

**RESEARCH ARTICLE :**

# Socio-economic factors affecting entrepreneurial behaviour of agripreneurs of KAU technology

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**ARTICLE CHRONICLE :**

**Received :**  
10.08.2018;  
**Revised :**  
18.09.2018;  
**Accepted :**  
03.10.2018

**SUMMARY :** Socio-economic factors influencing entrepreneurial behaviour among agripreneurs of Kerala Agricultural University's technology were analysed. The specific objective was to study the factors affecting entrepreneurial behaviour of agripreneurs. Data were collected from 100 respondents who had adopted KAU technology were selected using simple random sampling technique. Structured interview schedule was used to collect the data. Data collected were analysed using Karl Pearson's correlation co-efficient. The result revealed that socio-economic factors such as education, attitude towards self-employment, mass media contact, social participation and economic motivation were significantly and positively influencing the entrepreneurial behaviour of agripreneurs. Whereas age, annual income, trainings received, self-reliance and occupational status had no significant relationship with entrepreneurial behaviour of agripreneurs.

**How to cite this article :** Naik, Raju Parashuram and Helen, S. (2018). Socio-economic factors affecting entrepreneurial behaviour of agripreneurs of KAU technology. *Agric. Update*, 13(4): 384-389; DOI : 10.15740/HAS/AU/13.4/384-389. Copyright@2018: Hind Agri-Horticultural Society.

**KEY WORDS :**

Agripreneurs, Socio-economic factor, KAU technology

## BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

Agripreneurship has got the potential to create development opportunities, diversifying income, providing extensive employment and entrepreneurial opportunities in rural areas. If the right environment was created and farmers were provided with good infrastructure, technological support and timely availability of credit it could enhance food production and ensure food security as well as increase in income of the farmers and quality of life. Even less educated small farmers of old age could also become an agripreneur provided they were clearly informed about the right type of

technologies and knowledge about their use. Hence, technology dissemination system was equally important than technology generation (Singh, 2013).

An agripreneur may start a new agribusiness, change a business direction, acquire a business or may be involved in creating innovations in value addition. Explicit an agripreneur is a risk-taker, opportunist, initiator which deals with the uncertain agricultural business environment of the firm. Entrepreneurs are often discussed in terms of starting a business. The poor farmers have failed in agriculture but agripreneurs are becoming very successful by doing business

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in Agri Export Zones (Tripathi and Agarwal, 2015).

Kerala has a high per capita rate of consumption, but it imports a major share of its requirements including food. The educated and technically qualified youth are migrating for want of jobs and sufficient employment opportunities. The abundance of capital and manpower are not being tapped adequately. Keralites are reluctant to invest in economically productive activities even though there is a surfeit of techno-economic talent. The factors contributing to this state of affairs may range from labour market rigidities to the absence of a favourable investment climate and has to lead to a generation of entrepreneurship been lost.

Kerala Agricultural University has taken earnest and concerted effort to consolidate, showcase and disseminate the various technology generated suitable for entrepreneurship and skill development. Apart from showcasing the technology in various fairs, seminars, trainings and workshops, KAU Technology Meet-2014 was organised to transfer the technology to the ultimate users. It was felt as appropriate to study the factors influencing entrepreneurial behaviour of agripreneurs who adopted KAU technology.

## RESOURCES AND METHODS

The present study was conducted in central zone of Kerala. The list of clients who had adopted KAU technologies 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 technologies were selected using simple random sampling technique to form the respondents. Structured interview schedule was used to collect the data. Data collected were analysed using Karl Pearson's correlation co-efficient. Frequency distribution and percentages were used to know the distribution pattern of respondents according to variables.

## OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS

The results obtained from the present study as well as discussions have been summarized under following heads:

### Socio-economic characteristics of agripreneurs:

In this section the study of socio-economic

characteristics of agripreneurs was made with reference to age, education, mass media contact, social participation, attitude towards self-employment, economic motivation, self-reliance and trainings received by the respondents. The analysed data are presented in the form of table followed by the interpretation of results as given below:

#### *Age of agripreneurs:*

It could be observed from Table 1 that 47.00 per cent of the agripreneurs belonged to the middle age group, followed by 39.00 per cent belonged to old age group and 14.00 per cent belonged to young age group. An observation of the above results showed that majority of the respondents were of middle age. The possible explanation behind the above pattern may be that the middle aged agripreneurs could take up decision independently to implement their desires and goals. More over the middle aged agripreneurs were energetic, had physical vigor and efficient in executing the work and relatively had free hand in making expenditure towards their interested areas. This result is in accordance with the findings of Raghunath (2014) and Nargave (2016).

#### *Education level of agripreneurs:*

It could be viewed from the Table 1 that 36 per cent of the agripreneurs educated upto high school, followed by graduate (35%), intermediate (25%), post graduate (3%) and primary school (1%). The result reflected the higher literacy rate of Kerala State. There was no illiterate among the agripreneurs. This indicates that today's agripreneurs are well educated and capable of gaining knowledge on the intended enterprise. A similar finding was reported by the Nargave (2016).

#### *Occupational status:*

The data presented in Table 1 revealed that 34 per cent of the agripreneurs had agribusiness as their primary occupation, followed by farming and services (25%) each, agricultural labourer (4%), allied activities (3%), non-agricultural labourer (1%) and others (8%). As the respondents selected for the study were agripreneurs, majority of them had agribusiness and farming as their main occupation. A similar finding was reported by Kumar (2017).

#### *Annual income:*

The data furnished in the Table 1 indicated that

majority (82%) of the agripreneurs belonged to the category of earning medium annual income, followed by low (10%) and high (8%) annual income. A similar result was observed by Raghunath (2014).

*Social participation:*

The data furnished in Table 1 indicated that 73 per cent of the agripreneurs had medium social participation, followed by 16 per cent had low and 11 per cent had

high social participation. Social participation cheers agripreneurs to set up contact with the support system, which can encourage agripreneurs for gaining more support from fellow members. For medium social participation the reason could be that the agripreneurs with medium formal education and average economic conditions are keen to take an interest in social participation for getting better social status when compared to agripreneurs having low social participation.

**Table 1 : Socio-economic profile of agripreneurs of KAU technology**

Sr. No.	Characteristics	Category	Percentage	
1.	Age	Young (Upto 35 years)	14.00	
		Middle (36 to 50 years)	47.00	
		Old (>50 years)	39.00	
2.	Education	Primary school	1.00	
		High School	36.00	
		Intermediate	25.00	
		Graduate	35.00	
		Post graduate	3.00	
3.	Occupation	Agribusiness	34.00	
		Farming	25.00	
		Services	25.00	
		Others	8.00	
		Agricultural labourer	4.00	
		Allied activities	3.00	
		Non-agricultural labourer	1.00	
4.	Annual income	Low (<1.65 lakh)	10.00	
		Medium (1.65 – 5.41 lakh)	82.00	
		High (>5.41 lakh)	8.00	
5.	Economic motivation	Low (<15.88)	11.00	
		Medium (15.88-20.30)	77.00	
		High (>20.30)	12.00	
6.	Social participation	Low (<0.12)	16.00	
		Medium (0.12-5.12)	73.00	
		High (>5.12)	11.00	
7.	Mass media contact	Low (<14.17)	8.00	
		Medium (14.17-19.03)	76.00	
		High (>19.03)	16.00	
8.	Attitude towards self-employment	Low (<29)	19.00	
		Medium (29-41.64)	63.00	
		High (>41.61)	18.00	
9.	Range of self-reliance (percentage)	Least self-reliant (25-49)	6.00	
		Less self-reliant (50-74)	10.00	
		More self-reliant (75-99)	43.00	
		Completely self-reliant (100)	41.00	
10.	Training received	Not received trainings	9.00	
		Received trainings	91.00	

Source: Compiled from primary data

While lack of interest and time, lack of perceived benefits and evading local politics could be the major reason for medium social participation. These observations are in line with the findings of Ramlakshmidevi *et al.* (2013) and Krishnan (2017).

