

PERFORMANCE VARIATION WITH AGE AND EDUCATION: PERCEPTION OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN PAPUMPARE DISTRICT, ARUNACHAL PRADESH, INDIA

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Entrepreneurs are influential in initiating and sustaining socio-economic development. Nonetheless, women entrepreneurs are actively contributing to economic growth, improving their socio-economic conditions, and playing a vital role in generating employment opportunities. This research focuses on the examination of how the perception of entrepreneurs' performance differs based on their age and educational background. Data were gathered from 340 women entrepreneurs residing in the Papum-Pare District of Arunachal Pradesh, India. The Kruskal-Wallis test was employed to assess variations in performance perceptions concerning the respondents' age and educational backgrounds. Our findings show that while age and education does not have a direct impact on perception across dimensions of performance among entrepreneurs, education levels however, significantly impact on perception of performance in terms of social contribution. The mean rank for social contributions is highest among those with 'No Education' followed by those under the group 'Primary'; while the mean rank of the group 'Graduate' is lowest among all. These results indicate that entrepreneurs with 'No Education' have the highest positive perception towards their social contribution. 'Graduate' entrepreneurs show the lowest positive perception towards social contribution as compared to other groups. These findings provide a foundation for further research into the nuances of women's entrepreneurship in Arunachal Pradesh.

Keywords: Arunachal Pradesh, women entrepreneurs, performance perception, social contribution

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Introduction

A woman entrepreneur may be defined as:

“ a woman or group of women who initiate, organize or run a business enterprise. A woman who is confident, innovative, and creative is capable of achieving self-economic independence individually or in collaboration and generates employment opportunities for others through instigating, establishing, and management of the enterprise by keeping pace with her family and social life” (Kulkarni, 2012, p. 3).

Women entrepreneurship in Arunachal Pradesh is quite recent and has yet to achieve outstanding success. Their overall enterprises are still very small. However, the potential for developing women entrepreneurs in the state is high due to its rich culture and tradition and the availability of an abundance of natural resources (Kalita, 2015). They contribute towards the growth of the economy, enhancing the socio-economic conditions. They have shown promising footprint on the economy and other socio-cultural factors. Some of the factors are improved education level, standard of living, and privileges which is seen to be at par with their male counterparts (Singh, 2014). Also, women entrepreneurs are becoming outstanding forces to consider within the business world and they are not only involved in business for survival, but they tend to influence their inner urge of creativity and to prove their potentialities. Educated women are contributing to an immense extent to the social transformation and it is speculated that in the future, there will be more women venturing into areas traditionally dominated by men (Singh, 2014, p.1)

Literature Review

Socio-Economic Characteristics of Women Entrepreneurs

Under the concept of human capital, there are two key demographic characteristics i.e., education and work experience (Basu & Virick,

2008). Socio-economic status, such as age, gender, family income, family occupation, individual background, education and work experience have an impact on entrepreneurial activities. Women's entrepreneurial innovativeness is very much affected by their age and education, as well as the type, location, and size of the business (Idris, 2008). Women's power forms a key part of the labour force and the economic role played by them cannot be cut off from the framework of development. Moreover, it gives women the right to survival, safety, equal education, and equal succession (Mohandas, 2016).

The choice for a pattern of enterprise by women entrepreneurs appears to opt proprietorship pattern, while family-owned business is secondary. The reason for this could be their self-confidence and their desire to achieve their dream. They agreed they have become more independent and successful and they have proved themselves in society that they can do anything and achieve their goals (Mall, 2015).

Factors Motivating Women Entrepreneurship

A total of 722 women entrepreneurs in the Chittoor district were interviewed. The study found that seven factors that motivated women greatly to become entrepreneurs are: Generation of Income, Economic Independence, Interest, Self-Dependent, Family Encouragement, Social Status, and Self Prestige out of sixteen attributes (Geetha & Rajani, 2017). The factors that influenced women to start beauty parlours included external and internal factors and meaningful engagement such as perks/rewards and education/competencies. These women accepted that the Beauty Parlor industry is a small enterprise and is easy to manage, which provides them with social status, financial independence, and a rewarding career through which they can balance their family and professional lives (Kumar & Patric, 2018). Seven factors such as economic independence and challenges, economic status and interest, opportunities and necessities, usage of funds,

experience, market potential and family background were extracted for measuring motivational factors for women entrepreneurs. The first factor, 'economic independence and challenge' provides the maximum insights of the motivating forces of women entrepreneurs in the study area. It is significant because the respondents prefer to be economically independent and seek to challenge themselves. (Jesurajan & Edwin, 2011).

Objective

The present study aims to examine the perception on women entrepreneurs' performance based on age and educational background.

