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### Socio-economic factors affecting the entrepreneurial behaviour of RKVY R-ABI agripreneurs in Mizoram

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#### Abstract

The study was carried out in Mizoram to understand how different socio-economic conditions shaped the entrepreneurial behaviour of agripreneurs supported through the RKVY R-ABI programme during 2024-25. The main focus was to see how factors such as age, education, income, experience, family support, and extension contact influenced the way agripreneurs made decisions, took initiative, and managed their enterprises. Information was collected from fifty-one agripreneurs using a structured interview schedule, and the data were analysed using correlation, chi-square tests, and multiple regression. The results showed that experience, family size, income, enterprise scale, and regular interaction with extension personnel positively influenced entrepreneurial behaviour, while age had a negative effect. Variables like gender, marital status, occupation, financial assistance, and type of training did not show meaningful relationships. Regression analysis confirmed that extension contact was the strongest predictor of entrepreneurial behaviour. Overall, the study highlighted that agripreneurs demonstrated stronger entrepreneurial behaviour when they had practical exposure, supportive family environments, and continuous technical guidance. These insights suggested that strengthening extension services and capacity-building opportunities would further encourage agripreneurial growth in Mizoram.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurial behaviour, agripreneurs, socio-economic characteristics, extension contact, enterprise experience, family support, rural entrepreneurship and agribusiness incubation

#### Introduction

Entrepreneurship has increasingly become a meaningful pathway for people seeking to improve their livelihoods, especially in regions where traditional employment opportunities are limited. In rural and agricultural settings, it does more than create income, it helps individuals think creatively, take initiative, and build ventures that make use of local resources. Across India, programmes such as RKVY-RAFTAAR have played a major role in nurturing new agripreneurs by providing mentoring, training, infrastructure, and financial support. In Mizoram, the RAFTAAR Agribusiness Incubator (R-ABI) has opened doors for many youths and farmers to convert their ideas into practical, sustainable enterprises.

However, becoming an entrepreneur is not shaped only by personal motivation or training; it is deeply influenced by the socio-economic background of the individual. Factors such as family structure, educational level, income, farming experience, exposure to training programmes, and access to credit create very different starting points for different agripreneurs. These factors help determine how confidently a person takes decisions, seeks new information, interacts with others, or takes risks in their business. In other words,

socio-economic conditions strongly influence the entrepreneurial behaviour that ultimately decides whether an enterprise thrives, struggles, or grows steadily.

In Mizoram, this relationship becomes even more important because of the unique social and geographical environment. The hilly terrain, limited market access, and dependence on agriculture mean that many aspiring entrepreneurs face challenges that are not common in other states. While the incubation centre provides a strong support system, each agripreneur enters with different resources, experiences, and constraints. Some come with strong family backing, business exposure, or savings, while others begin with minimal support. These differences influence how they perceive opportunities, what level of risk they are willing to take, and how effectively they apply the training they receive. Understanding this variation is essential for both researchers and policymakers, as it reveals what truly shapes entrepreneurial behaviour on the ground.

For this reason, the present study places special emphasis to analyse the socio-economic factors affecting the entrepreneurial behaviour of RKVY R-ABI agripreneurs in Mizoram. By examining how different socio-economic characteristics interact with behavioural traits such as

leadership, decision-making ability, information-seeking behaviour, innovativeness, and risk-taking ability, the study aims to identify the factors that have the strongest influence on entrepreneurial outcomes. This understanding can help incubation centres refine their strategies, offer more personalized guidance, and design training programmes that respond to the real needs of the agripreneurs they serve.

Ultimately, insights from this objective will not only strengthen academic understanding in the field of extension and agripreneurship research but also support the development of more inclusive and effective policies. By recognizing how socio-economic realities shape behaviour, the study contributes to building a stronger, more supportive environment for agripreneurs in Mizoram—one that encourages sustainable growth, innovation, and long-term rural development

### Methodology

The study was carried out across all eleven districts of Mizoram, a region known for its hilly terrain, scattered settlements, and strong dependence on agriculture. This setting provided a meaningful backdrop for understanding how agripreneurs function within diverse socio-economic conditions. Since the RKVY R-ABI Agribusiness Incubator at the College of Veterinary Science and Animal Husbandry, Selesih, which started on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2019, works directly with emerging agripreneurs from different parts of the state, it served as the starting point for identifying respondents for the research.

