must be adopted to help women to tackle the problems and overcome the hurdles and excel in her decision- making capabilities and thus retain in the entrepreneurial field.

Effective Human Resource Development (HRD) programmes can empower women to hold more responsible and competitive positions which is very essential in the particular situation. Women need to be made capable to whether out the ups and downs in business, to be more foresightedness and to face failures courageously. Re-evaluation of the rural entrepreneurial empowerment initiatives and its implementation prospects need to be checked by the concerned authorities to ascertain its effectiveness. Problems and prospects of women entrepreneurs and the procedures regarding the operations of their enterprise need to be put under scrutiny to learn how effectively rural women enterprises can be rejuvenated leading rural entrepreneurial development being a key milestone for national development initiatives as more women entrepreneurs are from the rural areas.

Group endeavours should be motivated among women entrepreneurs and the benefits of group initiatives to women, should be made through several campaigns. Also, the awareness on financial matters, like collateral free financial assistance, the best and appropriate mechanisms in repaying loan amount, should be made.

Another importance practical implication which can be brought out through this study is to bring about social revival which can lead to a sustainable development in women and in the entrepreneurial arena.

The limited time available to dedicate with full attention in business and the family pressure acts as dual constraints for women in Kerala. Social revival can be made possible by empowering women. Prevailing women empowerment measures hasn't brought remarkable changes on women in the MSME sector in Kerala. The foremost importance practical solutions which can be thought of is to enhance the skills and capabilities of women entrepreneurs and in this present century advancement in Information technology and communication has been adopted by most of the competing firms to withstand the competition in the market. Women entrepreneurs can also be empowered with knowledge of using and adopting new social networking options now available all over the world and which is capable of building strong connectivity. Government and non-government organisations and agencies should come forward to impart the skills and knowledge in acquiring and adapting advanced technological innovation in their enterprise. This would really boost up the confidence of women make them more capable. Information technology-intensive enterprises need to be promoted which could steer the entrepreneurial process and for this sound policies need to be brought about by Kerala Government.

11. RECOMMENDATION FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The goal of the study was a fact-finding enquiry by the researcher to analyse the causes of backwardness of women in the entrepreneurial field even though several positive and favourable factors were enjoyed by the women population in Kerala compared to any other states in India. A wider gender gap has been developed especially in the entrepreneurial field in Kerala compared to any other states amidst the two major advantages of high literacy rate for women and higher sex ratio of women in Kerala. The reasons for the causes of wider gender gap in the entrepreneurial area were been analysed by studying the existing women entrepreneurs.

Further research could be conducted on a more detailed investigation on the need and effectiveness of women entrepreneurial development in Kerala. Further studies on women entrepreneurs could be conducted by studying success of women with other blend of factors influencing their success or failure. Studies could be conducted for finding the causes for the backwardness of educated young women into the entrepreneurial field. Studies could be done to find the exact reasons for the low retention rate of women in the entrepreneurial arena.

12. CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY

The findings of the study helped the researcher to expand the options for the upliftment of women entrepreneurs of Kerala by analysing the different factors influencing the success of women entrepreneurs. Most of the women of Kerala brought up in a sound family under the secured environment has forced them to give primary importance and concern to security in their personal life and even in employment and later it was seen that women were slowly getting drifted towards the

safer zone behind the glass ceiling. Its high time to empower women to lead the society from the forefront by making women withstanding constraints faced at work and home. The study was meant to fill up the gender gap that heightens the women empowerment initiatives with a need for visualising a better future for women in business in Kerala and lessen the female to male proficiency proposition and hence articulate the followers to design measures which could empower women and bring about a change in the social system where women who constitute half of the population could be made to contribute to the welfare of our nation leading to national development through women empowerment.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests: - The authors declared no potential conflicts on interest with respect to the research, authorship and / or publication of this article.

Funding: - The authors received no financial support for the research, authorship and/or publication of this article

REFERENCES:

1. **Alam, S. S., Jani, M. F. M., & Omar, N. A. (2011).** An empirical study of success factors of women entrepreneurs in the southern region in Malaysia. *International Journal of Economics and Finance*, Vol. 3, No. 2, pp. 166-175. DOI:[10.5539/ijef.v3n2p166](https://doi.org/10.5539/ijef.v3n2p166)
2. Audretsch, D. (2003) "Entrepreneurship: A Survey of the Literature". Enterprise Papers, European Commission, Enterprise Directorate-General, 14, Brussels.
3. Charantimath, P. M. (2014). *Entrepreneurship Development and Small Business Enterprises*. 2nd ed. Pearson. Delhi. p. 88
4. Chinonye Okafor, Roy Amalu. (2010), Entrepreneurial Motivations as Determinants of Women Entrepreneurship Challenges by, Economic science series, Vol –LXII, No.2, pp.67-77.
5. Desai, V. (2011). *Entrepreneurship Management: Passion Works Wonders*. (1st.ed). Mumbai, Himalaya Publishing House. pp. 18-57.
6. D'Cruz, N. K. (2003), Constraints on Women Entrepreneurship Development in Kerala: An Analysis of Familial, Social and Psychological Dimensions. Discussion Paper, Kerala Research Programme on Local Level Development, Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram, India.
7. Ganesamurthy, V. S. (2007). *India: Economic Empowerment of Women*. New Delhi, New Century Publications, pp.87-102