Methodology

Design of the Study

The present study relies on primary data for the fulfilment of the stated objectives and the statistical tools are performed through IBM SPSS Version 27.0. A self-designed questionnaire cum schedule with a mix of descriptive and Likert-type questions, keeping in context in context the research objectives of the study, was administered to collect the primary data. The systematic random sampling method was adopted to select the women entrepreneurs of Papum-Pare District of Arunachal Pradesh. The survey was conducted in the year 2022. The process yielded a total of 340 women entrepreneurs from the study area. The reliability statistics of the questionnaire cum schedule are depicted in Table 1.

The reliability outcome of the scale has a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.744 for 10 items as shown in Table 1. The satisfactory alpha coefficient value recommended for related studies lies above 0.65 in most cases (Goforth, 2015). Hence the calculated value of 0.744 is satisfactory for the present study.

Table 1: Case Processing Summary & Reliability Statistics

<i>Cases</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
Valid	340	100
Excluded ^a	0	0
Total	340	100

<i>Cronbach's Alpha</i>	<i>Number of Items</i>
0.774	10

a-Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure

Table 2: Normality Statistics (Kolmogorov-Smirnov^a and Shapiro-Wilk)

<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Kolmogorov-Smirnov^a</i>			<i>Shapiro-Wilk</i>		
	<i>Statistics</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Statistics</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
The enterprise's earning capacity has been increasing since its inception	.198	340	.000	.904	340	.000
Increase in the profit	.221	340	.000	.898	340	.000
Increase in investment of capital	.274	340	.000	.795	340	.000
Increase in employment generation	.178	340	.000	.914	340	.000
Diversification of product and services/innovation	.234	340	.000	.871	340	.000
Improvement in the quality of products and services	.304	340	.000	.784	340	.000
Creation of new market/ expansion of market for product/services	.195	340	.000	.902	340	.000
Asset creation	.267	340	.000	.803	340	.000
Training and development of employees/staff	.278	340	.000	.822	340	.000
Social Contribution	.251	340	.000	.815	340	.000

a-Lilliefors Significance Correction

Data Analysis

Before selecting an appropriate hypothesis test, it's important to assess whether the data follows a normal distribution. To determine this, a Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was conducted on the dataset, and the results are outlined in Table 2. The outcome of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test ($p < 0.05$) indicated that the dataset doesn't adhere to a normal distribution. As a result, instead of using traditional parametric tests, a non-parametric statistical test is chosen for the current research. The Kruskal Wallis test which is commonly used when the data doesn't follow a normal distribution and the comparison is made between more than 2 groups was selected as an alternative to parametric tests. Confidence level was set at 95%.

Results

Demographic Profile of Respondents

Table 3 presents a summary of the demographic characteristics of the 340 respondents who participated in the study. The study examined several key demographic factors, including age, education level, marital status, family structure, and the number of earning members within each family. The largest segment of respondents falls within the age group of 31 to 40 years, comprising 148 individuals, which accounts for 44% of the total respondents. Conversely, the smallest group is represented by those aged 51 years and above, with only 31 individuals, making up 9% of the respondents.

As for education levels, the most common qualification among respondents is at the primary level, with 114 individuals (34%) holding this educational status. Conversely, the least common qualification is at the post-graduate level and above, with only 13 individuals (9%) in this group. The marital status among respondents indicates that a majority, 291 individuals (86%), are married, while the remaining 49 individuals (14%) are unmarried. In terms of family structure, the data shows that the majority of respondents, 176 individuals (52%), come from nuclear families, while the remaining 164 individuals (48%) are from joint families.

With regards to the number of earning members within families, the highest number of respondents, 172 individuals (51%), reported having two earning members in their family. Conversely, the lowest number of respondents, a mere 9 individuals (3%), stated that there are four or more than four earning members in their family.

Table 3: Profile of the respondents

<i>Demographic Variables</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Age Group (Years)	18-30	50	14.7
	31-40	148	43.5
	41-50	111	32.6
	51 Years & above	31	9.1
Education	No Education	85	25.0
	Primary	114	33.5
	Higher Secondary	97	28.5
	Graduate	31	9.1
	Post-Graduate & above	13	3.8
Marital Status	Married	291	85.6
	Unmarried	49	14.4
Family Structure	Joint Family	164	48.2
	Nuclear Family	176	51.8
Number of Earning Members	One	148	43.5
	Two	172	50.6
	Three	11	3.2
	Four & above	9	2.6
	TOTAL	340	100

Table 4: Performance of women enterprises based on age

<i>Statement</i>	<i>Chi-Square</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Asymp. Sig.</i>
The enterprise's earning capacity has been increasing since its inception	3.535	3	0.316
The enterprise's profit has been increased since its inception	4.727	3	0.193
There is an increase in investment of capital since its inception	1.294	3	0.730

