

CHAPTER -3

SOCIO ECONOMIC PROFILE OF SONITPUR DISTRICT OF ASSAM

First objective: To find out socio-economic factors that influences the women to become an entrepreneur.

Sonitpur district of Assam is situated on the North Bank of Brahmaputra. The district of Sonitpur was originally included in the ancient Hindu kingdom of Kamrupa of the Mahabharata. ¹The name “Sonitpur” and “Tezpur” means the “city of blood”. The name of Tezpur is derived from the Sanskrit word, “Teza” (meaning blood) and “pura” (meaning town or a city). Originally, this place was known to be, “Sonitpur”. In Sanskrit “Sonit” means blood, but when the war took place wherein Lord Krishna’s army battled for the rescue of the grandson of Lord Krishna Aniruddha, there was a heavy bloodshed for which the whole place was stained in red. Due to this, the name of the place came to be known as Tezpur. This incident reminds of the romantic legend of Usha and Anirudha. The legend moves around Banasura, who was the great Asura king of ancient Tezpur; his beautiful daughter Usha; and her friend Chitrlekha. Once Usha saw a handsome prince in her dreams. She fell in love with him. A talented artist Chitrlekha painted the portrait as Usha described, and recognized him to be Anirudha, the grandson of Lord Krishna, who was also, the ruler of Dwarka. Using her magical powers, Chitrlekha got both of them married to each other according to Gandharva rites, and the king Banasura was unaware of this. When Banasura learnt about this, he imprisoned Anirudha out of anger and this led to the arrival of Lord Krishna, who came to rescue his grandson. Thereafter, a battle followed, and the entire

¹en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sonitpur_district

city was stained in human blood; hence the name Sonitpur or Tezpur, i.e., “the city of blood” came into existence. The love story of Usha and Anirudha has been mentioned in various stories.

Sonitpur district is the second largest district in Assam, in terms of area, after Karbi Anglong district. It is spread around an area of 5,324 square kilometres (2,056 square ml.) and has seven blocks. Earlier it had 14 blocks; Biswanath Chariali is now a separate district (2015) of Assam.

3.1: Location of Sonitpur district:

The district is surrounded on the east by Lakhimpur district, and in north by Arunachal Pradesh. The Brahmaputra River stands on southern side, and at the west Darrang district. After Guwahati, Jorhat, Dibrugarh, and Silchar, it is the fifth largest city of Assam. Sonitpur is an administrative district of Assam and the district headquarter is in Tezpur. According to 2011 census, it is the third most populous district of Assam (out of 27), after Nagaon and Dhubri. This district was created in 1983 after the split from Darrang district. Hailing from the core Assamese cultural region, the Tezpur town has product of many stalwarts such as Dr. Bhupen Hazarika, Kalaguru Bishnu Prasad Rabha, Phani Sarma, Ankushita Boro (Boxer) and Jamuna Boro (Boxer). It is also considered as the cultural capital of Assam. The population of Sonitpur District constituted 6.17 percent of total Maharashtra population. In 2001 census, this figure was 6.25 percent.

Table – 3.1 Decadal growth of population 2001-2011 (Sonitpur district)

Description	2001	2011
Population	1,665,125	1,924,110
Male	863,298	983,904
Female	801,827	940,206

Population growth	18.11%	15.55%
Area sq. km.	5,204	5,204
Density/km	315	370
Proportion to Assam Population	6.25%	6.17%
Sex Ratio (1000)	929	956
Child Sex Ratio	974	966
Average literacy	59.07%	67.34%
Male literacy	67.61%	73.65%
Female literacy	49.80%	60.73%
Child proportion (0-6)	16.24%	14.44
Boys proportion (0-6 age)	15.87%	14.37%
Girls proportion (0-6 age)	16.64%	14.52%
Child sex ratio	974	966

Source: Census report of Sonitpur district of Assam (2011)

Table-3.2 Distribution of population on religion (2011)

Religion	Population	%
Hindu	1,422,821	73.83
Muslim	350,675	18.18
Christian	138,355	7.19
Buddhism	5088	0.5
Jain	1003	0.05%
Others	221	0.01%

Source: Census report of Sonitpur district of Assam (2011)

Per capita income; Rs. 17041(2011)

Total Road length of Sonitpur: 1885.00 km

National Highway: 208.00 km (No.52)

3.2: Economy of the study area

The economy of Sonitpur is underdeveloped. Approximately 80 percent (2011) of the population depends on agriculture allied (primary sector) activities for their livelihood. Rain-fed cultivation of single paddy crops continues to be in practice in the most areas of the district. However, with the help of irrigation facilities like shallow tube well, high yielding variety of seeds and tractors, the multiple cropping techniques is now possible. In this district, both Rabi and Kharif crops are cultivated. Another important feature of Sonitpur's economy is the existence of large number of tea gardens.² There are, altogether, 73 tea gardens in this district (undivided Sonitpur). Earlier Biswanath Chariali was under the Sonitpur district. Biswanath Chariali was formed in 15 August 2015. Both Sonitpur and Biswanath Chariali have seven blocks each. The area covered under these tea gardens is approximate 2, 81,660 bighas. Monabari Tea Estate near Biswanath Chariali is the Asia's largest tea garden while the second largest tea garden is Bargang tea Estate. In the recent years, many Indian owned companies like Brooke Bond, Tata Tea, etc. have started taking over the ownership of the tea gardens. Apart from the big companies, recently, small tea gardens with an area of 40 to 100 bighas have also come up in greater numbers near the big gardens. Basically, they sell tea leaves to the big gardens, who own the facilities. The total number of registered small tea gardens (207) is,

however, less than the number of non-registered tea gardens. The major industry in Sonitpur district is Tea Processing, Cane product, Food product, Timber sawing, and Tea machinery manufacturer.

In Sonitpur, tribal and the other weaker sections of the society are traditionally involved in the pig rearing. In this district, fishing is a tradition rather than a commercial activity, as 90 percent of the fish products are imported. Here, handloom weaving is an important cottage industry. Sonitpur is the trade centre of

²Source: Tea Board of India

Bomdilla, Tawang, Seppa, and Itanagar of Arunachal Pradesh. It is also the hometown to two wildlife sanctuaries- Burachapori and Sonai-Rupai. In 1998, the Nameri National Park, which is spread over an area of 200 kilometres was included in the Sonitpur district.

It is also a home to the Orang National Park (1999), which was earlier with the Darrang district. It is spread over an area of 79 kilometres. Sonitpur district is not industrially developed. The following table shows the picture of industrial development in Sonitpur.

Table –3.3 Industrial development in Sonitpur (2012-13)

Item	Total area in Sqr. Mtr.	Total No. of Sheds constructed	No. of Sheds Allotted	No. of Sheds Occupied	No. of Units Functioning
Industrial Estate	129612	30	24	24	8
Dhekiajuli	604800In Sq. Ft.	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
KundarbariDek argaon	158049	4	4	4	1
Ghotlong	30732	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Biswanath Chariali	52683	5	5	5	2
Export promotion Industrial park	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Food Processing Industrial Park	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Integrated Infrastructural Development project	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Mini Industrial Estate	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil

Source: D.I.C. Sonitpur

The above table-3.3 shows the total number of industrial estates, number of sheds constructed, and number of sheds allotted, and number of sheds functioning which are quite low. In Sonitpur, there is no export promotion of industrial park; no food processing industrial park; and no mini-industrial estate. Since Sonitpur is an agriculture-based district, and absence of big industries hamper the expansion of entrepreneurship. After agriculture, handloom sector serves as the second largest sector that provides more employment opportunities in Sonitpur district of Assam.

Table- 3.4 Industrial picture of Sonitpur District of Assam (2011)

Sl. No.	Head	No.	Particulars
1.	Registered Industrial Unit		2910
2.	Total Industrial Unit	No.	2910
3.	Registered medium & Large Unit	No.	3 No.
4.	Estimated Avg. No. of Daily Workers Employed in Small Scale Industries	No.	-
5.	Employment in Large & Medium Industries	No.	Large- Nil Medium- 65
6.	No. of Industrial Area	No.	9
7.	Turnover in Small Scale Industries	Rs. In Lakh	12591.77
8.	Turnover in Medium & Large-Scale Industries	Rs. In Lakh	365.12

Source: DICC Sonitpur

The above table-3.4 shows the overall industrial picture of Sonitpur district which is not satisfactory. Because there is no big industry; number of medium industries is only 65 and number of industrial areas is 9. The total registered unit is 2910; turnover of SSIs and Medium & large-scale industries are Rs. 12591.77 in Lakh and Rs. 365.12 Lakh respectively.

Table – 3.5 Achievements in Handloom & Textile (2013-14)

Name of Scheme	Target	Target	Target	Achievement	Achievement	Achievement
	2011-12	2012-13	3013-14	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Economic Upliftment of handloom weavers	1	1	1	1	1	1
Health package scheme (additional)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Chief Minister's Assam Vikash Yojana	0	4400 Bdl	5600 4Bdl	0	100%	100%
District Development Plan Scheme 2008-09	0	0	0	0	0	0
Chief Minister's Special Programme	220 Set	167 Set	0	0	0	0
Group Approach Scheme	1 No.	0	0	0	0	0
Chief Minister's Special Employment Generation Mission	0		0	0	0	0
Yarn PassBook Under 10% Price Subsidy on Hank Yarn Under Mill Gate Price	0	895 Nos.	530 Nos.	0	89.40%	85%
ICICI Health	14000	12000	15000	12075	11950	14696

Insurance Scheme						
Mahatma Gandhi Bunkar Bima Yojana	1500	1500	2500	1099	1852	2965

Source: Asstt. Director Handloom & Textile, Sonitpur

Table- 3.5 shows a slow progress of handloom & textile in Sonitpur district.

