

Research Note

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.26725/JEE.2019.4.31.6405-6410>**Market Orientation of Women Dairy Farmers of Kerala**Reeja George Pulinilkunnathil¹**ABSTRACT**

The study explores the status of women dairy farmers of Kerala state with respect to marketing variables that have a significant effect on their entrepreneurial behavior. The variables studied include the extent of utilization of marketing facilities, credit orientation and competition orientation. The study was conducted among 153 women dairy farmers, selected through the process of multistage random sampling from Ernakulam, Palakkad, and Thrissur districts of the state. Sharp contrasts with regard to the level of market utilization was observed among farmers with different herd sizes, while higher levels of market utilization were observed among around sixty percent of respondents with larger herd size. None of the respondents with small herd size had high level market facilities utilization. Extent of utilization of market facilities was positively and significantly associated with entrepreneurial behavior of the respondents. Similarly, respondents with larger herd sizes had significantly higher competition orientation scores when compared to those with smaller herd sizes. Most of the respondents in this study fell in the medium level of credit orientation. However, non-significant correlation was observed between credit orientation and entrepreneurial behavior. None of the respondents with more than two cows had low level of competition orientation. Most of the respondents fell in the medium level of competition orientation. Competition orientation was positively and significantly correlated with entrepreneurial behavior of the respondents.

Keywords : Market Orientation; dairy farmer; entrepreneurial behavior; Competition orientation, Credit Orientation; Kerala

The important role that entrepreneurship plays in the economic growth and development of a nation has been documented in scientific literature. Entrepreneurship has been described as a conscious activity that focuses on the creation, promotion and distribution of wealth and service. However, this change would not

be possible without the crucial intervention of the entrepreneur who has been recognized as the trigger for economic growth and the accompanying social and economic transformation of communities all over the world. This endeavor involves calculations on the part of the entrepreneur, crucial decision making and taking risks in the faces

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of adversities. The process of engaging in entrepreneurial activities not only transforms society, but also results in the growth of the entrepreneur endowing him with critical traits that are crucial in his discharge of functions in this respect.

Animal husbandry in Kerala has undergone a total transformation over the last few decades. The state of Kerala is unique in that she boasts of significantly higher rates of literacy when compared to other states in the country. However as per the figures available with the 5th Annual Employment-Unemployment Survey 2015-16 conducted by Ministry of Labour and Employment, Government of India, Kerala has the highest unemployment Rate (UR) of 12.5 as against the all India level of 5 per cent and it is without doubt that the educational qualifications of the unemployed in Kerala would be on the higher side.

Livestock entrepreneurship thus has a significant role to play in the state in ensuring a livelihood for the unemployed as well as augmenting incomes. Unemployment among youth and women is also a serious problem in Kerala where youth comprise around 23 per cent of the state population. The 5th Annual Employment-Unemployment Survey 2015-16 had reported that the unemployment rate of youth in Kerala was 21.7 per cent in rural areas and 18.0 per cent in urban areas while unemployment rates for women in rural Kerala stood at 47.4 per cent of women. It is against this background that the promotion of livestock entrepreneurial activities among the

women of Kerala assumes significance. The benefits of women's control over resources has been documented to have significant association with better health outcomes for children (Hossain et al 2007). Variables such as extent of utilization of market facilities, credit orientation and competition orientation are important determinants of entrepreneurial behavior (George, 2013). Past result has demonstrated the positive effects of entrepreneurship market orientation and performance (Shahid et al., 2004). It was against the aforesaid background that an investigation among women dairy farmers of the state on their extent of utilization of marketing facilities, credit orientation and competition orientation, was taken up.

METHODOLOGY

The present study was undertaken in three districts of the state of Kerala selected from the six districts with the highest cattle population using simple random sampling. The three districts selected were Ernakulam, Palakkad, and Thrissur. A multistage random sampling procedure was used to select the respondents. In the first stage, from each of the three districts selected, simple random sampling was used to select one block from among the first four blocks with the highest cattle population. Accordingly, Alathur block, Angamali block and Ollukara block were selected from Palakkad, Ernakulam and Thrissur districts respectively. From among the nine *panchayats* in Alathur block, Vandazhi *panchayat* was selected while from among the nine *panchayats* in Angamali block,

Karukutty *panchayat* was selected and from among five *panchayats* in Ollukara block, Nadathara *panchayat* was selected, in each case by using the procedure of simple random sampling. In the third stage of sampling, from each *panchayat* the main milk society with the highest milk collection was identified and from each society a list of all the women dairy farmers with one, two and more than two cows was prepared. A proportionate stratified sample of 51 women dairy farmers were selected from each *panchayat* so as to include 17 women each with one, two and more than two cow units. Thus the final sample contained a total of 153 farm women, 51 each with one, two and more than two cow units from each of the three *panchayats*. Data were collected using a pretested interview schedule using personal interviews of respondents on their homesteads. The marketing variables studied included the extent of utilization of market facilities, credit orientation and competition orientation.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Extent of Utilization of Marketing Facilities

