

Assessing the Attitude of Entrepreneurs towards Agri-Business in Tamil nadu using a Standardized Measurement Scale

Abstract

This study examines the attitudes of entrepreneurs towards agri-business, focusing on how various factors influence their entrepreneurial ventures in the agricultural sector. The study employs a robust methodology, using Thurstone and Chave's scaling technique to construct and validate an attitude scale. Results indicate that the majority of entrepreneurs exhibit a moderately favorable attitude towards agri-business, with a notable proportion showing a highly favorable disposition. This favorable attitude is attributed to factors such as opportunity identification, resource pooling, and resilience, despite the inherent risks and seasonal fluctuations associated with agri-business.

Keywords: Agri-business, Entrepreneurial Attitude, Attitude scale, Validity, Reliability

1. Introduction

Entrepreneurship in the agricultural sector, commonly referred to as agri-business, is increasingly recognized as a vital component for economic development and food security. Understanding the attitudes of entrepreneurs towards agri-business is crucial for fostering a supportive environment that can enhance the success and sustainability of agricultural enterprises. Existing literature suggests that entrepreneurs in agri-business display varied attitudes influenced by personal, social, and economic factors. Carree and Thurik (2002) emphasize the entrepreneurial ability to identify and seize new profit opportunities, while Friijs et al. (2002) describe the multifaceted roles of entrepreneurs, including innovation and decision-making. The emotional resilience of entrepreneurs, as noted by Cross and Travaglione (2003), plays a significant role in overcoming challenges. Raman (2004) and Swinney and Runyan (2007) further illustrate the importance of motivational factors and support systems. This study aims to build on these findings by employing a systematic approach to evaluate the attitudes of

agri-business entrepreneurs and to identify key factors that influence their entrepreneurial endeavors.

2. Review of Literature

2.1. Attitude of entrepreneurs towards Agri Business

Previous studies have reported differential attitudinal levels among farmers towards agri-entrepreneurship. Carree and Thurik (2002) highlighted that entrepreneurs excel at perceiving and seizing new profit opportunities. Friijs et al. (2002) discussed how existing definitions of entrepreneurship often encompass roles such as coordination, innovation, uncertainty bearing, capital supply, decision-making, ownership, and resource allocation. Cross and Travaglione (2003) indicated that entrepreneurs' emotional intelligence allows them to convert adversity into determination, frustration into motivation, and stress into self-reflection. Raman (2004) found in a study conducted in Kerala that motivational factors such as initiative, third-party assistance, encouragement from family and friends, skills, and experience contribute significantly to the success of entrepreneurs. Swinney and Runyan (2007) noted that generating income and creating jobs for themselves, along with support from family and friends, are primary motivators for successful entrepreneurship.

3. Materials and Methods

3.1.1. Attitude of Entrepreneurs towards Agri-Entrepreneurship

The scale was constructed using the 'Equal Appearing Interval' scaling technique developed by Thurstone and Chave (1929). The steps involved in constructing the attitude scale are detailed below.

3.1.2. Operationalization of Attitude of entrepreneurs towards agri-entrepreneurship

In this study, attitude was operationalized as the mental disposition of entrepreneurs towards agri-entrepreneurship, ranging from favorable to unfavorable.

3.1.3. Collection of attitude items

Statements concerning the psychological object, ‘agri-entrepreneurship,’ were gathered based on a literature review and discussions with scientists and extensionists. A total of 80 statements were collected, organized, and structured as items. These items were screened according to the criteria suggested by Edwards (1969) for editing statements used in attitude scale construction. Ultimately, 65 items were selected, forming the universe of content.

3.1.4. Item scoring and computation of scale values and Q values

The 65 statements were rated by 60 judges, comprising scientists from State Agricultural Universities, on a five-point continuum ranging from most unfavorable to most favorable. Scale values and Q values for the statements were computed using Thurstone and Chave’s (1929) formula.

Table 1: List of statements sent for judges opinion

Sl. No.	Statements	MUF	UF	N	F	MF
1.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs have the ability to identify goods or services what people want					
2.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs do not have the tendency to identify unmet customer needs					
3.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs look for products that provide real benefits					
4.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs capture high-quality business opportunity					
5.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs are over enthused to initiate business					
6.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs have personal bias in assessing consequences of business					
7.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs possess over confidence to start a business without adequate					

	resources					
8.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs have good social network					
9.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs take decision by interacting with team members					
10.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs have decide on their own without consulting others					
11.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs have low intention to start business					
12.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs are the first persons to initiate any new activities					
13.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs try to learn from mistakes					
14.	Prior experience is essential to support Agri Business Entrepreneurs to make business successful					
15.	Family motivation is necessary for the entrepreneur to succeed their business					
16.	Previous experience have no association with the business performance of entrepreneurs					
17.	Business related education / training helps to improve the business in right way					
18.	Management know-how is important for Agri Business Entrepreneurs to run a business					
19.	Age is one of the important criteria to start a business					
20.	Education is merely a support factor for any entrepreneur to start a business					
21.	Continuous practice in business is needed for Agri					

