

Factors Contributing the Success of Rural Entrepreneurs in Hilly Areas: An Insight from Garo Hills, Meghalaya

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Abstract

It is now an established fact that entrepreneurship has the economic force towards rural development. Lately rural development and entrepreneurship are strongly associated by the policy makers. Rural entrepreneurship is now seen as the strategic driver of rural development. Rural areas of the countries especially hilly areas offer enough resources (both agro-based and non-agro-based) for the development of entrepreneurship. Most importantly, a rural entrepreneur lives in the rural areas and thus helps in the formation of local wealth. Since economic goals of rural entrepreneur and social goals of rural development are interconnected, entrepreneurship in rural areas is usually community-based and has large impact on rural community. Under this situation, in any project, the selection of potential entrepreneur becomes a crucial factor in order to ensure entrepreneurial success. An analysis of the empirical literatures regarding the characteristics of entrepreneurs, establishes direct relationship between the need for achievement, locus of control and risk taking propensity with success in most cases. There are many other factors including need for dominance, passion for work, and time preference. Apart from these psychological factors, the demographic characteristics, infrastructural facility and institutional support also play a crucial role in decision related to entrepreneurship in rural area especially in hilly regions like West Garo Hills of Meghalaya. The background factors of the entrepreneurs also cannot be ignored. This paper attempts to investigate the factors that determine entrepreneurial selection and success in rural hilly areas by studying the entrepreneurs in the IFAD project villages of the district. Also an effort was made to find out the correlation between the variables and relations between those variables and sales (income from enterprise) to find

out factors having significant impact on entrepreneurial success in rural hilly areas.

Keyword: Rural Entrepreneurship, Rural Development, Agribusiness, Entrepreneur Selection

Introduction

Fieldsend *et al.*, (2004) have given a definition of sustainable rural development as “maintaining or increasing the wealth-generating capacity of rural communities whilst maintaining the long-term capability of the community and its built and natural environments to support this capacity”. Here, the words “wealth generating capacity” is vital. This wealth generating capacity can be improved by increasing the competence and attitude of people to achieve adequate and sustainable incomes. Rural areas of the countries especially hilly areas offer enough resources (both agro-based and non-agro-based) for the development of entrepreneurship. Most importantly, a rural entrepreneur lives in the rural areas and thus helps in the formation of local wealth. Since economic goals of rural entrepreneur and social goals of rural development are interconnected, entrepreneurship in rural areas is usually community-based and has large impact on rural community. Under this situation, in any project, the selection of potential entrepreneur becomes a crucial factor in order to ensure entrepreneurial success. An analysis of the empirical literatures regarding the characteristics of entrepreneurs, establishes direct relationship between the need for achievement, locus of control and risk taking propensity with success in most cases. There are many other factors including need for dominance, passion for work, and time preference.

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Apart from these psychological factors, the demographic characteristics, infrastructural facility and institutional support also play a crucial role in decision related to entrepreneurship in rural area especially in hilly region like West Garo Hills of Meghalaya. This paper attempts to investigate the factors that determine entrepreneurial selection and success in rural hilly areas by studying the entrepreneurs in the IFAD project villages of the district. Also an effort was made to find out the correlation between the variables and relations between those variables and sales (income from enterprise) to find out factors having significant impact on entrepreneurial success in rural hilly areas. In short, the objectives of this paper are:

- i. to identify the factors affecting rural entrepreneurship in hilly areas of Garo Hills, Meghalaya
- ii. to understand the relationship between the factors affecting rural entrepreneurship in the study area
- iii. to prepare a framework for the potential entrepreneur selection strategy for rural hill entrepreneurs

In reaching the above mentioned objectives, the structure of this paper is as following. The next section presents a critical analysis of the literatures related to rural entrepreneurship. The third section describes IFAD project villages and its importance in rural hill entrepreneurs. Methodology related to study area, data collection, variable construction, and analytical tools has been presented in the subsequent section. The fifth section presents the results and finally, the sixth and the last section concludes the paper.

