

Preface and Acknowledgement

Entrepreneurship and Business is regarded as an important medium of socio-economic development in all parts of Darjeeling district. Importantly, those areas where employment opportunities are less and business enterprises are extending immediate scope for income generation and future expansion for women. The present thesis is an analysis of the businesswomen and women entrepreneurs of Darjeeling District in west Bengal. A variety of initiatives have been traced in the present study, particularly those focused on the entrepreneurial opportunities and background variables for their emergence. Attempts have been made to examine the changes occurred in their status and society due to their business and entrepreneurial participation. The study begins with a brief description of different perspectives on women's independent economic activities particularly those of business and entrepreneurship. Effects and related aspects of entrepreneurship on empowerment and emancipation of women have also been discussed. These have helped in further analysis of several sampling cases, comparison of different types of entrepreneurial ventures, descriptions of entrepreneurial qualities, problems and prospects. This study also discussed about implications of women entrepreneurship for the society to mobilize ideas, resources and social arrangements required for sustainable social transformation. Simultaneously, different government and non-government support programmes for encouraging businesswomen and women entrepreneurs in Darjeeling District have also been discussed. The very existence of gender disparity and inequality in the sphere of business world and entrepreneurship is not identified by most of the existing research works. So far there is no existing study on women entrepreneurs in Darjeeling District. In my present study the main objective is to highlight those areas related to women entrepreneurship which were not discussed in detail earlier.

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