Table -3.6 Proportion of workers in different sectors (2011)

Category	Gender	Total Workers	%	Cultivators	%	Agricultural labourers	%	Agricultural labourers	%	Workers in household industry	%	Other workers	%
Assam	Male	8,541,560	71.35	3,099,763	76.32	1,129,210	61.19	1,506,918	45.91	205,744	41.88	4,106,843	73.71
	Female	3,428,130	28.64	961,864	23.68	716,136	38.81	1,775,649	54.09	285,577	58.12	1,464,553	26.29
	Total	11,969,690	100	4,061,627	100	1,845,346	100	3,282,567	100	491,321	100	5,571,396	100
Sonitpur	Male	537,195	69.71	191,486	76.85	62,681	54.57	96,102	45.27	12,997	50.53	270,031	70.89
	Female	233,411	30.29	57,637	23.14	52,184	45.43	116,179	54.73	12,722	49.47	110,868	29.11
	Total	770,606	100	249,123	100	114,865	100	212,281	100	25,719	100	380,899	100

Source: Population census 2011

Table-3.6 shows that in Assam, the number of female workers- the marginal workers and workers in household industry are less than the male workers. In Sonitpur district, the number female workers are less in case of total workers, cultivators, workers in household industry except in case of agricultural labourers.

3.3 Tourist Places of Sonitpur district

Enriched with cultural heritage, Sonitpur is land bliss with natural beauty, ancient monuments. It serves as an important tourist destination with beautiful parks, temples, number of national parks, and ancient monuments. The main tourist spots are:

Chitrlekha Udyan (Cole Park): The word, “Udyan” means garden, and of course, it has a mythological reference as the name of Chitrlekha has been embedded here. Chitrlekha Udyan is one of the most beautiful places in Tezpur. Established in 1906, by a British Deputy Commissioner, Mr. Cole, this park has two massive ornamented stone pillars, and other sculptural remnants.

Agnigarh: This hillock on the bank of river Brahmaputra is the site of legendary romance of princess Usha (the only daughter of king Bana) and Aniruddha, grandson of lord Krishna. On this hillock, which was surrounded by fire, Usha was kept hostile. Hence, the name came to be known as Agnigarh.

Mahabhairab temple: The ancient temple of Mahabhairab is situated in the northern side of Tezpur town. It is believed that the temple has been established by king Bana with a Shiva lingam. Earlier, this temple was made up of stones, but the present one is built of concrete.

Bhairabi temple: This temple is situated on a small hillock on the bank of river Brahmaputra on the eastern side of Tezpur. As per mythology, princess Usha, the daughter of king Banasura, used to offer puja to the Goddess Bhairabi, regularly. This is the significance of this temple.

Rudrapada Temple: The significance of this temple lies in the belief that Rudra (Lord Shiva) had left foot (pada) on a stone found in the temple. It is believed that Lord Shiva showed his real life to king Bana here.

Haleswar: The place is situated 10 kilometres from to the north of Tezpur, besides Tezpur-Balipara main road. A cultivator (Hallowa) found a linga while he was ploughing in the field. Initially, a temple was constructed on this linga. Later on, Ahom king Rudra Singha built the temple in 1705 AD.

Da Parbatia: Ruins of the door frame of Da Parbatia temple is one of the finest and oldest specimens of sculptural art that is a few kilometres away from Tezpur is perhaps in Assam. Early Gupta School of Sculpture's carving is the characteristic of this monument. Brahmaputra River provides breathe taking view of the mighty river and Tezpur town.

Hazara Pukhuri: It is a large tank that was excavated in the early ninth century. It is named after Harjjar Varma in Tezpur.

Bamuni Hill: The ruins of Bamuni Hills are well-known for their archetypal artistic calibre. The sculptural remains trace back to the ninth and tenth century AD.

Bhomoraguri: It is a gargantuan stone inscription that was made by Ahom General Kali Bhomora Barphukan, who planned to construct a bridge at the site, and now stands completed. This bridge is of 3.015 kilometres in length, and is named after the great Ahom general. It connects Silghat of Nagaon district with Tezpur.

3.4 Characteristics of Women Entrepreneurs in Sonitpur district

The study of socio-economic side of women entrepreneurs is quite essential in drawing meaningful conclusions for the entrepreneurial activities, and the enterprises which are run and controlled by women entrepreneurs. The demographic and personal features determine how several activities related to entrepreneurship among women lead to their entrepreneurial development in their respective region. These

characteristics are a composition of variables like age, occupation, caste, family size and structure, marital status, educational standards, involvement and work experience, their family income from entrepreneurial and allied activities, etc. According to Weber (1930) a particular socio-economic condition produces entrepreneurs in which they live and the personality of an entrepreneur is shaped by the society. Sharma, 1975 (K.L. Sharma (1975,)) reveals that for one's entry into entrepreneurship socio-economic background matters a lot.

The social and economic profile of women entrepreneur can be discussed from two points of view: one is social position, and another is economical position. The social position generally depends on the age group - age at the time of starting with the enterprise, marital status, family background, number of family members, number of dependent family members, community and the religion of women entrepreneurs. On other hand, economical position of women entrepreneurs depends on the forms of business, origin of business, nature of ownership of business, investment in the business, management of business, size of workers or employment generation, etc.

3.4.1: Social position of women entrepreneurs:

- Age group of women entrepreneurs

There is a strong relationship between age and entrepreneurial behaviour. Age works as a key deciding factor in the implementation of various entrepreneurial activities. According to (Welmilla, Weerakkody, & Ediriweera, 2011), skills of people improve with the age because they learn to manage time effectively. (Paul Davidson Reynolds & White, 1997) , states that person's age is considered as a significant demographic characteristic in understanding his or her entrepreneurial behaviours and intentions. Study conducted by (Levesque & Minniti, 2006) and

(Paul Davidson Reynolds & White, 1997), states that most active entrepreneurship are over the age of twenty-five years. (Tanveer, Akbar, Gill, & Ahmed, 2013), reveals that there is a less chance to become an entrepreneur as the age increases. Repose et al. (2008) stated that the entrepreneurs get more opportunities as their age increases, but

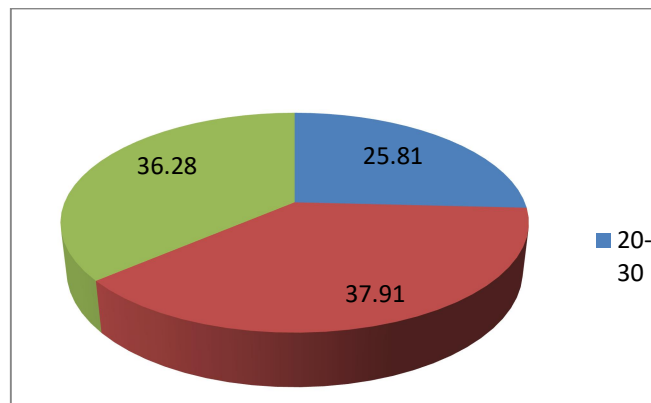
their inclination towards becoming an entrepreneur decline as they become old. Thus, there are different opinions on the effect of age on individual's choice of self-employment. An attempt has been made to reconnoitre the relationship between age and entrepreneurial behaviour of women entrepreneurs in the Sonitpur district of Assam.

Table- 3.7 Age-wise classification of respondents at the time of starting entrepreneurial activities

Age group	Urban		Rural		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
20-30	43	19.55	68	32.38	111	25.81
30-40	91	41.36	72	34.29	163	37.91
Above 40	86	39.09	70	33.33	156	36.28
Total	220	100	210	100	430	100

Source: Primary data

Figure-3.1 Percentage distribution of age at the time of starting entrepreneurial activity of respondents



Interpretation:

From the above table 3.7 and figure-3.1, the age of starting enterprises of respondents was more in the age group belonging to 30-40 years. This is because of their maturity; they were ready to take responsibility to run entrepreneurial activities. Since at this

age, after marriage, their financial responsibilities increase, they are forced to become money earner (second earner) of the family. Moreover, at this age women were free from child rearing and bearing. But in rural areas, the starting age group 20-30 years was more than urban area due to poverty. They were forced to take responsibilities of a business to earn money to meet their day-to-day expenditures.

- **Educational level of women entrepreneurs**

Education is considered as one of the most effective tools to bring about socio-economic change in any society. The importance of education is more significant in case of backward areas and communities like Sonitpur district of Assam. Lack of awareness of recent developments in government policies and programmes, creates various problems in setting up and running of business enterprises. Field study reveals that several women entrepreneurs lack adequate knowledge about the policies undertaken by the government in this segment. Most of the respondents did not have knowledge of basic accounting. They maintained their accounts by their own system of maintaining records which may be sufficient to run a small business from their point of view but not possible for medium size enterprises.

According to (Hisrich & Brush, 1986), educational level of entrepreneurs has a great importance in the process, especially, in forecasting the financial success of a start-up/new business. (Wiersema & Bantel, 1992), state that educational level reflects an individual's cognitive abilities and skill sets.

There are some studies by Praag and Orphne (1995), which establish a neutral impact of education on becoming self-employed.

(Ranasinghe, 1996) stated that a maximum number of successful entrepreneurs haven't undergone or pursued higher education or formal courses in entrepreneurship. There are also a few studies that indicate a contradicting outcome that for the people who have pursued or are pursuing higher education might increase their chances for employment in the paid employment system. This is ultimately reducing the

likelihood of self-employment (Johansson, 2000). According to (Le, 1999), education uplifts the management skills of person; thus, influencing the choice of entrepreneurship options. Therefore, it is not always true that educated individuals will become successfully self-employed.

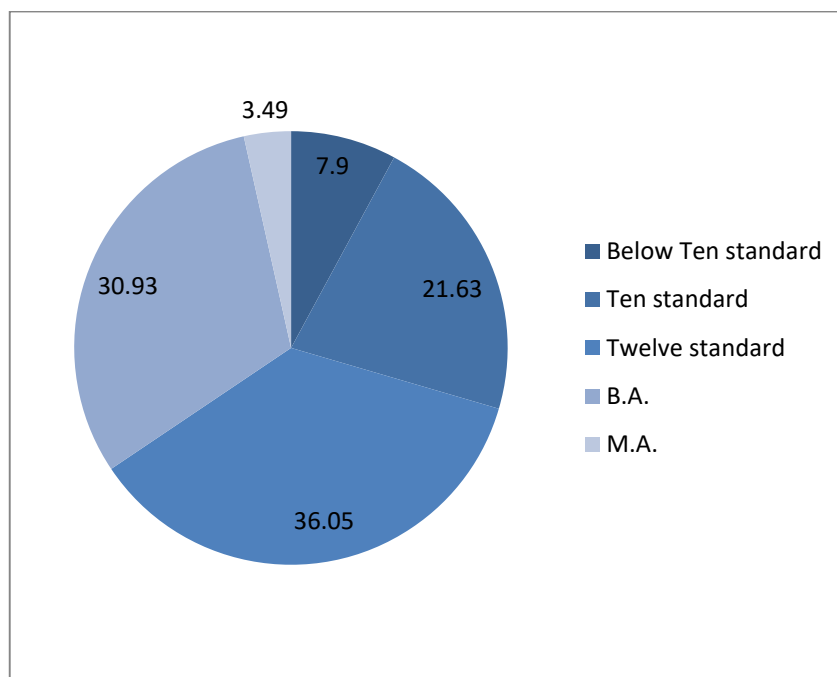
(M. Praag, van Witteloostuijn, & van der Sluis, 2009) studied the effects of education on the relative performance of entrepreneurs and employees. This study reveals that the returns to education are higher for the entrepreneurs than for the employees. Due to higher levels of personal control, entrepreneurship gives better opportunities to maximize the use of and return from one's education. The higher returns to education for the entrepreneurs are only because of a few challenges that are related to organizational set up faced by them. With reference to the above context, the present study assesses women entrepreneurs' level of education in different study areas.