Literature Survey

A review of the literatures on entrepreneurship and entrepreneurs highlights that a large number of researchers (including economists, psychologists, and sociologists among many) have tried to analyze these concepts from different perspectives. To begin with, it was Cantillon who coined the term “Entrepreneurship” in 1755. Schumpeter (1961), McClelland (1961), Pareek (1967), Akhauri (1977), Cantillon (1955), Lucy Mair (1984), Adam Smith (1984), Geertz (1967), Firth (1967), Barth (1960), Singer (1967), Epstein (1964), Nafziger (1975), and others highlighted that psychological, socio-cultural, economic factors play a key role in the development of entrepreneurship.

As far as the concept of entrepreneurs is concerned, there are many researchers who described entrepreneurs as risk

bearers (Cantillon, 1755 and Knight, 1921), or as agents who draw together the factors of production (Say, 1803), or as coordinators of innovation (Schumpeter, 1942).

Many researchers have tried to identify factors affecting success of entrepreneurs. The personality characteristics include the need for achievement (McClelland, 1965a); risk taking propensity (Brockhaus, 1980); locus of control (Brockhaus, 1982) and desire for personal control of business (Sexton and Bowman, 1983).

In addition, other background factors or human capital related to individual personality have also been discussed by the researchers. Some of these include previous employment (Storey, 1982); family background (Scott and Twomey, 1988); age and gender (Buttner and Rosen, 1989); education (Storey, 1982) and religion (Weber, 1930) cited in Tonge (2001). Altogether, the combination of personal characteristics with background factors or human capital makes some individual more likely entrepreneurial candidates than others (Tonge, 2001). Apart from these, the external environment i.e. external factors like infrastructure, training, communication network and financial support encourages or discourages a potential entrepreneur.

As far as success of rural entrepreneurship is concerned, Rao and Mohan (1988) highlighted that the success of rural entrepreneurship depends not only on the drive and initiatives of the rural folk but also on the provision for adequate financial assistance, supply of raw material, machinery and equipment and the stupendous task of providing the marketing assistance.

Significance of IFAD Project Villages

The NERCORMP- IFAD (North Eastern Region Community Resource Management Project- International Fund for Agriculture Development) project model of NaRM- Gs (Natural resource management groups) and cluster associations has been replicated as a Village Employment Council (VEC) and Area Employment Council (AEC) in the whole state of Meghalaya through the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA), the state government has given recognition to these groups for any development programmes. The IFAD project thrust has been to facilitate a new approach to development focusing on interventions, which are technically appropriate, culturally sensitive

and institutionally effective and sustainable. The NaRM-Gs, SHGs, NaRM- G cluster associations and SHG federations has achieved a sustainable production in vegetables, agri-horti, livestock, credit requirements of enterprise, etc. to improve the living standard of the people. The establishment of cluster specific enterprises viz. dairy, poultry, tea production, fruit processing, spice unit, bamboo CFC's, ginger, *graminbhandar*, banana and pineapple fiber and village grain bank, etc. are success stories.

Methodology

Study Area

Meghalaya, one the states of the north- east India, has a geographical area of 22,429 sq km and lies between 24⁰58' and 26⁰07' N and 89⁰48' and 92⁰51' E. The elevation ranges from 60 m to 1950 m asl. The population of the state is 2,306, 069 (2001 Census). The scheduled tribe population (mainly belonging to Khasi, Jaintia and Garo tribes) constitutes 85.53% of the total population of the state. The Garos inhabit western Meghalaya, the Khasis central Meghalaya and the Jaintias eastern Meghalaya. In the interior of the state (excluding the urban populations), the tribal population percentage increases to 97.3% in Garo hills, 77.4% in the Khasi hills and 95.1% in the Jaintia hills. The study has been carried out in the West GaroHills district of the Garo hills.

Data Collection

The findings of the study were based on both primary as well as secondary data. Primary data collection was done through interviews with the help of schedules administered on 50 randomly selected successful entrepreneurs of the West Garo Hills distributed across the 5 blocks in the IFAD project area. The list of successful rural entrepreneurs was obtained from the officials of IFAD project. Various published sources including the annual reports of the project (various issues) were also consulted to gather relevant secondary information.

