

CHAPTER-1

INTRODUCTION

The process of women entrepreneurship development is a recent phenomenon in India which came into prominence after 1970s. Emergence of women entrepreneurs as a visible income generating category is on rise. Their contribution to the national economy is also become visible now in India. The number of women entrepreneurs has grown over a period of time, especially after the 1990s. Concept of women entrepreneurship is basically defined as a process where a woman initiates a business idea, gathers resources, creates an enterprise by providing leadership to make it a commercial success and aspired to achieve a dramatical height. Women entrepreneurs have been defined by Oxford Dictionary as, “one who undertakes an enterprise, especially a contractor acting as intermediary between capital and labour” (Vinze, 1987). Women entrepreneurs represent that bulk of womenfolk, who are full of potentials and skills with a high degree of achievement motivation, fully utilize modern technologies, have set them on public investments, generate employment for others specifically women and set examples as trend setter (Chattopadhyay, 2005). Potentials found among the women entrepreneurs proved that they are capable of contributing much more than expected. With this realization women entrepreneurship has been provided with a huge scope of expansion in the last 45 years resulted in a successive growth rate in women’s business and entrepreneurial participation to a growing rate of 14 percent in 2010 (Sixth Economic Census, 2013-14).

Global Entrepreneurship Monitor Report on women provides a detail knowledge database of women doing businesses around the world. GEM shows that entrepreneurship is of varied importance in different regions of India. Compared to the other parts Eastern India shows a relatively more conservative attitude towards entrepreneurship. According to the World Bank’s ‘Doing Business 2014’ Report, India is ranked 134 out of 189 countries (GEM, 2014). India’s total entrepreneurial activity accounts for about 14 percent in 2014. The liberalization of the economy in the 1990s has paved the way for a huge number of people to become entrepreneurs in India. Over the years Government has also encouraged entrepreneurship by providing training and necessary subsidies.

In India entrepreneurship development can be discussed in two phases viz. entrepreneurship development in pre-independence period and post-independence period.

During pre-independence period entrepreneurship development has been noticed mainly among the rural artisans who were engaged with different kinds of handicrafts and small scale industries. Large scale undertakings were few. It is seen that a large number of small scale, large scale, family based and individual entrepreneurial ventures have emerged after independence. This is mainly by the encouragement of different processes of social transformation and governmental policy perspectives (Vinze, 1987).

Similarly, in various business activities, entry of Indian women is a relatively new phenomenon. Due to break up of joint family system, need for additional income, maintenance of living standards, women began to enter the competitive world of business. But to reach a height of 14 percent in 2013 from that of 4 percent in 1980 for business women (Business Standard, 2014) is a dramatical achievement against all kinds of hindrances like patriarchal domination, ethos and discriminations.

In India, businesswomen and women entrepreneurs have succeeded in achieving the role of social caretaker besides fulfilling the role of a commercial partner. Women entrepreneurs of India are sometimes recognized as social entrepreneurs because of various social roles and responsibilities performed by them. As a social entrepreneur, she recognizes several social problems, undertakes innovative efforts to solve persistent social problems of poverty, marginalization, unemployment, and to some extent, have been successful in catalyzing social transformation (Patil, 2009). Modern social entrepreneurs are different from traditional commercial entrepreneurs by virtue of their target orientation on removing poverty of deprived marginalized groups by generating employment opportunities for them.

Statement of the Problem

Women constitute significant part of total population as well as labour force in India, i.e. 25.5 percent (Census 2011). Women's Work Participation Rate (WWPR) determines significantly their economic participation in any society and also their position in developmental processes. They produce not merely goods and services but is regarded as a prime source for generating human resources as well as gender development. Thus, from the point of view of any development process of any society, women's active and direct participation in the economic process cannot be overlooked. But throughout the world, it is seen that contribution of women's work has been underestimated and unrecognized in the overall development process for a long time. This is mainly because of the male centric attitude and practices it has

society which have always neglect and ignore women's proper contribution in the economy (Mathu and Shukla, 2005).

In contemporary time the appointment of National Committee on the Status of Women in 1972 and the introduction of International Women's Year in 1975 marked the official attempt to study the status of Indian women. These initiatives have recommended changes to improve their status. The report highlighted that despite constitutional guarantees, the roles, rights, and participation of women in all spheres of life are limited. Therefore, a change is necessarily required in mindset to allow all round liberty and freedom for women in practical sense. They should be given equal chance for economic participation like men to transform the stereotyped perception towards their potentialities and capabilities. Their role as an earner can change both the attitude of their family member and society towards them.

Income generating activities for women is the index of their economic status in society. More so with response to equality, though this is far more beyond than achievement in spite of the endless contribution women made for their families and society. This attempt of establishing equality by all means particularly with respect to gender is a continuous process since the late nineteenth century. In traditional society, gender roles were determined by patriarchal values and ethos, where women were denied of their legitimate rights (Vinze, 1987). They were glorified only when they sacrifice their desires and individual urges. These ideals continue to persist even in the present time to some extent. The patriarchal bias in society hinders proper assessment of women's participation in any gainful economic activity.

The patriarchy of traditional Indian society, since time immemorial, has viewed women as a product of history and based on this idea, the patriarchy has registered a milieu of mystification, whereas the reality is that women also actively participate in making history. The patriarchy kept women illiterate, economically dependent and unrecognized, socially inferior and legally helpless and their image in public life had been negatively influenced due to their unvalued and undervalued work in economic terms. This practice is still seen to be present in Indian society in terms of differential treatment extended towards both the gender category. Men and women differ in a multitude of matters, for example, in their socialization pattern, family roles, holding power position and taking decisions within the family and many more. In outside economic activities the proportion of the male category is much higher than that of the proportion of women. Distinction is made because women are traditionally thought to be not capable of doing non-household activities. Even in a same organization distinction

is also made between men's and women's work and wages. Therefore, the differential treatment towards women of being a second sex seems to place men in an advantageous situation and women in an exploitative situation.

Traditionally, Indian women have had dependency syndromes as far as employment is concerned. Women's status as a wife did not give her control over the family income which remained within the hands of husband who decided the expenditure pattern of family. Due to the practice of such gender inequality in most important spheres of life, women often lack participation in various development processes, have less access to knowledge, skills, information, development and training facilities, more so in case of generating family income. Even when they work, their work is less value loaded and considered as secondary bread winners in the family (Mies, 1980). This kind of gender disparity continue to persist in the present day where women tend to get easily displaced by new technologies and are either pushed out or pushed down when requirements of different employment categories demand skilled and trained persons. The unprotected women labour force suffers from various socio-economic impediments, disadvantages and is treated as a vulnerable or marginalized group. Though the development policies and performances have had a positive impact in the society, women of poor economic and educational background have not been gained from these. Women perform multifarious activities but usually do not treated as main worker. This is one of the most important reasons why they are not reflected and notified correctly in different development oriented projects and data base of our country (Kalia, 2005). Although there is no such major discrimination against women in the plans and programmes with regard to the implementation of various socio-economic targets, but still women of poor educational and economic background have been mostly left outside the development projects.

