



ENTREPRENEURIAL PROBLEMS OF EVENT MANAGERS IN THRISSUR AND KOLLAM DISTRICTS – A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

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Introduction

India is known as the land of emerging entrepreneurial activities, currently with more than forty eight million small business units. Small business sector in India creates 1.3 million jobs every year and provide the largest share of employment after agriculture. Event Management business, though it is still in an infant stage and an unorganized sector in India, is described as a sunrise industry in the service sector. The scope for marketing of events not only include social functions like weddings and birthday functions but also corporate events, that include meetings, conferences, exhibitions, live entertainment shows, and so on. Many companies have already realized the benefits of Direct Marketing through events. Events are now considered as a means to Launch, Advertise or Build a brand. Hence it is already an established fact that individuals, corporate houses and the society have recognized the events handling as a professional function. In short the event management industry caters to organize events in four broad categories: Leisure, cultural, personal and organizational events.

At present, the Event Management industry is in a budding stage and extremely unorganized, comprising mainly homemakers and self-employed businessmen. But it has grown by leaps and bounds in recent period. According to some leading Research agencies, the Indian M&E (Media & Entertainment) industry grew from INR 728 billion in 2011 to INR 917 billion in 2013, registering an overall growth of 12.6 percent and is estimated to grow at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 15.2 percent to reach INR 1,661 billion by 2017.

Event management sector, according to a report by Business Today, 6.2 percent of the entrepreneurs contribute to service industry. In the present service industry scenario event management firms has become the important contributor to our country's economic growth. Event management is a business of low risk, because of very less capital investment. The Harvard Business School experts agree that the basic quality of an efficient event manager is a futuristic outlook and the capacity to plan for the future opportunities, with creativity and collective involvement. Apart from the roles and composition of enterprises in event management, the marketing problems of these units need to be addressed, such as, problems in publicity of the events with other problems like finance, technological lag, problems of severe competition from large industries as well as MNCs, and so on.

This study helps to know the overall problems of entrepreneurs in event management sector, especially in Thrissur and Kollam districts of Kerala state; and whether they will prosper in this field by managing these problems in promoting their business, as well as in increasing their income and providing employment opportunities.

Profile of Study Area

Thrissur District

Thrissur district is bounded by Malapuram district in north, Idukki district and Ernakulum districts in the south, Palakkad district in the east and the Arabian Sea in the west.

Geographical Location

North latitude : 10.52 degree

South longitude : 76.21 degree

Languages spoken: Malayalam, English.

Kollam District

Kollam District is bounded by Chinnakada to the east, Thangassery to the west, Cutchery to the north and Mundakkal to the south.

Geographical Location

North latitude: 8.89 degree

South longitude: 76.6 degree

Problem Definition

Event management business is steadily growing; still there is lot of problems that entrepreneurs face. Among them, the main

challenges faced by them is the cost cutting factor with reduced event budget and less support from sponsors, that will have a huge impact on event management business. It is difficult to overcome these obstacles as being an event entrepreneur. Development of a country lies in the hands of young event planners and development cannot take place unless people in this industry are not well organized and professionally trained. Government helped entrepreneurs through various schemes to start their own small business. Slowly various bodies and management institutes are organizing entrepreneurship development programs for event planners and this makes event management to move from margin to center.

Many research studies have been done on entrepreneurship, but very little has been done on the problems faced by entrepreneurs in event management firms. A lot of data is available on entrepreneurship but there is very little regarding the entrepreneurial problems in the event management sector. Hence the present study is undertaken to analyze the problems faced by event management firms in Thrissur and Kollam districts, Kerala. These two districts have a few number of registered event managers, compared to developed cities like Trivandrum and Ernakulum. Hence the study also focuses to suggest avenues for event management units in these less developed districts.

Research Methodology

The present study has adopted descriptive research design. The total population is selected for the study using census method.

Objectives of the Study

- To find out the entrepreneurial quality of event management entrepreneurs
- To examine the problems faced by event management entrepreneurs
- To find out their entrepreneurial ability in overcoming the problems of their units,
- To compare event business units in the selected districts to find out suggestions for the problems

Analysis and Interpretation

The respondents were selected from the population of Thrissur and Kollam districts. The entire population of registered event entrepreneurs is used for data collection.

Socio Economic Profile of the Respondents

Some of the important socio economic profiles of the event management units under this study, such as educational attainment, caste wise distribution and monthly income of the event management entrepreneur are given below

Table 1: Educational attainment of event entrepreneurs in Thrissur and Kollam districts

S. No	Level of education	Thrissur		Kollam	
		Number of entrepreneurs	Percentage	Number of entrepreneurs	Percentage
1	Illiterate	Nil	---	Nil	--
2	Elementary / Middle School	1	10	Nil	--
3	High & Higher secondary School	4	40	2	40
4	College / Technical level	5	50	3	60
	Total	10	100	5	100

Source: Primary data

It is inferred from the above table that education is an important factor in event business of both districts, but higher level of education is yet to be inconsiderable level in Thrissur district.