Table – 3.8 Classification of respondents based on educational levels

Level of education	Urban		Rural		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Below Tenth standard	10	4.54	24	11.43	34	7.90
Tenth standard	28	12.73	65	30.95	93	21.63
Twelve standards	80	36.36	75	35.71	115	36.05
B.A.	87	39.55	46	21.90	133	30.93
M.A.	15	6.82	Nil	00	15	3.49
Total	220	100	210	100	430	100

Source: Primary data

Figure – 3.2 Percentage distribution of educational level of respondents



Interpretation:

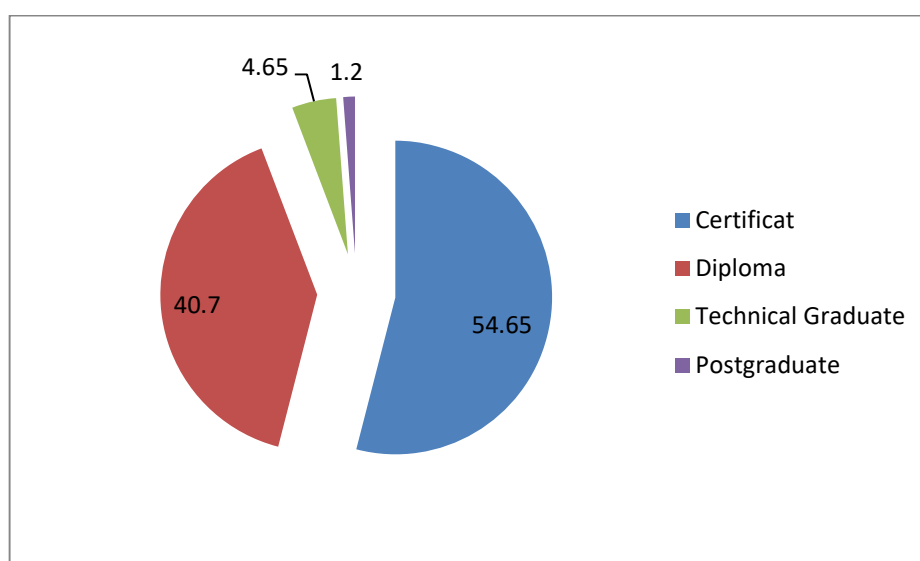
Table – 3.8 and figure – 3.2 reveal that most of the respondents were twelve standards (36.05%). In urban area, the number of respondents having graduate were more than rural areas. Master degree holder was nil in rural area and it was lowest in urban area (6.82%). The number of respondent not passing High School education was found few both in rural and urban areas. On the other hand, the number respondents passing twelve standards were more both in urban and rural areas but comparatively it was more in urban areas than in rural areas. In rural areas, majority of respondents could not continue their study because they were forced to work to support their family expenses and leave their studied to overcome their poverty. Investigation revealed that, due to this, most of the rural respondents have not enough knowledge about the latest facilities given by government.

Table – 3.9 Classification of respondent based on technical education

Technical education	Urban		Rural		Total	
	Nos.	%	Nos.	%	Nos.	%
Certificate	130	59.09	125	59.52	235	54.65
Diploma	90	40.91	85	40.48	175	40.70
Technical Graduate	0	0	Nil	00	20	4.65
Postgraduate	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	0
Total	220	100	210	100	430	100

Source: Primary data

Figure – 3.3 Percentage distribution of technical education of respondents



Source: Primary data

Interpretation:

According to the above table – 3.9 and figure – 3.3, the number of respondents having minimum technical education, i.e., certificate course, was more (54.65 percent). In Sonitpur district, respondents having post graduate or holding higher professional

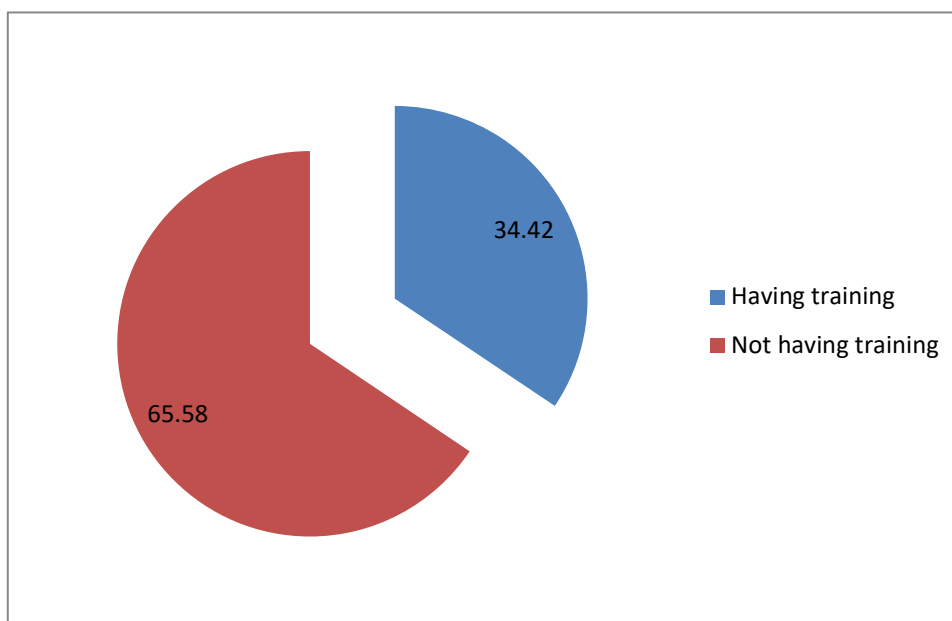
qualification, was almost nil. Since education opens many ventures for highly qualified women in various fields, steps should take by government to explore their talents.

Table – 3.10 Classification of respondents based on status of training

Status of training	Urban		Rural		Total	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Having training	90	40.91	58	27.62	148	34.42
Not having training	130	59.09	152	72.38	282	65.58
Total	220	100	210	100	430	100

Source: Primary data

Figure – 3.4 Percentage distributions of respondents based on Status of training



Source: Primary data

Interpretation:

From the above table –3.10 and figure –3.4, it came to know that a large section of respondents (65.58 percent) has no training in both rural (72 percent) and urban (59.09

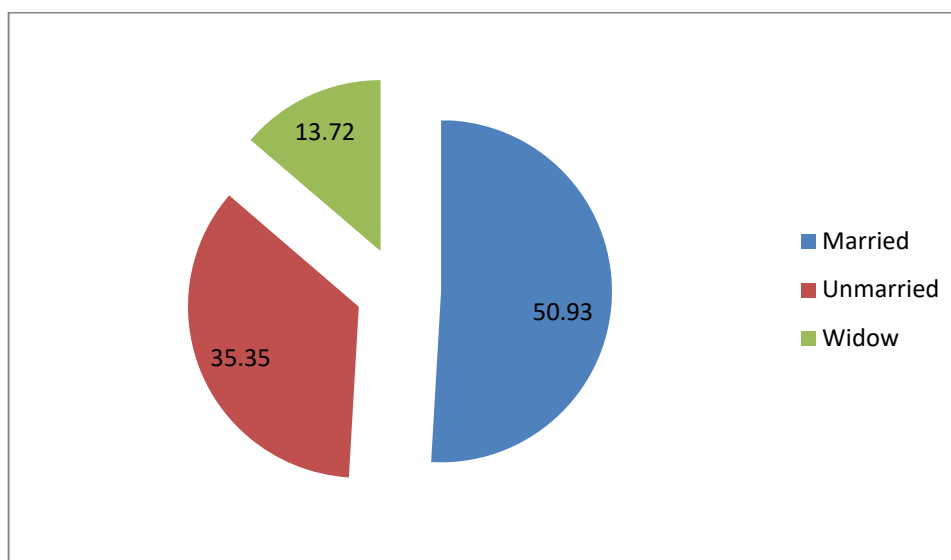
percent) areas. Due to lack of proper training, most of the respondents did not know how to manage and run a venture.