Women's right to self-determination is rapidly becoming recognized as one of the important dimensions of development due to several forces of social change like modernization, urbanization, increasing literacy, legislative measures, increasing economic participation by women and gender sensitization. Uplifting women's status by enhancing their educational, living and working standards is far more than a humanitarian consideration (Chinnadurai, 2005). Though they constitute about half of India's total population but they are often hold back by poverty, illiteracy, ill health, malnutrition, lack of access and control over resources, burden of household responsibilities and various other practices of inequality and discrimination. These discriminatory practices again pulled back women in accessing different developmental opportunities. Especially poor women lack access to developmental

resource, face economic exploitation with low and discriminatory wages, lack decision making in both familial and economic matters, etc. Even the existing communication channels are not adequate to make them benefited and thus they become more vulnerable to exploitation and marginalization as well.

An increase in the livelihood opportunities e.g. education, economic access, health system etc. for women has a direct bearing on their socio-economic status. Education is the touchstone for enhancing women's status and power in the society (Sinha, 2007). Their access to health system makes them physically and socially able to achieve different socio-economic goals. Simultaneously, their participation in economic activities makes them self-reliant and independent which is necessary for their emancipation.

Women's access and control over both tangible and intangible resources determine their economic participation. Tangible resources include different economic resources, such as, family property, control over body, politics, movement outside home, legal access, decision making power, while intangible resources include skill, knowledge, communication, education, training etc. All these factors determine women's overall status in the society which is necessary for their emancipation (Singh and Kumar, 2010). Empowerment of women is the recent approach refers mainly to the 'Third world' women. It seeks to meet strategic gender needs emerged due to women's subordination to men through their full-fledged participation in different developmental practices. Besides, it also aimed at increasing women's actual power by enhancing their self-esteem, self-reliance and decision-making capability.

In India, there has been a gradual shift over the last few decades towards new arrangements and policies for more freedom and equality for women in different socio-economic political spheres. Empowerment is the most recent approach designed to meet several gender needs required for establishing gender equality, stability, economic emancipation, self-realization, participation and increasing control over different resources for a desired change. The process of empowerment involves not just an improvement in physical and social conditions but also equal participation in decision making process, control over socio-physical –economic resources and mechanisms for sustaining these gains (Mor and Kumar, 2009) .

It is apparent that even today women are unlikely than men to continue their higher education and to secure a job carrying a high remuneration. Specifically speaking, women of

poor and marginalized category in India are severely held back by poverty and disadvantageous situations. In general, traditional ethos, ideas and social practices have limited their mobility within few identical women friendly professional fields like school-teaching, nursing, stenography, typing, social workers, librarian, telephone operating, etc. Even in all these fields women workers hold a position and status lower than male workers, in terms of remuneration or wages, duty hours or work opportunities. Even educated and qualified women in India often find it difficult to escape from these discriminatory practices. Besides that, their dual role responsibilities as workers and as housewives and mothers hinder their path of achieving freedom of thought and action (Rao, 2010). In India women workers are mainly concentrated in unorganized sector, with a few in organized sectors. Nearly 78 percent of women are agricultural workers, which is significantly high than the agricultural men folk comprising 63 percent of total male workers. Though, women's contribution to agriculture and allied sectors do not benefited them from the major developmental programmes. This is mainly because of age old gender inequality and discriminations which denied their access to different social, economic and political facilities.

In an attempt to relate women's economic participation and economic development of the country, the transformation of economy from subsistence to developing has gained importance. In subsistence economies women contribute labour towards subsistence economic production as unpaid family labour which did not require professional skills. Traditionally women's work thought to be unskilled, secondary and non-preferable for the benefit of the family. But due to the effect of globalization, the requirement for women's workforce as well as perception towards women's work have both been changed. On a negative note, due to the rise of commercialization gender based wage differentials has increased.

Along with that the technological change resulted into skill based demand for labour, which has decreased the scope of work participation for non-skilled women in paid workforce. This is mainly caused by the gender bias in education, skill development and financial assistance. These circumstances have obligated women to either withdraw from the labour force or enter as secondary workers. All these factors together force them to allocate more time for independent income earning activities along with their usual household burden. This has been the most recent aspect of change and transformation for establishing gender equality with freedom of choice and decision making for women. In this context the choice for business and entrepreneurship for women has widened. Entrepreneurship as a process act

as an employment generating machinery for the major bulk of unemployed women to utilize their intellect, knowledge and potentialities. Literally the concept of entrepreneurship is defined as a process, enterprise as an object of operation and entrepreneur a medium for development. The whole process can be defined as an act of utilizing women's inherent potentials including those of skill, competency, knowledge, and training for income generation for self and for others to contribute for the growth and development of family and society (Mathu and Shukla, 2005).

Women have find entrepreneurship as a useful medium of independent income earning activities, along with other self-employment activities to utilize their excellence and skills with their own choice. This group of independent economic participants increasingly gained the consideration of government, social scientists and academicians. Entrepreneurship is specifically an independent economic activity depends upon skill and competency. Women's role as an entrepreneur is a recent development in India after 1975 on the backdrop of new age women's movement for equality in all respects of life (Khan and Kumar, 2009). The number of businesswomen and women entrepreneurs in India is very low since the inception of its movement. Only higher participation is observed in North eastern states and Darjeeling hills basically due to matriliney. This community structure has given more power and authority to women than men in all respects of life. But now it is seen that the act of entrepreneurship is not only restricted to matrilineal women but is expanded beyond that. Indian women of different regions, class and background have become able to grasp the opportunities of business and entrepreneurship in more and more numbers. This is mainly because of modernization and different development processes including those of government planning and most importantly women's inherent urge for emancipation.

In our country, women entrepreneurs seen to own, run and expand not only small manufacturing enterprises, but large business houses. Entry of women in organized business as entrepreneurs is though a fairly recent phenomena, but women have been contributing to production process by working in family farms sine time long before. Women in India have traditionally been highly esteemed, though their status has been undergoing changes from time to time. In India women are traditionally engaged in home based products or cottage industries, they were often termed as traditional entrepreneurs. Presently educated Women are seen to be venturing into areas traditionally dominated by men in more numbers and therefore contributing to a great extent to the social transformation. This group of women performing several non-conventional entrepreneurial activities is termed as modern

entrepreneurs. Indian women have undergone a long way and are becoming increasingly visible and successful in all spheres and have shifted from kitchen to higher level of business activities. Women entrepreneurs are fast becoming a force to reckon within the business world and are not only involved in business for survival but to satisfy their inner urge of creativity and to prove their capabilities (Garg, 2004).

The new group of women entrepreneurs those who are penetrating into new ventures, differ from the traditional entrepreneurs in every respect and usefully they are referred as the Second Generation. Women entrepreneurs today have their own opinion, are self-assured and able to withstand all risks and are efficient operator of business. They are more receptive to new ideas and open to change and more confident of the future without disturbing their pivotal role in the family. Now she better manages her dual work roles with the help of modern technology with less conflict than earlier. Woman working in family ventures can balance her dual role more than those non-home base individual ventures. Many women plan their lives very skillfully and succeed in balancing these dual roles in a smooth way. The experience gained outside home enables her to enrich her family relationships through new outlook. By her continuous interaction with outside world she can become a better organizer of the enterprise and help to promote growth.

