

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERSONAL, SOCIOECONOMIC AND PSYCHOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF FPO BENEFICIARIES WITH THEIR ATTITUDE TOWARDS FPO IN TAMIL NADU, INDIA

Abstract

Agriculture in India is predominantly production oriented and plays a pivotal role in the Indian economy. Even though lack of advancement, poor management of supply chains and shrinking average farm holding sizes all slow down this progress. As a result of its awareness of these problems facing small and marginal farmers, the Indian government is actively promoting Farmers Producer Organisations. FPO help small and marginal farmers integrate so they can raise their incomes and improve their economic standing. The present investigation was conducted with the aim of analysing the attitude towards Farmer Producer Organisations with the personal, socioeconomic, and psychological characteristics of the respondents. It was conducted three districts namely Coimbatore, Erode and Trichy in the state of Tamil Nadu (India). From each selected FPO, 100 beneficiaries were selected randomly with simple random sampling technique. In this way total of 300 beneficiaries were considered as respondent for the study.

The results shows that the majority of the respondents had revealed that majority of the respondents were middle aged, had higher secondary school level education, had agriculture as their primary occupation, belonged small farmers category, possessed medium level of farming experience and had medium level annual income. Majority of the respondents had medium level of extension agency contact, mass media exposure, information source utilization, information sharing behaviour, achievement motivation, economic motivation, credibility, innovativeness and market orientation. Most of the respondents participated in more than two trainings and made their decision independently.

Regarding the relationship between personal, socioeconomic and psychological characteristics of beneficiaries and their attitude level, twelve variables viz., educational status, occupational status, annual income, extension agency contact, mass media exposure, information source utilization, achievement motivation, economic motivation, credibility, decision making pattern, market orientation and training undergone were found to have positive and significant relationship with the attitude.

Key words: Attitude, Farmer Producer Organisation, Profile characteristics

1. Introduction

The foundation of the Indian economy is agriculture. It employs about fifty eight per cent of the overall of the Indian labour force, helps the economy grow on average, and lowers

poverty by providing the majority of the population with employment and meal protection. Furthermore, the agricultural sector's contribution to reducing poverty and ensuring the sustainable growth of the economy is well known. In India, the fact that small and marginal farmers occupy about eighty five per cent of the total cultivated area demonstrates the significance of their work (NABARD, 2015). About 92.8 million of these were marginal farm holdings, or individual operating land holdings of less than 1 hectare. The remaining 24.8 million were small farm holdings with individual operational land holding sizes of less than 2 hectares (Paty, B.K. and K.C. Gummagolnath, 2018). Due to the fact that they are small and marginal farmers, they face numerous difficulties in obtaining accurate information about the aspects of their production and productivity. The idea of collectivization calls for the integration of small farmers into contemporary competitive markets to protect them from the negative effects and difficulties.

The Department of Agriculture and Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of India has identified Farmer Producer Organisations as the most appropriate institutional form and mechanism to mobilise farmers and build their capacity to collectively leverage their production and marketing strengths. In this context, collectivization of agricultural products offers a sustainable solution (Small Farmers' Agribusiness Consortium 2016).

Farmer Producer Organisations primary goal was to assist small and marginal farmers in achieving economies of scale by bolstering the assistance and services provided by newly developing value chains. (Kavin and Divya, 2019). Eleven crucial services have been developed and implemented by the Indian government to ensure that these FPOs operate effectively. Policymakers may be able to improve their strengths and weaknesses by quantifying these services. (Shivani Dechamma *et al* 2020), As a result, this study was conducted with the intention of thoroughly evaluating the personal, socioeconomic, and psychological characteristics and their relationship between the attitude towards Farmer Producer Organisations among their beneficiaries, and the findings were then examined in this paper.

