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A STUDY ON PROBLEMS OF RURAL ENTREPRENEURS DURING COVID PANDEMIC IN ERNAKULAM DISTRICT

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Introduction

Rural Enterprises constitutes a vibrant and dynamic sector of the Industrial economy of India. This sector has always recorded marvelous growth in terms of manufacturing, employment generation and economic growth over the years. Rural Enterprises have been established in all the sectors of the nation's economy, which is less capital intensive and thus suits the economic environment of India. It is highly labor intensive built upon the traditional skills and knowledge. The industries coming under the sectors of handicrafts, handloom, khadi, food processing industries, garment making and textile industries, coir, wood, bamboo, plastic, rubber, clay, electronic, electric components etc. Rural enterprises sector development targets various social groups such as SC, ST, women, educated unemployed youth and physically handicapped for the purpose of reducing social and regional imbalances, assuring more equitable distribution of income and wealth. In Kerala rural enterprises sector contributes to the process of economic growth, employment generation and balanced regional development. It has the potential to emerge as a strong, vibrant and globally competitive sector in the economy of Ernakulam district with its excellent connectivity, communication network, and availability of highly skilled human resources and developing industrial infrastructure which is best suited for the growth of rural enterprises. At this juncture, the researcher tries to understand rural entrepreneurship in terms of its growth and performance, identifying rural entrepreneurial motivations, examines the entrepreneurial problems of rural entrepreneurs, Awareness regarding available supporting systems and the prospects for rural entrepreneurs which may provide fresh insights into the functioning of rural enterprises in Ernakulam district. The study provides insights to the rural entrepreneurs and to the promoters of rural entrepreneurship regarding various entrepreneurial motivations, challenges and constraints faced, existing sources of assistance and supports, schemes and policies and prospects for future growth in the district to devise appropriate measures, either by way of creating and implementing new