



AGRIPRENEURS OF KAU TECHNOLOGY: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY ON ENTREPRENEURIAL BEHAVIOUR

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Abstract: The study assessed the entrepreneurial behaviour among agripreneurs of Kerala Agricultural University's technology. Simple random sampling technique was employed in the selection of 100 respondents who had adopted KAU technologies. The study showed that Decision making ability, co-ordinating ability, self-confidence, management orientation and market perception were found high among agripreneurs Whereas, Achievement motivation, risk orientation, innovativeness, leadership ability and information seeking behavior were found medium among agripreneurs. Majority of the agripreneurs belonged to medium level of entrepreneurial behaviour followed by high and low level of entrepreneurial behaviour.

Key words: Entrepreneurial behaviour, Agripreneurs, KAU technology.

Introduction

After independence, the focus of the Government of India was to frame the major policies based on equity along with growth in the agriculture sector. Being an agrarian country, many efforts have been made towards economic and social stabilization over the past decades, but not much progress has been achieved in the growth of the agro industrial sector. Farmers lack access to adequate agricultural technology inputs and funding and have commercial farming skills have put the quality under the threat. With the increase in agricultural production, there is a need to have the proportionate growth in the agro-processing industry. In the recent past most of the farmers are becoming real estate owners by giving their fertile land to edifice industry, because they are unable to meet the expenditure spent on cultivation, high rates of interests taken from landlords, commission agents, banks and financial institutions (Nagalakshmi and Sudhakar, 2013). This situation can be changed by generating employment opportunities for them in rural areas itself. Agro entrepreneurship can be used as paramount medicine for the solution of this complexity. Developing entrepreneurs in agriculture will solve most of the problems by trimming down the burden of agriculture, creating employment opportunities for

rural youth, controlling migration from rural to urban areas, increasing national income, sustaining industrial development in rural areas and cutting down the pressure on urban areas (Uplankar and Biradar, 2015).

Role of agripreneurship in national economy

Agripreneurship plays various roles in the growth and development of national economy through entrepreneurship development which increases the income level and employment opportunities in rural as well as urban areas (Bairwa and Kushwaha, 2012). Agripreneurship also plays following role in the economic system (Sahet *al.*, 2009).

- ✓ It helps in inducing productivity gains by smallholder farmers and integrating them into local, national and international markets.
- ✓ It helps in reducing food costs, supply uncertainties and improving the diets of the rural and urban poor in the country.
- ✓ It also generates growth, increases and diversifies income and provides entrepreneurial opportunities in both rural and urban areas.

Kerala has attained worldwide acclaim for its achievements in the social sector, particularly in the health and education system. But the performance in the industrial sector has not been keeping pace with

the potential of the State. Government of Kerala has recognized this factor and has instituted bold and forward looking measures to tap the unique strengths of the State aimed at providing a sustainable stimulus for industrial growth. Kerala is the first and only state in the country to have 1 per cent of the state's annual budget ear-marked for entrepreneurship development activities (GOK, 2014).

Kerala Agricultural University has been transferring agricultural technology to the benefit of farming community right from its inception. Several recommended agricultural technologies were utilized by the stakeholders for enhancing their income for their livelihood. Recently, promotion of agripreneurship is realized as inevitable for the revitalization of agriculture sector. Agripreneurship has potential to generate growth, diversifying income, providing widespread employment and entrepreneurial opportunities in rural areas. Hence, it was felt as appropriate to study the entrepreneurial behaviour of agripreneurs of KAU technology

Research Methodology

The present study was conducted in central zone of Kerala. The list of clients who had sought for KAU technology from the extension centres of Kerala Agricultural University viz., Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Communication Centre and Central Training Institute of Thrissur district during 2014 and 2015 were collected. One hundred clients who had adopted KAU technology were selected using simple random sampling technique to form the respondents.

The dimensions of entrepreneurial behaviour such as decision making ability, achievement motivation, risk taking ability, self-confidence, innovativeness, leadership ability, information seeking behaviour, coordination ability, management orientation and market perception of agripreneurs was measured. Method of composite index followed by Aiswarya (2016) was used to measure ten dimensions and respondents were classified into three groups viz., low, medium and high on the basis of Mean ± SD. The following formula was used for

calculating the index of each statement and composite index for all the dimensions:

$$\text{Index of each statement} = \frac{\text{Total score for each statement}}{\text{Maximum score of the statement}} \times 100$$

$$\text{Composite index} = \frac{\sum X}{M \times N \times S} \times 100$$

Where, $\sum X$ = sum of total scores of all statements (Sum of frequencies multiplied by weight)

M = Maximum score

N = Number of respondents

S = Number of statements

The indices were then classified into three categories as followed by Aiswarya (2016) for interpreting the result as given below:

Table 1: Range of Index Values

Range of Index values	Category
0 - 32	Low
33 - 66	Medium
67 - 100	High

Results and discussion

Dimensions of entrepreneurial behaviour of agripreneurs

Ten dimensions of entrepreneurial behaviour of agripreneurs were measured and results are presented in Table 2. as follows.

