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Short Note

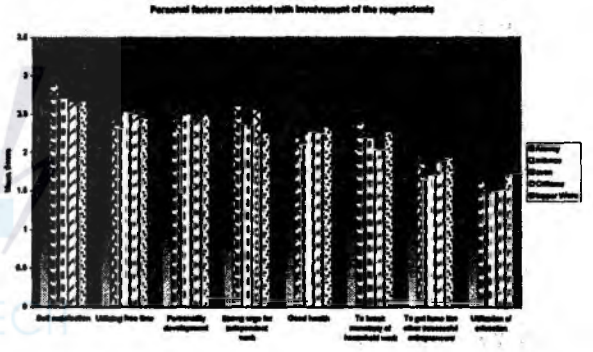
Motivating factors for women in direct selling enterprises

Neena Vyas and Savita Batish*
Department of Family Resource Management, College of Home Science
CSK Himachal Pradesh Krishi Vishvavidyalaya, Palampur-176 062, India.

Women have been taking increasing interest in recent years in income generating activities, self-employment and entrepreneurship. Individual needs and desires are the motivating factors behind every human action. Due to motivation an individual makes consistent efforts to attain one's goal. In spite of traditional gender role expectations and attitude in a developing nation like India women are coming up in a big way to generate income. Direct selling is a distribution channel and a business opportunity to all in which products of companies are sold face to face. For those good at selling skills, direct marketing for products like Amway, Avon and Tupperware etc. is a nice option. Taking up such a career will provide with a decent regular income (Sweta 2007).

A number of women have come out of the shell and carved a nitch for themselves in the male dominated area of business. The economic needs of the family are increasing day-by-day demanding the women to take up self-employment. Empowerment of women has emerged as an important issue in our society in the recent time. Several studies have been done to examine the motivational factors affecting women to join income generation activities like preservation, handicrafts, boutiques, parlours, health clinics etc. Direct selling business is a upcoming trend and have significant development in the country. Thus keeping the above facts in view the study was designed to examine the various personal, economic, family and social factors affecting women to join direct selling enterprises as to start their own business.

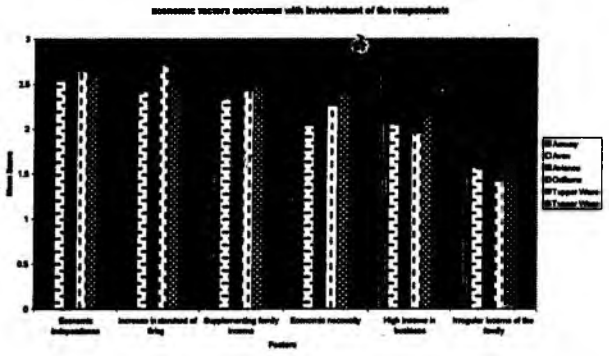
The present study was undertaken in Ludhiana city of Punjab as there are many direct selling enterprises in operation. Five direct selling enterprises namely Amway, Avon, Tupperware, Oriflame and Aviance were purposively selected after selecting the enterprises a list of women with minimum of three years of experience in a particular enterprise up to March 2007, and having monthly earnings up to rupees 5900/- was prepared separately for each selected enterprise in consultation with the official of the concerned enterprise. Out of the total number of the women involved in each of the five purposively selected enterprises, 298 women were selected according to the probability proportional to size sampling method. Data were collected through interview during April 2007 to August 2007 and analysed statistically. Various factors may motivate women to join direct selling enterprises. The personal, economic, family and social factors which were responsible for involvement of the respondents in selected enterprises were studied. The results are presented in Graphs 1 to 4.



