

# **A Micro-study of Agricultural Entrepreneurship in Kalimpong a Small District in the Indian State of West Bengal**

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## **Abstract**

Agriculture is an important sector of India. It is indispensable for the sustenance and growth of the Indian Economy. On an average about 70% of the Indian households and 10% of the urban population are dependent on agriculture for their means of livelihood. This sector not only fulfils the food needs of the country but also generates employment opportunities and helps the economy to mint foreign currencies. It also succours other industries by supplying them the basic raw materials required for carrying out their production thereby maintaining the ecological balance too. After the ushering of liberisation, privatisation and globalization of the Indian economy in 1991 this sector had no alternative but to be oriented in a commercial manner. The purpose of this paper is to view how the local people of Kalimpong, a small district in the Indian state of West Bengal is pursuing business with the help of their agriculture products. Here 33.4% of the local people are agriculturalist. They produce varieties of products such as fresh fruits, vegetables and food cereals. Some, even dwell on horticulture and livestock business. Agriculture is the back bone to most of the local people dwelling in Kalimpong.

**Keywords:** Agriculture entrepreneurship, financial inclusion, livelihood in Kalimpong

## **Introduction**

Entrepreneurship refers to the ability to take risk and organize new business ventures to earn profit. Agricultural Entrepreneurship is also known as Agripreneurship, as it is associated with the marketing of agricultural products. It is an age-old income generation source for Indian population and still today it accounts for providing livelihood to approximately 65% of its population. Indian economy is vehemently dependent on agriculture and its allied activities and still remains a major contributor to the Indian Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Agriculture industries are further divided into several segments, namely: – horticulture and its allied sectors (including fruits and vegetables, flowers, plantation, crops etc.); fisheries; animal husbandry and

livestock; and securities. India's varied agro-climatic conditions are highly favourable for the growth of large number of horticultural crops.

## Literature Review

- ❖ Agricultural entrepreneur emphasizes on the creative, proactive and networking aspects of entrepreneurial activity. It regulates environment, food safety, product quality, biotechnology and sustainability. It also provides a new cycle of entrepreneurship maintaining sustainability. (Thomas, Landsman Pleter Seuneke, 2017).
- ❖ Entrepreneurship in the agricultural sector is a dynamic activity and face sudden and new challenges emerging from the aspects of the supply of demand, low level of human and financial resources relatively limited markets and weak connectivity as most of the people involved are from the rural areas. Because of this complexity, the direct environment of agricultural holdings, the family farm enterprises and the role of the women in the new established farm sectors are taken into account (Lans and Thomas, 2017).
- ❖ Agripreneurship or Agricultural Entrepreneurship refers to the ability of an individual to recognize a profitable agricultural business opportunity by creating a venture that incorporates innovation for the successful agribusiness. Agripreneurship and entrepreneurship are not different in terms of opportunities, self-motivation, risk-taking and need for achievement.

## Objectives

- ❖ To exhibit the demographic profile of agri-entrepreneurs dwelling in Kalimpong.
- ❖ To observe and collect the information about how agricultural entrepreneurship has become the backbone of their livelihood.

## Limitations

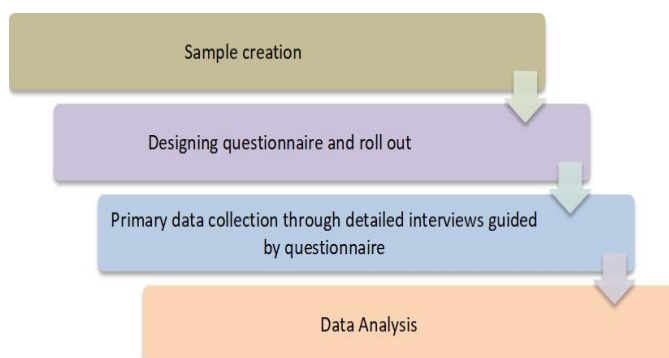
- ❖ The scope of this study is confined to Kalimpong only.
- ❖ Only three villages of Kalimpong have been covered due to time constraint.
- ❖ Small sample size has been taken into consideration i.e., 25 people
- ❖ Respondents were not so co-operative in providing essential and pertinent facts.