A total of 98 individuals had been incubated under the RKVY R-ABI programme across 13 batches. To ensure that the study reflected real entrepreneurial experiences, only those incubatees who had actually started their enterprises or received financial support were included. This resulted in a final sample of 51 agripreneurs. By covering all active participants rather than selecting a smaller subset, the study avoided sampling bias and captured the full range of entrepreneurial activities taking place under the programme. Data were collected through a structured interview schedule. Respondents were approached in person whenever possible, and online or mailed questionnaires were used for those located in remote areas. Before final data collection, the schedule was pre-tested to confirm that the questions were clear and appropriate.

In line with the study, special attention was given to understanding how different socio-economic factors shaped the entrepreneurial behaviour of the agripreneurs. Natikar, (2021), which helped express the behavioural level in percentage terms. For the purpose of the study one dependent variable Y (Entrepreneurship behaviour) was selected and following independent variables (X) were selected-

- AGE (X<sub>1</sub>)
- GENDER (X<sub>2</sub>)
- MARITAL STATUS (X<sub>3</sub>)
- TYPE OF FAMILY (X<sub>4</sub>)
- FAMILY SIZE (X<sub>5</sub>)
- EDUCATION (X<sub>6</sub>)
- OCCUPATION (X<sub>7</sub>)
- SOCIAL BACKGROUND (X<sub>8</sub>)
- AV. INCOME ANNUALLY (X<sub>9</sub>)

- ANNUAL TURNOVER (X<sub>10</sub>)
- LOAN RECEIVED/FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE (X<sub>11</sub>)
- INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPED (X<sub>12</sub>)
- EMPLOYEE HIRED (X<sub>13</sub>)
- EXPERIENCE IN YEARS (X<sub>14</sub>)
- FARM/FIRM SIZE (X<sub>15</sub>)
- EXTENSION CONTACT (X<sub>16</sub>)
- TRAINING UNDERGONE (X<sub>17</sub>)

To explore the influence of socio-economic factors, multiple statistical tools were used. Pearson's correlation was applied to continuous variables to understand the strength and direction of their relationship with entrepreneurial behaviour. For categorical variables, the chi-square test helped determine whether significant associations existed. To examine the combined impact of all variables, multiple linear regression analysis was used, allowing a clearer picture of which factors played the most meaningful role. All analyses were carried out using SPSS and Microsoft Excel, ensuring accuracy and replicability of results.

### Results

The study examined how different socio-economic characteristics shaped the entrepreneurial behaviour of agripreneurs supported under the RKVY-RABI programme in Mizoram. Correlation analysis showed that several variables had a clear and positive association with entrepreneurial behaviour. Family size, annual income, annual turnover, number of employees hired, years of experience, and farm or firm size all showed significant positive correlations. Among these, experience ( $r = 0.783$ ), family size ( $r = 0.757$ ), and farm/firm size ( $r = 0.773$ ) emerged as the strongest correlates, indicating that agripreneurs with more years of practical exposure, larger family support, and wider operational areas tended to score higher in entrepreneurial behaviour.

Age showed no measurable relationship ( $r = 0.000$ ), suggesting that entrepreneurial behaviour did not vary by age group. Financial assistance displayed a weak and non-significant relationship, which indicates that access to loans alone did not necessarily enhance behavioural attributes.