Table – 3.11 Classification of respondents based on marital Status

Marital status	Urban		Rural		Total	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Married	119	54.09	100	47.62	219	50.93
Unmarried	67	30.45	85	40.48	152	35.35
Widow	34	15.45	25	11.90	59	13.72
Total	220	100	210	100	430	100

Source: Primary data

Figure – 3.5 Percentage distribution of marital status of women entrepreneurs



Source: Primary data

Interpretation:

Table –3.11 and figure-3.5 show that majority of respondents were married in the study areas (50.93 percent). Study revealed that married women were able to maintain a balance between business and family life. The married respondents were more both in rural and urban areas mainly because their family income was insufficient to meet

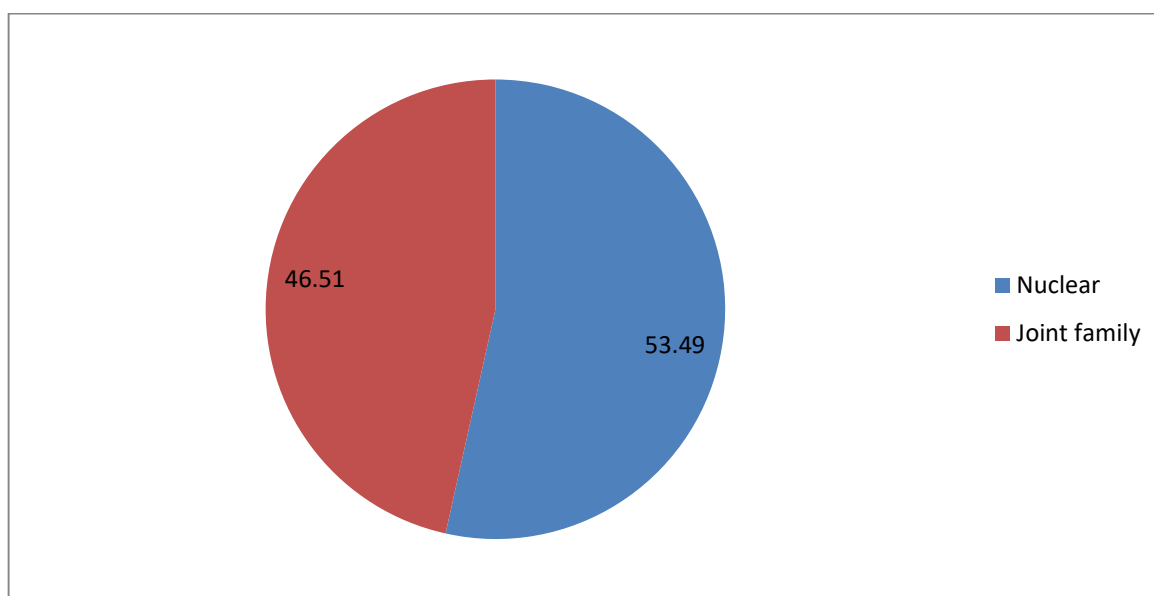
the rising day to day cost. Therefore, the married women were compelled to start their business. Unmarried respondents were more in rural areas (40.48 percent) than urban areas (30.45 percent). Due to lack of job opportunities in public and private sectors, they forced to start entrepreneurial activities for self-employment. At the same time, widow / separated (13.72percent) were in business activities to support themselves and their children or elders. Generally, the factors affecting marital status of respondents are mainly family support, type of enterprises run by them, and the time spent on their business.

Table – 3.12 Classification of respondents based on family structure

Family structure	Urban		Rural		Total	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Nuclear	143	65	87	41.43	230	53.49
Joint family	77	35	123	58.57	200	46.51
Total	220	100	210	100	430	100

Source: Primary data

Figure – 3.6 Percentage distribution of family structure of respondents



Source: Primary data

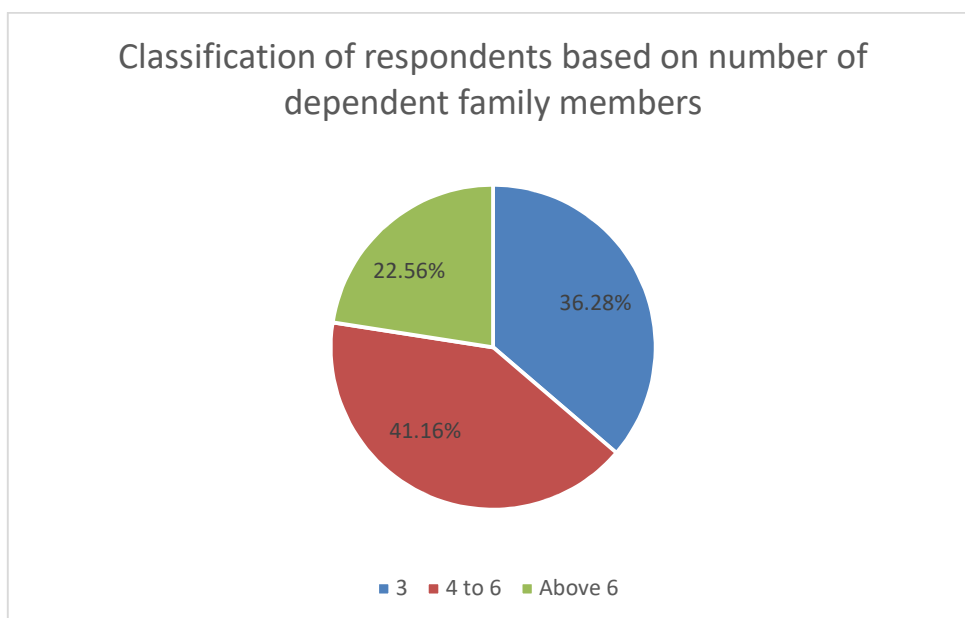
Interpretation: Table – 3.12 and figure – 3.6 shows that respondents in nuclear family set-up are more (53.49 percent). In urban areas it was more (62.17 percent) than in rural areas (37.83 percent). On the other hand, respondents in the joint family set are more (61.5 percent) in rural areas, than in urban areas (38.5 percent).

Table – 3.13 Classification of respondents based on number of dependent family members

Dependents	Urban		Rural		Total	
	Nos.	%	Nos.	%	Nos.	%
3	116	52.73	40	19.05	156	36.28
4-6	84	38.18	93	44.28	177	41.16
Above 6	20	9.09	77	37.62	97	22.56
Total	220	100	210	100	430	100

Source: Primary data

Figure- 3.7 Percentage distribution of respondents based on number of dependent family members



Source: Primary data

Interpretation:

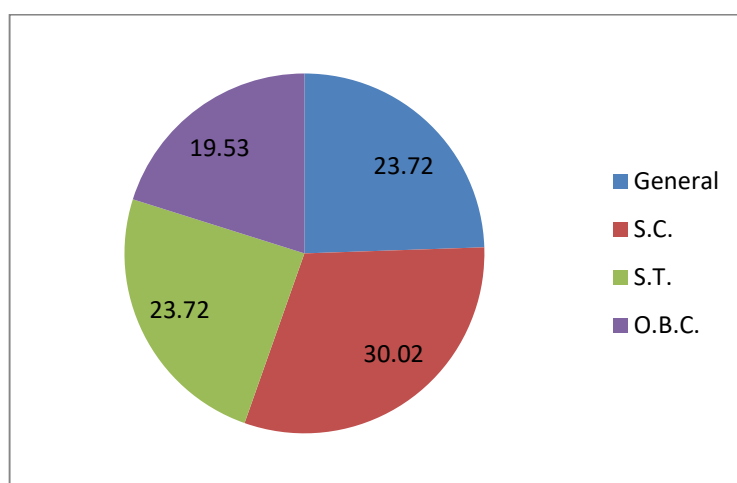
Table – 3.13 and figure -3.7 reveal that number of dependent family members (from 4 to 6 and above 6) is less in urban areas than in rural areas. As per the structure of the joint family system and lack of education, the number of dependent family members above 6 is more in the rural areas (37.62 percent) than in the urban areas (9.09 percent).

Table – 3.14 Caste-wise classification of respondents

Category	Urban		Rural		Total	
	Nos.	%	Nos.	%	Nos.	%
General	60	27.27	42	20	102	23.72
S.C.	64	29.09	78	37.14	142	33.02
S.T.	50	22.73	52	24.76	102	23.72
O.B.C.	46	20.91	38	18.09	84	19.53
Total	220	100	210	100	430	100

Source: Primary data

Figure – 3.8 Cast-wise percentage distribution of respondents



Source: Primary data

Interpretation:

Above table– 3.14 and figure-3.8 show that the respondents belonging to the SC community is more (33.02 percent), both in the urban and rural areas. Due to poverty, upbringing of their children, and lack of education women were compelled to do entrepreneurial activities followed by the categories ST and General (23.72 percent each), and OBC by 19.53 percent. In case of general caste, the job opportunities are less than other caste. So, they are compelled to do entrepreneurial activities to help their families and also to raise their standard of living.

3.4.2: Economical position of women entrepreneurs:

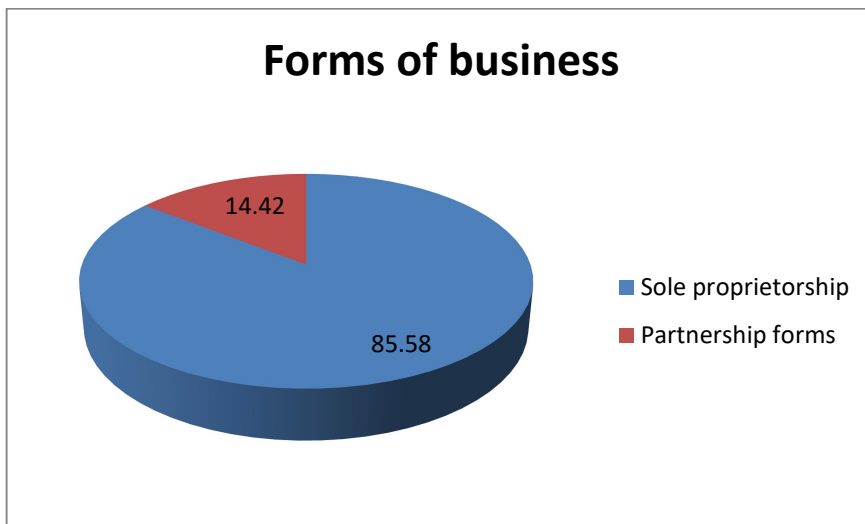
The important parameters to understand the economic conditions women entrepreneurs are - forms of business, origin of business, nature of ownership of business, investment in the business, management of business, size of workers or employment generation, etc.