2. Methodology

2.1. Selection of study area

The present study was conducted in the state of Tamil Nadu. Three Farmer Producer Organisations were selected in Coimbatore, Erode and Trichy purposively, based on the categories that were functioning effectively according to government certification. The State

Government of Tamil Nadu has honoured these three FPOs with State Award for best governed FPO of Tamil Nadu.

2.2. Selection of respondents

Beneficiaries were chosen in a proportional manner. From the three chosen FPOs, 100 beneficiaries will be chosen from each, taking the total 300 as the final sample size. These selections were done by using simple random sampling method.

2.3. Research Design and Data collection

In this study, an ex-post facto research design was used. A pretested interview schedule was used to collect the data. Individual interviews with the chosen respondents took place at their homes or workplaces, and each one's responses were carefully recorded in the schedule.

2.4. Statistical analysis

Only when appropriate statistical tests are applied will the results and inferences be accurate. The gathered data were coded and tabulated properly. Frequency, percentage, coefficient of correlation methods of statistics were used for interpretation of data.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Personal, socioeconomic, and psychological characteristics of the FPOs beneficiaries

3.1.1. Age

A number of profile characteristics were selected as independent variables to find out profile of the respondents of the study area. Majority (63.33 per cent) of the respondents belonged to the middle age group followed by 30.00 per cent belonged to old age group and 06.67 per cent were found in young age group. Hence it may infer that the respondents of middle age group were more enthusiastic and interested in involving the participation in Farmer Producer Organisations. This findings is in line with the findings of Jadhav (2018).

3.1.2. Education

As regards education, the majority (36.67 per cent) of the respondents had higher secondary school followed by high school (33.33 per cent), middle school (10.33 per cent), Illiterates (09.00 percent), primary school (06.67 per cent) and collegiate (04.00 per cent). It may be inferred that majority of the respondents had completed the school education. This findings is in accordance with the findings of Ankur (2020).

3.1.3. Occupational status

As regards occupational status, the majority (85.33 per cent) of the respondents were found to have agriculture as the primary occupation followed by respondents with agriculture as the secondary occupation consist only a very limited portion (14.67 per cent). The findings derive support from the findings of Renuka Rani (2021).

3.1.4. Farm size

As regards farm size, majority (44.67 per cent) of the respondents belonged to the category of small farmer followed by 28.33 per cent of the respondents were marginal farmers and 27.00 per cent of the respondents were big farmers. This findings is in association with the findings of Rajini Devi (2021).

3.1.5. Farming Experience

Majority (63.33 per cent) of the respondents had medium level of farming experience followed by 30.33 per cent of respondents belonged to high level of farming experience and 06.34 per cent exhibited to low level of farming experience. This observations is in agreement with the findings of Darshan (2019).

3.1.6. Annual income

It was observed that more than half (58.00 per cent) of the respondents had medium level of annual income followed by 32.00 per cent of the respondents had high level of annual income, only 10.00 per cent of the respondents belonged to low level of annual income category. This findings is in parallel with the findings of Chopade (2019).

3.1.7. Extension agency contact

As regards extension agency contact, medium level of extension agency contact followed by 20.67 per cent of the respondents had high level of extension agency contact and very meagre 07.67 per cent had low level of extension agency contact. This findings is in agreement with the findings of Sidharth Dash and Mazhar (2021).

3.1.8. Mass media exposure

Major portion (72.33 per cent) of respondents had medium level of mass media exposure followed by 21.00 per cent of the respondents with high level of mass media exposure and 06.67 per cent with low level of exposure towards mass media. This findings is in conformity with the findings of Jadhav (2018).

3.1.9. Information source utilization

As regards information source utilization, more than three-fifth (64.67 per cent) of the respondents had medium level of information source utilization while more than one-fourth (28.00 per cent) of the respondents belongs to high level of information source utilization and only 07.33 per cent belonged to low level of information source utilization. These findings are supported by Dharshan (2019).