Now there are at least two distinct groups. The traditional group focused on providing domestic type of services and skills and the new generation moderns entered into a variety of new occupations. The second generation women entrepreneurs are now penetrating into the traditionally non-female business areas of finance, insurance, manufacturing and construction. They are different from the women owners in the retail and the wholesale trade areas by exhibiting traits more commonly associated with male entrepreneurs. Whereas traditional women entrepreneurs typically needed assistance in acquiring capital, use of credit, managerial training; the moderns have given priority to advanced counseling in communication skills, training programmes and new business opportunities. Second generation women entrepreneurs not only innovative and creative but also used to exercise authority and control, they came to entrepreneurship with more exposure to the business world. They are better prepared with technical knowledge, planning skills and wider network and are oriented more towards making money and creating new markets. Modern women entrepreneurs can take lead in bringing ethics in business and human approaches in socio-economic relations and thus help to make an integrated cohesive society.

Today women entrepreneurs are taking more and more professional and technical degrees to cope up with market need and are flourishing as successful businesspersons. They left their mark as designers, interior decorates, exporters, publishers, garment manufactures and still exploring new avenues of economic participation. Different Government Bodies, NGO's, Social Scientists, Researchers and International Agencies have also started taking interests in the issues related to women entrepreneurship. They set new examples different from conventional thoughts. Women entrepreneurs usually undertake risks, introduce new innovations, coordinate among different duties of business , exert control over resources and explore the prospects of starting new enterprise. By doing these they are proving effective leadership in all aspects of business and have proved their footage in the male dominated business areas.

The number of women entrepreneurs is increasing in every region of the country, across the culture. Though even today the number of big farm women entrepreneurs is few but they have shown the path to many emerging and new small and medium scale businesswomen and entrepreneurs in the country. Now in the era of Globalization, like men, many women entrepreneurs lunched their business to achieve independence, personal development and job freedom as well as security and most importantly emancipation.

Entrepreneurship in India

The term Entrepreneur is a highly respected word in the developed world. The word has been derived from the French word *entrepreneur* in the 17th century which means the person who undertakes the risks of new enterprise. A French economist Richard Cantillon was the first to use the concept of entrepreneur in economics. Adam Smith interpreted the word enterpriser in his famous book 'Wealth of Nations' in 1776. Smith describes entrepreneurs are those reacted to economic change and thereby becoming the economic agents who transformed demand into supply. The Entrepreneur is an important change agent in every society (Blenman, 2016). Entrepreneur in general, refers to any owner of capital who is engaged in the management of an enterprise for the sale of goods or services of profit. Sociological study of Entrepreneur has been concerned in particular with their position within the class structure, their values and their relations to other class grouping. The Entrepreneur may be either an individual or a group. Both are equally significant in developing countries. In the developing countries no ideal perspective for entrepreneurship exists for at any given moment because entrepreneur is playing many highly different roles (Vinze, 1987).

Indian economy has been witnessing a drastic change since 1991 due to economic liberalization, globalization and the policies of privatization. India has a great potential for entrepreneurship since long back. Entrepreneurship is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon. The changing socio-economic scenario has paved the path for entrepreneurship development in India after 1990s. Since economic reforms there has been lots of restructuring in the Indian labour markets in terms of employee's qualification, nature of work contents and work contracts. The changes have raised the profile and importance of entrepreneurship in the Indian economy. Entrepreneurship can be either in born or achieved. There are various perspectives identified as the backdrop of entrepreneurship development in India. These include: a flair for innovation in the modern small scale industry; marked by a certain level of technology and sophistication; should have one or more of the skills like technical knowledge of products, marketing ability, managerial ability and the capacity of command over adequate financial resources; the background of the individual and a family background of business knowledge; one's own personality; work experience necessary for the identification of manufacture opportunities and most importantly facilities offered by the government policies and programmes. However, uncertain economic conditions perhaps act as a constraint to the growth of entrepreneurship.

Development of Entrepreneurship in India: The process of entrepreneurship development in India may be discussed into two broad categories, which are as follows:

Entrepreneurship Development in Pre-independence Period:-

In India in the pre-independence period, a tendency for entrepreneurship development had been noticed among the rural artisan's handicrafts and other types of cottage and small scale establishments. Large-scale undertakings were not developed so much, excepting a few, that is, cotton textile mills, plantation industry, railways, etc. Most of the entrepreneurs were found to carry on the enterprises by inheritance.

Entrepreneurship Development in the Post-independence Period:-

After independence, the national government took efforts to escalate the entrepreneurship development throughout the country. It has become possible to trace the effects of the development programmes for entrepreneurs in view of favourable socio-economic and political measures in different five-year plans. To meet the socio-economic needs of the country, the Government of India is showing a lot of interests in the Entrepreneurship

development Programmes. These Programmes have been adopted due to the following reasons:-

1) Increase in national product and productivity in the primary, secondary and tertiary sectors, (2) balance regional development, (3) dispersal of economic power, (4) re-investment of profit for the welfare of the society, (5) solving problems of unemployed and under-employed, (6) harnessing youth vigor and (7) women as a special need group, The most notable trend seen in entrepreneurship development has been in training and encouragement. Entrepreneurship as a process can be taught and developed in an individual if properly identified and assisted. The task of entrepreneurship development has become easy in view of adopting various measures by the government (Gupta and Srinivasan, 2006).

Women Entrepreneurs in India

Women entrepreneurship development is an essential part of human resource development. The graph of women entrepreneurship development in India though very low but they are showing a remarkable progress in small scale entrepreneurship during recent time. Presence of women in productive activities in India has been increasing over the years, however the total number of enterprises run by them is insignificantly small. In India though women have played a key role in the society, their entrepreneurial ability has not been properly traced due to the lower status attached to them in society. It is only from the fifth five year plan (1974-78) onward that their roles have been explicitly recognized with a marked shift in the approach from women welfare to development and women empowerment. Since 1975 the development of women entrepreneurship has become an important aspect of national plan priorities (Sharma, 2013).

Women entrepreneurs refer to a group of women who have succeeded in changing all pre conceived notions regarding business activities and are exploring new areas of economic participation. The reasons for women to run organized industries are many, likely their urge to utilize skills and knowledge, talents and abilities and compelling desire to achieve something positive. They have long stories of handicaps and hardships. They have had to encounter public prejudices and criticisms. Family opposition and social constraints had to be overcome before establishing themselves as independent entrepreneurs. Appropriate education, training in skills of entrepreneurship and financial support are necessary for women. Enterprises started by women are no longer confined to conventional fields. Today

women entrepreneurs are venturing the fields of computers, luxury items, exports of electric goods and garments, dress designers, interior decorator, private school owners and the like. Small units are run in the manufacture of readymade garments, handicrafts, textile printing, toys and dolls, plastics, processing and preservation of fruits by enterprising ladies. They have shown courage, willpower, farsightedness, vision and tenacity in holding their business ventures.

