

Project title	Women's Industries Programme in Kerala – An Evaluation
Source of funding	Science Technology and Environment Department, Government of Kerala
Year	2002

Abstract

This was essentially an evaluative study of the functioning of the Women's Industries Programme (WIP) in Kerala that was started in 1980 with the main objective of providing employment opportunities to women.

The number of WIP units which was about 900 in 1985 increased to nearly 12000 by 2000. The main objectives of the study were to assess the role of WIP in the overall industrial scenario of the state and to estimate their contribution to the state income. The study has attempted to identify and analyse both the negative and positive factors influencing the functional efficiency of WIP.

In terms of regional spread, the pattern of distribution of SSI units and WIP units in the districts was similar. There were serious regional imbalances in the spatial distribution of both SSI units as well as the WIP units. Of the total WIP units nearly 79 per cent were in rural areas. As far as the proportion of closed units was concerned, there was no regional pattern. The mortality rates of the WIP units were quite high, especially in respect of older units.

Economic reasons were pointed out as the motivating factor for starting WIP units by 81 per cent of the entrepreneurs. The WIP activities were broadly in three categories, viz. manufacturing units, servicing units and both manufacturing and servicing. In the case of sources of funding, on an average 48.5 per cent was entrepreneur's own share and 34.4 per cent came from borrowings from Banks. Non-availability of raw materials was not reported as a major problem. However non-availability of power affected about 10 per cent of the units.

In terms of labour productivity, large units were found more efficient than smaller units. The average life of 287 closed units was found to be less than five years. Sixty-one per cent of the closed units reported financial problems as the major reason for closure. Labour related problems, lack of co-operation among working members of societies and lack of interest of working partners are reason for closure of 7 per cent of the units and for 6 per cent of the closed units, shortage of power was the main reason for closure.

The WIP units needed assistance in marketing their products and marketing were a major problem faced by small manufacturers. Many entrepreneurs expressed the view that periodical training to make them aware of the latest developments in the field was needed.