3.1.10. Information sharing behaviour

As regards information sharing behavior, around two-third (61.67 per cent) of the respondents showed medium level of information sharing behavior followed by 31.33 per cent of the respondents unveiled high level of information sharing behavior and very few (07.00 per cent) of the respondents had low level of information sharing behavior. These findings are supported by Suriyapriya (2018).

3.1.11. Achievement motivation

The data pertaining to achievement motivation is presented in Table 1, that majority (69.67 per cent) of the respondents were found to be medium level of achievement motivation followed by 21.67 per cent of the respondents belonged to high level of achievement motivation and only 08.66 per cent of respondents had low level of achievement motivation. This findings are in agreement with Ajaypal Gour (2021).

3.1.12. Economic motivation

The results revealed from Table 1, that majority (70.67 per cent) of the respondents were observed to have medium level of economic motivation followed by 18.00 per cent of the respondents spotted in high level of economic motivation and remaining 11.33 per cent of respondents had low level of economic motivation. This findings derives support from Chopade (2019).

3.1.13. Credibility

Table 1 provided evidence that majority (44.00 per cent) of the respondents found to have access to medium level of credibility followed by 29.33 per cent of the respondents were accounted to low level of credibility and 26.67 per cent of respondents had witnessed to high level of credibility. The above results coincide with the findings of Armstrong and Gandhi (2012) and Suriyapriya (2018).

3.1.14. Innovativeness

From Table 1 the results concluded that, majority (60.67 per cent) of the respondents were attained to medium level of innovativeness whereas 24.00 per cent of respondents had high level of innovativeness and 15.33 per cent of the respondents had low level of innovativeness. This outcomes agree with the findings of Sneha (2019).

3.1.15. Decision making pattern

Table 1 made it feasible to see, that most of the respondents (73.33 per cent) took only independent decisions and the remaining 26.67 per cent of the respondents took decision in consultation with their family members, relatives or friends. This findings are in concurrence with the findings of Dharshan (2019).

3.1.16. Market orientation

It could be observed from the Table 1, 2 that majority (80.00 per cent) of the respondents had medium level of market orientation followed by 13.00 per cent of the respondents had high level of market orientation and very less (07.00 per cent) percentage of respondents had low level of market orientation. This findings are in correlation with the findings of Vankudothu (2014).

3.1.17. Training Undergone

It is evident from the Table 1, that more majority (90.33 per cent) of the respondents have attended more than two trainings. Subsequently 09.67 per cent of the respondents have attended two trainings. This findings are in line with the findings of Nisha Tiwari (2021).

Table 1. Personal, socioeconomic, and psychological characteristics of the FPOs beneficiaries

S.No	Variables	Frequency	Percentage
1	Age		
	Young (Up to 35 years)	20	06.67
	Middle (Above 35 to 45 years)	190	63.33
	Old (Above 45 years)	90	30.00
2	Education		
	Illiterate	27	09.00
	Primary school level	20	06.67

	Middle school level	31	10.33
	High school level	100	33.33
	Higher secondary school	110	36.67
	Collegiate	12	04.00
3	Occupational Status		
	Agriculture as primary occupation	256	85.33
	Agriculture as the secondary occupation	44	14.67
4	Farm Size		
	Marginal farmer (less than 2.50 acre)	85	28.33
	Small farmer (2.50 to 5.00 acre)	134	44.67
	Big farmer (above 5.00 acre)	81	27.00
5	Farming Experience		
	Low (Up to 10 years)	19	06.34
	Medium (10 to 15 years)	190	63.33
	High (more than 15 years)	91	30.33
6	Annual Income		
	Low (up to 1 lakhs)	30	10.00
	Medium (1 to 3 lakhs)	173	57.67
	High (above 3 lakhs)	97	32.33
7	Extension agency contact		
	Low	23	07.67
	Medium	215	71.66
	High	62	20.67
8	Mass media Exposure		
	Low	20	06.67
	Medium	217	72.33
	High	63	21.00
9	Information source utilization		
	Low	22	07.33
	Medium	194	64.67
	High	84	28.00
10	Information sharing behavior		
	Low	21	07.00