Table – 3.15 Classification of respondents based on forms of entrepreneurial activities

Forms of business	Urban		Rural		Total	
	Nos.	%	Nos.	%	Nos.	%
Sole proprietorship	190	86.36	178	84.76	368	85.58
Partnership forms	30	13.64	32	15.24	62	14.42
Total	220	100	210	100	430	100

Source: Primary data

Figure- 3.9 Percentage distribution of respondents based on forms of entrepreneurial activities



Source: Primary data

Interpretation:

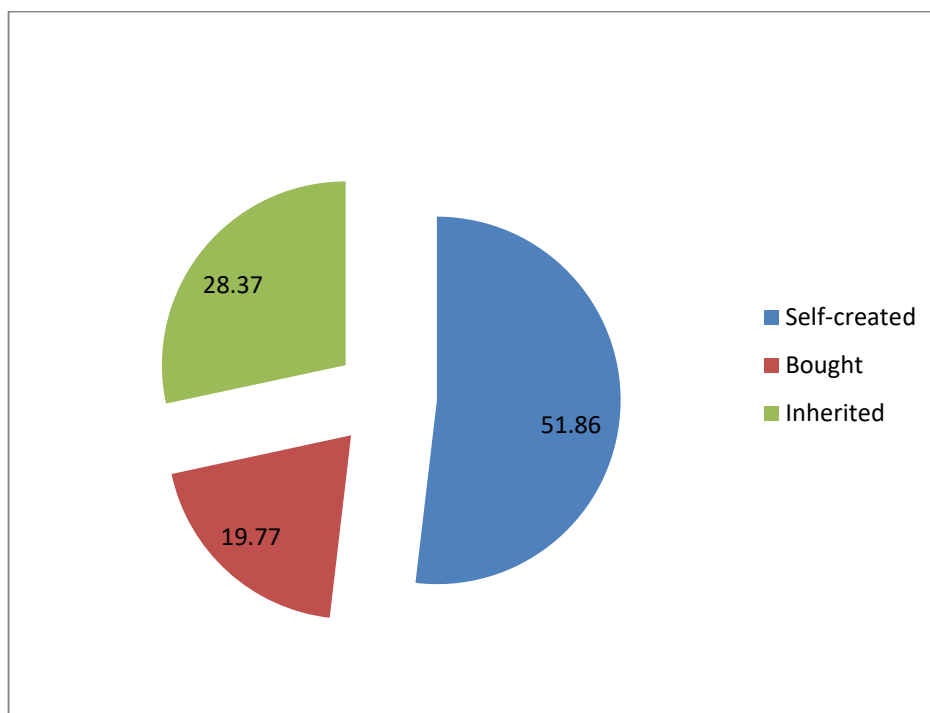
Above table –3.15 and figure-3.9 show that most of the respondents (85.58 percent) were sole proprietors. In urban areas it was 86.36 percent whereas in the rural areas it was 84.76 percent. Partnership system of business activities was 14.42 percent. It was 13.64 percents in the urban areas and in rural areas 15. 24 percent.

Table – 3.16 Classification of respondents based on origin of business

Sl. No	Nature of women entrepreneur	Urban		Rural		Total	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1	Self-created	123	55.91	100	47.62	223	51.86
2	Bought	40	18.18	45	21.43	85	19.77
3	Inherited	57	25.91	65	30.95	122	28.37
4	Total	220	100	210	100	430	100

Source: Primary data.

Figure – 3.10 Percentage distribution of respondents based on origin of busine



Source: Primary data

Interpretation:

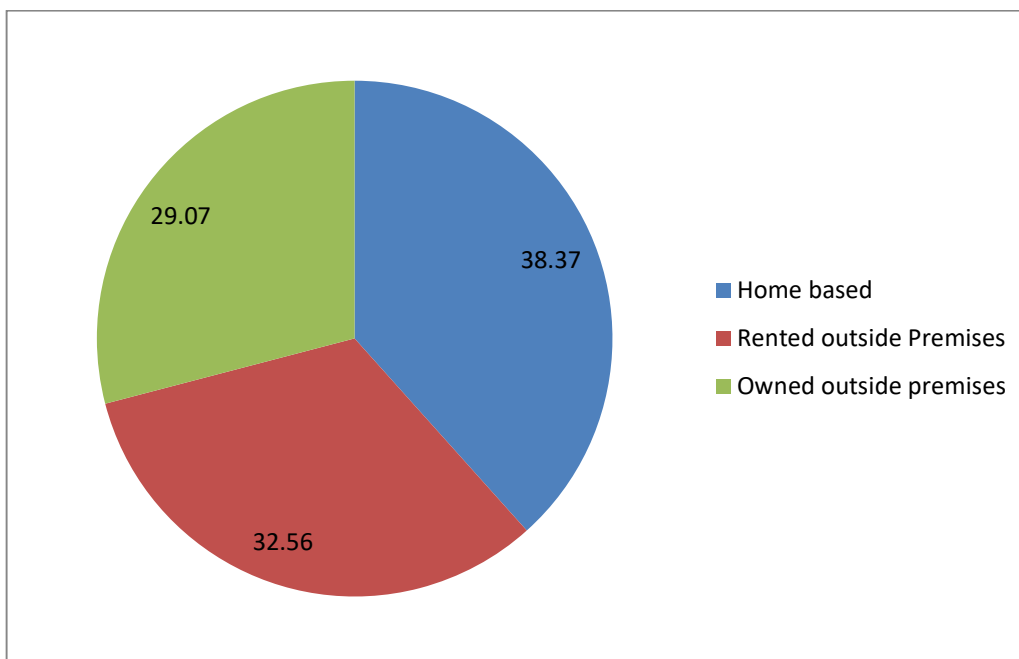
Table – 3.16 and figure-3.10 show the origin of business of women entrepreneurs that self-created respondents were more (51.86 percent) both in urban and rural areas followed by inherited, (28.37 percent) and bought (19.77) respectively. During field study it came to know that first generation respondents (self-created) were interested to do entrepreneurial activities on non-traditional items than on traditional items.

Table – 3.17 Classification of respondents based on location of the enterprise

Business premises	Urban		Rural		Total	
	Nos.	%	Nos.	%	Nos.	%
Home based	78	35.45	87	41.43	165	38.37
Rented outside Premises	80	36.36	60	28.57	140	32.56
Owned outside premises	62	28.18	63	30	125	29.07
Total	220	100	210	100	430	100

Source: Primary data

Figure – 3.11 Percentage distribution of respondents based on location of enterprise



Source: Primary data

Interpretation:

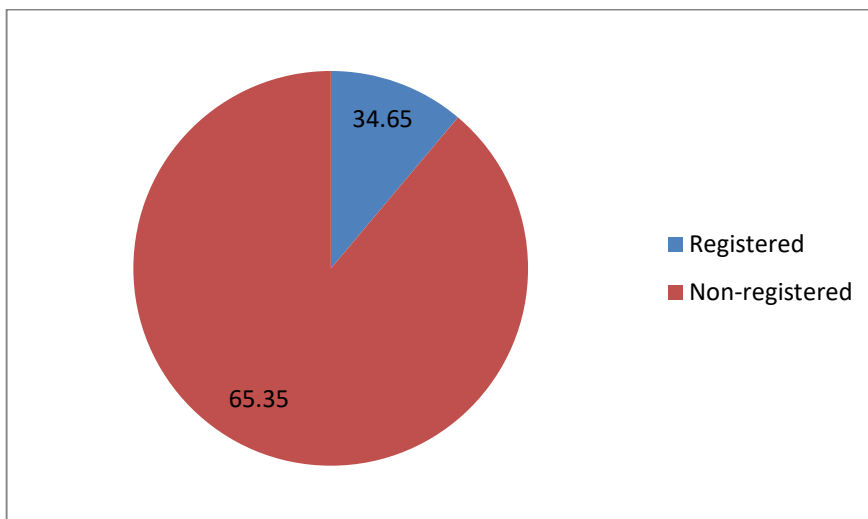
The above table –3.17 and figure-3.11 reveal that most of the respondents having enterprises are in their own residences. Number of such enterprises (38.37 percent) were more in rural (41.43 percent) areas. Primarily, it was intended to operate their enterprises economically and also to maintain balance between business and household activities. Moreover, these respondents were able to get the family support in their needy times. During investigation, it came to know that operating enterprises from home were not possible to expand the markets of their products which adversely affected the growth of their business. Rented outside premise enterprises or nearby to the daily bazaar, they have potential to earn more. However, such enterprises (32.56 percent) in the study areas particularly in urban areas (36.36 percent) were more than rural areas (28.57 percent) because of paucity of funds. Due to higher cost of rented room, most of the respondents were not able to arrange suitable premises in roadside or outside premises. Respondents in the urban areas earned more than rural areas due to facilities available like markets of their products, easy purchase of raw materials, education (literacy rate of women in urban area is more than rural area) and liberal social attitude towards the respondents.

Table – 3.18 Classification of respondents based on legal structures of enterprises

Legal structure	Urban		Rural		Total	
	Nos.	%	Nos.	%	Nos.	%
Registered	129	58.64	20	9.52	149	34.65
Non-registered	91	41.36	190	90.48	281	65.35
Total	220	100	210	100	430	100

Source: Primary data

Figure – 3.12 Percentage distribution of respondents based on legal structure of enterprises



Source: Primary data

Interpretation:

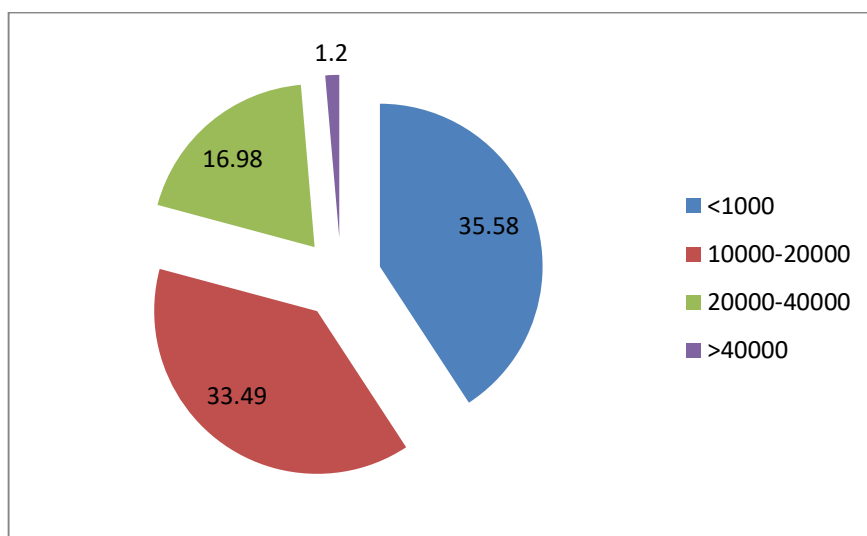
Table – 3.18 and figure-3.12 reveal that number of registered respondents is lower than non-registered respondents. The above table also shows that registered respondents were more in urban areas (58.64 percent) than in rural areas (9.52 percent). Rural respondents did not give so much importance on registration of their enterprises. Non-registered respondents were more in rural area (90.48 percent) than in urban area (41.36 percent). They have lack of knowledge about the government's policies and programs. During 2013-14 to 2017-18, out of 968 registered entrepreneurs the total respondents were only 430 (44 percent).

