

FACTORS INFLUENCING ENTREPRENEURIAL BEHAVIOUR OF RURAL WOMEN

Twentieth century witnessed the entry of women into professions due to expansion of educational facilities for them. To a large majority of Indian women the highest motivation for work is indeed sheer economic necessity. Among the educated and highly educated the strongest motivation for starting their own business is the desire for independence, satisfaction and achievement rather than economic and social compulsion. (Singh and Singh, 1971) women are equally endowed with motivation and managerial capabilities in starting and running small enterprises located in their own homes or communities. A study was conducted in Trivandrum District of Kerala State to find out the factors influencing entrepreneurial behaviour of rural women. Two training centres, College of Agriculture, Vellayani and Mitraniketan, Vellanad were selected for the study since training were given to rural women on mushroom cultivation and fruit and vegetable preservation in these centres. Thirty rural women each were selected randomly for each enterprise and from each centre. Sixty untrained rural women were selected as control from the nearby area of each centre. Thus, the total sample comprised of 180 with five groups of respondents i.e.,

Group I Rural women trained in mushroom cultivation at the College of Agriculture, Vellayani,

Group II Rural women trained in mushroom cultivation at Mitraniketan, Vellanad

Group III Rural women trained in fruit and vegetable preservation at the College of Agriculture, Vellayani,

Group IV Rural women trained in fruit and vegetable preservation at Mitraniketan, Vellanad,

Group V Untrained rural women (control group)

The dependent variable selected for the study was **entrepreneurial** behaviour. Fourteen independent variables (personal and **sociopsychological**) influencing entrepreneurial behaviour were selected and correlation analysis was done.

The results presented in Table 1 revealed that there was no significant relationship between age and **entrepreneurial** behaviour of five groups of rural women. With respect to caste, there existed a positive and significant relationship with the entrepreneurial behaviour of rural women in Group II and IV. According to Alexander (1967) the family system has a complex relationship with the society. Therefore, the response of different castes within a society to entrepreneurial opportunity is likely to vary and it depends upon the extent of exposure to the caste to the entrepreneurial **culture**. Educational status of the rural women in Group II, IV and V was found to have positive and significant relationship with their entrepreneurial behaviour. Since Kerala is a state of cent per cent literacy it is quite natural that both male and female kids are given equal opportunity for education. Educated people have more social participation and subscribe newspaper which will help them to get more information about the assistance provided by various governmental and non-governmental organisation for starting an enterprise. The family educational status of all the five groups was found to have positive and significant relationship with the entrepreneurial behaviour. Educated parents always aspire their children to have higher education. They influence their children to take up enterprise of their own. Land-holding and occupation of the respondents did not show any significant relationship with entrepreneurial behaviour of five groups

Table 1. Correlation coefficient between selected independent variables and entrepreneurial behaviour of five groups of rural women

Independent variables		Group II n = 30	Group II n = 30	Group III n = 30	Group IV n = 30	Group V n = 60
X1	Age	0.3365	0.3288	-0.2338	0.2516	-0.0868
X2	Caste	0.0599	0.5146**	-0.2139	0.4641**	0.0865
X3	Educational status of the respondent	0.2035	0.4631**	0.0723	0.4284*	0.4869**
X4	Educational status of the family	0.5337**	0.5656**	0.3640**	0.5241**	0.2940
X5	Land holding	-0.0523	0.1797	-0.0241	0.0492	0.0578
X6	Annual income	0.3213	0.1966	0.2943	0.5520**	0.2729*
X7	Occupation of the respondents	0.1298	0.4470	0.3183	0.0154	0.1923
X8	Information seeking behaviour	0.7465	0.7535**	0.0407	0.7332**	0.5186**
X9	Mass media contact	0.7460	0.6102**	0.3077	0.7718**	0.2677*
X10	Social participation	0.2640	0.4171**	0.0443	0.2029	0.2732*
X11	Cosmopolitaness	-0.0152	0.5373**	-0.0067	0.4939**	0.4037**
X12	Level of aspiration	0.7865**	0.8279**	0.1307	0.8277**	0.2263
X13	Attitude towards self employment	0.7804**	0.8732**	0.3543	0.8509**	0.3654**
X14	Perceived knowledge of the technology	0.4864**	0.7142**	0.2343	0.6810**	0.3545**

* Significant at 5 per cent level of probability

** Significant at 1 per cent level of probability

of rural women selected for the study. There existed a significant relationship between annual income and entrepreneurial behaviour of rural women in Group IV and V. Those entrepreneurs with higher income took advantage of the various schemes proposed for the development of their enterprise. In the case of Group V, higher annual income motivated them to start an enterprise by taking advantage of the various women development schemes. Information seeking behaviour was found to have a positive and significant relationship with the entrepreneurial behaviour of four groups of respondents except Group III. Majority of the trained rural women have started their own enterprise in the trade in which they are trained. This compelled them to collect information regarding their enter-

prises from various sources regarding the production and marketing. The relationship with the entrepreneurial behaviour of untrained rural women might be that seeing the progress of rural women who has started the enterprise, they were motivated to start an enterprise of their own without acquiring any specialized training.

With regard to mass media contact, all the groups except Group III were found to have a positive and significant relationship with their entrepreneurial behaviour. The first hand information necessary to start an enterprise was received by exposing themselves to these mass media. A positive and significant relationship between social participation and entrepreneurial behaviour of rural women in Group II

and V might be due to the fact that majority of rural women were members in one or other organizations in their area. This helped them to come in contact with other members of the society and get information about the new programmes and project that can be taken up by the rural women and also share the experience of other entrepreneurs. Cosmopolitaness of rural women in Group II, IV and V was found to have positive and significant relationship with the entrepreneurial behaviour. Cosmopolitaness helped the rural women to collect information about what is happening outside their social system. Nandapurkar (1982) is of the opinion that Cosmopolitaness is one of the important factors influencing entrepreneurship. Level of aspiration of rural women in Group I, II and IV has a positive and significant relationship with their entrepreneurial behaviour. Those rural women with high level of aspiration will take risk in starting an enterprise of their own. A positive and significant relationship was observed between attitude towards self employment and

entrepreneurial behaviour of rural women except Group III. These enterprises viz., mushroom cultivation and fruit and vegetable preservation are suitable for rural industrialization as they make use of skills and resources. Rural industries help the growth of entrepreneurship in rural areas. Processed food and fruit preparations have tremendous export potential (Khan, 1995). A positive and significant relationship was observed between perceived knowledge of the technology and entrepreneurial behaviour of rural women except Group III. The high level of education and training might have increased the level of knowledge of rural women about the technology. Training helps in imparting knowledge and in improving skills required for the profitable running of an enterprise. It may be concluded that promoting and developing entrepreneurship among rural women require encouragement, training to improve the knowledge and skills, developing initiative and providing necessary information regarding financial support by development agencies.

College of Agriculture
Vellayani 695 522, Trivandrum, India

G. Jayalekshmi, S. Shilaja
G. Shobhana

REFERENCES

- Alexander, A. P. 1967. The supply of industrial entrepreneurship. *Explorations in Entrepreneurial History*. Series 2, 4 : 136-149
- Khan, M. M., 1995. Agroindustries as a means of rural development *Kurukshetra* XLIII (12) : 30-32
- Nandapurkar, G. G. 1982. *Small Farmers - A study on their Entrepreneurial Behaviour*. Metropolitan Book Company Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi
- Singh, M. P. and Singh, K. 1971. Motivation components of entrepreneurs. *Indian Industrial Relation* (1) : 35-55