	Medium	185	61.67
	High	94	31.33
11	Achievement motivation		
	Low	26	08.66
	Medium	209	69.67
	High	65	21.67
12	Economic motivation		
	Low	34	11.33
	Medium	212	70.67
	High	54	18.00
13	Credibility		
	Low	88	29.33
	Medium	132	44.00
	High	80	26.67
14	Innovativeness		
	Low	72	24.00
	Medium	182	60.67
	High	46	15.33
15	Decision making pattern		
	Independent decision	220	73.33
	Joint decision	80	26.67
16	Market orientation		
	Low	21	07.00
	Medium	240	80.00
	High	39	13.00
17	Training Undergone		
	Not attended any training	--	--
	One training	--	--
	Two trainings	29	09.67
	More than two trainings	271	90.33

3.2. Relationship between personal, socioeconomic and psychological characteristics of FPO beneficiaries with their attitude towards FPO

This section deals the association and contribution between the selected characteristics of the respondents with their impact of FPO. For studying the relationship between personal, socioeconomic and psychological characteristics and their dependent variables, the statistical tools namely zero-order correlation and the results are presented in this section.

The personal, socioeconomic and psychological characteristics of the FPO beneficiaries may play a vital role in determining their impact level. In order to assess the association between personal, socioeconomic and psychological characteristic of beneficiaries and their attitude level, zero order correlation co-efficient was worked out.

The association of the seventeen independent variables namely age (X₁), educational status (X₂), Occupational status (X₃), farm size(X₄), farming experience (X₅), annual income (X₆), extension agency contact (X₇), mass media exposure (X₈), information source utilization (X₉), information sharing behavior (X₁₀), achievement motivation (X₁₁), economic motivation (X₁₂), credibility (X₁₃), innovativeness (X₁₄), decision making pattern (X₁₅), market orientation (X₁₆) and training undergone (X₁₇) were studied with their attitude of FPO and the results are presented in Table 2 and Fig.1.

Table 2. Relationship between personal, socioeconomic and psychological characteristics of FPO beneficiaries with their attitude towards FPO

Variable No.	Independent Variables	Correlation-coefficient 'r' value
X1	Age	-0.057NS
X2	Educational status	0.189*
X3	Occupational status	0.234*
X4	Farm size	-0.041NS
X5	Farming Experience	-0.035NS
X6	Annual income	0.227**
X7	Extension agency contact	0.317**
X8	Mass media exposure	0.326**
X9	Information source utilization	0.216*
X10	Information sharing behaviour	-0.053NS

X11	Achievement motivation	0.197*
X12	Economic motivation	0.286**
X13	Credibility	0.185*
X14	Innovativeness	-0.046NS
X15	Decision making pattern	0.220*
X16	Market orientation	0.299*
X17	Training undergone	0.309**

***Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed), ^{NS} Non Significant**

Table 2 indicated that the zero order correlation co-efficient of educational status (X₂), occupational status (X₃), annual income (X₆), extension agency contact (X₇), mass media exposure (X₈), information source utilization (X₉), achievement motivation (X₁₁), economic motivation (X₁₂), credibility (X₁₃), decision making pattern (X₁₅), market orientation (X₁₆) and training undergone (X₁₇) of FPO beneficiaries with their attitude was found to be significant. Whereas the variables age (X₁), farm size (X₄), farming experience (X₅), information sharing behaviour (X₁₀) and innovativeness (X₁₄) was found to be non-significant.

The observations of Table 2 revealed a positive and significant relationship between the attitude of respondents towards Farmer Producer Organisations and their educational status. A more relevant reason is that education has a direct impact on the ability to understand any new concept. The level of education enables an individual to acquire the necessary skills to engage in modern agricultural techniques. Educational level has a positive and significant relationship with the attitude of the respondents which may be due to the fact that most of the respondents have their educational level up to higher secondary. This findings is in line with the findings of Parmar (2014) and Jagadeeswari Boppana *et al.* (2020).