Table 2: Caste wise distribution of event management entrepreneurs in Thrissur and Kollam districts

S. No	Caste	Thrissur		Kollam	
		Number of entrepreneurs	Percentage	Number of entrepreneurs	Percentage
1	Forward Community(FC)	2	20	3	60
2	Backward Community(BC)	4	40	1	20
3	Most Backward Community(MBC)	4	40	1	20
4	Scheduled Caste(SC) and Scheduled Tribe(ST)	Nil	---	Nil	---
	Total	10	100	5	100

Source: Primary Data

It is inferred from the above table that SC /ST communities are still unaware about this business, while all the other communities have a good idea about this business.

Table 3: Monthly personal income of Event organizers in Thrissur and Kollam Districts

S. No	Monthly personal income (in Rs.)	Thrissur		Kollam	
		Number of entrepreneurs	Percentage	Number of entrepreneurs	Percentage
1	Less than 10000	2	20	Nil	---
2	10000- 20000	3	30	2	40
3	20000- 30000	3	30	2	40
4	30000- 40000	1	10	Nil	---
5	40000 and above	1	10	1	20
	Total	10	100.00	5	100.00

Source: Primary Data

It is inferred from the above table that majority of the event managers in the selected districts earn 10,000 to 30,000 rupees per month.

Entrepreneurial Profile of the Respondents

Association between Profile of event Entrepreneurs and their Attitude towards Enterprises

An attempt has been made in this section to analyze the association between profile of event entrepreneurs and their attitude towards enterprises with their help of chi-square analysis. The chi-square value and its significance examine each of the profile variables separately. The thirteen profile variables and their respective 5 different level groups are analyzed separately with the help of contingency table. The results of chi-square test for two districts are presented in table number 4 and 5.

Table 4: Association between profile of entrepreneurs and attitude towards enterprising in Thrissur District

S. No	Profile variables	Chi-square Values	Table value at 5 percent level	Significance
1	Age	23.3712	26.085	Insignificant
2	Education	38.1138	36.294	Significant
3	Caste	27.1739	21.014	Significant
4	Monthly income	6.9726	9.278	Insignificant
5	Size of the organization	31.3689	21.006	Significant
6	Experience / Age of the unit	38.8791	31.27	Significant
7	Personality traits	24.3138	26.164	Insignificant
8	Enterprising ability	28.2730	26.174	Significant

Source: Primary Data

It has been revealed from the Table 4 that in the case of Thrissur district, the significantly associated profile variables with the attitude of entrepreneurs towards their enterprises are Education, Caste, Size of the organization, Experience / Age of the unit and Enterprising ability, since the square values are greater than the respective Chi-square table values at 5 percent level. There is no association between attitude towards enterprising and the profile variables namely Age, Monthly income and Personality traits, since the respective Chi-square values are less than the related table value at 5 percent level.

Table 5: Association between profile of entrepreneurs and attitude towards enterprising in Kollam district

S. No	Profile variables	Chi-square Values	Table value of 5 percent level	Significance
1	Age	14.7126	21.006	Insignificant
2	Education	51.1142	36.294	Significant
3	Caste	11.3626	21.014	Insignificant
4	Monthly income	4.1609	9.278	Insignificant
5	Size of the organization	31.1615	26.085	Significant
6	Experience / Age of the unit	37.1129	31.27	Significant
7	Personality traits	30.1615	26.174	Significant
8	Enterprising ability	38.3116	26.174	Significant

Source: Primary Data

It has been inferred from the Table 5 that in the case of Kollam district, the significantly associated profile variables with the attitude of entrepreneurs towards their enterprises are Age, Education, Size of the organization, Experience / Age of the unit, Personality traits and Enterprising ability, since the square values are greater than the respective Chi- square table values at 5 percent level. There is no association between attitude towards enterprises and the profile variables namely Age, Caste and Monthly income, since the respective Chi- square values are less than the related table value at 5 percent level.

Problems Faced by Entrepreneurs

The major problems identified with event entrepreneur are Mobility problems, Dependant industry, Budget limitations, Lack of event networking, Little creativity, Lack of public awareness, Less support from sponsors, Skills to keep up with technology, Event security, More government regulations, Environmental issues, Financial problems, Less human relations skill and Problem with middlemen. The above said problems are asked to be rated by the event entrepreneurs at a five- point scale namely highly serious, serious, moderate, not serious and not at all serious which have the score value of 5,4,3,2 and 1 respectively. The average score of each problem in running their enterprise was separately calculated for both districts and the overall score are shown in table 6.

