PRESPECTIVES IN WOMEN EMPOWERMENT THROUGH MICROFINANCE INTERVENTION
-A STUDY IN THE RURAL INDIA OF CHAMRAJNAGAR DISTRICT IN KARNATAKA STATE

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ABSTRACT
The primary of occupation in Chamrajnagar district is farming, mainly mulberry cultivation and sericulture. The agrarian nature of the district brings out the requirement for irrigation facilities. Since the district being sparsely irrigated, it is highly dependent on the seasonal rainfall. Other than the farming activities there are 21 factories in the district providing employment to a number of people, microfinance if provisioned properly for Women. Usually in a male dominated society, women are underestimated and discriminated in all spheres of life like family and social life or their economic and political life. Moreover, the traditional duties of managing households create hindrances in their social and economic empowerment. Over the years various efforts have been made by many Government and Non Government organisations to promote women empowerment especially in rural areas. One such effort is the microfinance intervention. Many leading public and private sector banks are offering schemes exclusively designed for women to set up their own ventures. Even the unorganized sector has been heading into microfinance movement. NABARD has come out with a detailed plan consisting of the financial requirements for 2009-10 pertaining to each sector. According to these projections, the total amount of credit required for the agriculture sector was estimated at Rs.318 crores with crop loans constituting about 54% of the total. A sum of Rs.52 crores is required to carry out allied activities such as dairy farming, sheep and goat rearing. Also, non-farm sector and agro-processing needed credit to the tune of Rs.11 crores and Rs.2.8 crores respectively together adding up to 4.2%. Rural population constitutes about 85% of the total with 24% of agricultural labourers and 15% of cultivators. Credit availability is a critical factor which determines the development of agriculture and farming sector in the district. Therefore, it is necessary to have an adequate and continuous supply of credit for which there exist a number of financial institutions in Chamarajanagar district.
Chamrajnagar district has a rich diversity of crops and includes cereal crops (Ragi, Maize, Jowar and Paddy), pulses (Horsegram, Blackgram, Redgram and Cowpea) and oil seeds such as Groundnut and Sunflower. The commercial crops in the district also consist of Cotton and Sugarcane. According to the economic survey 2008-09, the net income of Chamarajanagar district was estimated to be Rs. 1,70,149 lakhs (1701 crores) during 2006-07. At current prices, the per capita income stood at Rs. 16,441, way below the state average of Rs. 30,847. In constant prices (2009-2010), the total GDP amounted to Rs. 1405 crores with 51% of the total coming from the tertiary sector. The present paper is an attempt to study the role of microfinance
intervention in promoting women empowerment in rural India of Chamrajnagar District in Karnataka State The objective is to analyze the use of micro financial services by the women clients and access their level of satisfaction with regards to these services.

**KEYWORDS:** Microfinance, Micro credit, Women empowerment, Financial inclusion, Agro processing.