As per conclusions of Table 2, there is a strong and positive relationship between the attitude of respondents towards Farmer Producer Organisation and their occupational status. This clearly demonstrates that the occupational status increases the level of attitude. The fact that almost all the respondents had agriculture as their primary occupation showed that they had a very positive attitude towards agricultural activities and that they were

equally concerned about the Farmer Producer Organisation. This may be the reason for the positive and significant relationship between the occupational status and attitude of respondents towards Farmer Producer Organisation. This findings were similar with the findings of Jadhav (2018).

Table 2 shown that, there is a positive and significant relationship between the annual income and the attitude of respondents towards Farmer Producer Organisation. The financial reliability, stability and behaviour of an individual can be directly determined by their annual income. A large proportion of the respondents had a medium and high level of annual income, which can be directly attributed to the positive and significant relationship between annual income and attitude among respondents towards farmer producer organization. This findings is in line with the findings of Jadhav (2018), Deshmukh *et al.* (2020) and Jagadeeswari Boppana *et al.* (2020).

It is evident from the Table 2, that there was a positive and highly significant relationship between extension agency contact and the attitude of respondents towards Farmer Producer Organisation. Those who are actually involved in their activities with extension agencies and those who actually participate in their gain expertise and knowledge in the new features of the agricultural strategy. It gives them the opportunity to learn about agricultural innovations. Therefore, the results of the study that most of the respondents had efficient extension agency contacts may be due to the positive and most significant relationship between the extension agency contacts with the attitude of the respondents towards Farmer Producer Organisations. This finding derives support from the findings of Gonshtwad *et al.* (2016) and Deshmukh *et al.* (2020).

It could be observed from Table 2, the result shown that there was a positive and highly significant relationship between the mass media exposure and the attitude of respondents towards Farmer Producer Organisation. This may be due to the fact that the ideas and beliefs of individuals are easily influenced by the mass media. The main role of the media in timely spreading innovative information is a lot. Farmers listen to agricultural programmes on radio/TV, as well as read farm publications and newspapers, and use such information to improve their farming practices. The results of the study that most of the respondents were efficient of mass media exposure can cause a positive and most significant relationship between the mass media exposure with the attitude of the

respondents towards Farmer Producer Organisation. This finding is in accordance with those findings of Jagadeeswari Boppana *et al.* (2020) and Umme Hani *et al.* (2021).

Table 2 illustrates that there is a positive and highly significant relationship between information source utilization and attitude of respondents towards Farmer Producer Organisation. It could owe to the fact if a person is exposed to a greater variety of information sources, which begins to develop an attitude. Using additional sources of information helps in clearly stating the contents of any message obtained. Respondents, who uses more information sources has a huge exposure, which enhances their level of behaviour and attitude. It might be the reason that information source utilization could express the positive and significant relationship with the attitude of respondents towards Farmer Producer Organisation. This findings are in parallel with Modem Ravikishore *et al.* (2016) and Deshmukh *et al.* (2020).

The perusal of Table 2 depicts that there was a positive and highly significant relationship between achievement motivation and attitude of respondents towards Farmer Producer Organisation. It might be because achievement motivation serves as an inspirational force that guides thoughts and emotions, making plans, and take decisions towards attaining some internalised goals of excellence, which always influence the attitude of an individual. In the study, most of the respondents had a great level of achievement motivation towards agriculture, which may influence in the same way the positive and highly significant relationship between achievement motivations with attitude of respondents towards the farmer producer system. This results concur with the findings of Shankaraiah and Narayana Swamy (2012) and Umme Hani *et al.* (2021).