### **Aspect of entrepreneurship**

- ❖ Farm Management and strategic planning. A good entrepreneur establishes short term and long-term farm strategies. He is always on the outlook for information to improve sales and manage internal farm process.
- ❖ Soil, Fauna, Ecosystem and farm Hygiene. Sustainable entrepreneurship means that the farmer understands the importance of the soil for crop protection. He stimulates valuable soil fauna, adding organic matters and avoiding the use of deadly pesticides. The farmer works on prevention of pest, disease and weed through the improvement of the crop management and farm hygiene, reducing the application of pesticides.
- ❖ Relationship with Personnel. Good entrepreneurship means the understanding of the importance of qualified employees. Therefore, the farmer takes measures to attract and retain employees on his farm, improve working conditions and pay satisfying wages. Qualified employees are involved in the improvement of production, farm strategy and working conditions.
- ❖ Craftsmanship, Professional Skill. The farmer realizes the importance of quantitative and qualitative level of production and efficient use of inputs (labor, nutrients, and crop protection, energy). He is focused on optimal crop growth and for this he has a thorough look at his own farm and makes a comparison with the former years and looks out for avenues to ameliorate production both quantitatively and qualitatively by preventing problems with regard to pests, weeds, diseases and water paucity.
- ❖ Information Seeking and Finding, Networking. A good entrepreneur search for decision – supporting information in an active and structured way. He uses various information sources e.g., journal, internet, excursions. His network consists of other farmers, advisors and sales representatives of various suppliers. Through this, the farmer compares his farm with others and is well informed about the latest developments in crop protection, plant nutrition and mechanization.
- ❖ A good agripreneur is continuously aware of his farm and has a good understanding of his competitors, customers and environment. He is always ready to undertake risk to improve his farm results. The farmer has a high level of leadership, is creative to find new solutions for practical problems or to create new sales perspectives (De Lauwere, 2004).

However, the level of entrepreneurship is assumed to be not an absolute qualification from all seven aspects listed, but dependent on the relevance of entrepreneurial skills for a farmer. The size of the farm, the labour intensity, the variety of products and the ambitions of the farmer are so different that a standard of good agricultural entrepreneurship cannot be set.

## Methodology



The study area of this research covers some of the villages in Kalimpong (Bom busty, East Main Road and Algarah). Village area has been chosen as people living in this vicinity are engaged in agricultural work such as cultivation of fresh vegetables , different varieties of pulses and food cereals. Some of them practice horticulture specially floriculture and sapling production as Kalimpong provides a suitable climatic condition for the same. Few people depend upon livestock farming such as poultry farming, fisheries, hog farming and dairy production.

This study has been conducted with the help of both primary and secondary data. Primary data comprised of interviews and observations while secondary data were obtained from books, journals, newspapers, articles and internet.

Analysis and working from the cohort study

## A. Demographic profile

### 1. Percentage of female and male agri-entrepreneurs

As per the research design and interview from the study area, a total of 25 responses were received. Out of 25 agri-entrepreneurs, 6 were females and 19 were males. This demonstrates that 24% of agri-entrepreneurs are females and the remaining 76% are males thereby showing that this business is totally male dominated.

### 2. Qualification of respondents

**Table1: Distribution of respondents according to their qualifications**

| Qualification    | Bum Busty | Eastmain road | Algarah |
|------------------|-----------|---------------|---------|
| Graduation       | 1         | 2             | 1       |
| Primary          | 2         | 3             | 2       |
| Matriculation    | 3         | 2             | 2       |
| Higher Secondary | 2         | 1             | 4       |
| Total            | 8         | 8             | 9       |

