CHAPTER VII

A DISCUSSION ON THE FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Introduction

The entrepreneurial response (to six specific sectors of entrepreneurship development programmes) of the two categories of case-respondents ('typical' and 'atypical') were reported in the fifth chapter. Following that, the nature of relationship between the personal & family characteristics of the 'typical' case-respondents and their entrepreneur behaviour was examined in the last chapter. The entrepreneurial behaviour index (EBI), a composite measure of 'entrepreneurism', was the yardstick in this regard.

Following this reporting of the findings of the study in the previous two chapters, this chapter provides a discussion on the same.

On the preliminaries

It was not a matter of choice to have adopted the qualitative methodology for this research. Being an unexplored field in which not much research effort had flown in, it was believed by the researcher that there was no better alternative. And, therefore, much explanation had to be made defending the methodology and
describing the process of information-gathering and quantification of the verbal/oral information in an objective manner.

The most vital contribution of the study was the development of a scale to measure entrepreneurial behaviour of agriculturists. Few efforts by earlier researchers provided the much needed ignition in this regard. A review of literature in the broad area was helpful to kindle imagination and creative thought to conceive quite pertinent scale components. The opinion of judges comprising agricultural scientists, behavioral scientists and the executives in the Department of Agriculture provided further support to make the measuring scale very objective and quite relevant, objective and apt for the study on hand.

While developing the scale due consideration was given to the multi-disciplinary influence on entrepreneurship development. Thus, the scale covered a total perspective in the making of an entrepreneurial personality.

Ingredients of the components of the scale (that is, the sub-components) were identified after ascertaining their relevance and practical utility. Thus, they were particularly relevant to the study area.

The agriculturists who happened to constitute the sample of case-respondents were in different age groups, different castes,
different levels of literacy, different types and sizes of family and
different value-orientations. Thus, the characteristics of
entrepreneurial behaviour dimensions were cross-culturally valid.
Adoption of a scale/instrument used in other studies or an
adaptation of it after minor modification were to be shunned, as
advocated by Pareek¹ and Rao², while pointing out the lacunae in
the studies of Singh³, Singh and Singh⁴ Sinha and Mehta⁵. These


studies were further criticized for selecting only few characteristics, that too, in a subjective way.

Thus, this study had made major departure from the earlier ones, and that was mainly because it had resorted to qualitative methodology. This makes the study more realistic and pragmatic in its approach to understand the phenomenon less understood earlier.

The reliability and validity of the scale to measure entrepreneurship behaviour were in-built and intertwined in the unstructured research protocol. Even then it was felt by the researcher that in an academic research by a student scholar, such tests may not be out of order.

This view was supported by the standardization measures for qualitative studies recommended by Akhouri and Bhattacharjee\(^1\).

This is one of the recent attempts to measure the entrepreneurial of agriculturists in an objective way, considering the various behavioural components, departing drastically from the methods and measures of McClelland and his ilk who focused their studies only on achievement motivation and risk-taking abilities and few other related attributes.

Thanks to Hunter\textsuperscript{1} and Coombs and Ahmed\textsuperscript{2} (who had strongly advocated a focus on ‘management services’ which would play a significant role in activating entrepreneurial behaviour of agriculturists), the researcher rightfully chose to anchor his study on ‘understanding’ agricultural entrepreneurship in India, on the educational and developmental role of agricultural extension officers, who were the prominent change agents in rural economy of India. The study of different components of entrepreneurial behaviour was inevitably intertwined with the role of the agricultural extension agency. Hence, this study on entrepreneurial behaviour of agriculturists was linked with the entrepreneurial response to various entrepreneurship development programmes promoted and executed by the Government of Tamil Nadu through the district, block and village level agricultural extension staff.

**Findings on Entrepreneurial Development Programme Participation**

The findings with respect to the entrepreneurial response to the five


development programmes offered by the agricultural extension officers were presented in Chapter V. (pages 134 to 145).