From the above Table 2, it was confirmed that there was a positive and highly significant relationship between economic motivation and attitude of respondents towards Farmer Producer Organisation. Economic motivation can be attributed to improvement of economic status by adopting the enabled services of farmer producer organisation. This might be the reason that the majority of the respondents had medium and high level of economic motivation. This indicates that the respondents had a basic desire to earn more money and wish to compete with others in improving their standard of living, which may have motivated the respondents to adopt various agricultural innovations. Due to the above reasons, economic motivation may have a positive and highly significant relationship with attitude of respondents towards farmer producer organization. This findings are in

connection with the findings of Kunchala *et al.* (2012), Jadhav (2018), and Jagadeeswari Boppana *et al.* (2020).

It is clear from the Table 2, the result noticed that there was a positive and significant relationship between credibility and attitude of respondents towards Farmer Producer Organisations. This is only possible if one has faith in an organisation. This may be mainly due to the fact that most of the respondents had a medium level of credibility. These findings are consistent with the findings of Modem Ravikishore *et al.* (2016), Hematripathi *et al.* (2018) and Nagesha *et al.* (2022).

Visualization of Table 2, reveals that there was a positive and significant relationship between decision making pattern and attitude of respondents towards Farmer Producer Organisation. The decision making pattern of respondents generally depends on their educational and economic status. This is because the study confirmed that most of the respondents were literate and their economic status was rising. This may have given them confidence to make a decision. And this may be the reason for the positive and significant relationship with attitude towards Farmer Producer Organisation and the decision making pattern. This findings are clearly consistent with the findings of Shankaraiah and Narayana Swamy (2012) and Hematripathi *et al.* (2018).

Based on the scores obtained from Table 2, the result revealed that there was a positive and highly significant relationship between market orientation and attitude of respondents towards Farmer Producer Organisations. The cause might be that the effectiveness level of Farmer Producer Organisations in disseminating the market information was greater. This is due to the fact that there was a positive and significant relationship between attitude towards farmer producer organizations and market orientation which gave them many opportunities to de-risk in the marketing sector. This finding got support from the finding of Hematripathi *et al.* (2018) stated that positive and significant relationship.

It is apparent from the Table 2, the result revealed that there was a positive and highly significant relationship between training undergone and attitude of respondents towards Farmer Producer Organisation. This may be due to the fact that the trainings changed the behavior of the respondents and raised their attitude levels. The study also concluded that most of the respondents attended more than two training programmes conducted by extension functionaries which accounts for the positive and significant relationship between training and attitude of respondents towards farmer producer organisation. This

findings is consistent with previous findings of Modem Ravikishore *et al.* (2016), Jaswanth Naik *et al.* (2020) and Acharya *et al.* (2020).

