Promoting Entrepreneurship & Innovation among Rural Dalit Women: A Viable Business Strategy for Rural India

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Abstract

It is estimated that 833 million people continue to live in rural India (The Census 2011). A very large proportion of them are either wholly or significantly dependent on their livelihoods on farm activity. ‘The development and transformation of the rural economy requires rapid expansion of employment and income opportunities’ (Planning Commission-2011). Women entrepreneurship has been recognized as an important untapped source of economic growth. A boost up to rural women entrepreneurs would supply employment and income opportunities leading transformation of the rural economy. Economically empowered women contributed to the wealth and well-being not only of their families, but also of their nations (Blumberg, 1995). The SHG process has paved the way for the emergence of rural women Entrepreneurs in the recent decades. Besides being a catalyst in reducing poverty in rural areas it has transformed rural women into entrepreneurs. Rural women have emerged as active participants, decision makers, and beneficiaries in economic, social and cultural fabric of society. The strategic management of dalit women entrepreneurship in the rural areas of Kumaon region of Uttarkhand could lead to inclusive prosperity. An attempt was made to highlight the various aspects related to rural dalit women in Takula block of Almora district. A total of 20 women involved in various enterprises were selected on purposive sampling. The study underscores various factors and measures in the context of hill scenario that could be focused for the betterment of rural economy.

Key Words: Rural economy, rural entrepreneurship, dalit women, self-employment & empowerment