Decision making ability

The data presented in Table 2. revealed that composite index for decision making ability of the agripreneurs was 'High' with a value of 67.20. Agripreneurs were well aware about their business activities which promoted them to take almost all decision independently. This might be the reason to categorized them into high level of decision making ability. This finding was in accordance with Mertiya (2017).

Achievement motivation

A glance from Table 2. In case of achievement motivation shown that composite index for achievement motivation of the agripreneurs was medium with a value of 53.76. The agripreneurs were satisfied with the little thing what they had, which might be the reasons to categorize them into medium

category of achievement motivation. Similar findings were reported by Avhadet al. (2015).

Risk taking ability

From Table 2. It was observed that composite index for risk orientation of the agripreneurs was ‘Medium’ with index value of 62.40. The agripreneurs were not ready to try new ideas unless others had done it with success which means that they took calculated risk, this could be the reason for their medium level of risk orientation. The results were in accordance with the findings of Gamitet al. (2015).

Self-confidence

In case of self-confidence it was observed from data reported in Table 2. that composite index for self-confidence among the agripreneurs was ‘High’ with a value of 68.83. It revealed that the agripreneurs can adjust readily to new situation and they were more confident to make profit in their enterprises with less dependence on others to carry out their business activities.

Innovativeness

The data in Table 2. indicated that composite index for innovativeness among the agripreneurs was ‘Medium’ with index value of 62.32. Agripreneurs preferred traditional way of doing things than newer method and preferred to wait for others to try out new practices. These could be the reasons for categorizing them into medium innovativeness category. The results were in consonance with the finding of Gamitet al. (2015).

Leadership ability

It is observed from Table 2. that composite index for the leadership ability of the agripreneurs was ‘Medium’ with value of 62.26. The agripreneurs offer new approaches to the problems faced by them and village people regard them as good source of information on new farm practices as well. The

findings are in agreement with the studies of Mertiya (2017).

Information seeking behaviour

In case of information seeking behaviour data in Table 2. revealed that composite index for information seeking behaviour among the agripreneurs was ‘Medium’ with a value of 64.87. It was observed that formal sources had less influence in seeking information by agripreneurs, which could be the reason to classify them under medium category of information seeking behaviour. The finding was in accordance with Lawrence and Sadashiveet al. (2015).

Coordination ability

The data furnished in Table 2. reported that composite index for coordinating ability of the agripreneurs was ‘High’ with a value of 66.66. The agripreneurs coordinate their business activities like financial aspects according to well-prepared pre-plan. The results were in line of with the findings of Lawrence and Ganguli (2012).

Management orientation

Table 2. showed that composite index for management orientation of the agripreneurs was ‘High’ with a value of 70.42. Agripreneurs had a frequent contact with extension personal/ Krishibhavan official which might have helped them to organize their business activity efficiently. The findings were in accordance with the results of Giridhara (2013).

Market perception

It was observed from Table 2. that composite index for market perception of the agripreneurs was ‘High’ with index value of 81.24. The agripreneurs gave much importance to the current market trend, marketing channel, market information and continuous supply of raw materials for the particular enterprise. The results were in line with the findings of Giridhara (2013).

Table 2: Overall entrepreneurial behaviour of agripreneurs (n=100)

Sl. No.	Dimensions	Index	Rank
1	Market perception	81.24	I
2	Management orientation	70.42	II
3	Self-confidence	68.83	III
4	Decision making ability	67.20	IV
5	Coordination ability	66.66	V
6	Information seeking behaviour	64.87	VI
7	Risk taking ability	62.40	VII

8	Innovativeness	62.32	VIII
9	Leadership ability	62.26	IX
10	Achievement motivation	53.76	X
Composite Index		65.99	Medium

Table 3: Distribution of respondents according to their entrepreneurial behaviour

Sl. No.	Category	Range of scores	Percentage
1	Low	<59.26	8.00
2	Medium	59.26 – 72.00	63.00
3	High	>72.00	29.00
Mean: 65.99		S. D: 6.73	

Table 3 indicated that majority (63%) of the agripreneurs had medium level of entrepreneurial behaviour followed by 29 per cent of them belonged to medium category and only 8 per cent of the respondents had low level of entrepreneurial behaviour. It was observed that achievement motivation, information seeking behaviour, risk orientation, innovativeness and leadership ability were medium among the agripreneurs. These could be the reasons led them to categorized into medium level of entrepreneurial behaviour.

Conclusion: The study has clearly shown that majority of the agripreneurs belonged to medium level

entrepreneurial behaviour category followed by high and low level. Hence, special consideration is required to enhance agripreneurship. Medium level of major dimensions like, innovativeness, achievement motivation, risk orientation, information seeking behaviour and leadership ability of the agripreneurs together reflected the reason behind their medium entrepreneurial behaviour. Therefore, efforts should be made to increase the level of entrepreneurial behaviour through Intensive training programmes, group discussions, demonstrations, tours, field visits, awareness programme etc., for socio economic upliftment of agripreneurs.

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