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Gendered lens on agripreneurship: Key influencers of entrepreneurial behaviour among women in Bihar

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Abstract

Women in agripreneurship are transforming agriculture by leading innovative ventures across the value chain. Their involvement enhances food security, boosts rural economies, and promotes sustainable practices. Despite facing challenges like limited access to resources and markets, women agripreneurs continue to rise, demonstrating resilience, creativity, and a strong commitment to agricultural development. Considering the scope, the current study focused on the factors that influence the entrepreneurial behaviour of women agribusiness owners. In Bihar, the study locale was selected purposively as women's participation was significant in activities such as organic farming, mushroom cultivation, poultry farming, lac bangle production, textile retail, pickle and papad production, and other related fields. A total of 120 respondents from the two districts of Bihar were finalized for the study. The socio-economic status of the respondents was analyzed through frequency and percentage. Factors that affected were correlated with entrepreneurial behaviour and factors such as 'education', 'Idea' and 'Restriction faced' were found to be significant. The study could advise the scope for future research in women involved in agripreneurial activities.

Keywords: Agripreneurship, gender equality, decision making, employment and women

1. Introduction

The contributions of women are crucial for emerging nations like India, as they make up about half of the population. Until the status of women is improved, a nation cannot grow. Women play a variety of intricate roles in the growth of the economy, most notably in the home and in different agricultural pursuits (Singh *et al.*, 2012) ^[3]. The bulk of households in rural areas, which make up 70% of the Indian economy, depend on agriculture and related industries for their livelihoods. It is evident that these households have no alternative sources of income. Women's contribution is major in agriculture, taking care of cattle, dairying etc and have become the head of the family due to migration of male member to find a job in the cities so majority of the decision which is 51% taken by women entrepreneur (Kavita, 2016) ^[4].

In all aspects of traditional farming, women have a leading role. They make significant contributions to homemaking and the agro-processing of different crops (Majumdar and Shah, 2017) ^[2]. Women's entrepreneurship was primarily driven by the desire to provide financial security for their families and children, the success of other business owners, and the knowledge that hard effort and family support are essential for success in the workplace (Mogilicharla, 2003) ^[5]. About 80% of the people in the eastern Indian state of Bihar are employed in agriculture, making it one of the most productive agricultural states in the nation. The region's

female agricultural workforce was estimated to be 19.32%, and its agricultural workers to be 19.48% and 14.01 percent for rural and urban areas, respectively. Since agribusiness creates jobs for a large number of people, it is crucial for the growth of both rural and urban areas. Therefore, the only option to employ a large number of women who work in agriculture in both rural and urban areas, enabling them to become self-sufficient and elevate their status, is through agribusiness. Organic farming, mushroom cultivation, goat rearing, poultry farm management, lac bangle production, textile shop management, pickle and papad production, various bakery and confectionery establishments, dairy industries, etc. are all activities that women in Bihar engage in. A number of them operate their businesses independently, while others do so in teams.

Objective

To ascertain the factors influencing Agripreneurship behaviour of women.

Methodology

The study was carried out in Samastipur and Muzaffarpur districts of Bihar. These two districts were selected purposively as Dr. Rajendra Prasad Central Agricultural University's main campus and sub-campus are situated in Samastipur and Muzaffarpur respectively. Samastipur consists of 20 blocks out of which 2 blocks namely Pusa and

Kalyanpur were selected for study and Muzaffarpur consists of 16 blocks out of which 4 blocks i.e. Saraiya, Bochaha, Sakra and Muzzafarpur town areas were selected blocks purposefully to complete the study properly. The study was conducted in both rural and urban areas. Total sample of 120 women agripreneurs were taken from different sectors.

Socio-personal variables of women agripreneurs

Table 1: Personal Characteristics of women agripreneurs No. of women(N=120)

Sl. no.	Independent variables	Frequency	percentage
1.	Age		
	Young (<35yrs)	35	29.17
	Middle (35-50)	76	63.33
	Old (>50)	9	7.5
2.	Family type		
	Nuclear	106	88.33
	Joint	14	11.67
3.	Caste		
	General	7	5.83
	OBC	71	59.17
	SC	28	23.33
	ST	14	11.67
4.	Education level		
	Illiterate	0	0
	Functionally literate	1	0.83
	Primary	15	12.51
	Middle	40	33.33
	Secondary	41	34.17
	Higher Secondary	16	13.33
	College Education	7	5.83
5.	Purpose of Starting Enterprise		
	Encouragement from family	56	46.67
	To satisfy financial needs	107	89.17
	To become independent	52	43.33
	To gain social status	84	70
	Influenced by success stories	44	36.37
	To make use of free time	85	70.83
	Business property inherited	38	31.67
	Interest in the enterprise	90	75
6.	The idea got about the enterprise		
	From neighbor	56	46.67
	KVK	34	28.33
	Local leaders	24	20
	RPCAU	6	5
7.	Restriction faced		
	Not at all	15	12.5
	Rare	25	20.83
	Moderate	33	27.5
	Usually	30	25
	Always	17	17.14

