

A STUDY OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND  
ENTREPRENEURIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF TRIBALS OF  
MAYURBHANJ DISTRICT IN SABAI GRASS ENTERPRISE

Ananda Shankar Mohapatra\*

Dr.Upendra Nath Sahu\*\*

**ABSTRACT:**

Entrepreneurship is considered as tactical development interference to speed up the process of economic development. The promotion of entrepreneurship is directly related to the socio-economic development of the poor tribal population of the society. Scheduled tribes constitute the poorest section of population in rural areas of India. They generally depend on forest and agriculture for livelihood. A research study was undertaken in the tribal dominated Mayurbhanj district of Odisha in India .The tribal people in the study area were involved in different agriculture based entrepreneurial activities. In the district cultivation of sabai grass (*Eulaliopsis binata*) and its processing of consumer goods remain a good enterprise for the tribal entrepreneurs. The study was conducted to examine the socio-economic, personal characteristics and entrepreneurial characteristics of the tribals in sabai grass enterprise. It is revealed from the study that majority of the respondents belong to low innovativeness, low farm decision making ability, medium level of knowledge, medium risk taking ability, medium level of self confidence, medium level of management orientation, high leadership ability, medium achievement motivation category.

**KEYWORDS:** Socio-economic development, entrepreneurial characteristics, Sabai grass enterprise, Tribals, Mayurbhanj

\* Senior Lecturer In Management, Seemanta Engineering College, Odisha, India.

\*\* SLO, Deputy Secretary, Government Of Odisha, Bhubaneswar.India.

## **INTRODUCTION:**

The Sabai Grass industry is linked with cultivation of sabai grass and processing of the grass into various consumer household articles such as ropes, mats, carpets, sofa sets, wall hangings and other sophisticated and artistic designing products. Especially the artistic designing of Sabai grass products are admired in foreign countries. So the industry has great export prospective.

Sabai grass is usually cultivated in less fertile highlands. Water requirement for growing of this plant is less as compared to other crops. The agro climatic environment of the study area covering the district of Mayurbhanj in Odisha, India, is suitable for sabai grass cultivation. Out of the total 4.47 lakh hector of cultivable land of the district, 43.70 percent is highland. The water retention capacity of the highlands is very poor. The highlands are less fertile which are generally not suitable for farming of any crop. But for cultivation of Sabai Grass they are most suitable. In two sub-divisions of Mayurbhanj i.e. Baripada and Kaptipada Sabai Grass plantations are extensively found. At present in the district the total area under Sabai Grass cultivation is about 22758 hectares.

Mayurbhanj district is located at northern region of the state of Odisha in India. It is the largest district of Odisha and is one of the biggest districts in India in relation to total geographical area coverage. According to 2001 census, the district covers an area of 10418 square kilometers, which constitutes 6.69 percent of the state territory. The district lies between  $21^{\circ} 16'N$  and  $22^{\circ} 34'N$  latitudes and between  $85^{\circ}40'E$  and  $87^{\circ}11'E$  longitudes. The district is 559.31 meters above the sea level. The central portion of the district is covered by a group of hills known as Similipal range. In the district the percentage of plain lands is quite lower in comparison to other lands. As the area is mainly undulating except along the few rivers and as it comprises ridges, slopes and depressions the agricultural lands are mostly terraced to catch the surface drainage coming from the uplands. Mayurbhanj is said to be a paradise of tribals. In Mayurbhanj district, out of 62 tribal communities of Orissa, 45 communities are found. The mountainous and forest regions of the district have been considered ideal for the tribals. The tribals constitute 57.67% of the total population of the district. The tribal population shares a 15.42% of the total Scheduled Tribe population of the state.

In Mayurbhanj Sabai Grass is cultivated mostly by tribal poor farmers on their degraded highlands. A large number of tribal people are engaged in this cottage industry. They cultivate sabai grass and process the grass to make rope. They are also involved in manufacturing of household and artistic designing articles by using sabai grass. A large number of tribal entrepreneurs also undertake the trading activity of sabai grass ropes. In the district the total annual production of Sabai grass is estimated as about 15000 to 20000 metric ton. Out of which about 9000 to 12000 metric ton is processed into ropes. The industry helps in the development of entrepreneurship among the tribals. The industry ensures economic improvement through generation of employment opportunities for the deprived poor tribal masses of the district.