Table- 3.19 Classification of respondents based on monthly capital investment on busines

Monthly capital Investment	Urban	%	Rural	%	Total	%
<10000	25	11.36	128	60.95	153	35.58
10000-20000	62	28.18	82	39.05	144	33.49
20000-40000	73	33.18	00	00	73	16.98
>40000	60	27.27	00	00	60	13.95
Total	220	100	210	100	430	100

Source: Primary data

Figure 3.13 Percentage distribution of respondents based on monthly capital investment



Source: Primary data

Interpretation:

Above table 3.19 and figure 3.13 show the monthly capital investment of women entrepreneurs of both rural and urban areas. Capital investment is more in urban area

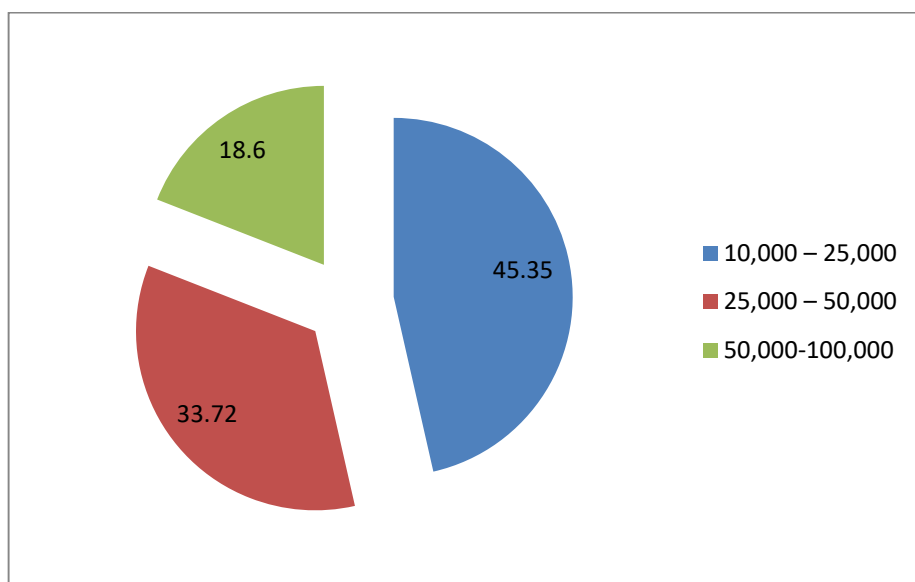
than in rural area. Higher capital investment exists only in urban area i.e., Rs.20000 - Rs. 40000 and above Rs. 40000. In rural area there is lower capital investment <10000 and Rs. 10000-Rs. 20000. This is mainly due to the low economic condition of the respondents.

Table 3.20 Classification of respondents based on monthly income

Monthly income	Urban		Rural		Total	
	Nos.	%	Nos.	%	Nos.	%
10,000 – 25,000	77	35	118	56.19	195	45.35
25,000 – 50,000	90	40.90	55	26.19	145	33.72
50,000-100,000	43	19.55	37	17.61	80	18.60
Above 1, 00,000	10	4.55	00	0	10	2.32
Total	220	100	210	100	430	100

Source: Primary data

Figure – 3.14 Percentage distribution of respondents based on monthly income



Source: Primary data

Interpretation:

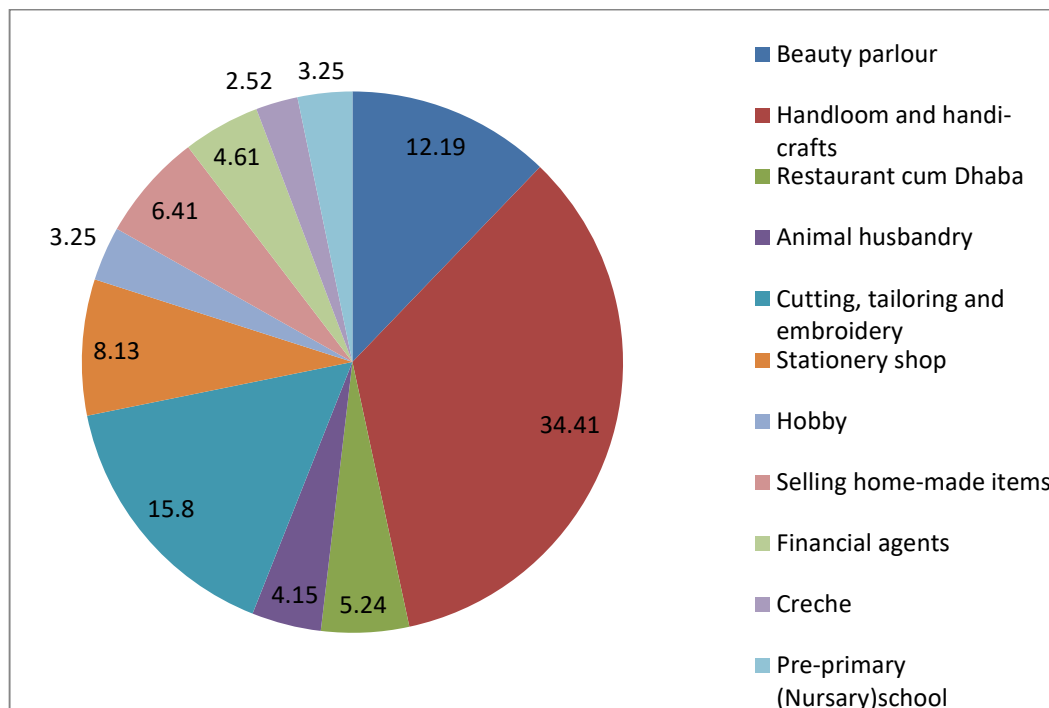
Income is an important parameter to understand the economic condition of respondents. Different types of enterprises were set up by different entrepreneurs in different fields in the study area. Table – 3.21 and figure-3.14 show that the monthly income between Rs. 10,000 – 25,000 is highest in rural area 56.19 percent, and in urban area it is 35 percent. Large number of respondents earned between the ranges of Rs. 25,000 to Rs. 50,000 in urban area (40.90 percent). Above Rs. 1, 00,000 was earned only by 4.55 percent in urban area. In rural area, that category was not found.

Table – 3.21 Classification of respondents based on size of workers or employment generation

Enterprises	Urban	%	Rural	%	Total	%
Beauty parlour	50	22.73	35	16.67	85	19.77
Handloom and handi-crafts	45	20.45	52	24.76	97	22.55
Restaurant cum Dhaba	10	8.18	09	4.28	19	4.42
Animal husbandry	10	4.54	26	12.38	36	8.37
Cutting, tailoring and embroidery	37	16.82	32	15.24	69	16.05
Stationery shop	20	9.09	15	7.14	35	8.14
Hobby (dance, art, music, yoga) teaching	9	4.09	7	0	16	3.72
Selling home-made items (pickle, papad, jam, jelly, laddu, pie)	12	5.45	23	10.95	35	8.14
Financial agents	14	6.36	9	4.28	23	5.35
Creche	07	3.18	0	00	07	1.63
Pre-primary (Nursery)school	06	2.73	02	0.95	08	1.86
Total	220	100	210	100	430	100

Source: Primary data

Figure – 3.15 Percentage distributions of respondents based on employment generation



Source: Primary data

Interpretation:

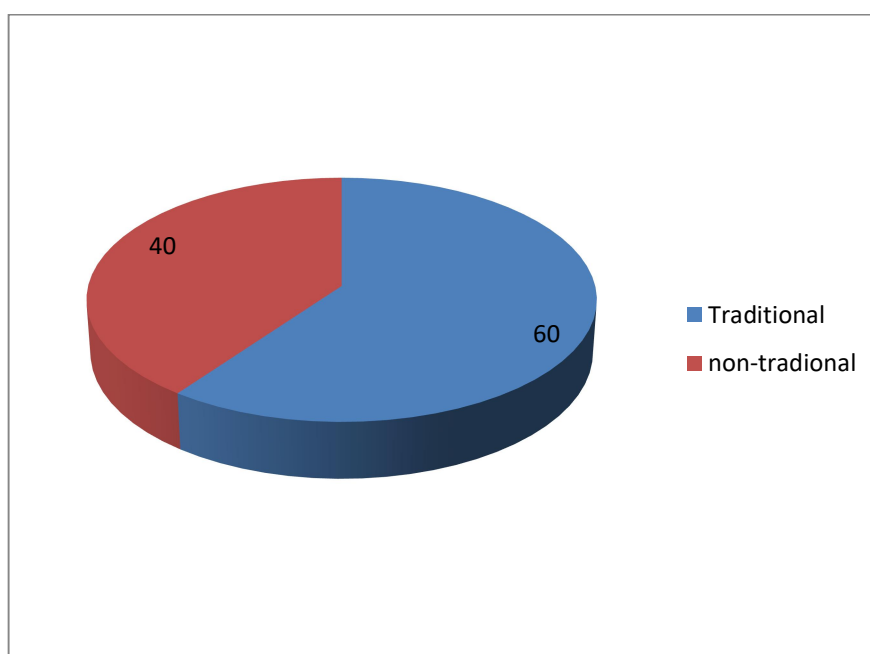
The above table 3.21 and figure-3.15 reveal that employment generation in different segments of businesses run by respondents. Highest employment generation was in handloom and handicraft sector followed by cutting, tailoring and embroidery, beauty parlour, stationery shop, selling home-made items (pickle, papad, jam, jelly, laddu, pie), restaurant cum dhaba, financial agents, animal husbandry, pre-primary (Nursery) school and crèche.