Variable Construction

The findings of the various researchers over the years have established that along with the internal factors (i.e.

personality characteristics), the external factors and the background factors are also important for becoming an entrepreneur.

Among the internal factors, based on the use by the various researchers, achievement motivation, locus of control, metacognitive activity, need for dominance and self- efficacy were considered for the present study. Achievement motivation i.e. high need for achievement leads individuals to engagement in entrepreneurial behavior and success (McClelland, 1961, 1962 and 1965b; Cassidy and Lynn, 1989). Some individuals believe that they control what happens to them whereas others believe outside factors viz. luck or chance control their fate. These are called as internals and externals respectively (Robins, 2003). Researches have shown that high internal scores lead to more successful entrepreneurs (Pandey and Tewary, 1979; Rotter, 1966). Metacognition is thinking about thinking (Livingston, 1997) and a successful entrepreneur should have good metacognitive skills. Some people who don't want to be in subordinate of another person tend to work for themselves. For an entrepreneur high need for dominance could be a key characteristic (Steers and Braunstein, 1976). Thus need for dominance was selected as one of the variable. Self- belief determines how people feel, think, motivate themselves and behave. They set themselves testing goals and uphold strong commitment to them. Entrepreneurs should have self- efficacious attitude towards life (Schwarzer *et al.*, 1997).

Among the external factors, institutional support, communication system, and financial support were considered for the purpose of the study. Among the background factors, family occupation, age, education and current enterprise experience are considered important for inclusion in the study.

Analysis of Variables

The objective of this study was to find out what makes successful entrepreneurs in the rural hilly regions. Based on the methodology developed by Acharya *et al.* (n.d), an attempt was made to identify statistically significant relationships between the selected variables by first finding the correlation between different variables and then multiple regression was used to find out relations between variables.

For the sake of simplicity, log- linear (independent variable is linear) was chosen as the functional form for the regression analysis. The simple logarithm of sales data is the dependent variable for all estimated regressions.

At the end of the study, the following regression equation is proposed for entrepreneur selection.

$$Y_i = \alpha + \beta_{11}X_{i1} + \beta_{12}X_{i2} + \dots + \beta_{in}X_{in} + E_i$$

Y_i stands for log of sales (income from enterprise), α is the constant intercept term, X_i represents the independent variables, β_i represents the slopes or the coefficients corresponding to each X_i and E_i is an error term

Results

Sample Description

Table 1 presents the means, standard deviations and coefficient of variations of the psychological, external and background variables. It also presents the same for sales

returns (income from enterprise) of the entrepreneurs. The table shows that entrepreneurs under study score high in locus of control and metacognitive for the psychometric variables. Further they score average in case of achievement motivation, need for dominance and self-efficacy. The table also shows that rural entrepreneurs of this hill area score high for institutional support. The reason being it's an IFAD project village. Further they score average for financial support and low for communication system. The average education level of the entrepreneur was found to be middle school (Class 6) pass and the average age was around 39 years. Most of the entrepreneurs had business as their family source of income. The table shows that most of the rural entrepreneurs are in the current business for around 14 years. The average turnover from the enterprises was Rs.22198.00.

Correlation Analysis

Table 2 is the correlation matrix for all the variables

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

Sl. No	Variables		Mean	Standard Deviation	Coefficient of Variation
	Group	Variable			
1	Psychometric Variables/ Internal Variables	Achievement Motivation (AchM)	3.70	0.47	7.809
2		Locus of Control (LC)	4.01	0.58	6.860
3		Metacognitive activity (MC)	4.34	0.50	8.691
4		Need for Dominance (ND)	3.61	0.65	5.562
5		Self- Efficacy (SE)	3.60	0.55	6.555
6	External Variables	Institutional support	0.600	0.495	1.212
7		Communication system	0.280	0.454	0.617
8		Financial support	0.380	0.490	0.775
9	Background variables	Education	6.260	3.550	1.763
10		Age	39.300	8.057	4.878
11		Family Occupation	0.720	0.454	1.587
12		Current enterprise experience	13.880	6.006	2.311
13	Sales (income from enterprise)		22198.000	9362.027	2.371

Note:

Each of the psychometric variables was measured on a 5 point likert scale for the respective questions and then average was taken.