	Business Entrepreneurs to gain management know-how					
22.	Industrial experience supports the entrepreneurs to run in a better way					
23.	Parents entrepreneurial skill creates self-confidence in the minds of kids/next generation					
24.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs have the passion to become self-employed					
25.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs are eager to provide jobs to others through businesses					
26.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs have an aversion to work under others as an employee					
27.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs have attribute to develop new products or innovation					
28.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs can easily allocate and manage time for business and family					
29.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs allocate time to spend with family on their own					
30.	It is possible to contribute more time with business by entrepreneurs					
31.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs possess good communication skill					
32.	Opportunity alertness is more in the mind of entrepreneur to grab chance					
33.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs are interested to work independently					
34.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs rummage support to develop new products by experimentation					
35.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs have the tendency to take bold actions					

36.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs possess forward looking behaviour to run a business					
37.	Futuristic perspective of an entrepreneur is a barrier to look into the present conditions					
38.	At the initial stage, there lacks encouragement to start business by an entrepreneur					
39.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs have quick decision making ability					
40.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs have talent to face challenges					
41.	Out-of-box thinking (above normal person) in business is high among entrepreneurs					
42.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs easily prioritize the work with consecutive plan					
43.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs are willing to take risks					
44.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs are willing to make personal sacrifices for their business					
45.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs have the ability to continue despite setbacks					
46.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs are ready to adapt new skills/approaches					
47.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs have determined, dedicated and committed for their business					
48.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs set specific vision to achieve					
49.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs have flexibility for changes in business environment					
50.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs make timely decisions to implement					

51.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs encourage and accept criticism					
52.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs maintain a strong work ethic					
53.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs rebound quickly from setbacks					
54.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs get out of their comfort zone periodically to pursue something important to elevate the business					
55.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs uses resources efficiently					
56.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs have the ability to turn ideas into reality					
57.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs possess sound financial background					
58.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs able to pool resources from financial institutions					
59.	Finance position is a hindrance to start business					
60.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs join as a member in organisation which support their business					
61.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs seeking guidance for marketing the product in member organisation					
62.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs use Mass media for quick dissemination and popularization of technologies/products					
63.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs participate in promotional activities like exhibition, workshop, forum etc.					
64.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs have adequate knowledge on government schemes related to					

	entrepreneurship development					
65.	Agri Business Entrepreneurs approach government officials to acquire financial assistance					

Note: MUF- Most unfavourable UF- Unfavourable N- Neutral

F- Favourable MF- Most favourable

3.1.5. Selection of attitude items

Items with high scale values and low Q values were selected from each compartment to ensure that the items represented the content universe and covered various aspects of agri-entrepreneurship.

Table 2: Compartment of Scale Values for the Selection of the Attitude Items

Statement No.	Q Value	S Value	Difference	Cumulative Frequency	Compartments
48	1.09	1.44			I
50	1.08	1.44	0.00		
3	1.00	1.50	0.06	0.06	
18	1.10	1.54	0.04	0.10	
52	1.31	1.57	0.03	0.13	
36	1.39	1.58	0.01	0.14	
1	0.52	1.63	0.05	0.19	
56	1.13	1.63	0.00	0.19	
31	1.10	1.65	0.02	0.21	
17	1.12	1.65	0.00	0.21	
41	1.16	1.67	0.02	0.23	
32	1.14	1.72	0.05	0.28	

43	1.35	1.72	0.00	0.28	II
55	1.08	1.73	0.01	0.29	
64	1.09	1.74	0.01	0.30	
46	1.14	1.75	0.01	0.31	
63	1.08	1.76	0.01	0.32	
4	1.34	1.78	0.02	0.34	
13	1.19	1.81	0.03	0.37	
8	1.18	1.82	0.01	0.38	
47	1.31	1.83	0.01	0.39	
42	1.40	1.87	0.04	0.43	
14	1.63	1.88	0.01	0.44	
27	1.30	1.89	0.01	0.45	
35	1.31	1.89	0.00	0.45	
2	0.55	1.91	0.02	0.47	
49	0.51	1.92	0.01	0.48	
62	0.51	1.92	0.00	0.48	
61	0.42	1.94	0.02	0.5	
65	0.37	1.94	0.00	0.5	
33	1.22	1.95	0.01	0.51	
39	1.23	1.97	0.02	0.53	
40	1.25	1.98	0.01	0.54	
9	0.41	1.99	0.01	0.55	
58	0.36	2.07	0.08	0.63	

60	0.72	2.09	0.02	0.65	
51	0.69	2.10	0.01	0.66	
21	0.58	2.11	0.01	0.67	
11	0.57	2.12	0.01	0.68	
15	0.68	2.13	0.01	0.69	
44	1.70	2.14	0.01	0.7	
23	1.67	2.17	0.03	0.73	
25	0.67	2.17	0.00	0.73	
30	1.45	2.17	0.00	0.73	
45	1.82	2.17	0.00	0.73	
54	0.62	2.18	0.01	0.74	
22	1.54	2.19	0.01	0.75	
5	1.56	2.21	0.02	0.77	
59	1.49	2.27	0.06	0.83	
24	1.67	2.28	0.01	0.84	
34	0.65	2.31	0.03	0.87	
12	0.82	2.33	0.02	0.89	
53	0.66	2.36	0.03	0.92	IV
28	0.74	2.63	0.27	1.19	
38	1.05	2.73	0.10	1.29	V
37	1.03	3.00	0.27	1.56	VI
57	0.78	3.02	0.02	1.58	
29	0.85	3.05	0.03	1.61	

