

Investment and profit margins of boutiques run by the women entrepreneurs in Punjab

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■ **ABSTRACT** : Entrepreneurship is a multidimensional challenging task that involves mobilizing resources and combining them to initiate action in the production and thereby profitable returns. The present study was planned with the objective to investigate the investment and profit margins of the boutiques run by women entrepreneurs in Punjab. A total of 200 respondents running boutiques from houses and shops in four cities of Punjab (Ludhiana, Jalandhar, Amritsar and Patiala) were included to extract the relevant information by an interview schedule. The information regarding the investment, income and profit margins of women running boutiques was thus worked out. Majority of the women (33.5 %) started their boutique with initial investment of Rs. 50,000-1,00,000 followed by 26 per cent who made an initial investment between Rs. 1,00,000-1,50,000. Over and above the initial investment, 24 per cent of the respondents invested below Rs. 10,000 followed by 20.5 per cent who made an investment between Rs. 20,000 - 30,000 per annum. Out of 200 respondents, 86.5 per cent used their own family resources for setting up their boutiques. Majority of women operating boutiques from shops earned Rs. 30,000-40,000 (30%) while the women operating boutiques from houses earned Rs. 20,000-30,000 (24%), per month. Forty one per cent of boutiques had profit margins from 20-30 per cent on their products and minimum profit margin was of 10 per cent. The average per month income earned from the boutiques came out to be Rs. 37,080 in case of boutiques operating from shops as compared to Rs. 29,900 for the boutiques operating from houses.

■ **KEY WORDS** : Entrepreneurship, Boutique, Investment, Income, Profit

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In the Indian socio-economic context income assumes great significance for women. There are number of enterprises which are being run by women entrepreneurs successfully. The market of readymade garments is flourishing in India. With such a boom in the market of ready-mades, came up the idea of boutiques in 1980s. 'Boutique' is a French word and has been defined as "a chic little store" selling smart or fashionable clothes and accessories. The boutiques are catering to the needs of lower and upper middle class customers and with varying profit margins. Hence, the study was planned to know the investment and profit margins of women entrepreneurs running boutiques in Punjab.

■ RESEARCH METHODS

The present study was conducted on 200 respondents

running boutiques from houses and shops in four cities of Punjab (Ludhiana, Jalandhar, Amritsar and Patiala). The respondents were selected purposively by using snowball sampling technique from selected cities. The relevant information regarding the investment, income and profit margins of the women entrepreneurs was collected by an interview schedule. The data were tabulated and analysed by using frequencies, percentages, t-value, Z- test and x² value.

■ RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows that 33.5 per cent of respondents started their boutique with initial investment of Rs. 50,000-1,00,000 followed by 26 per cent with an initial investment between Rs. 1,00,000-1,50,000. Only 13 per cent of the respondents invested more than Rs. 2 lacs to start their enterprise. The