A STUDY ON EMPOWERMENT OF DALITS THROUGH ENTREPRENEURSHIP

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ABSTRACT

Dalit Entrepreneurship is a recent phenomenon and it has been recognized as an important tool for empowerment of socially depressed classes. By establishing new ventures, dalit entrepreneurs generate new jobs for themselves and also for others along with that they provide society with different solutions to management, organization and business problems.The emergence of entrepreneurship among theScheduled castes and Scheduled tribes may be understood as a result of the capitalistic development of theCountry, alongside their own initiative, hard work and innovativeness. There are many institutions supporting dalit entrepreneurs through different schemes. This study focuses on the roleof different institutions in promotion ofDalit entrepreneurship in Karnataka and perception of Dalit unemployed youths about Entrepreneurship.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Promotion, Dalits, Development, Government Schemes.

INTRODUCTION

Dalits in India are vulnerable both socially and economically. They were discriminated from centuries but as a result of globalization, few Dalits have raised themselves as an entrepreneur with the motto of fighting caste with the capital. In developing countries like India, it plays a vital role not only as a source of livelihood but also as a solution to many social problems. Entrepreneurship is defined as ‘‘A scholarly field that seeks to understand how opportunities to bring into existence ‘future’ goods and services are discovered, created, and exploited, by whom, and with what consequences.’’ Venkataraman (1997). Dalit entrepreneurship is a core concept emerged as a solution to the many problems of Dalits in India. Entrepreneurship plays major role in empowerment of economically vulnerable but nowadays it is also taking part in forming the social capital and competence amongDalits in India (Shivashankar 2019). Social capital and competence of entrepreneurs plays important role in financial success when other factors being same (Baron & Markman, 2003). After the globalization, many Dalits are raised as entrepreneurs and they started forming social capital through entrepreneurship. The government and other institutions extended their support to make Dalits engage in entrepreneurial activity. But the inner urge in the form of social competence made their way easy to enter into venturing.

DALITS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

‘Dalit’ has its roots in Sanskrit (dal) which means broken, cracked, trodden down, crouched or destroyed. According to Bert Hoselitz (1960), entrepreneurship can develop only in a society in which cultural norms permit variability in choice of paths in life. But in developing countries like India it is very difficult for all to

engage in entrepreneual activities because of the poor social capital, competence and economic condition. So, a Dalit entrepreneur is an individual who belongs to Dalit community and doing his business in the market.

GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES

1. Government of India introduced Stand-Up India scheme to facilitate bank loans between 10 lakh and 1 Crore to at least one Scheduled Caste (SC) or Scheduled financial). Tribe (ST) borrower and at least one-woman borrower per bank branch for setting up a greenfield enterprise. This enterprise may be in manufacturing, services or the trading sector.
2. Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises Development Organisation (MSME-DO) provides comprehensive consultancy services in technical, managerial, economic and other disciplines. Such services are provided mostly free of cost. Wherever, charges are leviable, the SC/ST entrepreneurs are given 50% concession.
3. Venture Capital Fund is a Social Sector Initiative to be implemented nationally in order to promote entrepreneurship among Scheduled Castes population in India.
4. The National SC/ST Hub has been set up to provide professional support to SC/ST Entrepreneurs to fulfil the obligations under the Public Procurement Policy for Micro and Small Enterprises Order 2012.
5. A sub-target of 4% out of 20% target of annual procurement is fixed for procurement from MSEs owned by SC/ST entrepreneurs.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1.Why entrepreneurship is necessary for empowerment of Dalits?

2.What are the different initiatives taken by the government to promote Dalit entrepreneurship?

3. How can a Dalit achieve socio-economic empowerment through entrepreneurship?

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the present status of Dalit entrepreneurship.
2. To explore the role of entrepreneurship in empowerment of Dalits.
3. To study the role of Government in promotion of dalit entrepreneurship.

HYPOTHESES

1.H_0: Income is not associated with Entrepreneurial Interest.

H_1: Income is associated with Entrepreneurial Interest.

2.H_0: Education qualification is not associated with Entrepreneurial Interest.

H_2: Education qualification is associated with Entrepreneurial Interest.

3.H_0: Awareness level is not associated with Entrepreneurial Interest.

H_3: Awareness level isassociated with Entrepreneurial Interest.

METHODOLOGY

The conceptualization of the present study is done based on peer-reviewed literature. The study is quantitative in nature and opinion collected from 100unemployed youths of Mysore through a structured questionnaire. Chi-square test is used to analyse the data.