It could not be expected that all the case-respondents would respond to each of five development programmes. Whoever had the need and the potentials to exploit the opportunity could benefit by the programmes. The case-respondents who showed keen interest (typical cases) in each programme and an equal number of case-respondents who had the need and potential but did not respond entrepreneurially (atypical cases) by availing the opportunity were examined to test the following null hypothesis: 'the nature of entrepreneurial response to this entrepreneurship development programme would not differ as between the typical and atypical groups of case-respondents'.

Though the null hypothesis with regard to response to the offer of extension services stood accepted, it stood rejected with regard to participation in entrepreneurial development programmes. This implied that there was a significant difference in the entrepreneurial behaviour as between the two categories of case-respondents.

The question then arose as to the probable reason for the uninspiring and unenterprising nature of the majority of the atypical cases, as against others who seemed to be relatively more
entrepreneurial. The answer had to be found in the personal and social characteristics, which were the independent variables in this study. A glimpse at this would be quite revelatory:

Among the 160 atypical case-respondents, 70% were in the age group ‘above 40 years’ (only 10% among the typical cases); 45% belonged to scheduled caste & scheduled tribe (9% among the typical cases); 62% had no formal education (44% among the typical cases); 36% lived in extended families (7% among typical cases); 71% were large families (55% among typical cases); 82% held conservative value-orientation (51% among typical cases).

A probe, breaking the unstructured interview protocol, revealed the following additional breakthrough information: There were large number of long-pending litigation on family disputes in the family histories of 33 per cent atypical cases (only 8 per cent among typical cases); 32 per cent instances of extra-marital family causing economic hardships among the atypical cases (only 10 per cent among the typical category); 80 per cent of the atypical cases had acquired less than 25 percent incremental wealth during the 10 years preceding the study period (42 per cent among the typical cases); 66 per cent of the atypical cases had a pessimistic vision of their future life in agricultural occupation (30 per cent among the typical cases). These behind the scene characters of atypical cases were intriguing.
These contrasting differences as between the atypical and typical case-respondents clearly indicate that these two categories stand apart deserving new lines of research thinking.

**Findings on Personal and Family Variables & Entrepreneurial Behaviour**

In view of the above scenario, the researcher proceeded further only to study the relationship between the personal and social characteristics of the typical case and their entrepreneurial behaviour.

At this point, it would be pertinent before proceeding on a discussion of the results of the examination of the influence of personal and family characteristics on the composite entrepreneurial behaviour, that the relative importance of the components in the entrepreneurial behaviour scale did not change from the order of the importance obtained on the basis of the sum of actual entrepreneurial behaviour scores of typical and atypical case-respondents of five entrepreneurship development programmes, treating the ‘response to extension services offered’ as the dependent variable.

For this purpose a stepwise regression analysis was conducted. The results are shown below in Table 7.1
TABLE 7.1

Result of Stepwise Regression Analysis of Different Components of Entrepreneurial Behaviour Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Components of Entrepreneurial Behaviour</th>
<th>Sum of Square Reduced</th>
<th>F Value</th>
<th>R</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Achievement-orientation</td>
<td>32350.57</td>
<td>22.018*</td>
<td>0.349</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Innovativeness</td>
<td>12909.09</td>
<td>16.205*</td>
<td>0.413</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Information-seeking</td>
<td>14558.52</td>
<td>15.197*</td>
<td>0.475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Decision-making</td>
<td>4467.65</td>
<td>12.442*</td>
<td>0.493</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Risk-taking</td>
<td>2935.71</td>
<td>10.474*</td>
<td>0.503</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Internal locus of control</td>
<td>2333.49</td>
<td>9.080*</td>
<td>0.512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Knowledgeability</td>
<td>2025.66</td>
<td>8.041*</td>
<td>0.519</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Team-building</td>
<td>1905.10</td>
<td>7.248*</td>
<td>0.526</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Using extension services</td>
<td>1172.69</td>
<td>6.524*</td>
<td>0.530</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Cosmopolitaness</td>
<td>9.26</td>
<td>5.849*</td>
<td>0.531</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Significant at 1 per cent level

The F value shown in Table 7.1 indicates that all the components of entrepreneurial behaviour were highly significant. This is the concrete evidence that all the components included in the stepwise regression analysis were important, since none of the items were eliminated in the analysis.