Nearly sixty percent of the respondents with large herd size had medium level of utilization of marketing facilities but none of the respondents with small herd size (one cow) had high levels of access to market facilities (Table 1). Access to marketing facilities was positively and significantly correlated with entrepreneurial behavior of the respondents. Marketing is the cornerstone of all industries including livestock enterprises. Milk marketing in Kerala is undertaken in the organized sector by *Milma*- a state agency for milk marketing, and to households and hotels in the unorganized sector.

Higher levels of entrepreneurial behavior associated with larger units could be due to the higher utilization of markets and consequent economic benefit of this association (Table 2). Somvanshi et al (2016) observed that access to market was positively and significantly associated with

Table 1.
Distribution of Respondents according to Their Extent of Utilization of Marketing Facilities

(n = 153)

Sl. No.	Category	Herd size							
		One cow		Two cows		More than two cows		Total	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1.	Low	15	29.41	17	33.33	5	9.80	37	24.18
2.	Medium	36	70.59	18	35.30	17	33.33	71	46.41
3.	High	0	0	16	31.37	29	56.87	45	29.41
4.	Total	51	100.00	51	100.00	51	100.00	153	100.00

Mean: 4.59 SD: 2.15

Table 2.
Correlation Coefficients of the Marketing Variables with Entrepreneurial Behaviour

Sl. No.	Variables	Correlation coefficient
1.	Competition orientation	0.616**
2.	Credit orientation	0.142
3.	Extent of utilization of Marketing facilities	0.317**

**Significant at 0.01 level

Table 3.
Distribution of Respondents according to Credit Orientation

(n = 153)

Sl. No.	Category	Herd size							
		One cow		Two cows		More than two cows		Total	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1.	Low	13	25.49	1	1.96	14	27.45	28	18.30
2.	Medium	25	49.02	32	62.75	17	33.33	74	48.37
3.	High	13	25.49	18	35.29	20	39.22	51	33.33
4.	Total	51	100.00	51	100.00	51	100.00	153	100.00

Mean: 3.67 SD: 1.20

entrepreneurial behavior. Etriya et al (2012) observed that farmers of Warung Kondang in Indonesia had lower levels of entrepreneurial orientation which the authors posited could be due to the inaccessible nature of this region and the consequent lack of market opportunities for farmers in this area.

Credit Orientation

Data on credit orientation are presented in Table 3. It is without question that the ready availability of credit is a critical factor in the establishment of an enterprise and any impediment to the continuous flow of credit would adversely affect the performance of the

enterprise. So also, the larger the enterprise more would be its credit requirement. This was reflected in the findings of this study which showed that respondents with larger herd sizes had significantly higher scores when compared to those with smaller herd sizes. Most of the respondents in this study fell in the medium level of credit orientation. However, non-significant correlation was observed between credit orientation and entrepreneurial behavior (Table 2). This finding was in contrast to that of Datta et al (2016) who observed a positive and significant correlation between credit orientation and entrepreneurial behavior of

Table 4.
Distribution of Respondents according to their Competition Orientation

(n =153)

Sl. No.	Category	Herd size							
		One cow		Two cows		More than two cows		Total	
		Nos	%	Nos	%	Nos	%	Nos	%
1.	Low	25	49.02	3	5.88	0	0	28	18.30
2.	Medium	21	41.18	35	68.63	34	66.67	90	58.82
3.	High	5	9.80	13	25.49	17	33.33	35	22.88
4.	Total	51	100.00	51	100.00	51	100.00	153	100.00

Mean: 13.99 SD: 3.08

rural women engaged in bamboo handicraft in Tripura.

Competition Orientation

Data on 'Competition orientation' are presented in Table 4.

None of the respondents with more than two cows had low levels of competition orientation. Most of the respondents fell in the medium level of competition orientation. Competition orientation was positively and significantly correlated with entrepreneurial behavior of the respondents (Table 2). The authors observed that this higher rate could be due to the fact that most of the respondents had attended formal trainings. Patel et al (2013) however observed that competition orientation was not significantly associated with entrepreneurial behavior of poultry farmers in Gujarat state.

The results of this study point to the fact that more farmers with small herd sizes

fell in the low category with regard to the three marketing variables studied. These results point to a greater need for entrepreneurial trainings among these farmers. Farmers with two cow units though better off in this regard when compared to those with one cow units, they had larger number of farmers in the low category when compared to farmers with larger herd sizes for all the marketing variables except credit orientation.

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