

CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES OF SAMPLE MICRO ENTREPRENEURS

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Abstract

The micro enterprises sector contributes to employment creation, income generation, use of latent resources, removal of regional disparities and under-development in rural and backward regions/ segments. It produces many products, renders services and is a major supplier of mass consumption items. It is difficult to ascertain why, in similar situations, some micro entrepreneurs fail while others succeed. Therefore, it is thought that the focus on entrepreneurial features offers a practical solution to this problem. Hence, the researchers have undertaken an empirical study on the characteristics of micro entrepreneurs in the Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh. The universe of the study is spread over the whole of Chittoor district. For a meaningful analysis of cross sectional data, five categories such as agro, food and allied, mechanical and metallurgical, chemical, plastic and rubber, glass and ceramics and paper, 100 units spread over 20 in each category are purposely brought into the sample frame. Stratified random sample technique is conveniently adopted. The study is restricted due to time, resource and other constraints. More than 80 per cent of micro enterprises are started as proprietary concerns. Men account for a lion's share among the respondents. Eighty two per cent of respondents are of less than 50 years of age. Most of the entrepreneurs are Hindus. A majority of respondents are influenced by family members followed by friends and relatives. Nuclear family is dominant among the micro entrepreneurs. Ninety six per cent of micro entrepreneurs are educated. The respondents who hail from business constituted 35-50 per cent. The proportion of migrants is insignificant. Micro enterprises situated within the industrial estates/areas are less as compared to those located outside the industrial estates/areas. First generation entrepreneurs are higher when compared to those who have taken up industrial activity from their family. More than 60 per cent of respondents have established the micro enterprise due to self- decision.

1. Introduction

It is difficult to ascertain why, in similar situations, some micro entrepreneurs fail while others succeed. Therefore, it is thought that the focus on entrepreneurial features offers a practical solution to this problem. Some writers argue that due to lack of resources, especially skilled workers and sophisticated technologies, small firms depend on the competencies of entrepreneurs for their success. Although a number of variables such as organizational and environmental, are vital to the performance of the firm, it is important to acknowledge that the entrepreneur acts as a gatekeeper, enabling the internal resources of the organization to be utilised properly so as to achieve success. The critical nature of this gate - keeping role highlights the importance of examining the features of the entrepreneurs and how these impact upon firm performance. The contribution of entrepreneurs to the economy cannot be understated. The entrepreneur is a critical person who strives to re-orient the national strategies and brings out the desired changes in the development pattern. He is mainly a catalyst who can mobilize different resources and put them to effective use. In fact, entrepreneurship is reckoned a factor of production along with others. In a district like Chittoor, where diversified classes of people dwell and many remain unemployed and under-employed, the micro sector has emerged as a major source of generation of employment, creation of income, production, exports and so on. This sector has contributed to the removal of regional disparities and under-development in rural and backward regions/ segments. It produces many products, renders services and is a major supplier of mass consumption items. Therefore, there is a dire need to study the profile of micro entrepreneurs. Hence, the researchers have undertaken an empirical study on the characteristics of micro entrepreneurs in the Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh.

2. Methodology

The universe of the study is spread over the whole of Chittoor district. The study is confined to micro manufacturing enterprises as incorporated in the MSMEs Development Act, 2006. The DIC has classified the micro manufacturing enterprises in Chittoor district into nine categories. At the end of 2012, these are agro, food and allied (176); mechanical and metallurgical (81); chemical, plastic and rubber (206); glass and ceramics (238); paper (39); textiles (30); wooden (14); electrical and electronics (9); and leather and footwear (5). For a meaningful analysis of cross sectional data, there shall be a minimum of 20 units. In the first instance, three categories like wooden, electrical and electronics and leather and footwear are excluded since the number of units registered with the DIC is less than 20. In the case of textiles, nearly half of the units are sick/ closed. Finally, five categories are left and therefore, the researcher has to necessarily select the samples from these categories. Of these five categories such as agro, food and allied, mechanical and metallurgical, chemical, plastic and rubber, glass and ceramics and paper, 100 units spread over 20 in each category are purposely brought into the sample frame. Thus, stratified random sample technique is conveniently adopted for this study.