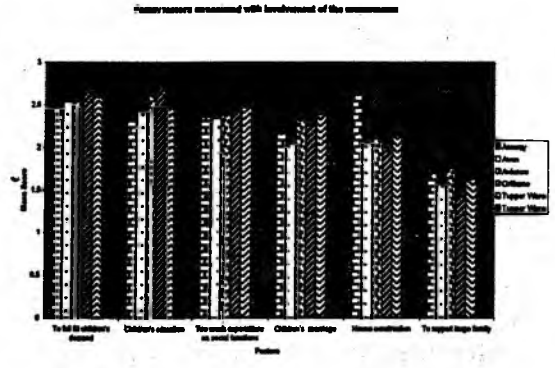
Personal factors: Graph 1 reveals that in Aviance, Avon, Oriflame and Tupperware enterprises most of the respondents gave first rank to the factor "self satisfaction" with an overall mean score of 2.66, followed by "utilizing free time" (mean score 2.52), "personality development" (mean score 2.49) and "strong urge for independent work" (mean score 2.41) with second, third and fourth rank respectively, reason being that these enterprises organize many seminars and meetings from time to time for women in order to improve their health and personality. "Good health" and "to break monotony of home making work" obtained fifth and sixth rank with almost same mean scores of 2.27 and 2.26 whereas "to get fame" and "utilization of education" were at seventh and eighth rank with mean scores of 2.01 and 1.71 respectively. These findings are in line with the results of Sunaina and Bal (2001), Sharma (2003) and Sunderam (2004) who also found that women involve themselves in direct marketing because

Department of Family Resource Management, College of Home Science, Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana.

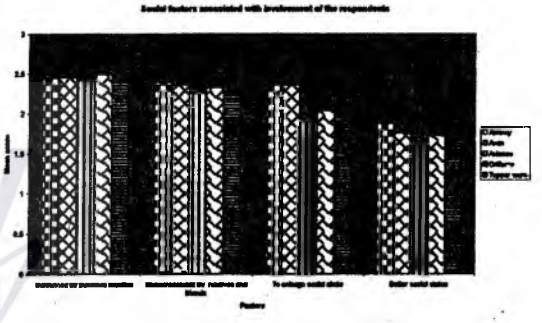
they want to derive self-satisfaction by doing something independent and secondly to utilize their free time.



Economic factors: Different economic factors due to which women involved themselves in different enterprises were economic independence, supplementing family income, increase standard of living, economic necessity, high income in business and irregular income of the family (Graph 2). While comparing the different economic factors "economic independence" ranked first with mean score of 2.56 followed by "increase in standard of living" (mean score 2.50), "supplementing family income" (mean score 2.39) and least rank for "irregular income of family with a mean score of 1.64. Further detailed analysis shows that in Aviance and Tupperware enterprise respondents were involved due to 'economic independence' factor with mean score of 2.54 and 2.59 whereas in Avon and Oriflame "increase standard of living" bagged first rank with mean scores of 2.61 and 2.72. "High income in business" was only considered at first rank in Amway enterprise but in overall sample it was at fifth rank with 2.23 mean score. These results are in accordance with the results of Banerji and Kumar (2002), Kaur (2003) and Gangwar *et al* (2004) who also reported that women take up entrepreneurship to have economic independence to keep up there status and standard of living.



Family factors: Findings in Graph 3 reveal that overall mean score regarding taking up of an enterprise, the first rank was obtained for "to fulfill children's demand" with mean score of 2.03 by the respondents followed "for their education" with a mean score of 1.88, "too much expenditure on social functions" (mean score 1.71), "children's marriage" (mean score 1.70) and least rank was given for the factor "large family to support" (mean score 1.28) reason being that most of the respondents belong to nuclear families. When the mean score and ranks of different family factors were viewed within the selected enterprises it is seen that there was difference in the priorities given by the respondents to these factors. The results are in line with the findings of Rajvanshi (1990) and Kaur (2003) who also reported that women usually involve themselves in business for the future career of their children.



Social factors: The different social factors for the involvement of the respondents in direct selling enterprises were to enlarge social circle, influenced by business meetings, encouragement by relatives and friends and better social status as it is business of social network. From the perusal of Graph 4 it is seen that in all the selected enterprises first rank was obtained for "influenced by business meetings" with an overall mean score of 2.44 followed by "encouragement from relatives and friends" (mean score 2.32) and "to enlarge social circle" (mean score 2.14), whereas least mean score was for "better social status" 1.75. The reason for these results may be that the well organized weekly meetings including different social aspects influence most of the respondents to join these enterprises whereas better social status was the last reason for entering in the enterprise because respondents were already enjoying the good social status. These findings are in the line with the results of Tagra (1997) and Porwal (2002) who also stated that social network plays a key role in motivating people and thus adding to the growth of business.

From the above study it can be concluded that the most important motivating factors which encourage women to join direct selling enterprises, amongst personal factors was self-satisfaction whereas economic independence, to fulfill children's demands influenced by business meetings were the economic, family and social respectively.

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