Women Entrepreneurship as a process can be defined as a means of business ownership that empowers women and increases their economic strength as well as position in society. They have been making a considerable impact in all related sectors of the economy. Strong desire to do something positive is an essential quality of women entrepreneurs. This quality again coincided with women empowerment which is nowadays found necessary for the emancipation of Indian women after a long period of socio-economic marginalization. In the words of Former president APJ Abdul Kalam, empowering women is a prerequisite for creating a good nation, when women are empowered stability in the society is assured. Government of India has defined women entrepreneurship as an enterprise owned and controlled by a women having a minimum financial interest of 51% of capital and giving at least 51% of the employment generated by the enterprises to women. According to Medha Dubhashi Vinze, a woman entrepreneur is a person who is an enterprising individual with an eye for opportunities and a vision, commercial intention, with tremendous perseverance and above all a person who is willing to take risk with the unknown because of the adventure spirit she possess (Vinze, 1987).

Analyzing the above definitions, it can be stated that a woman entrepreneur is one who starts a business with innovative ideas, manages it independently, takes all the risks, accepts challenges to balance dual roles and become economically empowered and emancipated. Their willingness for the future growth is reflected in their growth orientation. A strong desire to do something positive is an inbuilt quality of an entrepreneurial woman, who is capable of contributing values in both family and social life and is one who faces the challenges boldly.

In India, women join entrepreneurship more because of economic necessity. Therefore, presence of necessity entrepreneurs is more visible than opportunity entrepreneurs. Women usually have smaller networks and less geographical mobility than men. This is more so in the case of young and married women who need to take care of their families. These

women can use their skills and available local resources to start their own enterprises. However, the location of her enterprise and the strength of relationship with contacts are very important as it determines the entrepreneur's ability to acquire and employ the resources available in her community.

Theoretical Framework

The present study examines the role of different social structural variables such as ethical values, socialization, child rearing practices and withdrawal of status (McClelland, 1965 and Hagen, 1962), in generating entrepreneurial orientation among women. The focus of the study is mainly on status of women entrepreneurs and their activities from the structural-functional standpoint, that is, to what extent women entrepreneurs have been successful in challenging age old patriarchal ideology of Indian society which treats women as a stereotyped component. Attempt is also taken to find out how they started transforming traditional structures and institutions which reinforce and perpetuate gender discrimination and social inequality. Based on an extensive fieldwork and empirical findings the present study goes on to demonstrate the resistance faced by businesswomen and women entrepreneurs owing to their social location and how they managed to overcome the social structural impediments.

The structural-functional approach of Talcott Parsons (Abraham, 2012) amongst all theoretical schemes of sociology has been found valid while drawing conceptual framework of the present study. Parsons has defined function as complex of those activities directed towards meeting needs of the system. Likely, women entrepreneurs are also known for culmination of those positive qualities which are essential to meet the needs of the structure. Specifically, the four functional imperatives that is, Adaptation (A), Goal Attainment (G), Integration (I) and Latent Pattern Maintenance (L), are found essential while interrogating the necessary qualities possessed by women entrepreneurs.

Women entrepreneurs like other valid social systems must perform these four (AGIL) functions. This can better be understood by the following discussions:

Adaptation: A woman entrepreneur must adjust her two work roles, one at home and another at her business. In this context it is very necessary for her to adapt all the situational demands created by her two or sometimes multiple work roles. After de-regularize the age old practice

of patriarchy, she has now adapted those attitudes and traits which are thought to be male dominated.

Goal Attainment: A woman entrepreneur must choose and perform accordingly to achieve her predetermined goals. Her goals may include achievement of equality, power, success, enhancing standard of living, fulfillment of inherent desire etc.

Integration: She must integrate her all roles and performances as well as act as a coordinator among all the agents helping her in entrepreneurship.

Latent Pattern Maintenance: Women entrepreneurs modify their actions several times to enhance their motivation and with these actions cultural patterns are also being maintained severally.

Review of Literature

The research works which were studied during my research have come up with several facts and information. These works have focused upon entrepreneurship and related aspects. Major research works on business and entrepreneurship are done by Schumpeter (1934), McClelland (1965), Drucker (1983) and others is to identify various structural functional variables behind the emergence of entrepreneurs, their nature, features and contributions they made for socio-economic change. But very few research works have been found to highlight women entrepreneurship as a recent development. Researches generally examine women's work participation, empowerment but do not illustrate how their business orientation and participation help in gaining empowerment. However, recent studies on women's entrepreneurship have given a major focus here for better understanding of the present work.

The concept of entrepreneurship has a long history of development in the commercial field as well as in the social and economic literature. From Cantillon (Swedberg, 2000) who coined the term entrepreneur in the early 18th century to the social scientists of today, the emphasis are many. Several theories have explained the concept of entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship from different perspectives. The various definitions of entrepreneurship came from the academicians of the developed nations and thus the problem of third worlds emerging entrepreneurship has been overlooked. They have ignored the different functions of entrepreneurs over space and time. Further they conceived entrepreneur as a male category.

Woman as entrepreneur is a missing dimension in most of the classical works on entrepreneurship.

However for developing the theoretical framework, different views on entrepreneurship have been discussed. These would highlight on different kinds of nature and potentialities possessed by entrepreneurs in different social settings. Moreover, as an entrepreneurial category, how women perform several entrepreneurial tasks, what social ground motivates them for entrepreneurship and the theoretical background of analyzing women entrepreneurship have discussed here.

The classical economists never defined the term entrepreneur precisely. Neither the classical economists nor the neo-classicals recognized the importance of entrepreneurial function. The economic entrepreneurship theories by Schumpeter (1934) have illustrated the importance of various structural variables behind the emergence of major entrepreneurial qualities and their contribution towards socio-economic changes in the society.

Schumpeter's (1934), study on entrepreneurship constitutes only a part of attempt to study economic theory and development as a whole. In his works, he advocated different facets of the life of a business person, whom he defined as an innovative entrepreneur. A business person and an entrepreneur correspond to each other by way of their innovation and creative personality traits and thereby he impel the whole set of his study towards approaching a new arena of economic activity. Schumpeter has developed a new and fresh theory without any relative correspondence to already existing research works. To him, all significant changes in economic sphere of any country are introduced by the entrepreneurs and by way of business cycle, these changes are spreaded over other sectors of society. He was of the opinion that the changing intention inherent within any business activity is not imposed from outside rather it is the expression of inherent prediction to change of every business venture and therefore it affects not only the economic phenomena but also several other social phenomena. He defined entrepreneurship as a process of new combination of already existing materials and forces.

He supports the revolutionary character of entrepreneurs in the new wave economic development in which entrepreneurship acts as a creative activity. According to Schumpeter, entrepreneurs are the creators and innovators who create and innovates new things in the field of commerce with the help of resources. About the nature of entrepreneurship he analyzed it as sometimes a joint and sometimes a single effort. It is the establishment of new

establishment, involves creativity and innovation. It is an industry oriented effort, it has evolved out of different types of functions, and this has accelerated economic development.