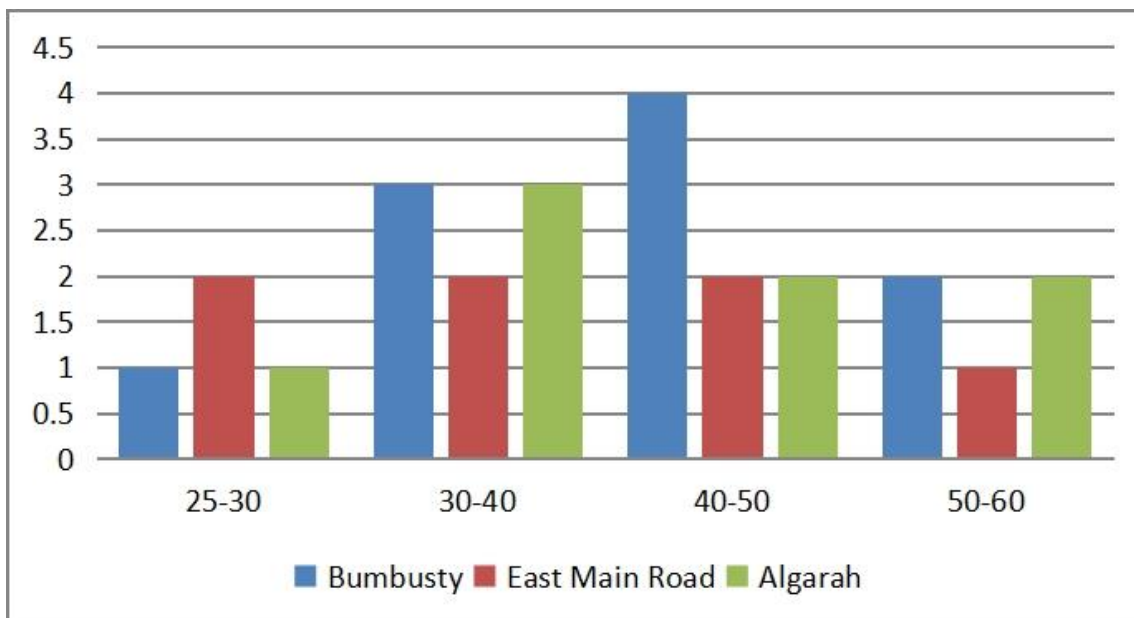
From **Table 1** we can observe that maximum of the people pursuing agri-business have either completed their matriculation or primary schooling or higher secondary schooling. Very few of them seemed to have completed their graduation.

### 3.Age of respondents

**Table 2: Distribution of respondents according to their Age-group.**

| Age-Group | Bum Busty | East Main Road | Algarah |
|-----------|-----------|----------------|---------|
| 25-30     | 1         | 2              | 1       |
| 30-40     | 3         | 2              | 3       |
| 40-50     | 4         | 2              | 2       |
| 50-60     | 2         | 1              | 2       |

**Fig 1 Graphical representation of respondents according to their Age-Group**



Maximum of agri-entrepreneurs in the study area fall under the age group of 30-40 and 40 to 50. Young people and older people are not that much interested in this sector.

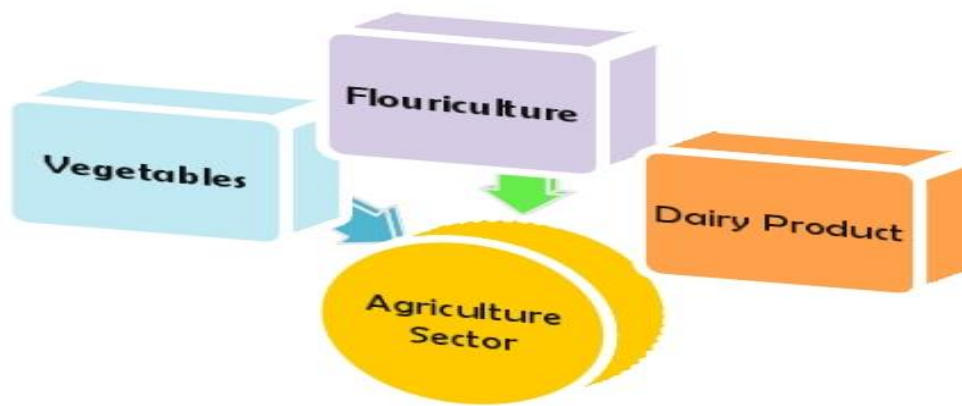
## ANALYSIS AND WORKING

I. Quantitative and qualitative information was collected from the following three different villages.

1. Bumbusty (vegetable production data has collected).

2. East main road (Floriculture data has been collected).

3. Algarah (Dairy farming data has been collected).



**Table 3: Agricultural activities carried out in the study area**

| Name of study area | Agricultural activities | No of Entrepreneurs | Total percentage |
|--------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| Bumbusty           | Vegetable production    | 10                  | 40%              |
| East main road     | Floriculture            | 8                   | 32%              |
| Algarah            | Dairy Production        | 7                   | 28%              |
| (Total)            |                         | 25                  | 100%             |

40% of agri-entrepreneurs are engaged in vegetable production in Bombusty, 32% in floriculture in East main road and 28% in dairy production in Algarah.