Table 6: Problems faced by entrepreneurs in event management business in Thrissur and Kollam districts

S. No	Nature of problem	Average score		
		Thrissur	Kollam	Overall
1	Mobility problems	1.0339	3.7924	2.0924
2	Dependant industry	2.0236	3.9846	2.8699
3	Budget limitations	2.9613	2.5259	1.6564
4	Lack of creativity	2.0135	3.1387	3.3879
5	Lack of event networking	0.8226	2.6686	1.8897
6	Less support from sponsors	2.4269	3.9515	1.0947
7	Skills to keep up with technology	1.2180	2.3821	2.5296
8	Event security	1.6816	2.2732	3.4346
9	More government regulations	2.4393	1.5864	2.2978
10	Environmental issues	1.5317	2.4649	1.7946
11	Problem with middlemen	1.8375	1.0132	2.8813
12	Financial problems	1.6827	3.9197	2.4652
13	Less human relations skill	2.9894	2.5712	2.2427
	Overall average	1.7594	2.8638	2.2523

Source: Primary Data

It has been observed from the above Table, in the case of Thrissur district, among those event entrepreneurs who spoke of problematic factors the most seriously viewed problems are Less human relations skill, Budget limitations, More government regulations and Less support from sponsors, since the mean scores are 2.9894, 2.9613, 2.4393 and 2.4269 respectively. The less perceived problems are Lack of event networking, Mobility problems and Skills to cope up with technology as their mean scores are 0.8226, 1.0339 and 1.2180 respectively.

Among the event entrepreneurs in Kollam district, who spoke of problems, the highly perceived problems are Dependant industry, Less support from sponsors, Financial problems and Mobility problems since the mean scores are 3.9846, 3.9515, 3.9197 and 3.7924 respectively. Whereas the less perceived problems are Problem with middlemen and More government regulations with their mean scores 1.0132 and 1.5864 respectively.

In overall average, the important problems perceived by the event entrepreneurs are Event security and Lack of creativity since the average scores are 3.4346 and 3.3879 respectively.

Measures for Problems

The important measures for the problems perceived by the event entrepreneurs in Thrissur and Kollam districts are analyzed and interpreted in table 7.

Table 7: Measures for problems as perceived by entrepreneurs in Thrissur and Kollam districts

S. No	Nature of problem	Average Score	
		Thrissur	Kollam
1	Entrepreneurial awareness at school and college level	4.47	3.23
2	Information dissemination and publication of experience	3.68	4.01
3	Adequate financial assistance or facilities in organizing events	3.31	3.62
4	Facilities for easy access to technology	2.71	2.29
5	Management education and training in event business	2.43	3.07
6	Problem Recognition and counseling	3.88	4.18
7	Support by government agencies	4.31	2.21
8	Association of event managers	2.89	4.32
9	Simple government rules	3.97	1.98
10	More publicity for public awareness	3.76	2.37
11	Dependant industry	3.35	4.15
12	Financial problems	2.89	3.83
13	Less human relations skill	4.01	2.97
14	Exploitation from middlemen	3.20	3.54
	Overall	3.2537	3.3034

Source: Primary Data

From the table 7, it has been observed that in the case of event entrepreneurs in Thrissur, the important measures for the problems perceived by the event entrepreneurs are Very good in entrepreneurial awareness at school and college level, Support by government agencies, Less human relations skill and Simple government rules, since the mean values of these personality factors are as high as 4.47, 4.31, 4.01 and 3.97 respectively. In total, the average score of the measures felt by the entrepreneurs in Thrissur is 3.2537.

Whereas, in the case of event entrepreneurs in Kollam, the important measures for the problems perceived by the event entrepreneurs are Very good in Information dissemination and publication of experience, Problem recognition and counseling, Association of event managers and Dependent industry, since the mean values of these personality factors are as high as 4.01, 4.18, 4.32 and 4.15 respectively. In total, the average score of the measures felt by the entrepreneurs in Kollam is 3.3034.

Correlation between Personality Traits and Entrepreneurship

The personality traits of the event entrepreneurs are related to the psychological aspects of the entrepreneurs how they view the enterprise, how they face risks, and the like. For this, the correlation between the score of personality variables with the entrepreneurship index of the entrepreneur is separately calculated for entrepreneurs. The computed results of Karl Pearson's Correlation Co-efficient of the personality variables and the entrepreneurship are shown in table 8.

Table 8: Correlation between Personality traits and Entrepreneurial success in Thrissur and Kollam districts.