Table – 3.2 Classification of respondents based on specialisation of products (Traditional items / non-traditional items)

S.N.	Items	Urban		Rural		Total	
		Nos.	%	Nos.	%	Nos.	%
1	Traditional items	98	44.55	160	76.19	258	60
2	Non-traditional items	122	55.45	50	23.81	172	40
3	Total	220	100	210	100	430	100

Source: Field study

Figure –3.16 Percentage distribution of specialisation of products (traditional/non-traditional)



Source: primary data

Interpretation:

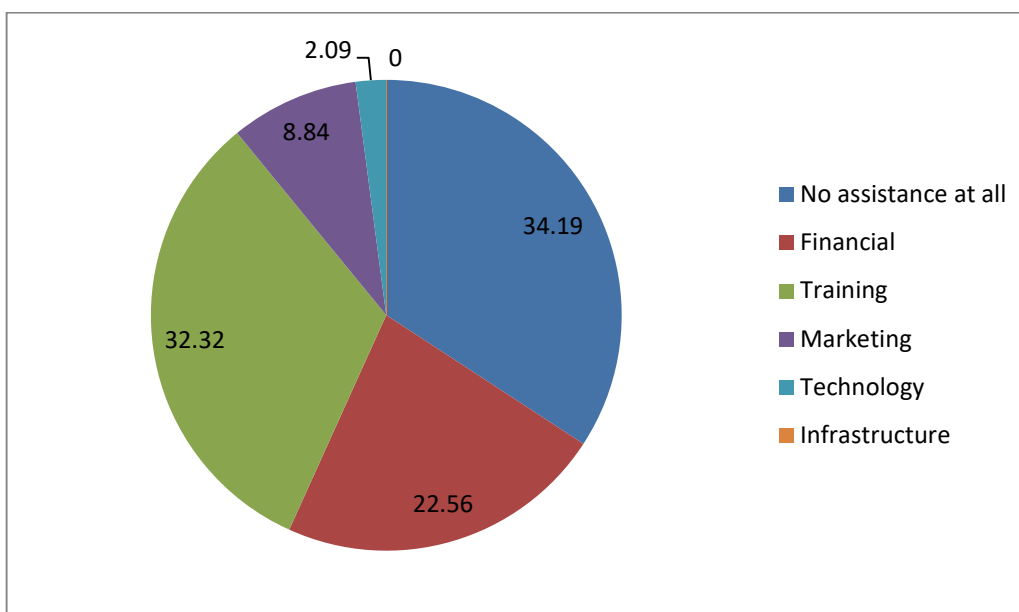
Table – 3.22 and fig- 3.16 shows the interest of respondents on traditional items was more in rural area than urban areas. The interest of respondents on traditional items (60 percent) was more in rural area than urban areas (40 percent). Rural respondents (76.19 percent) were interested mainly on traditional items like weaving, tailoring, and embroidery, pickle, jam-jelly making etc. Urban respondents (55.45 percent), on the other hand, was interested on non-traditional items. They were also interested on traditional items in modern looks (e.g., beauty parlour, boutiques, restaurant, cafe, crèche, developing hobby – yoga, music, singing, art etc.

Table - 3.23 Classification of respondents based on assistance received from Government

Sl No	Variables	Urban		Rural		Total	
		No. of responders	%	No. of respondent	%	Nos.	%
1	Financial	78	35.45	19	9.04	97	22.56
2	Infrastructure	0	0	0	0	00	00
3	Training	86	39.09	53	25.24	139	32.32
4	Marketing	30	13.64	08	3.81	38	8.84
5	Technology	09	4.0	0	0	09	2.09
6	No assistance at all	17	7.72	130	61.90	147	34.19
	Total	220	100	21	100	430	100

Source: Primary data

Figure – 3.17 Percentage distributions of respondents based on assistance received from government



Source: Primary data

Interpretation:

Table – 3.23 and figure- 3.17 that 33.32 respondents have got training facilities. Financial assistance was got by 22.56 percent respondents. But no one can get infrastructural facilities. Marketing and technological facilities have got only by 8.84 and 2.09 respectively which were negligible. Number of respondents that did not get any assistance was 34.19 percent

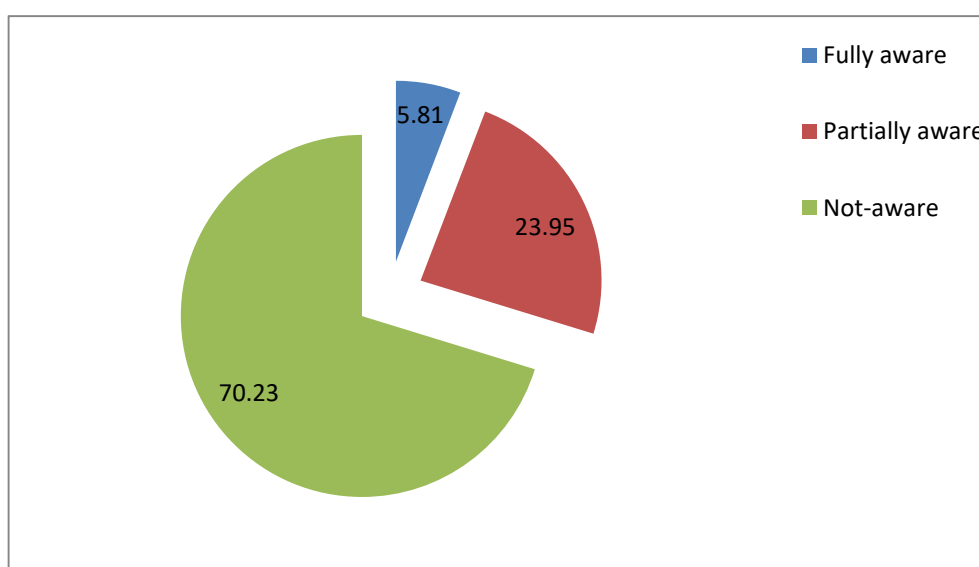
Table – 3.24 Classification of respondents based on awareness about government policies and schemes

Level of awareness	Urban		Rural		Total	
	No. of units	%	No. of units	%	No. of units	%
Fully aware	21	9.54	04	1.90	25	5.81

Partially aware	72	32.73	31	14.76	103	23.95
Not aware	127	57.73	175	83.33	302	70.23
Total	220	100	210	100	430	100

Source: Primary data

Figure – 3.18 Percentage distribution of respondents based on awareness about government policies



Source: Primary data

Interpretation:

The table -3.24 and figure- 3.18 reveal that large sections of the respondents (70.23 percentage) in both urban (57.73 percent) and rural (83.33 percentage) areas have lack of awareness (nil or low) about the government policies and programmes. During field study, especially, in the rural areas, it was known that women entrepreneurs were not aware of the incentives meant for them. According to them, incentives only existed in paper and for availing these incentives were very complicated. The number respondent that fully aware about government policies were only 5.81 percent

followed by partially aware 23.95 percent. Lack of awareness is primarily due to the lack of publicity from government's side and also lack of education.

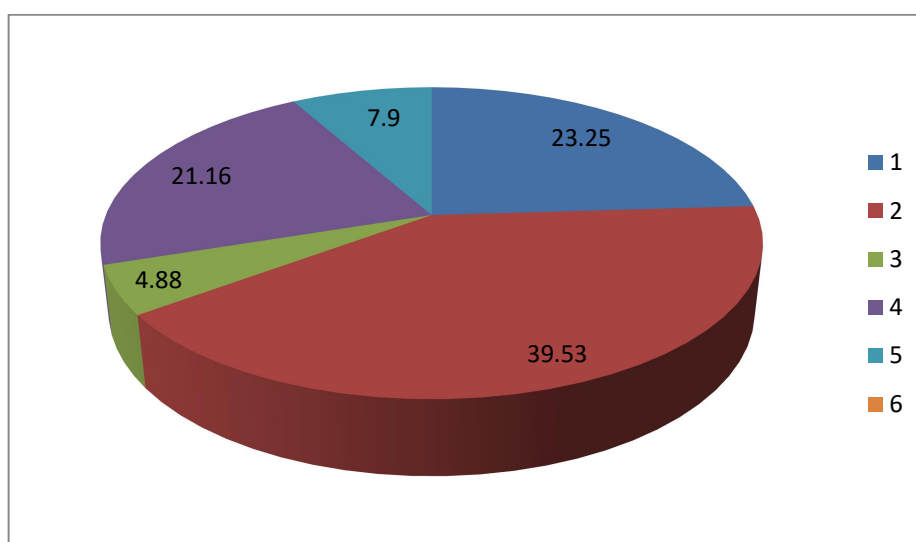
Table – 3.25 Major broad categories of Women run enterprises in Sonitpur

Sl. No	Category name	Activities included	Urban		Rural		Total	
			No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
1	Beauty parlour	Beauty parlour, selling of beauty products of Lotus, Lakme, Oriflame, Ponds, etc.	70	31.82	30	14.29	100	23.25
2	Handloom & handicraft	Boutiques, tailoring & stitching, embroidery, exhibitions of suits, <i>mekhela-chadar</i> , and sarees, toys, etc. (Traditional & non-traditional dress)	90	40.91 40.91	80	38.10 38.09	170 170	39.53 39.53
3	Educational	Tuitions, coaching in groups, hobby classes (dance, hobby, music, art,) training programs.	13	5.91	8	3.81	21	4.88
4	Trading	Gift items, Grocery items, poultry products, papads, pickles, spices (jeera, black pepper, etc.) and florists.	30	13.62	61	29.05	91	21.16

5	Restaurant & Dhaba	Tiffin centres, baking, tea/snacks stalls, Assamese cuisine.	09	4.09	25	11.90	34	7.90
6	Professional, financial and miscellaneous services	Health/yoga services, financial services/insurance agents/ fund advisors, etc.), crèches etc.	8	3.62	6	2.86	14	3.25
7	Total		220		210		430	

Source: Primary data

Figure – 3.19 Percentage distributions of major broad categories of Women run enterprises in Sonitpur



Source: Primary data

Interpretation:

The above table – 3.25 and figure- 3.19 reveal that most of the respondents (39.58 percent) in the study area were engaged in handloom and handicrafts. This is mainly due to comparatively low cost of production and can be run at home with less efficiency. Followed by beauty parlour, trading, restaurant & dhaba, educational and professionals, financial and miscellaneous services.