### **RATIONALITY OF THE PRESENT STUDY:**

Entrepreneurship development is based on the assumption that entrepreneurs are not only born but can also be created. Entrepreneurs can be perceived as change agents who adopt a relatively new line of economic activity deviating from their traditional occupation for their livelihood. of Sabai grass cultivation and processing has tremendous potential for generating gainful employment opportunity, promotion of business practices, possibility of setting processing industries and fabulous export potential which can bring progressive improvement in the socio-economic status of tribals. It is observed from various concepts and theories advocated by the researchers that entrepreneurship is a function of several factors. The emergence of entrepreneurs in a society depends upon closely inter-related economic, social, cultural and psychological variables. Keeping these points in view this research study was undertaken with following specific objectives:

- To study the socio-economic and personal characteristics of the tribal entrepreneurs in Sabai grass enterprise.
- To examine the entrepreneurial characteristics of tribal entrepreneurs in Sabai grass enterprise.
- To know the attitude of the tribal entrepreneurs towards improved package of practices in Sabai grass enterprise.

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:**

Both primary and secondary sources of data are used for the present study. The primary data were collected from the respondents with the help of a pre-tested semi structured interview schedule. Secondary data were collected from books, news paper reports, articles published in journals, websites , Census of India volumes, statistical abstract, selected socio-economic statistics, per capita Net State Domestic Product of States, Economic Survey, Central Government Publications, District Statistical Hand books etc.

### **SAMPLE DESIGN:**

The study was conducted in Mayurbhanj district of Odisha in India. Mayurbhanj district was selected for the study purposively because of the thick concentration of tribal population which facilitate for proper selection of adequate number of respondents for the study. The tribals constitute 57.67% of the total population of the district. The data was collected from two community development blocks of Mayurbhanj district, namely Khunta and Kaptipada, on the basis of prominence in Sabai grass enterprises. From the two blocks, ten villages were selected randomly for the present study. A list of all Sabai grass cultivating and trading tribals was prepared. By following proportionate random sampling method, 80 respondents were selected from these villages.

### **DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS:**

A draft interview schedule was first prepared against the set objectives of measuring the variables of the study .The schedule were pre-tested with the tribals in the non-sample area. The final interview schedule was prepared with necessary modification in the format of items in the light of pre-testing. Then it was used to elicit the required information from the respondents.

The schedule had two major parts, namely entrepreneurial behavior part and socio-economic part including several questions. The variable entrepreneurial characteristics were empirically measured by using various indices and scales. Entrepreneurial characteristics was measured by developing entrepreneurship index, knowledge level was measured by developing knowledge

index, risk orientation by using modified scale of Supe (1969), self confidence by using the scale of Basavanna (1971), management orientation by using scale developed by Samanta (1977), farm decision making ability by using scale developed by Nanda Purkar (1980). The variable attitude was empirically measured with the help of attitude index developed by Rongsentemjen and Jha (2001). Frequency and percentages were calculated for making simple comparison wherever needed.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS:**

### **Socio-Economic And Personal Characteristics Of The Tribal Entrepreneurs**

The study of socio-economic and personal characteristics was made with reference to age, education, size of family, land holding size, annual income, experience, economic motivation, market orientation and scientific orientation.

- Age:-The data in Table 1 revealed that 43.75 per cent of ST entrepreneurs belonged to middle age group of 35-50 years, whereas 32.50 per cent of them belonged to young age group less than 35 years. Thus, only 23.75 per cent of ST entrepreneurs belonged to old age group.
- Education:-It is found from Table 1 and figure1 that 20.00 per cent of the tribal entrepreneurs were educated up to primary school whereas, 15.00 per cent them had middle school education. Thus, 11.25 per cent of the tribal entrepreneurs had education up to high school level, while 10.00 per cent of them had college education. Thus, majority of the respondents (43.75%) were illiterates.
- Size of Family:-It is found from Table 1 and figure1 that majority 75.56 per cent of the respondents belonged to average family size with 5-10 members, 13.33 percent of the respondents had large size family comprising of more than 10 members. Thus only 11.11 per cent of the respondents had small family size of up to 4 members.
- Land Holding Size:-It is observed from Table 1 and figure1 that 40.00 per cent of the respondents possessed medium land holding, followed by small land holding (36.25%) whereas, 23.75 per cent of them had big land holdings.