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

TABLE 1.1 DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT BY TYPE OF GENDER/ SOCIAL CATEGORY

STATE	FEMALE	MALE	TOTAL	SC	ST	OBC	OTHERS	TOTAL
Karnataka	215265	574093	789358	88197	52248	294416	354497	789358
All India	1904039	7405447	9309486	1095138	489537	2938432	4786379	9309486

Source: Fourth all India census of MSME

From the above table it can be seen that out of 93,09,486 MSMEs the number of enterprises owned by the Dalits in India is 17.02 percent. In Karnataka percentage of Dalit owned enterprises is 17.79 out of 7,89,358 MSMEs.

TABLE 1.2 DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT BY TYPE OF GENDER/ SOCIAL CATEGORY (RURAL and URBAN)

STATE	Locality	FEMALE	MALE	TOTAL	SC	ST	OBC	OTHERS	TOTAL
Karnataka	Rural	27.99	72.01	100	14.09	6.28	45.75	33.88	100
	Urban	26.89	73.11	100	9.64	6.80	32.85	50.71	100
All India	Rural	22.43	77.57	100	14.19	6.17	36.15	43.48	100
	Urban	19.16	80.84	100	10.18	4.66	28.56	56.6	100

Source: Fourth all India census of MSME

From the above table it can be inferred thatrepresentation of Dalit entrepreneurs in urban area is less i.e.,14.18 percent but in rural area it is 20.36 percent. In Karnataka urban and rural area representation of Dalit entrepreneursare 16.44 percent and 20.37 respectively.

TABLE 1.3 DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT BY TYPE OF ENTERPRISES AND TYPE OF SOCIAL CATEGORY(Numbers in Thousand)

Sl.No	Type of Enterprise	Number of Enterprises Owned by				
		SC	ST	OBC	Others	Total
1	Micro	775.83	315.45	2219.18	3223.74	6534.19
2	Small	272.90	133.50	604.34	1332.28	2343.03
3	Medium	46.41	40.59	114.91	230.36	432.27
	Total	1095.14	489.54	2938.44	4786.38	9309.48

Source: Fourth all India census of MSME

From the above table it can be said that majority of Dalits owned the micro enterprises i.e.,10,93,280. Number of small and medium enterprises owned by Dalits is 4,06,400 and 87,000 respectively.

TABLE 1.4 DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT BY NATURE OF ACTIVITY AND TYPE OF SOCIAL CATEGORY(Numbers in Thousand)

Sl.No	Nature of Activity	Number of Enterprises Owned by				
		SC	ST	OBC	Others	Total
1	Manufacturing	990.07	449.14	2509.22	4135.21	8083.63
2	Services	52.40	21.08	230.48	324.20	628.16
3	Repairing& Maintenance	52.67	19.32	198.73	326.96	597.69
	Total	**1095.14**	**489.54**	**2938.44**	**4786.38**	**9309.48**

Source: Fourth all India census of MSME

From the above table it can be seen that majority of entrepreneurs i.e., 14,39,210 Dalit entrepreneurs are engaged in manufacturing activity. And others engaged in services and repairing and maintenance activity.

TABLE 1.5 DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT BY TYPE OF ORGANISATION AND TYPE OF SOCIAL CATEGORY(Numbers in Thousand)

Sl.No	Type of Organisation	Number of Enterprises Owned by				
		SC	ST	OBC	Others	Total
1	Proprietary or HUF	668.59	299.83	2078.79	2928.14	5975.35
2	Partnership	164.40	64.09	308.63	529.16	1066.27
3	Pvt. Company	166.52	80.90	347.80	873.49	1468.71
4	Pub. Ltd. Company	46.13	21.18	95.18	244.62	407.11
5	Cooperatives	25.09	5.10	52.40	58.75	141.35
6	Others	24.41	18.44	55.63	152.22	250.70
	Total	**1095.14**	**489.54**	**2938.43**	**4786.38**	**9309.48**

Source: Fourth all India census of MSME

From the table 1.6 it can be inferred that majority of enterprises owned by Dalit entrepreneurs is proprietary or HUF in nature. Out of 15,84,680 enterprises 9,68,420 are HUF, 2,28,490 are Partnership firms,2,47,420 are Private Company and remaining are public Ltd company, Cooperatives and other firms respectively.