3. Features

3.1. Form of Organization

Of the total enterprises, 82 per cent are organized as sole trader concerns and the remaining 18 per cent, partnership firms (see Table 1). In the case of agro, food and allied category, the former and the latter constituted 90 per cent and 10 per cent respectively. All the enterprises under mechanical and metallurgical category are

Table 1: Form of Organization in the Sample Micro Enterprises

Forms of organization	Agro, food & allied	Mechanical & metallurgical	Chemical, plastic & rubber	Glass & ceramics	Paper	Total
Sole Proprietorship	18 (90)	20 (100)	17 (85)	12 (60)	15 (75)	82 (82)
Partnership firm	2 (10)	-	3 (15)	8 (40)	5 (25)	18 (18)
Total	20 (100)	20 (100)	20 (100)	20 (100)	20 (100)	100 (100)

Notes : Figures in brackets indicate the percentage to total ,

Source : Sample survey.

organized as sole trader concerns. With regard to chemical, plastic and rubber, 85 % are proprietary concerns and the rest, 15 per cent, partnership firms. With regard to glass and ceramics, the aforesaid constituted 60 per cent and 40 per cent sequentially. In the case of paper, sole trader and partnership firms formed 75 per cent and 25 per cent serially.

3.2. Gender

Each of 80 per cent of entrepreneurs under agro, food and allied and glass and ceramics are men while the rest, 20 per cent, are women (see Table 2). In the case of mechanical and metallurgical, paper and chemical, plastic and rubber, male formed 90 per cent, 75 per cent and 55 per cent sequentially. The rest are females. When all the categories of respondents are considered together, 76 per cent are men and the rest, 24 per cent, women.

Table 2: Gender-wise Classification of Micro Entrepreneurs

Gender	Agro, food & allied	Mechanical & metallurgical	Chemical, plastic & rubber	Glass & ceramics	Paper	Total
Male	16 (80)	18 (90)	11 (55)	16 (80)	15 (75)	76 (76)
Female	4 (20)	2 (10)	9 (45)	4 (20)	5 (25)	24 (24)
Total	20 (100)	20 (100)	20 (100)	20 (100)	20 (100)	100 (100)

Notes : Figures in brackets indicate the percentage to total.

Source : Sample survey.

Among the categories, women are meager except in the case of chemical, plastic and rubber category. The possible reason may be that most of the units under this category produce goods in which women are interested. Further, they may have sufficient knowledge as compared to those in the remaining categories of industries.

3.3. Age

In aggregate terms, the highest, 36 per cent of respondents are in the age group of 40 – 50 years followed by 30 per cent in the level of 30 – 40 years, 16 per cent in the order of 20 – 30 years, 12 per cent in the range of 50 – 60 years and the rest, 6 per cent in the group of 60 years and above. An almost similar trend exists among different categories of respondents.

Table 3: Age-wise Categorization of Respondents

Age (years)	Agro, food & allied	Mechanical & metallurgical	Chemical, plastic & rubber	Glass & ceramics	Paper	Total
20 - 30	3 (15)	3 (15)	6 (30)	3 (15)	1 (5)	16 (16)
30-40	4 (20)	8 (40)	4 (20)	6 (30)	8 (40)	30 (30)
40-50	6 (30)	8 (40)	6 (30)	7 (35)	9 (45)	36 (36)
50 - 60	6 (30)	1 (5)	2 (10)	2 (10)	1 (5)	12 (12)
60 and above	1 (5)	-	2 (10)	2 (10)	1 (5)	6 (6)
Total	20 (100)	20 (100)	20 (100)	20 (100)	20 (100)	100 (100)

Notes : Figures in brackets indicate the percentage to total.

Source : Sample survey.

3.4. Religion

Entrepreneurs in paper category enterprises are Hindus only. The proportion of Hindus in the rest of the industrial groups varied between 90 per cent and 95 per cent (see Table 4). Muslims accounted for 5 – 10 per cent while Christians, Parsis, Sikhs etc are absent.

