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### Entrepreneurial traits: Insights from rural dairy farming communities

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#### Abstract

Dairy farming serves as a vital component of rural livelihoods in India, ensuring consistent income, better nutrition, and reduced unemployment. Entrepreneurs, as key drivers of economic growth and innovation, play a pivotal role in maximizing the potential of the dairy sector. This study assessed the entrepreneurial behavior of dairy farmers in the Panagar block of Jabalpur district, Madhya Pradesh. Utilizing a purposive sampling method, eight villages were selected based on training provided by the Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK). A total of 120 farmers (60 trained and 60 untrained) were evaluated. Findings revealed that 68.33% of trained farmers exhibited medium entrepreneurial behavior compared to 51.67% of untrained farmers. Trained farmers also demonstrated superior performance in key entrepreneurial traits such as decision-making, risk orientation, and innovativeness.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurial behavior, rural livelihoods, dairy farming, innovativeness, risk orientation

#### Introduction

Dairy farming is integral to India's rural economy, second only to agriculture in its contribution to livelihoods. It provides a steady income, augments dietary standards, and addresses rural unemployment. India leads global milk production, contributing 18% of the total output, supported by the largest livestock population worldwide. The dairy sector contributes significantly to the GDP (3.9% in 2013-14) and plays a crucial role in rural economic development. Madhya Pradesh ranks third in livestock population and fourth in milk production nationally. However, despite its potential, benefits from dairy enterprises remain unevenly distributed. To unlock this potential, fostering entrepreneurial skills among dairy farmers is essential. This study investigates the entrepreneurial behavior of trained and untrained dairy farmers to identify opportunities for growth and improvement.

#### Materials and Methods

The study was conducted in Panagar block of Jabalpur district, known for its high population of milch animals. Eight villages-Bamhnoda, Majhgawan, Badkhera, Liti, Imaliya, Pipariya, Garda, and Nipariya-were purposively selected based on training programs conducted by KVK, Jabalpur.

A total of 120 dairy farmers (60 trained and 60 untrained) were randomly selected. Entrepreneurial behavior was assessed across five dimensions:

- Innovativeness
- Decision-making ability
- Risk orientation
- Information-seeking behavior

- Cosmopolitaness

An entrepreneurial behavior index was developed to categorize respondents as having low, medium, or high entrepreneurial levels. Statistical tools, including mean, standard deviation, and t-tests, were employed to analyze the data.

#### Results and Discussion

##### 1. Innovativeness

Among trained farmers, 60% exhibited medium innovativeness, with 28.33% achieving high scores. Conversely, only 10% of untrained farmers showed high innovativeness, and 38.33% were in the low category. Training clearly enhanced farmers' ability to adopt and implement new ideas.

##### 2. Decision-Making ability

Around 56.67% of trained farmers demonstrated medium decision-making ability, while 35% showed high ability. Among untrained farmers, only 15% displayed high decision-making skills, with 31.67% categorized as low. This highlights the significant role of training in improving decision-making processes.

##### 3. Risk Orientation

Trained farmers were more inclined toward taking risks, with 46.67% classified as high in risk orientation. In contrast, only 8.33% of untrained farmers fell into this category, while 35% were risk-averse. Training appears to encourage calculated risk-taking, vital for entrepreneurial success.

#### 4. Cosmopolitaness

Cosmopolitaness, reflecting exposure to external knowledge and resources, was higher among trained farmers, with 31.67% achieving high scores. Meanwhile, 36.67% of untrained farmers scored low, emphasizing the need for better outreach and interaction opportunities for untrained groups.

#### 5. Overall Entrepreneurial Behavior

Trained farmers outperformed untrained farmers across all metrics. While 68.33% of trained farmers exhibited medium entrepreneurial behavior, only 6.67% were categorized as low. In contrast, 40% of untrained farmers displayed low entrepreneurial behavior, underscoring the transformative impact of training programs.

#### Statistical Analysis

The mean entrepreneurial behavior score for trained farmers was significantly higher (61.66) than for untrained farmers (39.03). The t-test value of 12.163 ( $p < 0.01$ ) confirms this difference as statistically significant.

#### Conclusion

The study underscores the importance of training in enhancing entrepreneurial behavior among dairy farmers. Trained farmers consistently outperformed untrained counterparts in innovativeness, decision-making, risk orientation, and cosmopolitaness. This highlights the potential of targeted training programs to boost technical knowledge, adoption of scientific practices, and risk-taking abilities.

To fully realize the economic potential of dairy farming, it is imperative to:

1. Expand training programs tailored to local needs.
2. Foster knowledge-sharing platforms for untrained farmers.
3. Promote innovative extension methods that address practical challenges in dairy farming.
4. These initiatives can enhance entrepreneurial capabilities, making dairy farming a more profitable and sustainable enterprise for rural communities.

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