#### *Economic motivation:*

The perusal of data in the Table 1 revealed that majority (77%) of the agripreneurs had medium economic motivation, followed by high (12%) and low (11%). The main aim of an agripreneur was to effectively utilize the physical and financial resources for making more profit and increasing income. Moreover, economic gains might be the most important goal for starting an enterprise. These observations are in line with the findings of Nargave (2016).

#### *Mass media contact:*

It could be observed from the Table 1 that majority (76%) of the respondents belonged to medium mass media contact category, followed by high (16%) and low (8%). In Kerala, because of the high literacy rate, most of the households subscribe at least one newspaper and every family possess radio and television. Hence, the respondents had medium to high level of mass media contact. This shows that they were in quest for the latest information which may be useful for updating their business. These observations are in line with the findings of Sreeram (2013).

#### *Trainings received:*

The distribution of agripreneurs according to the trainings received by them is presented in Table 1 which showed that most (91%) of the agripreneurs had received training and only few (9%) of them had not received training in their respective enterprise. Extension centres of Kerala Agricultural University are providing training to the aspiring agripreneurs and majority of the respondents had participated in such trainings, hence this could be the reason for above findings.

#### *Attitude towards self-employment:*

It could be inferred from the data presented in Table 1 that 63 per cent of the agripreneurs had medium attitude towards self-employment, 19 per cent of them had low attitude towards self-employment and 18 per cent of agripreneurs had high attitude towards self-employment.

Even though Kerala is a state with high literacy rate, the percentage of unemployment is high. The only alternative for income generation is to take up self-employment and that too with the easily available resources. Agri-business provides rich opportunity to start business with less investment using existing facilities. This might be the reason for the medium level of attitude towards self-employment among the agripreneurs.

#### *Self-reliance:*

It could be concluded from the Table 1 that 43 per cent of the agripreneurs belonged to 75-99 self-reliance category, followed by 100 (41%), 50-74 (10%) and 25-49 (6%), respectively. An entrepreneur has the urge to capitalize his technical skills himself than working for others. He feels that his destiny is his own making. The pride of being a lord of one's own destiny essentially prompt a prospective entrepreneur to venture into an enterprise and depend on the abilities and resources of self. Therefore, self-reliance is a desirable trait in an entrepreneur.

Out of the ten independent variables, four variables namely education, attitude towards self-employment, mass media contact, social participation and economic motivation were significantly and positively influencing the entrepreneurial behaviour of agripreneurs. Whereas age, annual income, trainings received, self-reliance and occupational status had no significant relationship with entrepreneurial behaviour of agripreneurs.

### **Relationship between entrepreneurial behaviour of agripreneurs with their socio-economic characteristic :**

#### *Entrepreneurial behaviour vs Age:*

From the Table 2 it could be concluded that age had no relationship with entrepreneurial behaviour of agripreneurs. The results are in conformity with the findings of Somvanshi *et al.* (2013).

#### *Entrepreneurial behaviour vs Education:*

The results from the Table 2 revealed that education had a positive significant correlation with entrepreneurial behaviour of agripreneurs. In Kerala, upto primary level of education is compulsory and free and dropouts occur only after primary level of education. Majority of the respondents had high school level education. The above fact has sufficient evidence that level of educational

background ensures entrepreneurial function and plays a significant role in moulding entrepreneurial behaviour. The results are in conformity with the findings of Somvanshi *et al.* (2013).

#### *Entrepreneurial behaviour vs Occupational status:*

It could be inferred from the Table 2 that there was a positive and non-significant relationship between occupation and entrepreneurial behaviour of the agripreneurs. The results are in conformity with the findings of Lawrence and Ganguli (2012).