Table 4: Classification of Respondents According to Religion

Religion	Agro, food & allied	Mechanical & metallurgical	Chemical, plastic & rubber	Glass & ceramics	Paper	Total
Hindus	18 (90)	19 (95)	19 (95)	19 (95)	20 (100)	95 (95)
Muslims	2 (10)	1 (5)	1 (5)	1 (5)	--	5 (5)
Total	20 (100)	20 (100)	20 (100)	20 (100)	20 (100)	100 (100)

Notes : Figures in brackets indicate the percentage to total.

Source : Sample survey.

3.5. Caste affiliation

Of the total respondents, the highest 67 per cent belong to open castes (OCs) followed by backward castes (BCs) (30 per cent) and the remaining, 3 per cent Scheduled Castes (SCs) (see Table 5). A similar trend can be noticed among different categories of sample entrepreneurs. OCs are the highest in paper category enterprises (80 per cent) followed by each of glass, ceramics and agro, food and allied (70 per cent), mechanical and metallurgical (65 per cent) and chemical, plastic and rubber (50 per cent).

Table 4.5: Segregation of Respondents on the basis of Caste

Caste	Agro, food & allied	Mechanical & metallurgical	Chemical, plastic & rubber	Glass & ceramics	Paper	Total
SC	1 (5)	-	2 (10)	-	-	3 (3)
BC	5 (25)	7 (35)	8 (40)	6 (30)	4 (20)	30 (30)
OC	14 (70)	13 (65)	10 (50)	14 (70)	16 (80)	67 (67)
Total	20 (100)	20 (100)	20 (100)	20 (100)	20 (100)	100 (100)

Notes : Figures in brackets indicate the percentage to total.

Source : Sample survey.

3.6. Marital status

Out of the entrepreneurs, unmarried are nil in mechanical and metallurgical and paper categories. In the remaining categories, the share of married is 95 per cent in each of agro, food and allied and chemical, plastic and rubber and 90 per cent in glass and ceramics.

Table 6: Marital Status of Micro Entrepreneurs

Marital Status	Agro, food & allied	Mechanical & metallurgical	Chemical, plastic & rubber	Glass & ceramics	Paper	Total
Unmarried	1 (5)	-	1 (5)	2 (10)	-	4 (4)
Married	19 (95)	20 (100)	19 (95)	18 (90)	20 (100)	96 (96)
Total	20 (100)	20 (100)	20 (100)	20 (100)	20 (100)	100 (100)

Notes : Figures in brackets indicate the percentage to total.

Source : Sample survey.

3.7. Nature of family and number of members

The highest, 73 Per cent belong to nuclear family via-a-vis the rest, 27 Per cent joint family (see Table 7). Of the industrial categories, nuclear family ranks first in the paper category with 90 per cent followed by mechanical and metallurgical (75 per cent), glass and ceramics (70 per cent) and each of agro, food and allied and chemical, plastic and rubber (65 per cent). The rest are in the joint family. It is surprising to note that despite several advantages and the necessity to take care of other activities including agriculture, majority of respondents are members of nuclear families.

Table 7: Type of Family of Respondents

Type of family	Agro, food & allied	Mechanical & metallurgical	Chemical, plastic & rubber	Glass & ceramics	Paper	Total
Nuclear	13 (65)	15 (75)	13 (65)	14 (70)	18 (90)	73 (73)
Joint	7 (35)	5 (25)	7 (35)	6 (30)	2 (10)	27 (27)
Total	20 (100)	20 (100)	20 (100)	20 (100)	20 (100)	100 (100)

Notes : Figures in brackets indicate the percentage to total.

Source : Sample survey.