Schumpeter has also outlined different entrepreneurial functions, such as innovation of new products, new techniques of production, exploration of new markets, exploration of new sources of supply and finding out the methods of industrial reconstruction. Many times he has mentioned the term innovation in his writings. According to him, innovation is the most essential prerequisite of entrepreneurship. By means of innovation new products and new methods of production are introduced, new sources of raw materials and new market horizons have been explored. So, innovation refers to a certain kind of activity which brings purposeful and focused change in the economic or social condition of the enterprise. He has also mentioned about the term 'creativity' in discussing entrepreneurship, which according to him is the ability to bring something new into existence. It is the major tool for the survival of an entrepreneur. He has discussed the interrelation between innovation and creativity power of entrepreneurs and defined how innovative power makes an entrepreneur a creative worker in the process of economic development.

Schumpeter (1934) explained some of the main types of innovation behavior, these are: a) Introduction of a new good; b) Introduction of a new method of production; c) Opening of a new market; d) Identifying new source of supply of raw material; and e) The creation of a new organization of an industry. Schumpeter also emphasized upon motivation behind the emergence of entrepreneurs. These include, the decisive forces of power and independence, the will to succeed, the satisfaction of getting things done. However, it is very clear from his discussion that an entrepreneur possesses a number of qualities which made him different from any other economic activist. During the last decade of his life, his major writing was grounded on the sociology discipline, of which *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* (1943), was the most significant one. It focuses on the institutional structure of society and he defined an entrepreneur in this section, as a social character rather than an economic change agent. He now made it clear that an entrepreneur can be a single person or an organization, but its behavior should conform to the social norms. Only then it would be possible to identify an entrepreneur as an empirical category different from other existing economically independent classes.

To Menger (1950), an entrepreneur is regarded as a change agent who converts economic resources into goods and services and thereby created circumstances congenial for

socio-economic growth. In Menger's view, these changes not always introduced by circumstances but generated from the individual's awareness and their understandings of these circumstances.

Hagen (1962) and McClelland (1965), both emphasized upon the role of society in developing an entrepreneurial personality among the individuals necessary for starting any new business operation. While McClelland's theory stated that individual's need for achievement has caused entrepreneurship. Hagen emphasized more on individual's inherent urge for entrepreneurship. He has argued that those who are from minority environment they automatically develop a stronger desire for entrepreneurship than others. Hagen emphasized upon the relationship between withdrawal of status and orientations to business activities. To him those who are facing status deprivation, they endeavored to invest their energy and could overcome various social barriers via their entry into business and entrepreneurial activities. In McClelland's writings, achievement motivation works as a push factor to work hard and gain social recognition for those who are planning to take up a new business venture. Every individual have some potential but driving these potentialities along with the line of human nature is possible only through achievement motivation. Those with a sense of high esteem, self-reliance, economic empowerment and intended to establish an independent business venture are said to have the achievement motivation. McClelland stressed upon the role of socialization process on developing a sense of achievement on individuals. To him, certain needs are learned and socially acquired during the individual's interaction with the environment. McClelland mentioned about three motives; these are need for achievement, need for power and the need for affiliation.

Drucker (1983) has explained an entrepreneur a multiple role player and an important change agent. To him, an entrepreneur not only performs business tasks but also tries to fulfill several social demands through entrepreneurship. He or she uses national resources to exploit employment opportunities for self and others. He stressed upon multifaceted characteristics of entrepreneurs.

The study of Martin and Wallace (1984) has focused upon the various resource bases of women who by exploiting these can enhance their entrepreneurial orientation. Martin and Wallace have outlined the interrelationship between redundancy, growing unemployment and business participation of women. They emphasized on the issue that women fall more on the redundancy situation that the men folk and became victims of unemployment. Latest trend of

retrenchment in the workforce particularly of the women work force and adverse effect of the policy of casualization of labour have made women the worst victims. They in such a situation can locate few options – these are, retraining for getting another better or the similar job options in the salaried employment sector, secondly, remain as house wives and thirdly to start own business. According to them, educated unemployed and in certain cases uneducated employed with a higher degree of innovation, risk-taking mentality find it easier to enter into the field of independent economic venture i.e. business. They have mentioned about the interrelationship between the redundancy and empowerment. To them, women who are empowered in a true sense are less victims of redundancy because they have every chances of become economically active. They started with discussing the effect of redundancy on women, later they move on to the discussion of women's challenge oriented nature which facilitates their participation in business activities. They mentioned that it is the combined consequences of need for empowerment and redundancy of women that influence them to take up business activities.

The study of Hisrich and Brush (1984), have mentioned that in the last twenty five years there have been a steady increase in the number of studies on women entrepreneurs. Key issues discussed in these studies are, background variables, motivational factors, training, problems faced. They mentioned that limited attention has been given on to the expansion orientation among women entrepreneurs in different economic sectors.

Shapiro (1985), was of the opinion that individuals became entrepreneurs after being thrown into situation of economic crisis. This has compelled them to take up entrepreneurship as a livelihood strategy. He studied the behavior patterns of immigrants of United States who possessed stereotyped ethnic values and religious ethics responsible for their unemployment. He found that these groups of unemployed, retrenched or retired people found entrepreneurship as a suitable medium of income generation in a new place of destination.

Manohar et.al, (1987), in their study highlighted upon women's participation in different independent economic activities including small scale business activities. They have argued that earlier women participated in family farms for additional help such a production and distribution of commodities. But during the capitalist and industrial development in our country a ruining state has emerged for small scale and household industries and between this tension a set of middle class people came on the scenario. Petty traders and household businesswomen did not totally disappeared from the scenario but have been emerged with a

new identity. They have now assumed a role of a dependent and subservient economic class, totally different from their earlier role of an independent economic participant. They were of the opinion that education is not necessary to start any small business operation and therefore women with a low educational status can lead a successful trade activity. Simultaneously, they opined that migrated women show little interest in joining business activity since they lack local support system and a sufficient capital to start and run own business. They found business as a hereditary occupation which women continue till the end of their life. Several other reasons they mentioned which compelled women to take up business these are, poverty, sickness of husband, sheer economic necessity, family responsibility etc. Some of the basic problems encountered by businesswomen are competition, negative attitude of consumers, and lack of cooperation on the part of government. Their study is providing an insight not only of the social responsibility and social status of a woman trader but also the economic role and performances played by her.

Vinze's study (1987), located an entrepreneur in the overall process of economic operation in India. She defines an entrepreneur as a person or a group who perform a central mediating role between the larger society and a single operating unit. An entrepreneur is an important change agent in every society. She observed that women have been contributing to production process since time immemorial but most of their contributions remain unacknowledged and unaccounted. Referring to the esteemed nature of Indian women she argues that it is not new for them to participate in different economic activities, entrepreneurship is a new addition in this regard. Women are more receptive to new ideas and open to change and can handle their dual roles properly; therefore business operations would be more suitable for them than any other work.