**Table 4: Data collected from Bumbusty regarding quantity of sales of vegetables**

| Name of product | Quantity of sales | Total Percentage |
|-----------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Potatoe         | 6,00 kg           | 23%              |
| Chillie         | 7,50 kg           | 29%              |
| Onion           | 8,00 kg           | 31%              |
| Cabbage         | 4,50 kg           | 17%              |
| Total sales     | 2,600 kg          | 100%             |

It is evident that from Bumbusty onions are sold in larger quantities compared to other vegetables i.e., potatoes, chillies and cabbage.

**Table 5: Data collected from East main road regarding quantity of sales of different varieties of flowers.**

| Name of Product | Quantity of sales | Total percentage |
|-----------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Orchid          | 8,00 Sapling      | 39%              |
| Lilium Plant    | 6,50 Sapling      | 31.2%            |
| Pansy Plant     | 2,88 Sapling      | 13.8%            |
| Azalea Plant    | 3,45 Sapling      | 16%              |
| Total sales     | 2,083 Sapling     | 100%             |

Kalimpong is famous for its orchids and it is clear from the above data that in floriculture business practised in East main road the highest quantity sold is that of orchids compared to lilium, pansy and azalea plant.

**Table 6: Data Collected from Algarah regarding quantity of sales of dairy products**

| Name of Product | Quantity Sales | Total Percentage |
|-----------------|----------------|------------------|
| Milk            | 1,200 kg       | 40%              |
| Panner          | 5,50 kg        | 19%              |
| Cheese          | 7,55kg         | 26%              |
| Curd            | 4,50 kg        | 15%              |
| Total sale      | 2,955 kg       | 100%             |



From the above data we see that Algarah sells milk in larger quantities compared to other dairy products such as paneer, cheese and curd.

**Table 7: Total annual sales of the study area**

| Name of Place  | Annual sales (Rs) | Total percentage |
|----------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Bumbusty       | 2,60,000          | 34%              |
| East main road | 2,08,300          | 27%              |
| Algarah        | 2,955,00          | 39%              |
| Total sale     | 7,63,800          | 100%             |

In terms of annual sales Algarah has been earning the highest amount of revenue compared to the other study areas.

### Overall Observation

- ❖ It is found that the dairy farming business is running successfully compared to the other agricultural businesses in the study area. Dairy products are in high demand as it is used for production of different varieties of sweets. Milk is in high demand too for its consumption. Not only that people often produce local butters and cheese for sale.
- ❖ Vegetable production is the second highest running business in Kalimpong. As people are much more conscious about their health these days organic fruits and vegetables are in high demand thereby helping local people to establish their vegetable production business.
- ❖ Kalimpong is often known as the “Land of Orchids” and floriculture covers 27% of the sales. As the place is blessed with suitable climatic condition floriculture seems to be a booming business.

It is so evident that a small district like Kalimpong is experiencing growth in Agricultural Entrepreneurship during the past few decades.

## Recommendations

- ❖ Make people realise that their lands in villages can be used for cultivation of crops which in turn will reap them huge profits.
- ❖ Sensitize the common masses regarding the benefits and services provided by the government in establishing agri-businesses.
- ❖ Eliminate the involvement of large number of middle man as they are the social parasites and the sooner they are eliminated better for the society.
- ❖ Make local people especially youths and women realize about the employment opportunities in agricultural sector.
- ❖ Make people aware about the modern farming system (mix cropping and crop rotation) and suggest them about the advanced technologies for convenient farming.
- ❖ Suggest and help the local people to make use of e-commerce platform for more progress in their agricultural business.

## Conclusion

Agriculture is a livelihood activity in India. The inherent ills of Indian agriculture are that of low productivity and prevalence of disguised unemployment. The ills no doubt shall be addressed through Agricultural Entrepreneurship. Not only that some of the chronic economic problems like urbanization, poverty and unemployment can also be addressed by effective agricultural entrepreneurship initiatives thereby helping the rural economy come in the limelight.

Globally, more than 66% of the world's population is predicted to be urban by 2050. A serious implication of expanding urbanization will be decline in the rural population. To ensure the sustainability of food production, rural communities and natural resources there is a need to slow the out migration of rural population by accelerating rural development processes.

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