The typical family size is 4-6 members. In this class, the proportion of respondents is the highest in chemical, plastic and rubber category (65 per cent) followed by paper (60 per cent) and each of agro, food and allied, mechanical and metallurgical and glass and ceramics (55 per cent). The total number of members is 10 or more in agro, food and allied and glass and ceramics only. In other words, they are nil in the rest of the categories. The respondents in the family size of 2-4 are found in all the categories of respondents. Their share varied between 10 per cent and 20 per cent. The proportion of respondents in the family size of 6 – 8 members is 3

Table 8: Number of Members in the Family of Respondents

Number	Agro, food & allied	Mechanical & metallurgical	Chemical, plastic & rubber	Glass & ceramics	Paper	Total
2 - 4	2 (10)	3 (15)	3 (15)	2 (10)	4 (20)	14 (14)
4 - 6	11 (55)	11 (55)	13 (65)	11 (55)	12 (60)	58 (58)
6 - 8	2 (10)	6 (30)	1 (5)	2 (10)	4 (20)	15 (15)
8 - 10	1 (5)	-	3 (15)	3 (15)	-	7 (7)
10 and above	4 (20)	-	-	2 (10)	-	6 (6.00)
Total	20 (100)	20 (100)	20 (100)	20 (100)	20 (100)	100 (100)

Notes : Figures in brackets indicate the percentage to total.

Source : Sample survey.

per cent in mechanical and metallurgical, 20 per cent in paper, 10 per cent in each of agro, food and allied and 5 per cent in chemical, plastic and rubber categories. The number of members are 8 – 10 in each of 15 per cent of respondents in chemical, plastic and rubber and 5 per cent in agro, food and allied. If all the respondents are taken as a whole, the number of members are in the range of 4-6 in 58 per cent of respondent families, 15 per cent in the range of 6-8 members, 14 per cent in the level of 2-4 persons, 7 per cent in the frequency of 8-10 members and 6 per cent in the range of 10 members and more.

3.8. Educational qualification

Five per cent of respondents are illiterates in all the categories except paper. In the case of paper, all the respondents are educated. In the case of agro, food and allied, the highest 35 per cent of respondents are graduates followed by 30 per cent who studied upto 10th standard, 20 per cent who are post-graduates and 10 per

Table 9: Educational Status of Micro Entrepreneurs

Level of education	Agro, food & allied	Mechanical & metallurgical	Chemical, plastic & rubber	Glass & ceramics	Paper	Total
Illiterate	1 (5)	1 (5)	1 (5)	1 (5)	-	4 (4)
Upto 10 th class	6 (30)	10 (50)	9 (45)	4 (20)	5 (25)	34 (34)
Graduation	7 (35)	7 (35)	4 (20)	7 (35)	8 (40)	33 (33)
Post-graduation	4 (20)	1 (5)	2 (10)	5 (25)	2 (10)	14 (14)
Technical	2 (10)	1 (5)	4 (20)	3 (15)	5 (25)	15 (15)
Total	20 (100)	20 (100)	20 (100)	20 (100)	20 (100)	100 (100)

Notes : Figures in brackets indicate the percentage to total.

Source : Sample survey.

cent who are technically qualified. In the case of mechanical and metallurgical, 50 per cent have studied up to 10th class, 35 per cent graduates and 5 per cent each post- graduates and technical qualification. With regard to chemical, plastic and rubber, 45 per cent studied up to 10th standard, 20 per cent each are graduates and technically qualified and 10 per cent, post-graduates. In respect of glass and ceramics, the proportion of graduates, post-graduates and those who studied upto 10th standard or have technical education constituted 35 per cent, 25 per cent, 20 per cent and 15 per cent respectively. A similar trend can be noted in the paper category. When all the respondents are considered together, the highest, 34 per cent have studied upto 10th class followed by 33 per cent graduates, 15 per cent technically qualified, 14 per cent post-graduates and 4 per cent illiterates.

3.9. Previous occupation

The highest, 37 per cent were in business followed by 20 per cent in household activities, 13 per cent each in white collar jobs, 10 per cent daily wage labour, 4 per cent unemployed and the remaining, 3 per cent retired employees. In the case of agro, food and allied and glass and ceramics, half of the entrepreneurs' earlier vocation

Table 10 Previous Occupation of Micro Entrepreneurs

Occupation	Agro, food & allied	Mechanical & metallurgical	Chemical, plastic & rubber	Glass & ceramics	Paper	Total
House wife	4 (20)	2 (10)	7 (35)	3 (15)	4 (20)	20 (20)
Unemployed	-	1 (5)	-	3 (15)	-	4 (4)
Business	10 (50)	3 (15)	7 (35)	10 (50)	7 (35)	37 (37)
Daily wage earner	2 (10)	7 (35)	1 (5)	-	-	10 (10)
White caller job	3 (15)	2 (10.00)	2 (10)	1 (5)	5 (25)	13 (13)
Retired	-	1 (5)	1 (5)	-	1 (5)	3 (3)
Student	1 (5)	4 (20)	2 (10)	3 (15)	3 (15)	13 (13)
Total	20 (100)	20 (100)	20 (100)	20 (100)	20 (100)	100 (100)

Notes : Figures in brackets indicate the percentage to total.