The enterprise has successfully contributed to employment generation	0.870	3	0.833
The enterprise has achieved its goal of diversification of product and services/innovation	0.271	3	0.965
There is an improvement in the quality of products and services since inception	0.834	3	0.841
The enterprise is successful in its objective of creation of new market/ expansion of market for product/services	1.828	3	0.609
The enterprise successfully achieved its goal of asset creation	1.542	3	0.673
The enterprise has successfully completed its routine training and development of employees/staff	1.093	3	0.779
The social contribution of the enterprise is positive and significant	1.303	3	0.728

a-Kruskal Wallis Test

b-Grouping Variable: Age of the Entrepreneurs

Significant at 5% Level of Significance

Table 5: Performance of women enterprises based on education

<i>Statements</i>	<i>Chi-Square</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Asymp. Sig.</i>
The enterprise's earning capacity has been increasing since its inception	2.013	4	0.733
The enterprise's profit has been increased since its inception	1.321	4	0.858
There is an increase in investment of capital since its inception	1.543	4	0.819
The enterprise has successfully contributed to employment generation	1.427	4	0.839
The enterprise has achieved its goal of diversification of product and services/innovation	2.134	4	0.711
There is an improvement in the quality of products and services since inception	3.002	4	0.557
The enterprise is successful in its objective of creation of new market/ expansion of market for product/services	0.972	4	0.914
The enterprise successfully achieved its goal of asset creation	3.04	4	0.551

The enterprise has successfully completed its routine training and development of employees/staff	1.231	4	0.873
The social contribution of the enterprise is positive and significant	10.98	4	0.027

a-Kruskal Wallis Test
b-Grouping Variable: Age of the Entrepreneurs
Significant at 5% Level of Significance

Table 6: Education and Performance (Social Contribution) Perception of Entrepreneur

<i>Statements</i>	<i>Level of Education</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Mean Rank</i>
The social contribution of the enterprise is positive and significant	No Education	85	194.11
	Primary	114	172.23
	Higher Secondary	97	159.45
	Graduate	31	141.45
	Post Graduate & above	13	152.65
	Total	340	

Performance Perceptions based on Age and Education

To determine whether age and education significantly influence the perception of performance among women entrepreneurs, the Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted. The results of our analyses indicate that perception of women entrepreneurs does not significantly vary ($p > 0.05$) according to the age of the respondents across all dimensions of performance (Table 4). Similarly, with an exception of perception towards social contributions of women entrepreneurs which significantly vary ($p < 0.05$) according to the education level of the respondents, education also does not significantly influence entrepreneurs performance (Table 5). Further, the mean rank for social contributions is highest (194.11) for the group labelled as 'no education' followed by the mean rank of the group labelled as 'Primary', and the mean rank of the group labelled as 'Graduate' is lowest (141.45) among all (Table 6). These results indicate that entrepreneurs with 'No education' have the highest positive perception towards their social contribution and on the contrary, the entrepreneurs with an education

level of a graduate, have the lowest positive perception towards social contribution when compared to other groups.

Conclusion

Our results show that age does not have a significant impact on the perception of performance among women entrepreneurs. This suggests that women of varying ages in the sample had similar perceptions of their business performance. On the other hand, there are significant variations in performance perception emerged based on the educational levels of the entrepreneurs, particularly in terms of social contribution. Entrepreneurs with lower education levels tended to have more positive perceptions of their social contributions compared to those with higher education levels. This research offers valuable insights into the intricate world of women's entrepreneurship in the unique context of Arunachal Pradesh. By investigating the influence of age and education on the performance perceptions of women entrepreneurs, this study has uncovered intriguing aspects of their entrepreneurial journey.

One key takeaway from this research is the resilience and determination displayed by women entrepreneurs in Arunachal Pradesh. Despite varying age groups, these women consistently exhibit a strong belief in their abilities and the potential of their businesses. The fact that age does not significantly impact their performance perceptions suggests that women of all ages in this region share a common entrepreneurial spirit, unwavering in the face of challenges. Moreover, the significant variations in performance perception based on educational backgrounds highlight the multifaceted nature of women's entrepreneurship. Those with lower educational levels tend to place a higher value on their social contributions, indicating that they perceive their businesses as not only vehicles for personal success but also as instruments for positive social change. On the other hand, women with higher educational qualifications may view their enterprises through a different lens, possibly focusing more on financial metrics.

These findings provide a foundation for further research into the nuances of women's entrepreneurship in Arunachal Pradesh. Future studies could delve deeper into the specific factors that contribute to the positive performance perceptions among women entrepreneurs, explore the role of mentorship and support networks, and assess the

long-term sustainability of their businesses. Ultimately, this research contributes to a broader understanding of how women entrepreneurs in Arunachal Pradesh navigate their entrepreneurial journeys, adapt to evolving socioeconomic landscapes, and continue to play a vital role in both economic growth and social development. It serves as a reminder that behind every statistic is a story of determination, empowerment, and the pursuit of a better future for themselves and their communities.

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