The three most important behavioural components in the descending order were: (1) Achievement-orientation, (2) Innovativeness, and (3) Information-seeking.
And, the three least important ones were: (1) Cosmopoliteness (2) Using extension services and (3) Team-building.

It may be observed that the order of importance that emerged after the study had differed from the rank order assigned before the study while developing the scale, using Guilford formula. But this would not affect the results of the study in any way, as only the index of entrepreneurial behaviour score on all the ten components were used to measure the entrepreneurial behaviour in any context throughout the study. The rationale of this is as follows: Behaviour is not the function of any particular component in isolation of others. Each component would influence each other component and at the same time would be influenced by each other component.

The influence of personal and family characteristic on the entrepreneurial behaviour has been studied earlier in different specific contexts. It was not so in this context, as mentioned earlier. Taking the mean EBI of the case-respondents, how one's age, caste, education, type of families, size of family and value-orientation were influencing the entrepreneurial behaviour were examined.
With respect to age and family size, it was found that the entrepreneurial behaviour was not influenced by these factors to a significant extent. The notion that age, experience and wisdom go together has no theoretical foundation, as Rogers and Shoemaker’s\(^1\) study revealed. In the present study it was observed that there were as many as 40 out of 67 (below 30 years of age) and 35 out of 77 (between 30 and 40 years of age) had won recognition and award for spectacular achievements and innovativeness, whereas only 2 out of 16 who were above 40 years of age had shown such behavioural outcomes.

Also, similarly, size of family was not significantly associated with entrepreneurial behaviour. There were significantly glaring examples of high entrepreneurial behaviour among a considerable number of cases in different family sizes. Large family is normally considered as a handicap for motivating enterprising behaviour. This is a pessimistic view. In the present study we could not find a decisive proof of negative relationship between size of family and entrepreneurial behaviour. With large size or smaller size,

there can be an ignition for entrepreneurial spirit, with more hands to share diversified ventures or with fewer stomachs to share the fruits of ventures. Diversification of agricultural activities such as horticulture, dairy farming, floriculture, fish culture, rice-mill, fruit-processing plants were taken up by large sized families. Similarly there were enough evidence to show highly concentrated and hectic activity in small and medium size families, adopting multiple cropping, intensive cultivation and farm mechanization.

But, there was a significance relationship between (1) education, (2) caste, (3) family type and (4) value orientation and the entrepreneurial behaviour.

Increased literacy enabled the case-respondents to gain up-to-date knowledge, courage and ability to seek out needed information, leadership quality, to utilize becoming cosmopolite and ability political mileage in getting favours from extension service officers.

People who belonged to most backward and backward communities could wield more socialization and political influence to exploit opportunities that were offered by the government. They were in an advantageous position in society, being a majority social
group with considerable political power and influence. The forward caste people with better education and social recognition were also able to develop their entrepreneurial spirit. But regarding the scheduled caste and tribe entrepreneurs, their lower social and economic status and their being in a family of first generation entrepreneurs, they faced a lot of hardship, even though they were given all sorts of incentives and support. They were yet to come out of the inferiority complex and assertively participate in development schemes.

Type of family was yet another factor which had significant influence in enthusing entrepreneurship behaviour. This is a culture-specific factor. Extended family system was part of Indian culture. Its influence is fading considerably now. Nucleus families are replacing extended families. As predicted, it was found that there was a significant relationship between the type of family and entrepreneurial behaviour. Nucleus families did seemed to possess more entrepreneurial characteristics than the extended families. Among the nucleus families, the II generation nucleus families were more entrepreneurial than the I generation nucleus families.
Regarding value-orientation, it was found that progressive-oriented mind-set were related to highest entrepreneurial behaviour than the liberal and traditional oriented mind-sets. As between the liberal and traditional mind-sets, the former were more entrepreneurial than the latter.

**Conclusion**

This chapter brought to focus a discussion on the important findings of the study with regard to (1) the entrepreneurial behaviour of typical and atypical case-respondents and their entrepreneurial behaviour in relation to specific entrepreneurship development programmes; and the influence of personal and family characteristics of typical case-respondents and their entrepreneurial behaviour.

The next chapter, the last one, would summarize the study report and would make certain concluding observations and offer suggestion for further research.