RESULTS OF HYPOTHESIS TESTING

1. H_0: "Income is not associated with Entrepreneurial Interest".

H_1: "Income is associated with Entrepreneurial Interest"

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TABLE 1.6 Entrepreneurial Interest among different Income group

Entrepreneurial Interest	Income group				
	Below10,000	**10,001-20,000**	**20,001-30,000**	**Above 30,000**	**Total**
Interested	07	26	14	07	**54**
Not Interested	10	12	18	06	**46**
Total	**20**	**43**	**22**	**05**	**100**

Source: Primary data

TABLE 1.7: Chi-Square tests

	Chi-Square	**df**	**Asymp. Sig.**
Pearson Chi-Square	5.606	3	0.129

Table 1.7 present the critical value of X^2 = 7.81 at significance level (α)= 0.05 and degree of freedom(df)= 3. Since the calculated value of X^2 =5.606 is less than its critical value, the null hypothesis is accepted. Hence, it is concluded that the Income is not associated with Entrepreneurial Interest.

2. H_0: "Education qualification is not associated with Entrepreneurial Interest".

   H_1: "Education qualification is associated with Entrepreneurial Interest".

TABLE 1.8 Entrepreneurial Interest and level of education

Entrepreneurial Interest	Education Qualification				
	Secondary	**Pre-University**	**Graduation**	**Post-Graduation**	**Total**
Interested	03	12	24	15	**54**
Not Interested	14	18	08	06	**46**
Total	**17**	**30**	**32**	**21**	**100**

Source: Primary data

TABLE 1.9: Chi-Square tests

	Chi-Square	**df**	**Asymp. Sig.**
Pearson Chi-Square	19.661	3	0.000

Table 1.9 present the critical value of X^2 = 7.81 at significance level (α)= 0.05 and degree of freedom(df)= 3. Since the calculated value of X^2 =19.661 is greater than its critical value, the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence, it is concluded that the education qualification is associated with Entrepreneurial Interest.

3. H_0: "Awareness level is not associated with Entrepreneurial Interest".

   H_3: "Awareness level is associated with Entrepreneurial Interest".

TABLE 1.10 Entrepreneurial Interest and awareness level

Entrepreneurial Interest	Income group						
	DIC	NSIC	MSME	SIDBI	More than one	Not aware	TOTAL
Interested	06	05	14	08	**10**	**11**	**54**
Not Interested	07	05	05	05	**04**	**20**	**46**
Total	**13**	**10**	**19**	**13**	**14**	**31**	**100**

Source: Primary data

TABLE 1.11: Chi-Square tests

	Chi-Square	df	Asymp. Sig.
Pearson Chi-Square	9.638	5	0.086

Table 1.11 present the critical value of X^2 = 11.1 at significance level (α)= 0.05 and degree of freedom(df)= 5. Since the calculated value of X^2 =9.638 is less than its critical value, the null hypothesis is accepted. Hence, it is concluded that the Awareness level is not associated with Entrepreneurial Interest.

MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

1. The number of enterprises owned by the Dalits in India is 17.02 percent. In Karnataka percentage of Dalit owned enterprises is 17.79.
2. The enterprises owned by Dalits are more in rural area. Most of the enterprises are micro enterprises and majority of them engaged in manufacturing activity owned by HUFs.
3. From the study it is found that income and awareness level of respondents is not associated with the Entrepreneurial Interest but the education qualification is associated with the Entrepreneurial Interest. Therefore, the education plays significant role in promoting entrepreneurship.

SUGGESTIONS

1. Human resources are treated as the human capital today and there is a connection between entrepreneurship and social status. This connection can help in solving the social-economic problems. Therefore, awareness programmes should be conducted to boost the interest.
2. Social and economic vulnerability cause poor social capital and competence. The economic and social status of Dalits can be improved through entrepreneurship development programmes.Therefore, EDPs should be conducted regularly in remote areas.
3. Entrepreneurship helps to transform the attitude of Dalits to become independent in the society and it boosts the interpersonal relationship in the society. Therefore, government should take necessary steps to improve the participation of rural households in entrepreneurial activity.

CONCLUSION

In a political environment all are equal but the in a social environment discrimination happens everywhere. Through Government initiativesDalits to found solutions to many problems. Therefore,Entrepreneurship serves as a gateway to transform the socio-economic status of Dalits and sows the seeds of social capital to become an independent and self-sufficient.

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