Table – 3.26 Classification of respondents based on factor motivating

	Factors	Urban		Rural		Total	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1	To earn money	70	31.82	73	34.76	143	33.25
2	To be independent	27	12.27	20	9.52	47	10.93
3	Unemployment	35	15.91	36	17.14	71	16.51
4	Responsibility due to death of near relatives	12	5.45	10	4.76	22	5.12
5	Special qualification attained for Running a business/enterprise	10	4.55	11	5.24	21	4.88
6	Business culture exists in the family.	10	4.55	10	4.76	20	4.65
7	Possessing innovative skills or aspiration and challenges for something new	10	4.55	10	4.76	20	4.65
8	Get better life than before	10	4.55	08	3.81	18	4.19
9	Social status	07	3.18	08	3.81	15	3.49
10	Being entrepreneur was a lifelong goal	08	3.64	06	2.86	14	3.25
11	To spend spare time	08	3.64	10	4.76	18	4.19
12	Use of idle funds	04	1.82	03	1.43	07	1.63
13	Availability of infrastructural facilities	04	1.82	02	0.95	06	1.39
14	Dissatisfaction with current jobs	05	2.27	03	1.43	08	1.86
15	Total	220	100	210	100		100

Source: Primary data

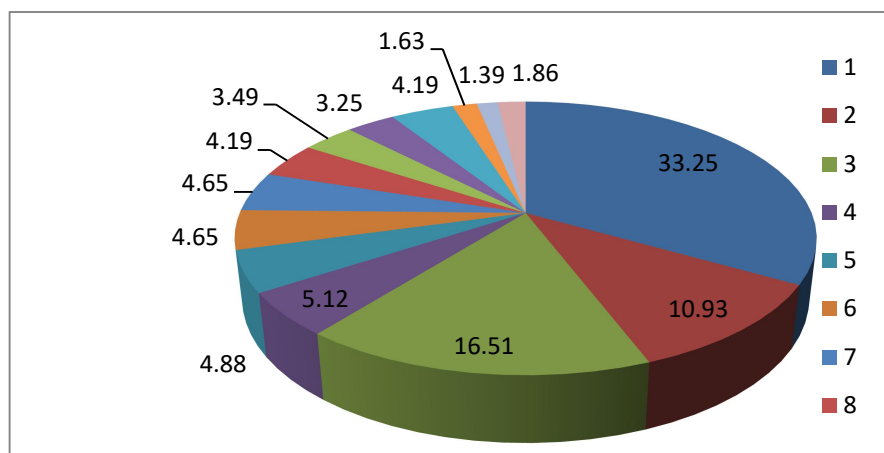
**Table 3.27 Classification of respondents based on factors motivating
[using Weighted Ranking Method]**

Sl. No.	Weighted particulars	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Total	Rank
1		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
2	To earn money	17	14	15	14	13	11	12	11	8	6		
		170	126	120	98	65	55	48	33	16	6	737	1
3	To be independent	18	16	10	11	9	9	10	8	10	6		
		180	144	80	77	54	45	40	24	20	6	673	3

4	Unemployment	16	15	14	15	11	10	7	10	6	7		2
		160	135	112	105	66	50	28	30	12	7	705	
5	Responsibility due to death of near relatives	15	10	14	9	10	8	11	7	5	6		4
		150	90	112	63	60	40	44	21	10	6	596	
6	Special qualification attained for running a business/enterprise	12	9	11	8	10	9	7	9	6	5		6
		120	81	88	56	60	45	28	27	12	5	522	
7	Business culture exists in the family	14	9	10	7	5	10	8	6	5	7		7
		140	81	80	49	30	50	32	18	10	7	497	
8	Possessing innovative skills or aspiration and challenges for something new	10	7	5	9	6	8	7	5	5	4		10
		100	63	40	63	36	40	28	15	10	1	396	
9	Get better life than before	13	10	11	9	10	11	8	6	7	5		5
		130	90	88	63	60	55	32	18	14	5	555	
10	Social status	11	10	9	7	8	10	7	5	6	4		8
		110	90	72	49	48	50	28	15	12	4	478	
11	Being entrepreneur was a lifelong goal	12	10	8	6	9	8	6	4	5	4		9
		120	90	64	42	54	40	24	12	10	4	460	
12	To spend spare time	10	7	9	7	6	7	5	3	4	2		2
		100	63	72	49	36	35	20	9	8	2	394	
13	Use of idle funds	9	7	5	6	4	6	3	4	2	2		11
		90	63	40	42	24	30	12	9	4	2	316	
14	Availability of infrastructural facilities	8	6	4	5	6	8	4	3	2	1		12
		80	54	32	35	36	40	16	9	4	1	307	
15	Dissatisfaction with current jobs	7	5	6	4	5	3	4	2	1	1		13
		70	45	48	28	30	15	16	6	2	1	261	

Source: Primary data

Figure-3.20 Percentage distribution of factors motivating women entrepreneur



Source: Primary data

Interpretation:

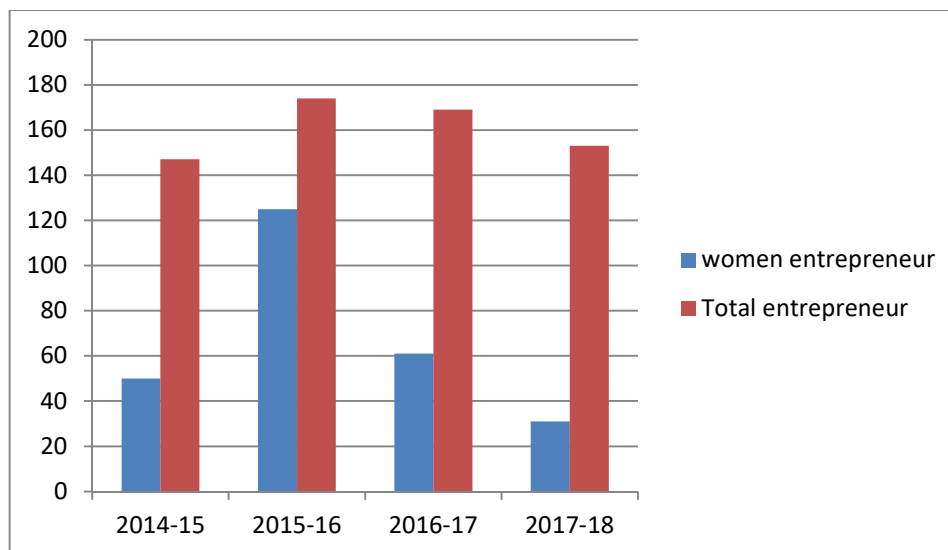
The above table 3.27 and figure-3.21 show that the most of the respondents have given first rank to earn money; second rank to unemployment followed by to be independent, responsibility due to death of near relatives, get better life than before, special qualification attained for running a business/enterprise, business culture exists in the family, social status, being entrepreneur was a lifelong goal, possessing innovative skills or aspiration and challenges for something new, use of idle funds, availability of infrastructural facilities and dissatisfaction with current jobs.

Table-3.28 Number of registered respondents in Sonitpur district since 2013-14 to 2017-18

Year	Women	Total (Men & women)	%
2013-14	376	968	38.84
2014-15	50	147	34.01
2015-16	125	174	71.82
2016-17	61	169	36.09
2017-18*	31	153	20.26

Source: DICC, Sonitpur, {***2018 (26/9/18)**}

Figure -3.21 Percentage distributions of registered respondents in Sonitpur district



Source: DICC

Interpretation:

Above table-3.28 and figure 3.21 shows that the growth rate of registered women entrepreneur which is not consistent i.e., it was 38.84 in 2013-14: 34.01 percent in 2014-15 followed by 71.82 percent in 2015-16, 36.09 percent in 2016-17 and 20 percent in 2017-18. On the other hand, the number of non-registered women entrepreneur is gradually increasing. Field study revealed that most of the women were not interested in registration of their enterprises because of their ignorance about the facilities (training and financial assistance) that provided by government through DICC, MSME, PMKVY, etc.

From the above discussions it can be deduced that there is a possibility of women entrepreneurship development in Sonitpur district due to the following reasons:

- Female literacy rate has been increasing from 49.80 percent in 2001 to 60.73 percent in 2011. Increasing literacy rate raises the awareness level among women.

- With the increase of literacy rate, SHGs among women has been gradually increasing. According to, DRDA, Sonitpur, the total number of SHGs were 9171 from 2011-2012 to 2017-18.
- In Sonitpur district, the registered Industrial unit was 968 (2013-14 to 2017-18). Out of this, number of woman entrepreneurs was 643 (66.42 percent, source: DIC Sonitpur). It shows a positive and expected expansion of registered woman enterprises in the study area.
- Population growth rate is increasing from 15.55 percent in 2001 to 18.11 percent in 2011. In case of urbanisation, it was 8.9 percent in 2011 against 10.56 in 2001.
- Moreover, the analysis of factors that motivate women entrepreneurs shows that 143 respondents out of total 430 respondents selected “to earn money” as the highest motivating factor with 33.25 percent. The next important motivating factor is “unemployment”, selected by 16.51 percent of the respondents out of which 17.14 percent reside in the rural, and 15.91 percent reside in the urban. The third most motivating factor is “independence”, which 10.93 percent of respondents picked. This option was selected by 12.27 percent of urban dwellers and 17.14 percent rural dwellers. The table 3.27 shows the ranking of factors that motivates women to become entrepreneurs.
- On the other hand, number of non-registered respondents is more than registered respondents during this period. It was 2697. During field study, it came to know that the rural and urban women have shown interest in having financial status in the family to raise their standard of living. Therefore, with the increase of population and awareness among women, the growth prospects of women entrepreneurs in the study area have been changing leading to development in the long run.

Table 3.24 reveals that 33.32 percent respondents have got training facilities. Financial assistance was got by 22.56 percent respondents. But no one can get infrastructural facilities. Marketing and technological facilities have got only by 8.84 and 2.09 percent respectively which were negligible. Number of respondents that did not get any assistance was 34.19 percent

From the above analysis of socio-economic factors of the study area, we can conclude that the (first objective-To find out socio-economic factors that influence the women to become an entrepreneur) socio-economic factors shown in tables 3.6, 3.7, 3.8, 3.9, 3.10, 3.12, 3.14, 3.18, 3.19, 3.20, 3.21, 3.22, 3.24, 3.25, 3.26, 3.37, and 3.28 influence women to become an entrepreneur.

Chapter summary

Sonitpur is an underdeveloped district of Assam. Its demography is not totally homogeneous as a number of linguistic, religious and ethnic communities and businesses stay there. With the make bigger of populace and urbanisation, the market circumstance of small corporations is steadily transferring upwards. The range of female entrepreneurs has been increasing substantially at some stage in latest years. Due to the existence of multicultural ethnic groups, there is a possibility for women entrepreneurs in exclusive fields such as traditional as well as non-traditional sectors. Since Sonitpur is an agriculturally based district; it has a normal dependence on agriculture; the study region has lack of entrepreneurship among the educated youths. They are commonly targeted on jobs. Absence of big industries in the study area is also partly responsible for lack of entrepreneurial activities. During field study, it came to know that the rural and urban women have shown interest in having financial status in the family to raise their standard of living. Therefore, with the increase of population and awareness among women, the growth prospects of women entrepreneur in the study area have been changing leading to development in the long run.