She also illustrated various entrepreneurial characteristics, such as, knowledge of new trends in business, swift receiver of changes in several business related areas, having a good quality of right decision making, having leadership qualities in the business place, should have a strong sense of social responsibility and most importantly must have achievement motivation. She argued that it is the businesswomen and women entrepreneurs of small scale industries who provide bases of operation for the whole economic sphere and approached a prospective ground for a secure future development. In her study she has done a major discussion on several organizations serving women entrepreneurs, among these, the Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDI), Small Industrial Centre (SIC) are important. They are playing vital role in extending useful training and marketing guidelines

to upcoming businesswomen. Women seeking several business opportunities often lack knowledge of business operation, such as market issues, business tactics, choice of production, controlling financial and employee issues. These problems can be resolved through the guidance of these organization and agencies. With the help of these organization and their creativity business women can satisfy the domestic market and in the long run could reach out for export markets. They may also move up to the large scale unit with their educational qualification, strong commitment and achievement motivation. Her study provides a detail analysis of the role, characteristics of a woman entrepreneur all along with her function.

The study of Trivedi (1991), has shown the implications of several cultural variables behind the emergence of entrepreneurship in tribal communities. To him, various processes of social change, namely, urbanization, industrialization and migration have direct relation with the emergence of tribal entrepreneurship. He differentiated between entrepreneurs and self-employed and mentioned that small businesses often treated similar to industrial entrepreneurship. With different governmental initiatives tribal economy has shifted from subsistence to commercial economy including business and entrepreneurship. Businesswomen have exhibited every feature of entrepreneurs, such as, risk taking aptitude, innovativeness etc. which have marked a difference from their indigenous ethnic identity.

It is also seen in the studies of Lalitha (1996) and Lakshmi (1998) that overall women are more inclined to be associated with low investment and low technological risk oriented entrepreneurial activities. Not only has that woman being an entrepreneur also constantly adjusted herself with various social circumstances, resource bases and support spheres.

The theory of Anker (1997), has rightly highlighted the utilization of human resources for better job opportunities in the labour market. He has classified human capital theory from two sides of opinion, that is, supply side and demand side. While the former explains the supply of lower level female human capital (less education and training); the later explains employer's preference for male employee due to less human capital possessed by female. This theory rightly highlights upon job segregation based on gender due to the less skilled human resources acquired by female caused by their socialization, dual role burden, physical inability, low skill and less educational qualifications. All these circumstances together enhance the possibilities of women entrepreneurship. Because entrepreneurship expands the

choice of occupation, women's ability to take risks, innovate new ideas and products and decision making.

Ramaswamy (1997), has illustrated the fact of women's subordinate position in both home and work place and shown how women's inherent intentions of breaking all conventional barriers are becoming successful through their growing economic participation in Nation's economy. She has nicely differentiated the category of self-employment activities which further help to understand the location of business sector in the whole economic scenario. She observed most of the self-employed women are located in urban areas. She has distinguished self-employed into three categories, these are, small traders including, vendors, hawkers selling vegetables, fruits, eggs, household goods; the second category is the home based producer including potters, milk producers, processors of agricultural products and handloom workers and the third category is the service suppliers. Home based producers, are sub divided into two categories; firstly piece-rated workers who are given raw materials by the employer to be processed at home and returned as finished products and second one include those who invest in raw materials, process the goods and sell the products in the market. Apart from this she has also mentioned about several governmental and non-governmental support programmes for training women in skill based programmes and to alleviate the adverse effects of poverty upon womenfolk. She has referred to the capability of women as an emerging economically active and functioning group who after a long period of domination and dependency has been showing a new path of economic operation. These will highlight upon the latent qualities of womenfolk, hidden behind the walls of domination and subjugation for a long time. The role played by NGOs and women's self-help groups, viz., Self-employed Women's Association (SEWA), Working Women's Forum (WWF), Annapurna Mahila Mandal (AMM), also mentioned by her. She focused upon the ways of functioning of these associations and shown how women have benefitted from these associations to become economically and socially empowered.

Cliff (1998), has stated that women usually start ventures which comparatively grow at a slower rate than men owned ventures. This is more so because they do not want to expand because fast growth is associated with various risk factors.

Holt (2000), in his discussion has differently defined the concepts of entrepreneurship, business and corporate ventures. He defined an entrepreneur as a person who incubate new ideas, start enterprises based on those ideas and provide added value to

society based on their independent initiative. Business persons are those who substitute income by operating local stores or independent service business. He justified his explanation by drawing an example of an owner of a fast food franchise chain and a local restaurant owner, of which he designated the first one as an entrepreneur and the second one as a business person. The small business persons may possess the same qualities possessed by an entrepreneur, e.g. vision for growth, energy to achieve unusual results, commitment to constructive change, but exhibited these only coincidentally. Talking about corporate entrepreneurship, which sometimes referred as 'Entrepreneurship' is concerned with innovation that leads to new corporate divisions or subsidiary ventures in established and larger firms. He has clearly drawn a visible outline of these three concepts and pointed out the areas where their operations merge with each other. He argued that most of the women entrepreneurs started business after settled down in their personal lives. This is because of the huge amount of time commitment as well as mental and physical presence required for the work of entrepreneurship and business.

Dashora and Sharma (2003), mentioned that there are various motivating factors behind emergence of entrepreneurs, these are urbanization, industrialization and the third major motivating factor is migration. He has shown that migration is caused by insufficient agricultural production in tribal areas which pushed them out to urban and industrial centers. This has initiated the acceptance of entrepreneurship among the tribals. Tribes are always lagging behind the process of adaptation of different entrepreneurial skills provided by government. They are generally engaged in brick making, poultry, mining flour mills, and so on. They are also talked about the role of tribal women entrepreneurs in tribal economy. They argued that impact of entrepreneurship on tribal areas drag tribal women from farming occupations to non-farming occupations and the role of various voluntary associations in training tribal women in various entrepreneurial skills are significant in this regard. The fields where tribal women are seen to be operating are mostly e.g. poultry, animal husbandry, brick-making, tailoring, pot-making, processing, spinning, weaving of sericulture products, preparing ghee, rope making and management of shop, hotels and restaurants, Apart from that, they have mentioned about some common problems faced by tribal women these are, lack of finance, awareness about resources, support programmes, market exposure and the like.

Chattopadhyay (2005), has made a significant effort towards understanding the impact of empowerment strategies of Indian government upon women's status and

particularly on their economic participation in recent years. To her, entrepreneurship for women is a natural expression of their economic empowerment and through their entrepreneurial participation they can generate income for themselves as well as employment for others. She has defined empowerment as a lengthy and difficult process, if a woman is economically empowered it becomes much easier for her to become socially empowered because only then women have full autonomy to spend their income and also control resources. Besides that she has also mentioned about the two fold interrelationship between empowerment and entrepreneurial participation of women. She has asserted that a woman entrepreneur is economically more powerful than other paid workers because entrepreneurship not only gives control over resources but also gives her the freedom to take decisions. She is of the opinion that most of the businesswomen are concentrated in small scale sectors. She has classified small scale sector participation of women into three categories; owner ; manager ; and employees.