#### *Entrepreneurial behaviour vs Annual income:*

The results from the Table 2 showed that annual income had no relationship with entrepreneurial behaviour of agripreneurs. Farm entrepreneur as a person who organizes and operates the business, is responsible for the results that is, either loss or gain from the business irrespective of his income level. He is a pioneer in organizing and developing the firm. The results are in conformity with the findings of Patel *et al.* (2013).

#### *Entrepreneurial behaviour vs Social participation:*

The results from Table 2 revealed that social participation had positive and significant relationship with entrepreneurial behaviour of the agripreneurs. Entrepreneurship being a people intensive activity, without good socialization, it will be very difficult for an entrepreneur to succeed. Running an enterprise necessitates the entrepreneur to contact and maintain relationship with many people and institutions. This might be the probable reason for obtaining such results. The results are in conformity with the findings of Sreeram *et al.* (2015).

#### *Entrepreneurial behaviour vs Economic motivation:*

A glance of the Table 2 indicated that economic motivation of the agripreneurs had positive and significant influence on their entrepreneurial behaviour at 1 per cent level. The entrepreneur is an economic man who tries to maximize his profit by using the available resources. The main aim of an entrepreneur is to effectively utilize the physical and financial resources for making more profit, income, wealth and employment. This might be the probable reason for obtaining such result. The results are in conformity with the findings of Shivacharan (2014).

#### *Entrepreneurial behaviour vs Mass media contact :*

It could be inferred from the Table 2 that there was a positive and significant relationship between mass media contact and entrepreneurial behaviour of the agripreneurs. Mass media exposure gives an opportunity for the agripreneur to know about various opportunities existing in the industry and also improves their awareness about the trend in market. Similar results were reported by Giridhara (2013).

#### *Entrepreneurial behaviour vs Trainings received :*

From the Table 2 it was clear that entrepreneurial behaviour of the agripreneurs had positive and non-significant relationship with trainings received by them. Only the technical details of the technology are imparted during the training programmes of KAU with less thrust on socio-psychological dimensions, which may be the reason for the positive non-significant relationship of the trainings received with the entrepreneurial behaviour of agripreneurs.

**Table 2 : Factors affecting entrepreneurial behaviour of agripreneurs**

Sr. No.	Variables	Correlation co-efficient (r)
1.	Age	-0.031NS
2.	Educational status	0.204*
3.	Occupational status	0.027NS
4.	Annual income	0.006NS
5.	Trainings received	0.051NS
6.	Attitude towards self-employment	0.644**
7.	Self-reliance	-0.026
8.	Mass media contact	0.589**
9.	Social participation	0.254*
10.	Economic motivation	0.200*

\* and \*\* indicate significance of values at P=0.05 and 0.01 level, respectively (2-tailed).

NS =Non-significant

*Entrepreneurial behaviour vs Attitude towards self-employment :*

The findings from the Table 2 indicated that attitude towards self-employment had positive and significant relationship with entrepreneurial behaviour of the agripreneurs. The significant positive relationship obtained is logical because a favourable mental disposition towards self-employment necessarily improves the entrepreneurial behaviour of a person. Unless one has a favourable attitude towards the positive aspects of self-employment, one may not be able to aspire and start an agribusiness.

*Entrepreneurial behaviour vs self-reliance :*

The findings from the Table 2 showed that self-reliance had negative and non-significant correlation with entrepreneurial behaviour of agripreneurs. Entrepreneur expects himself to be the master of time and space around him and feel responsible for his productivity, but running an enterprise necessitates the entrepreneur to depend solely on the resources, knowledge, skill, support and the facilities available with him which had influence in his business. This could be a reason for the above findings.

**Conclusion:**

The correlation co-efficient values indicated that the characteristics such as attitude towards self-employment, mass media contact, education and social participation were significantly and positively influencing with entrepreneurial behaviour of agripreneurs. Whereas age, annual income, trainings received, self-reliance, economic motivation, occupation had no relationship with entrepreneurial behaviour of agripreneurs. The development department should aim at intervening these variables to their advantage for promoting entrepreneurial behaviour among agripreneurs.

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