5 denoted extreme positive attribute and 1 denoted extreme negative.

Table 2: Correlation matrix

		VAR 00001	VAR 00002	VAR 00003	VAR 00004	VAR 00005	VAR 00006	VAR 00007	VAR 00008	VAR 00009	VAR 00010	VAR 00011	VAR 00012
VAR 00001	Pearson Correlation	1	-.229	-.195	-.047	-.114	-.198	-.199	-.044	-.090	-.005	.138	-.063
	Sig. (1-tailed)		.055	.088	.372	.216	.084	.083	.382	.268	.487	.170	.333
VAR 00002	Pearson Correlation	-.229	1	.236*	.686**	.282*	.300*	.188	.016	.064	.271*	.031	.063
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.055		.050	.000	.024	.017	.096	.456	.329	.029	.416	.333
VAR 00003	Pearson Correlation	-.195	.236*	1	.317*	-.236*	.091	.213	.218	.049	.023	.003	.048
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.088	.050		.012	.049	.264	.069	.064	.367	.436	.492	.371
VAR 00004	Pearson Correlation	-.047	.686**	.317*	1	.183	.177	.321*	.148	.169	.204	.265*	.290*
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.372	.000	.012		.102	.109	.012	.152	.120	.077	.031	.020
VAR 00005	Pearson Correlation	-.114	.282*	-.236*	.183	1	.327*	.303*	.261*	.296*	.314*	.203	.293*
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.216	.024	.049	.102		.010	.016	.034	.018	.013	.078	.019
VAR 00006	Pearson Correlation	-.198	.300*	.091	.177	.327*	1	.246*	.209	.182	.022	.032	.137
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.084	.017	.264	.109	.010		.043	.073	.103	.441	.413	.171
VAR 00007	Pearson Correlation	-.199	.188	.213	.321*	.303*	.246*	1	.193	.271*	.045	.443**	.451**
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.083	.096	.069	.012	.016	.043		.089	.028	.378	.001	.001
VAR 00008	Pearson Correlation	-.044	.016	.218	.148	.261*	.209	.193	1	.269*	.052	.209	.348**
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.382	.456	.064	.152	.034	.073	.089		.029	.361	.073	.007
VAR 00009	Pearson Correlation	-.090	.064	.049	.169	.296*	.182	.271*	.269*	1	.600**	.266*	.252*
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.268	.329	.367	.120	.018	.103	.028	.029		.000	.031	.039
VAR 00010	Pearson Correlation	-.005	.271*	.023	.204	.314*	.022	.045	.052	.600**	1	.197	.075
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.487	.029	.436	.077	.013	.441	.378	.361	.000		.085	.302
VAR 00011	Pearson Correlation	.138	.031	.003	.265*	.203	.032	.443**	.209	.266*	.197	1	.723**
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.170	.416	.492	.031	.078	.413	.001	.073	.031	.085		.000
VAR 00012	Pearson Correlation	-.063	.063	.048	.290*	.293*	.137	.451**	.348**	.252*	.075	.723**	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.333	.333	.371	.020	.019	.171	.001	.007	.039	.302	.000	

Note:

VAR0001: Education Level of the Entrepreneur, VAR0002: Age of the Entrepreneur, VAR0003: Family Occupation, VAR0004: Current Enterprise Experience, VAR0005: Institutional Support, VAR0006: Communication System, VAR0007: Financial Support, VAR0008: Achievement Motivation, VAR0009: Locus of control, VAR00010: Metacognition, VAR00011: Need for Dominance, VAR00012: Self-efficacy

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

Table 3: Regression Analysis

<i>Regression Statistics</i>					
Multiple R	0.797778714				
R Square	0.636450877				
Adjusted R Square	0.518543054				
Standard Error	0.139123562				
Observations	50				

<i>ANOVA</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>
Regression	12.000	1.254	0.104	5.398	0.000
Residual	37.000	0.716	0.019		
Total	49.000	1.970			