- Annual Income:- Table 1 and figure1 revealed that 35.00 per cent of the respondents had low level of annual income i.e. up to Rs.11,000/-, followed by semi-medium level of annual incomen(31.25%) i.e. between Rs.11, 001 to Rs.22, 000/- whereas, 21.25 per cent of them had medium level annual income i.e. Rs.22,001 to Rs.33,000/- and 12.50 per cent of them had high level annual income i.e. above Rs.33,000/-.
- Experience:-It could be observed from Table 1 and figure1 that 56.25 per cent of the respondents had experience of 3 to 6 years in sabai grass enterprise, whereas 28.75 percent had experience of less than 3 years. Only 15 per cent of the respondents were highly experienced with more than 6 years of experience.
- Economic Motivation:-It is found from Table 1 and figure1 that 52.50 percent of the respondents had medium level of economic motivation followed by 28.75 percent and 18.75 percent of the respondents with high and low level of economic motivation respectively.
- Market Orientation:-It could be observed from Table 1 and figure1that 53.75 per cent of the respondents had medium level of Market orientation followed by 27.40 per cent and 18.75 per cent of the respondents with low and high level of Market orientation respectively.
- Scientific Orientation:-It is observed from Table 1 and figure1that 56.25 per cent of the respondents had low level of Scientific orientation, whereas 35.00 per cent of the respondents had low level .Thus only 08.75 per cent of the respondents belonged to high level of scientific orientation.

**Table 1**

**Socio-economic and personal characteristics of the respondents (n=80)**

Sl. No.	Attributes	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	Age	Below 35years	26	32.50
		35-50 years	35	43.75
		More than 50 years	19	23.75
2	Education	Illiterate	35	43.75

		Primary school	16	20.00
		Middle school	12	15.00
		High school	09	11.25
		College education	08	10.00
3	Size of family	Up to 4 members	10	11.11
		5-10 members	68	75.56
		More than 10 members	12	13.33
4	Land holding size	Less than 05 acres	29	36.25
		5-10 acres	32	40.00
		More than 10 acres	19	23.75
5	Annual income	Low(Up to Rs.11,000/-)	28	35.00
		Semi-medium(Rs.11,001to 22,000/-)	25	31.25
		Medium(Rs.22,001to 33,000)	17	21.25
		High(Above Rs.33,000)	10	12.50
6	Experience in sabai grass enterprise	Less than 3 years	23	28.75
		3-6 years	45	56.25
		More than 6 years	12	15.00
7	Economic motivation	Low	15	18.75
		Medium	42	52.50
		High	23	28.75
8	Market orientation	Low	22	27.50
		Medium	43	53.75
		High	15	18.75
9	Scientific orientation	Low	45	56.25
		Medium	28	35.00
		High	07	08.75