**Table 1:** Relationship between the independent variables and dependent variable

Variables	Pearson correlation (r)	p-value (significance)
Age	0.000	0.999
Family size	0.757	0.000**
Av. Income annually	0.608	0.000**
Annual Turnover	0.439	0.001**
Loan received	0.105	0.698
Employee hired	0.521	0.000**
Experience in years	0.783	0.000**
Farm/Firm size	0.773	0.000**

The chi-square test further supported the pattern. Education and extension contact were found to be significantly associated with entrepreneurial behaviour, showing that knowledge, awareness, and regular interaction with advisory institutions contributed meaningfully to entrepreneurial development. Gender, family type, occupation,

infrastructure, and type of training attended did not show significant associations, suggesting that these factors did not create major behavioural differences among respondents.

**Table 2:** Chi square analysis for entrepreneurship behaviour with 8 selected independent variable

Variables	Chi square value	Df	p-value (significance)
Gender	1.374	2	0.503
Family type	36.528	36	0.444
Primary occupation	6.489	8	0.593
Subsidiary occupation	2.354	2	0.308
Education	20.545	8	0.008**
Infrastructure developed	9.122	10	0.521
Extension contact	43.412	8	0.000**
Training type	4.598	12	0.970

Multiple regression analysis provided a deeper understanding of these relationships. The overall model explained 71.5 percentage of the variation in entrepreneurial behaviour, demonstrating strong predictive effectiveness. Extension contact emerged as the most influential variable ( $p < 0.01$ ), highlighting the role of technical guidance and frequent advisory support in shaping behaviour. Age showed a significant negative contribution, indicating that younger agripreneurs tended to display stronger behavioural characteristics. Family size approached significance in the positive direction, while other variables such as education, income, and turnover showed positive but non-significant effects.

Overall, the results indicate that entrepreneurial behaviour among agripreneurs was influenced more by practical experience, enterprise scale, family support, and institutional interaction than by demographic attributes or access to financial assistance alone.

**Table 3:** Effect of independent variables (X) on dependent variable (Y)

Variable no.	Independent variables (X)	Coefficient	Standard error	"t" value	Sig
X1	Age	-9.824	2.976	-3.301	0.002**
X2	Gender	-2.970	2.126	-1.397	0.173
X3	Marital status	-1.218	1.219	-0.999	0.326
X4	Family type	0.218	0.115	1.899	0.067
X5	Family size	1.839	0.909	2.022	0.052*
X6.1	Primary occupation	0.347	0.438	0.793	0.434
X6.2	Subsidiary occupation	-0.550	1.563	-0.352	0.727
X7	Education	1.125	0.691	1.627	0.114
X9	Income	6.924E-7	0.000	0.909	0.370
X10	Turnover	-5.389E-7	0.000	-0.948	0.351
X11	Financial assistance	-8.163E-7	0.000	-0.463	0.647
X12	Infrastructure developed	-0.381	0.501	-0.759	0.454
X13	Employee hired	-0.214	0.536	-0.399	0.693
X14	Experience years	0.367	0.389	-0.943	0.353
X15	Farm/firm size	0.004	0.014	0.298	0.768
X16	Extension contact	6.522	1.216	5.364	0.000**
X17	Training undergone	0.623	0.493	1.265	0.216
R <sup>2</sup> = 0.715					
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup> = 0.709					
F value= 122.732					
Frequency= 51					

**Table 4:** ANOVA for the regression test

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	5722.038	20	286.102	15.158	0.000***
Residual	566.228	30	18.874		
Total	6288.266	50			

## Discussion

The study shows that the entrepreneurial behaviour of agripreneurs is shaped by a combination of practical experience, household dynamics, enterprise scale, and institutional support. The positive influence of family size aligns with earlier observations that larger households provide labour, shared responsibility, and moral support, all of which enhance entrepreneurial decision-making and confidence. This finding is consistent with studies stating that families with more members offer better labour

availability for enterprise activities. At the same time, it contrasts with the observations of Pooja *et al.* (2024) <sup>[11]</sup>, who found only a weak association, suggesting that in Mizoram, entrepreneurship remains more family-oriented and collective in nature.