Patil (2009), in his study of social entrepreneurship tries to relocate the opportunities exploited by different social entrepreneurs whose main objective is to create innovative solutions to immediate social problems like unemployment and poverty. According to him they try to mobilize the ideas, capacities, resources and social arrangements required for long term sustainable social transformations. He has illustrated the importance of women entrepreneurship in Green cooperatives. Women's cooperative entrepreneurship encourages socio-economic development by generating self-employment opportunities for women those promoting small and medium enterprises, strengthen solidarity, equality and social caring.

Amin and Shah (2014), are of the view that there are mainly three perspectives behind the emergence of entrepreneurship. Firstly, the economic perspective which defines entrepreneurship as a result of reasonable efficiency to deal in the market place. Secondly, the technological perspective defines entrepreneurship as technology driven and innovation oriented. It is concerned more with deliberation of consumer services. Thirdly, the commercial perspective which defines entrepreneurship as a business process to respond various opportunities with creativity. Apart from these three perspectives, Amin and Shah also referred to individual's personality traits are held responsible for the emergence of entrepreneurship. According to them, in the emerging economies like India relevance of entrepreneurship is not only pronounced but also critical.

Above studies touched different areas pertaining to businesswomen and small scale women entrepreneurs but left many areas untouched. Present study proposes to point out and fill these gaps in existing literature.

Schumpeter's study (1934), has been emphasized upon technological innovations rather than on organizational innovations. His study is basically deals with the individual aspect where an entrepreneur is only concerned with innovating new skills and business traits and focused on creating new business strategies in his entrepreneurial action. He totally ignores the fact of social responsibility of an entrepreneur i.e. the employment generation function. Following the lines of Schumpeter, Smith (1937) and Menger (1950), have also contributed to the area of understanding an entrepreneur as a change agent in economic terms who transform demand into supply. They have not discussed about several related social aspects of a business enterprise, such as, what makes a woman a businesswomen, what motivates her to bring changes in the economic output or what should be the role of a businesswoman as a social agent. The main gap found in their studies on business and entrepreneurship is lack of sociological justification and a full-fledged focus on women's involvement with business world as a social agent. While McClelland's (1965), study is stressing more on social psychological aspects of motivation behind the emergence of entrepreneurs. But he overlooked other essential motivating factors like; compelling forces e.g. unemployment, acute financial burden; facilitating forces like success stories of entrepreneurs or influence of family members, assistance from different governmental and non-governmental associations which are also important in encouraging business participation of women. He showed that socialization process and family influence played an important role in the initial phase of a business enterprise, but in the long run and competitive market environment, every businesswoman must possess some extra ordinary traits, qualities and business strategies which can be acquired by external motivating forces.

The practice of caste system in India has prevented the growth of work culture among the people. Caste as a major determining force of Indian social system promotes the principles of other worldly values which has prevented the growth of capitalism in India. The research works suggested for the present study do not concentrate on this fact. To develop industry every country should promote the rationale capitalism i.e. to develop a sense of work ethics among the people and this is possible only when there are some pure motivations behind every economic activities. Motivation to encourage people's economic participation and particularly women's economic participation should provided by different governmental

initiatives. Therefore, the rigid role of caste system in pulling back the growth initiative of capitalism and industrial development in India should be given a special recognition in discussing the development of entrepreneurship and business enterprises in India.

However, all of them ignored gender dimensions in business and other entrepreneurial activities. Schumpeter, McClelland, Hagen, Smith, Menger all have contributed to the understanding of business and entrepreneurship as a new economic area, but did not mention about women's presence in this area. Though, McClelland has illustrated the need for women's participation in external world activities. But what are the reasons behind their emergence of business persons and what would be and their socio-economic contributions were not discussed. Women's presence in different paid or salaried employment activities are discussed in a number of significant and major research works and studies but very few of the business historians, economists, sociologists or psychologists paid a serious attention towards women's role as a business person or an entrepreneur. The works which have already done on business and entrepreneurship are mostly male centric, they have treated an entrepreneur always as a male category. Since women constitute almost half of the nation's total population and showing unusual instances of entrepreneurial participation, as a category of businessperson they should be treated seriously. Due emphasis and recognition should be given to their business and entrepreneurial participation.

Martin and Wallace (1984), have mentioned about the interrelationship between growing unemployment and business orientation in which major emphasis has been given on to the adverse effect of redundancy for women. Redundancy is a crucial hindering factor in the employment career of women, resulted in increasing unemployment which on the otherhand compelled them for entrepreneurship. But they do not mention about other motivating factors behind women's participation in the world of business and entrepreneurship.

Vinze (1987), has ignored the differences lie between businesswomen, women entrepreneurs and professional and salaried women. She has not mentioned about changing status of women entrepreneurs due to their entrepreneurial participation in the Indian society.

Traivedi (1991), has identified only the exogenous forces behind the emergence of entrepreneurship among the tribes. He has overlooked the influence of community background and familial motivations behind the emergence of entrepreneurial orientation among tribals. He has mentioned about tribe's participation in few primitive occupations

having little scope for risk orientation and motivation. He has failed to show the presence of innovativeness and creativeness in the entrepreneurial activities performed by tribal women. Tribal women played an important role in modern day of business. Trivedi's study does not give any emphasis upon the transition faced by tribal women entrepreneurs at present time.

It is the responsibility of different academic discipline to play a useful role in providing a constructed ground to study and discuss women's participation in entrepreneurship and business. This can be done by raising the mass awareness regarding women's capability of income as well as employment generation through business and entrepreneurial participation. But the matter of institutionalizing entrepreneurial and business study for women in India is not pointed out as such by the existing studies. Similarly, the very existence of gender disparity and inequality in the sphere of business world and entrepreneurship is not identified by most of the research works. In my present study the main objective is to highlight those areas related to women entrepreneurship which were not discussed in detail earlier.

Objectives of the Present Study

Women in business and entrepreneurship are a recent development in Darjeeling district. It was the matrilineal community structure of the hills that initiated economic participation of tribal women. Earlier they were seen to participate in some traditional home based or family based trades or petty trades with a huge number engaged in only domestic activities. But today there is gender role reconstruction found in terms of their increasing work participation. More and more women are inclined to participate either in wage employment or self-employment especially entrepreneurship. Among different indigenous ethnic groups of Darjeeling District this trend of entrepreneurial participation among women is a recent phenomenon. The present study aimed at highlighting various aspects and perspectives on women's participation in business and entrepreneurship in Darjeeling District.

Participation of women in different business activities refers to a drastic transformation of the existing social structure. Traditionally women have had a dependency syndrome as far as their employment is concerned. Women's status as a wife did not give her control over the family income which always remains in the hands of husbands. But their increasing participation in income generation activities has weakened the hold of patriarchy and they are started becoming emancipated. This has enhanced their access over resources,

power domain and assets within the family. The present study tries to explore the structural changes brought about by the business and entrepreneurial participation of women and their capacity to manage dual role responsibilities.