Source: Primary data

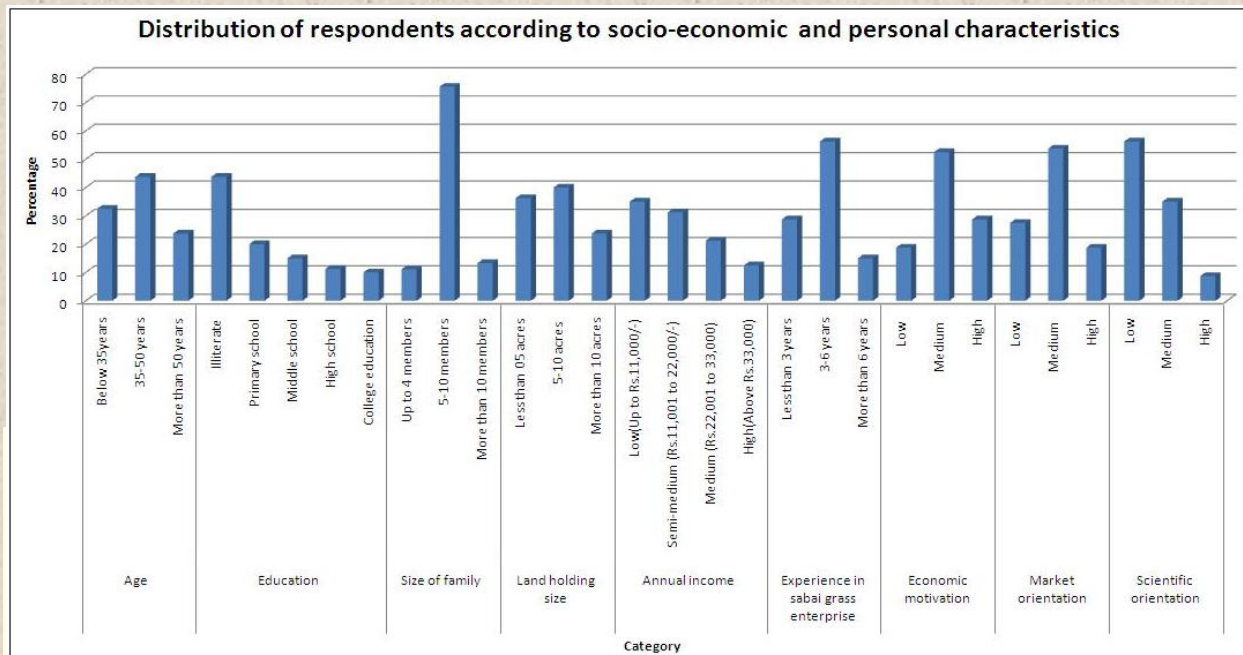


Figure -1 Distribution of respondents according to socio-economic and personal characteristics

### **ENTREPRENEURIAL CHARACTERISTICS:**

The study of socio-economic and personal characteristics was made with reference to innovativeness, farm decision making ability, Knowledge, Risk taking ability, Self confidence, Management orientation Leadership ability, Achievement motivation.

- **Innovativeness:** From the data presented in Table 2 and Fig. 2, it could be observed that, 38.75 per cent of the respondents belong to low innovativeness, 36.25 per cent of the respondents belong to medium innovativeness and 25.00 per cent belong to high innovativeness categories.
- **Farm Decision Making:** The data from Table 2 and Fig. 2 shows that, 40.00 per cent of the respondents belong to low farm decision making ability, whereas, 32.50 per cent of them belonged medium farm decision making ability and remaining 27.50 per cent belonged to high farm decision making ability category.
- **Knowledge:** It could be inferred from Table 2 and Fig. 2 that, 22.50 per cent of the respondents had high knowledge of farming and nearly equal percentage of them were



found in low (21.25 %) and medium (56.25%) category of knowledge of sabai grass enterprise, respectively.

- Risk Taking Ability: It is evident from Table 2 and Fig. 2 that, 52.50 per cent of the respondents belong to medium risk taking ability, followed by 28.75 and 18.75 per cent of them belonging to high and low risk taking ability categories, respectively. Thus it may be inferred that most of the entrepreneurs undertook a moderate level of risk in respect of new ventures and initiatives.
- Self Confidence: It is revealed from table that 61.25 per cent of the tribal entrepreneurs had medium level of self confidence, followed by 20.00 percent high. Only 18.75 percent of them belong to low level of self confidence category.
- Management Orientation: It is observed from the Table 2 and Fig. 2 that 42.50 per cent of the respondents belong to medium level of management orientation, followed by high 31.25 per cent. Only 26.25 percent of them belong to low management orientation category.
- Leadership Ability: It is quite clear from Table 2 and Fig. 2 that, 57.50 per cent of the respondents had high leadership ability, followed by low (25.00%) leadership ability. However, only 17.50 per cent of them belong to medium leadership ability category.
- Achievement Motivation: It is apparent from the Table 2 and Fig. 2 that, 32.50 per cent of respondents belong to low achievement motivation category, whereas 30.00 per cent of them belong to high achievement motivation category and rest of the 37.50 per cent belong to medium achievement motivation category.

**Table 2**

**Level of entrepreneurial characteristics of respondents (n=80)**

Sl.No.	Dimensions of entrepreneurial characteristics	Level	Frequency	Percentage
1	Innovativeness	Low	31	38.75

		Medium	29	36.25
		High	20	25.00
2	Farm decision making ability	Low	32	40.00
		Medium	26	32.50
		High	22	27.50
3	Knowledge	Low	17	21.25
		Medium	45	56.25
		High	18	22.50
4	Risk taking ability	Low	15	18.75
		Medium	42	52.50
		High	23	28.75
5	Self confidence	Low	15	18.75
		Medium	49	61.25
		High	16	20.00
6	Management orientation	Low	21	26.25
		Medium	34	42.50
		High	25	31.25
7	Leadership ability	Low	20	25.00
		Medium	14	17.50
		High	46	57.50
8	Achievement motivation	Low	26	32.50
		Medium	30	37.50
		High	24	30.00

