Abstract

*This research study is an endeavour to identify the association between the competencies of women entrepreneurs and enterprise performance. The researcher has observed that there is a gap in the existing knowledge in the case of entrepreneurial competencies and enterprise performance of Sri Lankan women entrepreneurs. This is the gap in the literature that is addressed in this study. Hence the research problem focused here is "what is the association between the competencies of women entrepreneurs and performance of their enterprises?" There were two objectives of the study: 1) **to find the association between cognitive, affective and connotive (behavioural) competencies of women entrepreneurs and performance of their enterprises, and 2) to find the most critical type of competence that has an association to the performance of the enterprise.***

The researcher used both Primary data and Secondary data for the study. Secondary data were collected from journals, publications, news paper reports and published and unpublished reports on the subject. Primary data were collected through the distribution of questionnaire.

This research has employed the descriptive research design where the research problem and specific hypotheses have been clearly identified. A questionnaire was administered to collect data needed for testing hypotheses. The population of the study was, all the women entrepreneurs registered with any formal organization who undertake to organize, own and run an enterprise with five or below employees in the Galle district. There were four organizations in the Galle district who maintained a list of micro women entrepreneurs and there were a total of 2000 registerd women entrepreneurs in these four organisations.

The researcher selected 200 women entrepreneurs from these four lists by using the stratified sampling technique.

The present researcher elaborates three types of competencies-cognitive, affective and behavioural (conotive).

The study hypothesized that there is a positive correlation between the said three competencies on performance of the enterprise. Hence, following three hypotheses were formulated: .1) H_1 *-There is an association between the cognitive competencies of women entrepreneurs and the performance of enterprises, 2)* H_2*-There is an association between the affective competencies of women entrepreneurs and the performance of enterprises. 3) H3- There is an association between the Behavioural competencies of women entrepreneurs and the performance of enterprises.*

Hypotheses were tested by performing a Chi-Square test and "C" value was calculated to determine the degree of association.

Accordingly, it has been empirically established that there is an association between the cognitive competencies and the performance of the enterprise (H_1) *and behavioural competencies of women entrepreneurs and performance of the enterprise* (H_3)*. However, it also suggested that there is no association between the affective competencies of women entrepreneurs and performance of the enterprise* (H_2)*.The strength of the association of the accepted hypotheses were measured by using the contingency coefficient(C) and it was found that behavioural competencies were the most critical type of competence that has a bearing on enterprise performance.*