S. No	Personality Variables	Correlation Co-efficient	
		Thrissur	Kollam
1	Networking ability	0.1732	0.2623
2	Delegating skill	-0.1132	-0.1981
3	Grow a thick skin	0.2157	-0.1932
4	Marketing strategy	0.5732*	-0.2213
5	Communication	-0.1927	0.3891
6	Negotiating skill	0.5432*	0.1713
7	Market research	0.5891*	0.2415
8	Open to learn	0.1132	0.5532*
9	Human relations skill	0.4731	0.5413*
10	Problem Recognition	-0.1139	0.5519*
11	Decision making	0.5132*	0.1839
12	Customer orientation	0.5312*	0.2935

Source: Primary Data

*Significant at 5 percent level

From the table, it has been revealed that in the case of event entrepreneurs in Thrissur, the significant correlation is identified in marketing strategy, negotiating, market research, decision making and customer orientation, since their Correlation Coefficient 0.5732, 0.5432, 0.5891, 0.5132 and 0.5312 are statistically significant at 5 percent level. The above mentioned personality variables are positively related to entrepreneurial success. Whereas, in the case of entrepreneurs in Kollam, the significant correlation is identified in open to learn, human relation skill and problem recognition, since their Correlation Coefficient of 0.5532, 0.5413, 0.5519 are statistically significant at 5 percent level.

Summary of Findings

- From the analysis we can understand that majority of the respondents are literate and there is no need of higher educational qualification to become successful in event management. It is perceived that through experience they can achieve their goals.
- The SC /ST communities are still unaware about this business, while all the other communities have a good idea about this business. And majority of the event managers in the selected districts earn 10,000 to 30,000 rupees per month.
- In Thrissur district, the most seriously viewed problems are Less human relations skill, Budget limitations, More government regulations and Less support from sponsors and the less perceived problems are Lack of event networking, Mobility problems and Skills to cope up with technology. In Kollam district, the highly perceived problems are Dependent industry, Less support from sponsors, Financial problems and Mobility problems and the less perceived problems are Problem with middlemen and More government regulations. In overall average, the important problems perceived by the event entrepreneurs are Event security and Lack of creativity.
- In Thrissur, the important personality factors of entrepreneurs are very good in entrepreneurial awareness at school and college level, human relations skill, simple government rules. Whereas, in the case of event entrepreneurs in Kollam, the entrepreneurs are very good in information dissemination and publication of experience, problem recognition and counseling and association of event managers.
- In Thrissur district, the significantly associated profile variables with the attitude of entrepreneurs towards their enterprises are Education, Caste, Size of the organization, Experience / Age of the unit and Enterprising ability and there is no association between attitude towards enterprising and the profile variables namely Age, Monthly income and Personality traits. Whereas in the case of Kollam district, the significantly associated profile variables with the attitude of entrepreneurs towards their enterprises are Age, Education, Size of the organization, Experience / Age of the unit, Personality traits and Enterprising ability and there is no association between attitude towards enterprises and the profile variables namely Age, Caste and Monthly income.
- The major problem here is it is a dependent industry. The lack of cooperation among this event industry with allied industries like food, beverage, hospitality, etc., is a problem and problem in any other industry will affect event management business.
- In order to overcome the problems faced by entrepreneurs some of the remedial measures perceived by the respondents include, distinct publication, information dissemination, entrepreneurial activities at school level, adequate financial assistance, and easy access to technology.

Suggestion and Recommendations

- Organization of event managers is needed and adequate competition is necessary for the development of the firms. Trust has to be developed by the firms to get more customers.
- The success stories of others in event management should be highlighted to give confidence and motivation to others who are willing to start their own business
- Training and development to promote entrepreneurial skills and ability and they must get ample opportunities to showcase their skills. This helps to groom efficient entrepreneurs in event management firms.
- Different types of budgets may be offered to different levels of customers with varying facilities, to overcome budget constraints.
- There should be co-operation among this event industry with allied industries, so that the difficulties in one industry shall be overcome with others' support.

Scope for Further Study

1. The present study focused on the problems of entrepreneurs in event management firms. This study covers only two districts of Kerala. There is a scope of study to compare with more districts and to cover wider geographical area.
2. In future study the scope of event management business and its recent trends and success stories can be done.



3. This study is limited to problems of event entrepreneurs and further a detailed investigation regarding potential avenues and challenges for event management firms can be undertaken.

Conclusion

Event management is a low risk business and hence more unemployed youth can be encouraged in this field. Investment is very less in this field but Creativity is an important factor in this industry.

As on date, majority of the event activities are handed over to event organizers. This helps the client to be tension free which creates more opportunity for event organizers. It is a new trend and dynamic, talented entrepreneurs have a lot to do in this field.

This is the field where women have to play a major role. Because many housewives have proved to be successful entrepreneurs in this event management business.

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