It was observed from Table 1 that among 120 women agripreneurs, 63.33% belonged to the middle age group, 29.1% to the young age group, and 7.5% to the old age group. Regarding the family type, 88.33% belonged to nuclear families and 11.67% to joint families; with many indicating that a single income (mainly from the husband) was insufficient due to rising living costs. In terms of caste

distribution, 59.17% were from OBC, 23.33% SC, 11.67% ST, and 5.83% from the General category, suggesting higher involvement in agripreneurship among OBC women. Educationally, 34.17% were educated up to matric, 33.33% up to 7th standard, 13.33% up to 12th, 12.5% at the primary level, 5.83% were graduates, and only 0.83% was functionally literate without formal education. Motivations for starting enterprises varied: 89.17% aimed to meet financial needs, 75% had an interest in enterprise, 70.83% wanted to utilize free time, 70% sought social status, 46.67% were encouraged by family, 43.33% wanted independence, 36.37% were inspired by other women's success stories, and 31.36% cited inherited business property. It was noted that many women had multiple motivations. As for sources of entrepreneurial ideas, 46.67% cited neighbors, 28.33% KVK, 20% local leaders, and 5% RPCAU, highlighting the significant role of community in idea generation. Regarding marketing restrictions, 27.5% faced moderate restrictions, 25% frequently faced restrictions, 20.83% rarely, 14.17% always (with only male members involved in selling), and 12.5% faced no restrictions at all.

Factor influencing agripreneurship behavior of the respondents

Table2: Decision making

Sl. No.	Decision making status	Independent decision		Decision taken with husband		Decision taken with family members	
		f	%	f	%	f	%
1.	Financial decision related to enterprise	29	24.17	80	66.67	11	9.17
2.	Marketing of products	36	30	84	70	0	0
3.	Deciding selling areas	35	29.17	78	65	7	5.83
4.	Launching of new products	41	34.17	65	55	13	10.83

From table2 it was revealed that out of 120respondent's 66.67 percent of women agripreneurs were taking financial decision related to enterprise with their husband,24.17 percent were taking decision independently, and9.17 percent of women agripreneurs financial decisions were taken by whole family members. Regarding marketing of products70 percent of women agripreneurs ways of marketing of the products were decided with their husband, 30 percent of women agripreneurs took independent decision, and none of them took decision with their family members related to marketing. While deciding selling area 65 percent of women agripreneurs decided the selling area with their husband, 29.17 percent took the decision it independently and only 5.83 percent decided it with their family members. Regarding launching of new products55% of women agripreneurs took decision with their husband, 34.17 percent took decision independently and 10.83 percent took the decision with their family members.

Factors influencing decision making behaviour of women agripreneurs

Table 3: Correlation co-efficient between decision making behaviour and other independent variables

Sl. No.	Factors	Correlation Coefficient (r)
1.	Education	.169*
2.	Purpose of starting	.037
3.	Idea got	.349**
4.	Restriction faced	-.502**
5.	Problem faced	.088
6.	Awareness level	.144

**significant at 1 percent level, *significant at 10 percent level

Table 3 represents the correlation coefficient between dependent variable decision-making behaviour and other independent variables. So, from the above table it was known that education is positively correlated with decision making behaviour of women agripreneur and was found significant at 10 percent level which means more the education level of women agripreneur more the decision taken by her independently. It was also known that idea got about the enterprise is positively correlated with decision making behaviour of women agripreneurs and was found significant at 1 percent level which means when she gets the idea; she is able to take decision. Restriction faced was found negatively correlated with decision making behaviour of women agripreneurs and was found to be significant at 1 percent level, which means more the restriction faced by women agripreneurs less the decision is taken by her.

Conclusion

The family's financial need was the main driver for the establishment of the business by female agribusiness owners. Therefore, a major element that drove women agripreneurs to launch their businesses was their need for money. However, the factors that influenced the behavior of agripreneurs were education and knowledge of the business, which were found to be positively associated and significant at the 1 percent level with the decision-making behavior of female agripreneurs.

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