8. Ghosh, R., Gupta, M., & Dhar, S.N. (1998). 'Women and Entrepreneurship in India'. In Rabindra. N. Kanungo (Ed.) *Entrepreneurship Innovation: Models for Development*. New Delhi, Sage Publication India Pvt., Ltd., pp 156-175.
9. Iyer, L. (1991). *Women entrepreneurs challenges and strategies*, Frederich, Ebert Stiftung, New Delhi.
10. Jesurajan, S. V. A & Gnanadhas, M. E. (2011), Study on the factors motivating women to become entrepreneurs in tirunelveli district, *Asian Journal of Business and Economics*, Vol. 1, No.1. pp. 2231-3699.
11. Jones, P., Ratten, V. & Hayduk, T. Sport, fitness, and lifestyle entrepreneurship. *Int Entrep Manag J* **16**, 783–793 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11365-020-00666-x>
12. Locke, E. A. (2000). Motivation, cognition, and action: An analysis of studies of task goals and knowledge. *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, 49(3), 408–429. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1464-0597.00023>
13. Lunenburg, F. C. & Irby, B. J. (2008). *Writing a Successful Thesis/ Dissertation: Tips and Strategies*. New Delhi, Corwin Press, Sage India Pvt. Ltd.
14. Mathew, P. M. (2000). *Small Enterprises Development: The Experiences of the South and North*. New Delhi, Oxford & IBH Publishing Company Private Limited.
15. Mohanty, S. K. (2012). *Fundamentals of Entrepreneurship*. PHI Learning Private Limited, New Delhi
16. MSME Annual Report-2020-2021, Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Government of India, New Delhi. Retrieved from www.msme.gov.in
17. MSME Annual Report-2021-2022, Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Government of India, New Delhi. Retrieved from <http://www.msme.gov.in>
18. Pages, E. R. (2005). The changing demography of entrepreneurship. *Local Economy*, 20(1), 93–97. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0269094042000326670>
19. Patil, A. & Mathu, A. (2007). *Women and Entrepreneurship: Issues and Challenges*. Delhi, Kalpaz Publications.
20. Ramadani, V., Hisrich, R.D. and Gerguri, S. (2015), "Female entrepreneurs in transition economies: insights from Albania", *World Review of Entrepreneurship, Management and Sustainable Development*, Vol. 11 No. 4, pp.391-413. <https://doi.org/10.1504/WREMSD.2015.072066>

21. Rao, V., Venakatachalam, A. and Joshi,H.G. (2012), “Challenges faced by women entrepreneurs running micro, small and medium scale fashion and apparel business: a study on fashion and apparel enterprises in coastal Karnataka”, International Conference on Trade, Tourism and Management (ICTTM’2012) December21-22, Bangkok (Thailand).
22. Robertson, M. Collins, A., Madeira, N. & Slater, J. (2003). Barriers to start-up and their effect on aspirant entrepreneurs, *Education & Training*, 45 (6), 308-316. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/00400910310495950>
23. Shane, S., Locke, E. A., & Collins, C. J. (2012). Entrepreneurial motivation. *Human Resource Management Review*,13(2), 257-279. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1053-4822\(03\)00017-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1053-4822(03)00017-2)
24. Salfiya U. & Gunapalan S. (2012). Factors influencing on entrepreneurial success: An empirical study on women headed families in Ampara and Batticaloa districts in Sri Lanka. *International Journal of Business, Economics and Law*, Vol 1. pp.141-148
25. Shepherd, D. A. & Patzelt, H. (2011). “The New Field of Sustainable Entrepreneurship: Entrepreneurial Action Linking ‘What is to be Sustained’ with ‘What is to be Developed’”. *Entrepreneurship: Theory and Practice*. 35(1), 137-163. DOI:[10.1111/j.1540-6520.2010.00426.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6520.2010.00426.x)
26. Singh, K. (1992), *Women Entrepreneurs*. Ashish publishing house, New Delhi.
27. Stewart, W. H. & Roth, P. L. (2001). Risk propensity differences between entrepreneurs and managers: A meta-analytic review. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 86(1), 145– 153. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.86.1.145>
28. Tambunan, T. T. H. (2009). *Small and medium enterprises in Asian developing countries*. London: Macmillan Palgrave.
29. Venkataraman, S. (1997). The distinctive domain of entrepreneurship research: An editor's perspective. In J. Katz & R. Brockhaus (Eds.), *Advances in entrepreneurship, firm emergence, and growth*, Vol. 3, pp. 119-138. Greenwich, CT: JAI Press