Source : Sample survey.

was business. With regard to mechanical and metallurgical, the highest, 35 per cent were daily wage earners. In respect of each of chemical, plastic and rubber and paper, 35 per cent of sample respondents were engaged in business. The retired employees formed 5 per cent in each of mechanical and metallurgical, chemical, plastic and rubber and paper. In the rest of the groups, they were nil. The proportion of students formed between 5 per cent and 20 per cent across the categories of industries.

3.10. Migration

Eighty eight per cent of respondents are locals/natives and the rest, 12 per cent, migrated from other places (see Table 11). In each of agro, food and allied, glass and ceramics and paper, migrants formed 10 per cent and the remaining 90 per cent, non-migrants. In the remaining two categories, the former have constituted 15 per cent and the latter, 85 per cent serially.

Table 11: Migration Status of Respondents

Response	Agro, food & allied	Mechanical & metallurgical	Chemical, plastic & rubber	Glass & ceramics	Paper	Total
Yes	2 (10)	3 (15)	3 (15)	2 (10)	2 (10)	12 (12)
No	18 (90)	17 (85)	17 (85)	18 (90)	18 (90)	88 (88)
Total	20 (100)	20 (100)	20 (100)	20 (100)	20 (100)	100 (100)

Notes : Figures in brackets indicate the percentage to total.

Source : Sample survey.

3.11. Location

Thirty two per cent of units are located within the industrial estates situated at Chittoor, Madanapalle, Palamaner, Renigunta, Gajulamandiyam, Nagari and Sri Kalahasti. The remaining, 68 per cent are found outside the industrial estates in the district.

Table 12: Location of Enterprises

Location	Agro, food & allied	Mechanical & metallurgical	Chemical, plastic & rubber	Glass & ceramics	Paper	Total
Industrial estate	2 (10)	10 (50)	7 (35)	6 (30)	7 (35)	32 (32)
Outside	18 (90)	10 (50)	13 (65)	14 (70)	13 (65)	68 (68)
Total	20 (100)	20 (100)	20 (100)	20 (100)	20 (100)	100 (100)

Notes : Figures in brackets indicate the percentage to total.

Source : Sample survey.

12. First generation Entrepreneurs

Thirty one per cent of entrepreneurs have taken up entrepreneurship for the first time and the rest, 69 per cent, second or third generation entrepreneurs. The first generation entrepreneurs are 40 per cent in agro, food and

Table 13: First Generation Entrepreneurs

Response	Agro, food & allied	Mechanical & metallurgical	Chemical, plastic & rubber	Glass & ceramics	Paper	Total
Yes	12 (60)	17 (85)	13 (65)	14 (70)	13 (65)	69 (69)
No	8 (40)	3 (15)	7 (35)	6 (30)	7 (35)	31 (31)
Total	20 (100)	20 (100)	20 (100)	20 (100)	20 (100)	100 (100)

Notes : Figures in brackets indicate the percentage to total. *Source*: Sample survey.

allied, 35 per cent in each of chemical, plastic and rubber and paper, 30 per cent in glass and ceramics and the least, 15 per cent, in mechanical and metallurgical.

13. Suggestion to start Enterprise

Out of the total number of entrepreneurs, self-decision is the cause for the highest, 62 per cent of respondents, to take up industrial activity. It is followed by

Table 14: Advised to start Micro Enterprise by Sample Respondents

Advise tendered by	Agro, food & allied	Mechanical & metallurgical	Chemical, plastic & rubber	Glass & ceramic	Paper	Total
Self-decision	11 (55)	14 (70)	11 (55)	11 (55)	15 (75)	62 (62)
Parents	6 (30)	3 (15)	4 (20)	2 (10)	1 (5)	16 (16)
Husband/wife	3 (15)	2 (10)	3 (15)	3 (15)	4 (20)	15 (15)
Friends	-	1 (5)	1 (5)	4 (20)	-	6 (6)
DIC	-	-	1 (5)	-	-	1 (1)
Total	20 (100)	20 (100)	20 (100)	20 (100)	20 (100)	100 (100)

Notes : Figures in brackets indicate the percentage to total.

