



Entrepreneurial behaviour of Women Self-Help Group members in Meghalaya

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ABSTRACT

A study was conducted in West Garo Hills District of Meghalaya to know the entrepreneurial behaviour of the members of Women Self-Help Groups (WSHGs) since the district was having the highest number of Self-Help Groups in the state. A sample of 80 respondents was taken for the present investigation. Majority of the respondents were found to possess medium entrepreneurial behaviour followed by low and high levels of entrepreneurial behaviour. The study also revealed that entrepreneurial behaviour was significantly and positively correlated with education, social participation, mass media exposure and level of aspiration of the respondents.

1. Introduction

India is on a constant battle against poverty since ages. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has rightly said, “You can tell the condition of a nation by looking at the status of its women.” Women empowerment can bring development to a nation as a whole. One approach to women empowerment is entrepreneurship development. Therefore the study on entrepreneurial behaviour is required in order to explore the potential of rural women to sustain their enterprises as well as start an enterprise if they have not yet. Also, the participation of rural women in Self-Help Groups (SHGs) was seen more than the men-folk (GoM 2009). When these SHGs are made of only female members, they are referred to as Women Self-Help Groups (WSHGs). Entrepreneurial behaviour of women is an important element for success of any enterprise undertaken by women in self help groups (Kumar 2009).

2. Methodology

The West Garo Hills district was selected purposively for the present study because it was having highest number of SHGs in the state of Meghalaya (GoM 2009).

Two blocks from the district, viz. Selsella block and Rongram block, were purposively selected owing to having highest numbers of SHGs among the blocks of the district. As of January 2018, Selsella block was having 885 WSHGs and Rongram block was having 537. Eight WSHGs were selected with proportional random sampling technique – five WSHGs from Selsella block, viz. Am•beng WSHG, Chimik WSHG, A•palgre WSHG, Nengkalpara WSHG and A•gipenggre WSHG, and three WSHGs from Rongram block, viz. Jendragre Matkol Gitok WSHG, Ka•ma Rong•chigre WSHG and Chandalbret A•duma WSHG. Respondents were selected by random sampling technique with equal allocation from each WSHG, i.e. ten respondents from each WSHG, which gave a total of 80 respondents from 8 WSHGs. Entrepreneurial behaviour was measured by the Entrepreneurial Behaviour Index (EBI) formula developed by Passah (2015).

$$EBI = \sum_{i=1}^n (w_i * x_i)$$

Where,

EBI = Entrepreneurial Behaviour Index

w_i = Weight attached to i^{th} component

x_i = Scale adjusted score of i^{th} component

Seven components of entrepreneurial behaviour, viz. Innovativeness, Risk Orientation, Leadership Ability, Achievement Motivation, Self-confidence,

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Decision Making Ability, and Management Orientation, were identified and weightages of 1.5, 0.4, 0.4, 2.6, 1.4, 0.6 and 0.6, respectively, were assigned according to Savitha (2007). The components innovativeness, risk orientation, achievement motivation, self-confidence, and management orientation were measured with the rating scales developed by Moulik (1965), Supe (1969), Desai (1981), Basavanna (1971) and Samantha (1977), respectively, with suitable modifications. Leadership ability and decision making ability were measured with the rating scale developed by Nandapurkar (1982). Data were collected with pre-tested interview schedule and statistical tools used were frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation and Pearson's coefficient of correlation. Using mean and standard deviation for the variables (entrepreneurial behaviour and its components), the respondents were grouped into low, medium and high categories.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Entrepreneurial behavior

Table 1. Distribution of the respondents according to their level of entrepreneurial behavior

Sl. No.	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	Low (< 48.54)	18	22.50
2	Medium (48.54 – 61.08)	53	66.25
3	High (> 61.08)	9	11.25
	Total	80	100.00

The respondents were having 'medium' level of entrepreneurial behaviour in majority (66.25%), which could be due to the majority of them willing to take medium risks, having medium achievement motivation, medium self-confidence, medium innovativeness, medium decision making ability, medium leadership ability and medium management orientation. The least percentage of respondents was observed in 'high' category of entrepreneurial behaviour with only 11.25 per cent of respondents. This could be related to the lack of self-confidence that the women members have, because some of them have reported that they become less confident when their views were in disagreement with others' views. They were also found to be not ready to adopt new methods or practices because of fear of failure as they were unable to take high risks although their planning ability was good as reported in management orientation aspect of the respondents. This also resulted in the 'low' level of entrepreneurial behaviour of WSHG members which stood

next to 'medium' category with 22.50 per cent of respondents. The research findings were in corroboration with the findings of Jain and Patel (2008), Dhanotya *et al.* (2013), and Passah (2015).