6	1.53	3.12	0.07	1.68	
26	0.72	3.36	0.24	1.92	VII
20	1.03	3.38	0.02	1.94	
7	0.93	3.65	0.27	2.21	VIII
16	0.96	3.68	0.03	2.24	
19	1.11	3.71	0.03	2.27	
10	0.55	4.12	0.41	2.68	IX

Thereby, nine items were selected with equal appearing interval and with a uniform distribution along the psychological continuum.

Table 3: Final set of attitude items selected with corresponding S and Q values and the nature of statement

State ment No.	Scale Value	Q Value	Statement	Nature of the statement
10	4.12	0.55	Agri Business Entrepreneurs decide on their own without consulting others	Favourable
7	3.65	0.93	Agri Business Entrepreneurs possess over confidence to start a business without adequate resources	Unfavourable
26	3.36	0.72	Agri Business Entrepreneurs have an aversion to work under others as an employee	Favourable
57	3.02	0.78	Agri Business Entrepreneurs possess sound financial background	Unfavourable
38	2.73	1.05	Agri Business Entrepreneurs possess forward looking behaviour to run a business	Favourable

53	2.38	0.66	Agri Business Entrepreneurs rebound quickly from setbacks	Favourable
58	2.07	0.36	Agri Business Entrepreneurs able to pool resources from financial institutions	Favourable
65	1.94	0.37	Agri Business Entrepreneurs approach government officials to obtain financial assistance	Favourable
1	1.63	0.52	Agri Business Entrepreneurs have the ability to identify goods or services what people want	Favourable

3.1.6. Reliability of the scale

The reliability of the scale was assessed using the ‘split-half’ method. The nine selected attitude items were divided into two equal halves, and administered separately to 30 entrepreneurs in a non-sample area. The scores were analyzed using the product-moment correlation test to determine half-test reliability, which was found to be 0.580, significant at the 5% level. The reliability coefficient for the entire test, computed using the Spearman-Brown prophecy formula, was 0.742, indicating adequate reliability.

3.1.7. Content validity of the scale

Content validity was assessed by evaluating the representativeness of the items. Thirty judges rated each item on a four-point continuum of ‘most adequately covers,’ ‘more adequately covers,’ ‘less adequately covers,’ and ‘least adequately covers.’ With a mean score of 3.0, indicating that the scale most adequately covers the intended content, the scale was deemed valid.

3.1.8. Administration of the scale

The nine selected attitude items were randomly arranged to prevent biased responses. A five-point continuum of ‘strongly agree,’ ‘agree,’ ‘undecided,’ ‘disagree,’ and ‘strongly disagree’ was used for responses.

Table 4: The scoring procedure adopted

Nature of the statement	Continuum				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Favourable	7	5	4	3	1
Unfavourable	1	3	4	5	7

The attitude score for each respondent was computed by summing the scores for each statement, ranging from 63 (maximum) to 9 (minimum). Responses were categorized as less favorable, moderately favorable, or highly favorable based on the cumulative frequency method.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Analysis of attitude of entrepreneurs towards agri-business

Table 5: presents the distribution of entrepreneurs based on their attitude levels towards agri-business:

(n=150)

S. No.	Category	No. of respondents	Percentage
1.	Less favourable	30	20.00
2.	Moderately favourable	77	51.33
3.	Highly favourable	43	28.67
Total		150	100.00

The table indicates that the majority of entrepreneurs (51.33%) had a moderately favorable attitude towards agri-business, followed by 28.67% with a highly favorable attitude and 20.00% with a less favorable attitude. Key factors influencing a favorable attitude include the ability to identify opportunities, confidence in managing resources, and resilience. Despite the risks and seasonal fluctuations associated with agri-business, entrepreneurs with prior farming experience show a strong preference for this sector. These factors contribute to the moderate to highly favorable attitudes observed.

5. Conclusion

The analysis of attitudes towards agri-business reveals a predominantly moderate to highly favorable disposition among entrepreneurs. The study's findings suggest that the entrepreneurs' ability to identify opportunities, their confidence in managing resources, and their resilience in the face of challenges are critical determinants of their attitude towards agri-business. Despite the risks associated with seasonal fluctuations in agriculture, entrepreneurs who have prior experience in farming or related activities demonstrate a strong inclination towards agri-business. The validated attitude scale used in this study provides a reliable measure of entrepreneurial disposition, offering valuable insights for policymakers and support organizations aiming to foster a conducive environment for agri-business ventures. Encouraging and supporting entrepreneurs through motivational strategies and resource allocation can further enhance their positive attitudes and contribute to the overall success of the agri-business sector.

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