Source : Sample survey.

parents (16 per cent), husband/wife (15 per cent), friends (6 per cent) and district industries centre (DIC) (one per cent). It appears that banks/financial institutions have not suggested to any one of the respondents to venture into industrial activity. Across the categories, more than 55 per cent have taken a self- decision to start the micro enterprise.

14. Influencers

In the case of agro, food and allied, the highest, 55 per cent of respondents, are influenced by family members followed by each of financial institutions and banks and Department of Small Scale Industries (15 per cent), friends and relatives (10 per cent) and non-financial institutions (5 per cent). The business and trade associations have not influenced any one of the respondents in this category. In the case of mechanical and metallurgical

Table 15: Influencers of Respondents on Existing Line of Activity

Influencers	Agro, food & allied	Mechanical & metallurgical	Chemical, plastic & rubber	Glass & ceramic	Paper	Total
Non-financial institution	1 (5)	4 (20)	-	-	-	5 (5)
Family members	11 (55)	8 (40)	14 (70)	8 (40)	6 (30)	47 (47)
Friends and relatives	2 (10)	7 (35)	4 (20)	6 (30)	8 (40)	27 (27)
Financial institutions/banks	3 (15)	-	2 (10)	1 (5)	1 (5)	7 (7)
Small Scale Industries Department	3 (15)	1 (5)	-	1 (5)	-	5 (5)
Associations	-	-	-	4 (20)	5 (25)	9 (9)

Total	20 (100)	20 (100)	20 (100)	20 (100)	20 (100)	100 (100)
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Notes : Figures in brackets indicate the percentage to total.

Source : Sample survey.

, 40 per cent are influenced by family members, 35 per cent by friends and relatives, 20 per cent by non-financial institutions and 5 per cent by the Department of Small Scale Industries. Financial institutions and banks have not influenced any one of the respondents in this category also. With regard to chemical, plastic and rubber, 70 per cent are influenced by family members, 20 per cent by friends and relatives and the remaining, 10 per cent by financial institutions and banks. Like this, the proportion of those influencing varies in glass and ceramics and paper.

Conclusions

More than 80 per cent of micro enterprises are started as proprietary concerns. Men account for a lion's share among the respondents. The women should be encouraged and motivated to take up entrepreneurship, to start with, micro enterprises in the years to come, so as to increase their involvement in the industrial society of India. Eighty two per cent of respondents are of less than 50 years of age. The proportion of youth among the entrepreneurs is less relative to their share in the population of the district. It is high time that the young minds are be motivated to take up industrial activity as it is not possible to provide jobs in agriculture and service sectors. Most of the entrepreneurs are Hindus. Among the caste groups, OCs account for a lion's share among the sample entrepreneurs. Married formed a lion's share among the respondents. A majority of respondents are influenced by family members followed by friends and relatives. Nuclear family is dominant among the micro entrepreneurs. In more than 70 per cent of respondent families, the number of members is less than 6. The number of members is 10 persons and above in 6 per cent of respondent families. Ninety six per cent of micro entrepreneurs are educated. Thirty five to fifty per cent of respondents hail from business except, mechanical and metallurgical category. The proportion of migrants is insignificant among the respondents. Micro enterprises situated within the industrial estates/areas are less as compared to those located outside the industrial estates/areas. Since the sample enterprises are micro in nature, there is no special attraction for locating them within the industrial estate area. Fifty per cent of mechanical and metallurgical enterprises are found within the industrial estates or industrial areas due to forward and backward linkages. First generation entrepreneurs are higher when compared to those who have taken up industrial activity from their family. More than 60 per cent of respondents have established the micro enterprise due to self- decision.

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