The strong role of annual income and annual turnover supports earlier research by Murugan and Sreedaya (2022) <sup>[10]</sup> and Bhaskar *et al.* (2020) <sup>[2]</sup>, both of whom reported that individuals with higher economic capacity exhibit stronger entrepreneurial behaviour. In the present study, agripreneurs with higher income and turnover appear better positioned to invest in improved technologies, diversify production, and expand market reach, thereby strengthening their overall entrepreneurial orientation. This demonstrates that financial stability not only supports business development but also encourages experimentation and willingness to innovate.

Experience emerges as one of the most influential socio-economic determinants. This observation is consistent with established extension research indicating that experience broadens understanding of markets, risks, and enterprise management. Experienced agripreneurs in Mizoram have accumulated practical knowledge over time, enabling them to make informed decisions, anticipate challenges, and adapt their strategies effectively. This strengthens their overall entrepreneurial behaviour and contributes to growth-oriented enterprise development.

In contrast, the study found that age has a negative influence on entrepreneurial behaviour, meaning younger agripreneurs tend to perform better. This contradicts the findings of Shivacharan (2015)<sup>[13]</sup>, who observed a positive association in another context. In Mizoram, younger agripreneurs appear more receptive to new ideas, digital tools, and training programmes introduced through incubation, which may explain their stronger entrepreneurial expression. Similarly, the insignificant influence of gender diverges from the findings of Yoganandan *et al.* (2022)<sup>[14]</sup>, yet aligns with studies reporting that in Mizoram, men and women have nearly equal access to skills, resources, and opportunities, thereby narrowing behavioural differences. Financial assistance showed no significant influence on entrepreneurial behaviour, contradicting the results of Antony and Thomas (2020)<sup>[1]</sup>, who found credit to be a strong motivator in their study on agro-food parks. This difference suggests that in Mizoram, access to formal credit is often supplemented or replaced by personal savings or informal borrowing, reducing the behavioural impact of financial assistance. Additionally, the need for financial literacy and post-loan guidance becomes evident, as credit alone may not shape entrepreneurial actions unless it is paired with appropriate advisory support.

Most notably, extension contact emerges as the strongest predictor of entrepreneurial behaviour. This finding is fully supported by the chi-square and regression results, which reveal that regular interaction with extension agents significantly strengthens behavioural attributes such as decision-making, information-seeking, and innovativeness. The consistency of this result with broader extension literature highlights the critical role of continuous technical guidance in shaping entrepreneurial capacity.

Overall, the study reaffirms that entrepreneurial behaviour is influenced more by practical exposure, resource availability, family support, and institutional interaction than by demographic variables alone. It also shows a clear pattern: factors directly tied to enterprise operations and knowledge seem to play a more decisive role than those linked to personal background. The consistency and contradictions identified across the referenced literature help position the study within the wider research context and underline the unique socio-economic dynamics of agripreneurship in Mizoram.

## Conclusion

The study shows that the socio-economic conditions surrounding an agripreneur play a meaningful role in shaping how they think, decide, and act in their enterprises. Experience, family support, income level, and the scale of

the enterprise emerge as strong influencers, while regular contact with extension personnel clearly strengthens confidence and decision-making. Younger agripreneurs show more dynamic behaviour, suggesting that age affects openness to new ideas and willingness to take risks. In contrast, factors such as gender, marital status, occupation, and financial assistance do not create major differences. These findings highlight that entrepreneurial behaviour grows when agripreneurs receive practical exposure, guidance, and supportive environments. Strengthening extension services, hands-on learning, and enterprise-building opportunities can therefore meaningfully enhance agripreneurship in the state.

## Highlights

- Experience, family size, income, and enterprise scale significantly enhanced entrepreneurial behaviour.
- Age negatively influenced entrepreneurial behaviour among agripreneurs.
- Gender, occupation, training type, and financial assistance showed no significant behavioural effect.
- Extension contact was the strongest predictor of entrepreneurial behaviour.
- Entrepreneurial behaviour improved with practical exposure and continuous technical guidance.

## Conflict of Interest: None

**Research ethics statement(s):** Informed consent of the participants

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