

Research Paper :

Problems of women entrepreneurs running boutiques in Punjab

VANDANA GANDOTRA AND SUNANDA KHANNA

Accepted : April, 2010

ABSTRACT

Women have adopted boutiques as an entrepreneurial activity to supplement their family income or as a means to channelize their creativity. However, all the entrepreneurs have their share of problems which hinder successful functioning of a business unit. The investigation was conducted to study the problems of women entrepreneurs running boutiques in Punjab. Information regarding this was collected from 200 boutiques operating from shops as well as from houses in various cities of Punjab. An interview schedule was prepared to collect the relevant information regarding various problems related to the availability of raw material, finance, marketing, production, managerial, personal and problems related to workers. The extent of problems such as expensive raw material, lack of money for further investment and price fluctuations was significantly greater in boutiques running from shops as compared to boutiques running from houses. On the other hand, the extent of problems such as adverse effects on health and no help in household work was significantly greater in boutiques running from houses as compared to their counterparts.

See end of the article for authors' affiliations

Correspondence to:

VANDANA GANDOTRA
Department of Clothing and Textiles, College of Home Science, Punjab Agricultural University, LUDHIANA (PUNJAB) INDIA

Key words : Women entrepreneur, Boutiques, Problems

In India, boutiques have mushroomed in the last few years not only in every nook and corner, but have established in big shopping complexes as well. A large number of women entrepreneurs feel that there is a good opportunity to make money and to provide employment in this sphere. Boutiques offer a wide range of fashion apparels exclusively designed for specific customer segment and have a job type production system (Pahwa, 1995). Boutiques may be located in residential or commercial areas and its success depends on how accurately target market is identified. Every business comes across various hardships related to employees, raw material, finance, personal, marketing and managerial problems. Hence, the study was planned to study the problems of women entrepreneurs running boutiques in Punjab.

METHODOLOGY

The present study was conducted on 200 respondents running boutiques from houses as well as from shops in four cities of Punjab namely, Ludhiana, Jalandhar, Amritsar and Patiala. The respondents were selected purposively by using snow ball sampling technique from selected cities of Punjab. The relevant information regarding the problems was collected from the boutique owners by an interview schedule. To study the extent of problems, the data were tabulated by three score method as, Frequently = 2, Sometimes = 1, Never = 0. The data obtained were tabulated and analyzed by using frequencies, percentages,

means and t-test.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The problems related to raw material, finance, workers, personal, production and managerial aspects faced by the women entrepreneurs running boutiques are presented in Table 1.

Problems related to raw material:

From the average mean scores worked out for various problems (Table 1), it was found that lack of new design was the most frequently faced problem (1.25) followed by expensive (0.99), variation in quality of raw material (0.41), inferior quality (0.32) and not easily available (0.14) in boutiques operating from shops. The boutiques operating from houses reported that the problems of lack of new designs (0.91), expensive (0.34), not easily available (0.17) and inferior quality (0.15).

Financial problems:

In case of boutique operating from shops, lack of money for further investment was found to be the biggest financial problem (1.42), followed by price fluctuations (0.90), less profit (0.73), small advertising budget (0.56), delayed payments (0.50) and irregular income (0.18). On the other hand, the problems faced by boutiques operating from houses were small advertising budget (0.65), delayed payments (0.61), less profit (0.54), irregular income (0.44), lack of money (0.36) for further investment and price