Source: Primary data

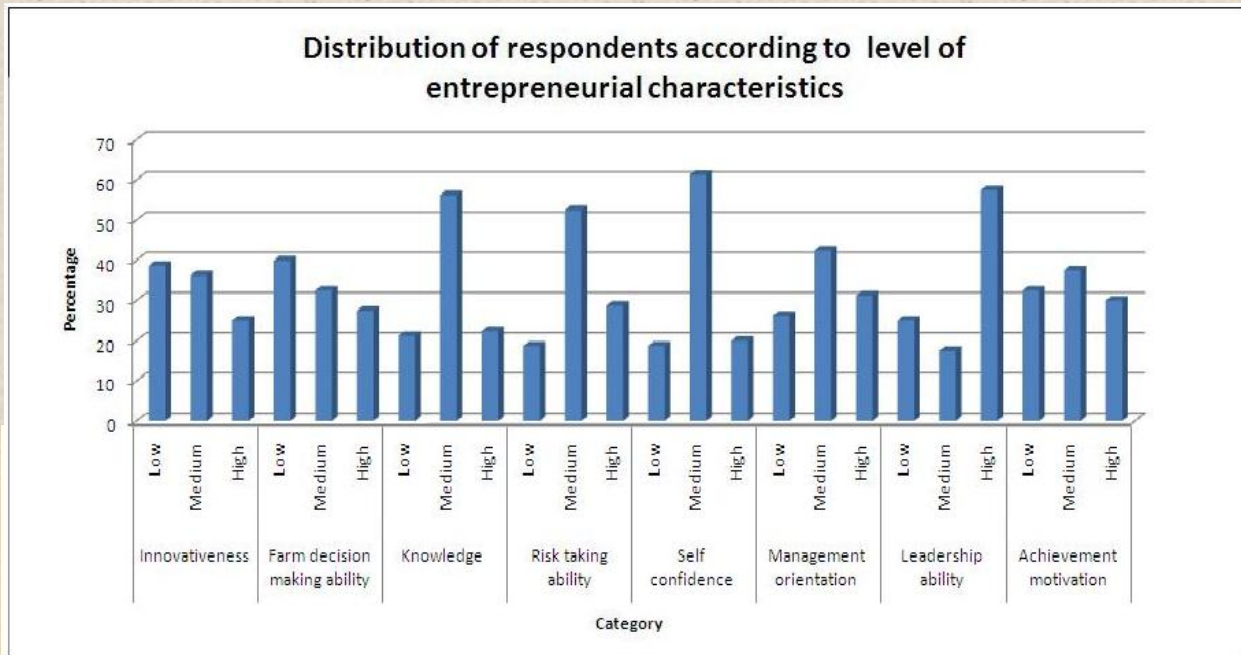


Figure-2 Distribution of respondents according to level of entrepreneurial characteristics

### **CONCLUSION:**

In the light of findings of the present study following conclusion are made for the improvement of entrepreneurial behaviour of tribal entrepreneurs.

- It is observed that majority of the respondents had medium entrepreneurial characteristic, which is a clear indication of the progressiveness of the tribal entrepreneurs. Further, it demand for amplification of educational efforts and policy support to the tribal entrepreneurs by the field extension workers of the development departments, NGOs and private organizations to make them more enterprising.
- In relation to innovativeness characteristic it is found that most of the tribal entrepreneurs had low level. It indicates that there is an urgent requirement of external exposure to recent developments in agricultural technologies. By organizing group discussions, meetings, study tours and field trips they can be motivated to adopt new technologies.
- It is essential to conduct intensive training programmes by government and nongovernment agencies to create awareness about entrepreneurial opportunities,

decision making, innovativeness, time and financial management, which would enable the tribal entrepreneurs for efficient utilization of their potential. Vigorous follow-up, guidance and counseling for sustenance of the entrepreneurial activity should be followed by these programmes.

- Modernization of rural social system through implementation of compulsory education for rural youth and adult education through functional literacy for tribals is desirable.

Intensive mass media campaigns would also promote entrepreneurial behaviour of tribals.

- Majority of tribal entrepreneurs were middle aged. Need based training to this group should also be imparted, so that they can act as catalysts in motivating other tribals to undertake entrepreneurial activities.

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