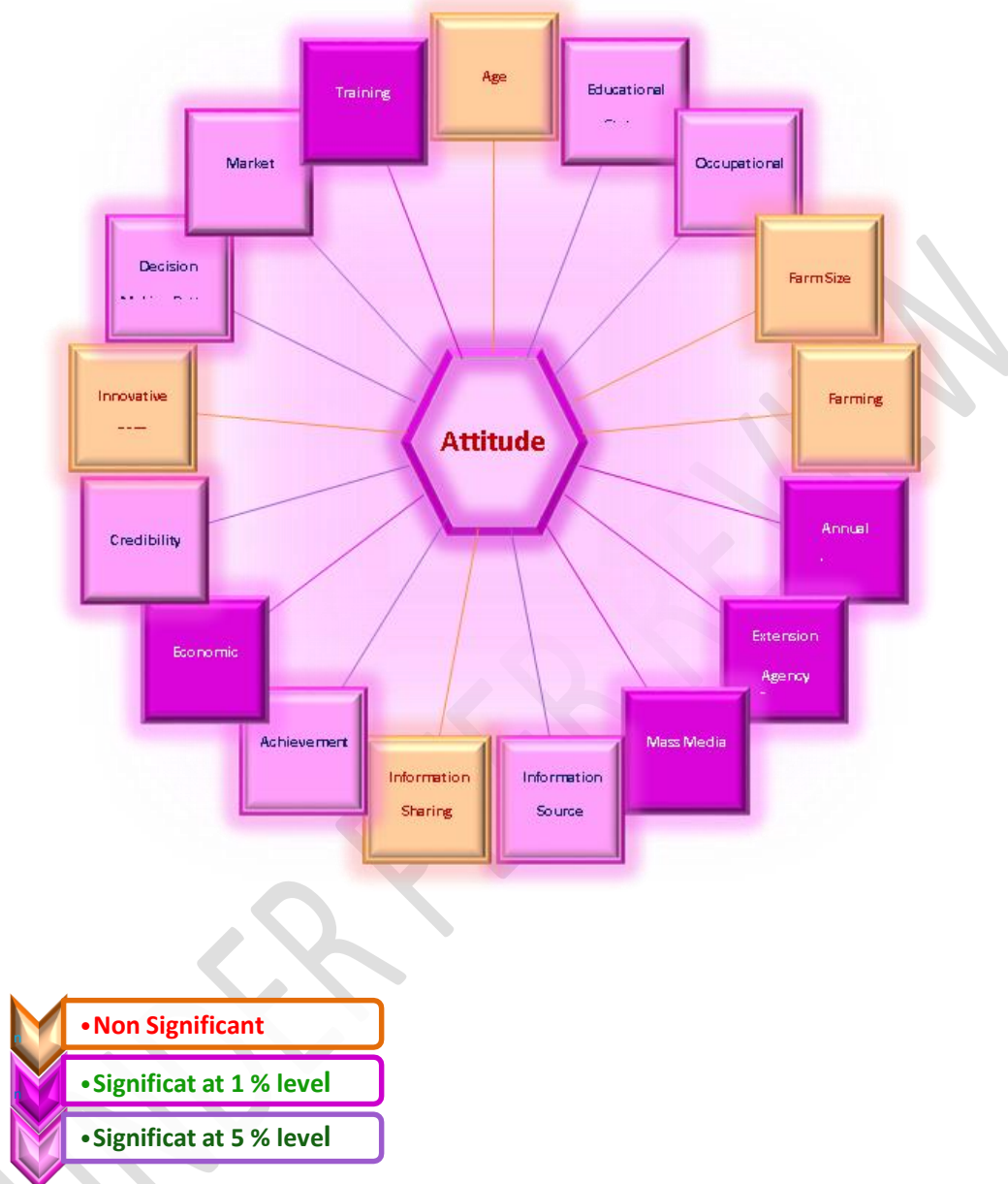


Fig 1 - Empirical model showing the association between personal, socioeconomic, and psychological characteristics relationship with the attitude towards farmer producer organisations

4. Conclusion

The study indicated that the personal, socioeconomic, and psychological characteristics relationship with the attitude towards Farmer Producer Organisations concluded that majority of the respondents were middle aged, had higher secondary school level education, had agriculture as their primary occupation, belonged small

farmers category, possessed medium level of farming experience and had medium level annual income. Majority of the respondents had medium level of extension agency contact, mass media exposure, information source utilization, information sharing behaviour, achievement motivation, economic motivation, credibility, innovativeness and market orientation. Most of the respondents participated in more than two trainings and made their decision independently.

Regarding the relationship between personal, socioeconomic and psychological characteristics of beneficiaries and their attitude level, twelve variables viz., educational status, occupational status, annual income, extension agency contact, mass media exposure, information source utilization, achievement motivation, economic motivation, credibility, decision making pattern, market orientation and training undergone were found to have positive and significant relationship with the attitude.

Disclaimer (Artificial intelligence)

Author(s) hereby declare that NO generative AI technologies such as Large Language Models (ChatGPT, COPILOT, etc) and text-to-image generators have been used during writing or editing of manuscripts.

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