Innovativeness

More than half of the respondents (66.25%) belonged to 'medium' category of innovativeness. This was followed by 'high' level and 'low' level with 20.00 per cent and 13.75 per cent of respondents, respectively. The reason goes to their sceptical attitude towards new methods and practices. Still they try to keep track of the new arrivals of latest technologies and also thought that if the innovations were assuring of benefits then they would surely adopt them, which is why the innovativeness did not have many respondents in 'low' category. The findings supported the findings of Nagesha (2005) and Lawrence and Ganguli (2012).

3.2 Risk orientation

As seen in Table 2, the 'Risk orientation' component of entrepreneurial behaviour of WSHG members had majority of the respondents (71.25%) in 'medium' category, followed by 'high' (21.25%) and 'low' (7.50%) categories. The result could be related to the fact that the respondents did not have enough financial resources to take high risks. Only few women members who had good financial resources were willing to take risks. The women also reported that they were willing to take risks only when the risky activity would show surety of the benefits of taking risks. The findings were in line with the research findings of Devarajaiah (2010), Das (2012), and Chouhan (2015).

3.3 Leadership ability

It could be inferred from the result in Table 2 that highest percentage of respondents (53.75%) was in 'medium' level of 'Leadership ability', followed by 'low' (30.00%) and 'high' (16.25%) levels of 'Leadership ability'. Higher percentage of respondents in 'low' category than in 'high' category is because the women member felt they were not qualified enough to lead the group as their self-confidence was affected by differences in the opinions they had with the opinions others had. This is also due to their low level of education because majority of them had not crossed 10th standard. The 'medium' level having majority of the respondents is due to the women members playing the leadership roles through the rotational allotment of leadership responsibility among the members of WSHGs. The research findings were corroborant to the findings of Nagesha (2005).

Table 2. Distribution of WSHG members based on components of entrepreneurial behavior

Sl. No.	Components of entrepreneurial behaviour	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	Innovativeness	Low (< 5.69)	11	13.75
		Medium (5.69 – 11.37)	53	66.25
		High (> 11.37)	16	20.00
		Total	80	100.00
2	Risk Orientation	Low (< 5.24)	6	7.50
		Medium (5.24 – 7.09)	57	71.25
		High (> 7.09)	17	21.25
		Total	80	100.00
3	Leadership Ability	Low (< 4.08)	24	30.00
		Medium (4.08 – 5.41)	43	53.75
		High (> 5.41)	13	16.25
		Total	80	100.00
4	Achievement Motivation	Low (< 2.07)	6	7.50
		Medium (2.07 – 8.00)	67	83.75
		High (> 8.00)	7	8.75
		Total	80	100.00
5	Self-confidence	Low (< 4.88)	14	17.50
		Medium (4.88 – 10.38)	56	70.00
		High (> 10.38)	10	12.50
		Total	80	100.00
6	Decision Making Ability	Low (< 11.04)	12	15.00
		Medium (11.04 – 15.27)	53	66.25
		High (> 15.27)	15	18.75
		Total	80	100.00
7	Management Orientation	Low (< 8.49)	5	6.25
		Medium (8.49 – 10.59)	46	57.50
		High (> 10.59)	29	36.25
		Total	80	100.00

Achievement motivation

Majority of WSHG members belonged to 'medium' level of 'Achievement motivation' with more than three-fourth of the respondents (83.75%) falling in 'medium' category, followed by 'high' and 'low' categories at 8.75 per cent and 7.50 per cent of respondents, respectively. This result throws light on how the members of WSHGs perceive success and satisfaction. The rural women were motivated to work towards achieving good social status. They were more into being good examples of good-doer than that of profit seeker. Most of them gave their best at what they did for their farm activities or SHG activities and wanted to be successful at what they did, while some of them only wanted to live happily by getting married. This paved way for obtaining maximum respondents in the 'medium' category of 'Achievement motivation'. The need for affiliation is another reason for not having more respondents in 'high' category, as it often keeps them from going out of their way to achieve greater heights.

The findings were in parallel with the findings of Lawrence and Ganguli (2012) and Chouhan (2015).

Self-confidence

More than two-third of the respondents (70.00%) belonged to 'medium' level of 'Self-confidence', followed by 'low' level (17.50%) and 'high' level (12.50%) of 'Self-confidence'. The underlying reason for this result was the lack of self-reliance that the rural women have. They were not able to believe firmly in their strength due to lack of high education. Due to this, WSHG members could not persistently work towards their goals and had seen giving up halfway. The increasing participation in SHG activities help these women-folk to unite with the other members and work towards their goals, thereby increasing their self-confidence, hence they belonged to 'medium' level of self-confidence. Also, the training programmes and workshops provided by NGOs and government organisations have contributed to increase in self-confidence of the members of WSHGs. The findings were in line with the findings of Chouhan (2015).