	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>
Intercept	3.432	0.296	11.600	0.000
X Variable 1	0.000	0.006	-0.046	0.964
X Variable 2	0.002	0.004	0.481	0.633
X Variable 3	-0.027	0.054	-0.496	0.623
X Variable 4	-0.002	0.005	-0.347	0.730
X Variable 5	0.095	0.054	1.763	0.086
X Variable 6	0.032	0.050	0.631	0.532
X Variable 7	-0.119	0.053	-2.258	0.030
X Variable 8	0.250	0.050	5.040	0.000
X Variable 9	0.093	0.048	1.924	0.062
X Variable 10	-0.129	0.058	-2.245	0.031
X Variable 11	-0.035	0.049	-0.711	0.481
X Variable 12	0.059	0.059	1.003	0.322

Note: X Variable 1: Education Level of the Entrepreneur, X Variable 2: Age of the Entrepreneur, X Variable 3: Family Occupation, X Variable 4: Current Enterprise Experience, X Variable 5: Institutional Support, X Variable 6: Communication System, X Variable 7: Financial Support, X Variable 8: Achievement Motivation, X Variable 9: Locus of control, X Variable 10: Metacognition, X Variable 11: Need for Dominance, X Variable 12: Self-efficacy

affecting the entrepreneurial success in rural hilly areas of West Garo Hills.

As we can see, family occupation is highly correlated with age of the entrepreneur, current enterprise experience is highly correlated with family occupation, institutional support is significantly correlated with age of entrepreneur and family occupation, communication system is significantly correlated with age of entrepreneur and family occupation, and financial support is significantly correlated with current enterprise experience, institutional support and communication system. In case of psychometric variables, achievement motivation is highly correlated with institutional support, locus of control is significantly correlated with institutional support, financial support and achievement motivation, metacognition is highly correlated with age of entrepreneur and institutional

support, need for dominance is significantly correlated with current enterprise experience and locus of control and finally self-efficacy is significantly correlated with current enterprise experience, institutional support and locus of control.

This is in line with the expectation that self-efficacy and locus of control should be positively correlated. This proves that entrepreneurs having strong belief in their ability would also think that fate has only a modest influence on whatever happens to them.

Regression Analysis

Table 3 presents the regression results of the study. In total, 12 variables were used to explain the dependent variable sales. The variables used are - X Variable 1:

Education level of the entrepreneur, X Variable 2: Age of the entrepreneur, X Variable 3: Family occupation, X Variable 4: Current enterprise experience, X Variable 5: Institutional support, X Variable 6: Communication system, X Variable 7: Financial support, X Variable 8: Achievement motivation, X Variable 9: Locus of control, X Variable 10: Metacognition, X Variable 11: Need for dominance, and X Variable 12: Self-efficacy.

It has been found from the regression analysis that entrepreneurial success in West Garo Hills has been significantly driven by institutional support among the external factors, achievement motivation and locus of control among the psychological/internal factors.

Based on the regression results, sales (income from enterprise) and variables under study, here an attempt was made to develop a model. This model shows that level of sales (income from enterprise) is a function of the different variables. This model can be used to test the aspiring entrepreneurs to forecast about their sales performance in the future. Based on this, the entrepreneurship promoter institutions can direct their actions in a more precise manner. Since it has been found that sales (income from enterprise) of rural entrepreneurs of West Garo hills is driven by institutional support, achievement motivation and locus of control.

Selection model of entrepreneur in hill region

$\text{Ln}(\text{Sales}) = \alpha + 0.095 * \text{Institutional support} + 0.250 * \text{Achievement Motivation} + 0.093 * \text{Locus of Control}$

Conclusion

An attempt was made in this paper to investigate the factors that determine entrepreneurial selection and success in rural hilly areas by studying the entrepreneurs in the IFAD project villages of the district. Also an effort was made to find out the correlation between the variables and then multiple regression was used to find out relations between those variables and sales (income from enterprise) to find out factors having significant impact on entrepreneurial success in rural hilly areas. The performance appears to be systematically driven by institutional support among the external factors, achievement motivation, and locus of control among the psychological/internal factors. Although the findings of the paper focus on the NERCORMP- IFAD project villages, this process can have a wider applicability. For

further development of the model, issues like variations in culture, cross- culture, geography etc. can be taken into consideration.

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