The prospects of business and entrepreneurship are high among the women of urban and semi-urban areas. Various background variables have differently affected women's entrepreneurial participation both in urban and semi-urban areas. Therefore it is very necessary to identify various socio-economic background variable, factors and circumstances responsible for the emergence and growth of women entrepreneurs. Also the constraints hindering their growth as an entrepreneur is also important to notify here.

Women's economic role as an entrepreneur cannot be separated from their overall socio-economic development. Women with their business participation help to enhance the process of their socio-economic independence and improve their status in the society. Development of entrepreneurial qualities among women should be considered as one of the important target of the industrial and economic development programmes. Because women entrepreneurship is related with the utilization of human development and gender development resources in order to generate more employment opportunities for the unemployed women. Thus, it is necessary to find out various entrepreneurship development programmes undertaken by government and non-government organizations, role of women entrepreneurs as social caretaker by virtue of fulfilling different social responsibilities and most importantly future prospects of business and entrepreneurship for women.

Briefly, the **aims and objectives of the present study** include, (1) identification of various background variables, factors and circumstances for the emergence and growth of women entrepreneurs; (2) examining entrepreneurial orientation among women; (3) knowing the capacity of women entrepreneurs in balancing dual roles; (4) identifying various support systems; (5) identifying the changes among women due to their entrepreneurial participation; (6) explore the implication of women entrepreneurship for the society at large; (7) knowing how far women entrepreneurship has helped in women empowerment and emancipation; (8) exploring the major hindrances faced by women entrepreneurs during the process of entrepreneurship; and (9) exploring the future prospects of business and entrepreneurship for women.

While the concept of entrepreneurship is relatively new, initiatives that employ entrepreneurial capacities to conceptualize and solve women's problem are not. A variety of

initiatives have been traced in the present study, particularly those focused on the entrepreneurial opportunities for women and 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 that has 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 and different governmental and non-government support programmes for enhancing the number of businesswomen and women entrepreneurs in Darjeeling District.

Methodology

This study seeks to identify nature, patterns, orientation, perspectives, problems and prospects of women entrepreneurs of Darjeeling District. Identification of these aspects are done by generating hypothesis about cases that combine data analysis of complex phenomena done by table representation.

Data used in this study are drawn primarily from field and secondary data are also used from available resources. Sampling method is used in identifying respondents from four sub-divisions viz. Darjeeling, Kurseong, Kalimpong and Siliguri of Darjeeling District. The non probability snowball sampling method is chosen to select scattered unknown respondents. Since there is lack of official database on women entrepreneurs and businesswomen in this district, I have to depend on my known circle of respondents primarily. But keeping the requirement of number of respondents in view, more respondents were required. Subsequently, the numbers of respondents are increased with the information given by the previously selected and interviewed respondents. . The second phase of respondents in turn gives some more other names. Gradually, this process of search for respondents proceeds until adequate number of businesswomen are interviewed. Before selecting the respondents, different financial institutions, industrial organization, Zilla Parisad are consulted to get the list of registered women entrepreneurs. A good number of home based non-registered businesswomen are also interviewed. A detail interview schedule used to gather information. The questions of the schedule are basically of two types- close ended and open ended. Informal discussion also done with the respondents, staff and their family

members in gathering valued information. In analyzing collected data, comparisons of different variables are done by using tabulation method. Data also collected from various secondary sources viz. various published and unpublished reports, newspapers, journals, periodicals, write-ups, internet sources and interviews with the organization members etc.

Universe of Study

For the selection of women engaged in different business and entrepreneurial activities, four sub-divisions of Darjeeling district- Darjeeling sadar, Siliguri, Kurseong, Kalimpong are selected. There are several reasons for selecting this area under study. Firstly, the process of urbanization, modern technical and professional education motivated women in entrepreneurship in this district. Secondly, Development of Siliguri as a commercial centre and other sub-divisions as major tourist centre have a significant bearing for emergence of businesswomen. It is the gateway of north-east India where a large number of different ethnic groups, refugees and migrants of adjacent states and counties started their commercial units to generate income. Thirdly, the foreign exports from Nepal and China also provided huge commercial insight to aspired business women. Fourthly, community and social background of women particularly those of matrilineal tribal groups of hills and educated middle class women of Siliguri sub-division have a great impact over emergence of women entrepreneurs. Fifthly, the government efforts for developing entrepreneurial skills among women in this District and finally, there is no much research work done on women entrepreneur and businesswomen in this district. All these factors motivated to undertake the present study.

The total size of the sample includes three hundred businesswoman and women entrepreneurs of different categories and communities having different familial, educational and financial background.

Significance of Study

It is necessary to draw the significance of the present study to illustrate various aspects of sociological perspectives, some of which are pointed out below:

- Women's entrepreneurship look at the innovative behaviour patterns of women which were ignored, overlooked and underestimated for a long time in Indian society and culture. This referred to the role reconstruction for women, essential for their social role allocation.

- Women's business and entrepreneurial participation has a stronger relative consequence upon their changing status in the society with respect to their increasing access and control over livelihood resources.
- Women entrepreneurs can be conceptualized as a social entrepreneur because being an entrepreneur she attempts to reduce poverty and unemployment by generating employment opportunities for others particularly for women.
- Women entrepreneurship as a process has a direct bearing with cultural values of some ethnic groups, those which are matrilineal by nature, for example, north-eastern tribes, Tibetans etc. Because these matrilineal tribal ethos helped to develop their own pattern of entrepreneurship having a natural market for certain commodities.
- Entrepreneurship as a process is encouraged by the socialization process of a person's childhood. Culmination of positive qualities of women entrepreneurs is largely rooted by their socialization within the family before and after marriage.
- Women entrepreneurship also held responsible for maintaining social solidarity between the enterprise and the outside world.
- By their business participation women become more accessive to the resources and power mechanism of their families. Because whenever they became independent automatically their power of decision making, control over resources, access of opportunities have increased and they become empowered.

Therefore, the present study have touched a number of areas which are sociologically important, for example, gender socialization, socio-cultural values, ethnicity and social structural relationship.

Limitations

During the whole course of fieldwork, few inconveniences are faced. Identifying businesswomen and women entrepreneurs in the four sub- divisions of Darjeeling district (Kurseong, kalimpong, Darjeeling and Siliguri) under study is little tough due to non-registration of most of the units. Besides that there are several benami units which are registered in the names of women but not run by them, rather run by their families. There are no statistical evidences shown on the sex composition of business owners or entrepreneurs in this district and many businesses have multiple owners or only namesake owners. This is more in case of women owners where the benami cases are found and official women proprietors do not run the unit. Even in North Bengal Federation of Chamber of Commerce,

there is no female wing like Kolkata (in Kolkata separate female wing named 'Pragati' is working) to safeguard issues of women entrepreneurs and businesswomen. Apart from that, hesitation on the part of women entrepreneurs and their family members while answering sometimes destructed the research purpose. Some of the respondents are of the impression that this work is done for government project which also limited the scope of collection of original information. However with the help of majority women entrepreneurs and other organizations such restrictions imposed by the then emerging circumstances are overcome.