Decision making ability

It was observed that majority of the respondents (66.25%) belonged to 'medium' category of 'Decision making ability', followed by 'high' and 'low' categories at 18.75 per cent and 15.00 per cent of respondents, respectively. This could be explained by bringing into light that rural women-folk were also finding good social status in the society to enable them to decide independently on issues of household and profit-oriented activities. But they were not self-confident enough to completely decide independently. They possessed medium level of self-confidence therefore they sometimes needed to consult their peers or family members on deciding about certain major issues in their activities. The research findings were in corroboration with the findings of Nagesha (2005) and Lawrence and Ganguli (2012).

Management orientation

The members of WSHGs had a good level of 'Management orientation' with 57.50 per cent and 36.25 per cent of respondents in 'medium' and 'high' categories, respectively. Only 6.25 per cent of respondents belonged to 'low' category of 'Management orientation'. This owed to the fact that women being involved in household planning activities had gained experience in planning ability and therefore their management ability was fairly high. The women had some experience in planning strategies to properly manage the food resources at home, which enabled them to put this experience towards production planning and marketing strategies for their products. The findings were in agreement with the findings of Sakharakar (1995) and Nagesha (2005).

3. Relationship between entrepreneurial behaviour and personal and socio-economic variables

Table 3 indicated that out of the eight independent variables, only 'Education', 'Social participation', 'Mass media

exposure' and 'Level of aspiration' of the respondents were having significant positive correlation with entrepreneurial behaviour with correlation coefficient values at 0.678, 0.859, 0.820 and 0.244, respectively. Out of these significant variables, 'Education', 'Social participation' and 'Mass media exposure' were significant at 0.01 level, while 'Level of aspiration' was significant at 0.05 level. The positive significant correlation between 'Education' and entrepreneurial behaviour was because advancement in studies made the women members broader in their outlook. The more the education of the respondent, the more was her innovativeness, risk orientation, leadership ability, decision making ability and other components. Also, 'Social participation' had positive significant correlation with entrepreneurial behaviour due to the fact that being more involved in the village level and district level organisations made the rural women socially active and allowed them to be in contacts with renowned personalities or cosmopolite agents in their area. Communication with cosmopolite agents made the women-folk obtain ideas about innovations and their successes and increased their self-confidence achievement motivation. The knowledge about various new technologies could also be obtained through social participation thereby it helped in increasing the respondents' risk taking ability and innovativeness. The variable 'Mass media exposure' was also significantly and positively correlated with entrepreneurial behaviour of WSHG members due to the reason that these women get more ideas about the advance in technology through the media. The exposure to mass media made the women understand more about the different ways to earn a living, different ways to maximise profit, and new ways to solve problems. This in turn had positive impact on their innovativeness, risk orientation, decision making ability, leadership ability, achievement motivation, self-confidence, and management orientation, thereby increasing the entrepreneurial behaviour. The significantly and positive correlation of 'Level of aspiration' with entrepreneurial

Table 3. Correlation coefficient between personal and socio-economic variables and entrepreneurial behaviour of members of WSHGs

Sl. No.	Independent Variables	Dependent Variable	Correlation coefficient (r) value
1	Age	Entrepreneurial Behaviour	-0.011 ^{NS}
2	Education		0.678 ^{**}
3	Family size		0.088 ^{NS}
4	Monthly family income		0.005 ^{NS}
5	Size of land holding		0.066 ^{NS}
6	Social participation		0.859 ^{**}
7	Mass media exposure		0.820 ^{**}
8	Level of aspiration		0.244 [*]

^{NS} : Non-significant

^{**} : Correlation is significant at 0.01 level

^{*} : Correlation is significant at 0.05 level

behaviour at significance level of 0.05 could be explained by referring to relationship between the desire to attain more satisfaction in one's work and the components of entrepreneurial behaviour. Having higher level of aspiration influenced competitiveness in the respondents. This also affects the innovativeness of the respondent. The managerial ability is also influenced by the desire to achieve greater heights as they looked for better strategies and plan well to attain their goals. The result of significant positive correlation of 'Education' and 'Mass media exposure' with entrepreneurial behaviour in the present study supported the findings of Pandeti (2005) and Kumar (2009). The finding of significant positive correlation of 'Social participation' and 'Level of aspiration' with entrepreneurial behaviour was in conformity with the finding of Pandeti (2005).

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