

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

Original Research Article

Abstract

This study examines the attitudes of entrepreneurs towards **agribusiness**, 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 (**51.33%**) exhibit a moderately favorable attitude towards **agribusiness**, with a notable proportion **28.67%** 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 **viz., weather conditions, supply and demand etc.**, associated with **agribusiness**.

Keywords: **Agribusiness**, Entrepreneurial Attitude, Attitude scale, Validity, Reliability

1. Introduction

Entrepreneurship in the agricultural sector, commonly referred to as **agribusiness**, is increasingly recognized as a vital component for economic development and food security. Understanding the attitudes of entrepreneurs towards **agribusiness** is crucial for fostering a supportive environment that can enhance the success and sustainability of agricultural enterprises. Existing literature suggests that entrepreneurs in **agribusiness** 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. 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 **to build attitude of entrepreneurs**. This study aims to build on these findings by employing a systematic approach to

evaluate the attitudes of **agribusiness** entrepreneurs and to identify key factors that influence their entrepreneurial endeavors.

2. Review of Literature

2.1. Attitude of entrepreneurs towards **Agribusiness**

Previous studies have reported differential attitudinal levels among farmers towards agri-entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurs excel at perceiving and seizing new profit opportunities (**Carree and Thurik, 2002**). Entrepreneurship often encompass roles such as coordination, innovation, uncertainty bearing, capital supply, decision-making, ownership, and resource allocation (**Frijjs et al. 2002**). Entrepreneurs' emotional intelligence allows them to convert adversity into determination, frustration into motivation, and stress into self-reflection (**Cross and Travaglione, 2003**). Motivational factors such as initiative, third-party assistance, encouragement from family and friends, skills, and experience contribute significantly to the success of entrepreneurs (**Raman, 2004**). Generating income and creating jobs for themselves, along with support from family and friends, are primary motivators for successful entrepreneurship (**Swinney and Runyan, 2007**). **Method of summated rating scale, by Likert3 (1932) was used to construct the attitude scale of rural youth towards agri entrepreneurship (Shivacharan et al, 2017). The student attitudes were measured by their tendency toward entrepreneurship which was based on four domains: personal skills, technical skills, managerial skills and leadership skills (Wajeha Thabit Al-Ani et al, 2020)**

3. Methodology

3.1.1. Attitude of Entrepreneurs towards **Agripreneurship**

“Random sample method” was adopted to select the respondents from the Entrepreneurial Hubs. Out of total population of 600, one-fourth of them were selected as sample respondents from each zone. Totally 150 respondents were selected for the study.

The details of the selection of respondents

| Entrepreneurial Hubs | Total respondents | Selected respondents |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|

| | | |
|--|------------|------------|
| Business Planning and Development Unit, TNAU, Coimbatore | 200 | 50 |
| Agricultural College & Research Institute, Madurai | 140 | 35 |
| Tamil Nadu Rice Research Institute, Aduthurai | 100 | 25 |
| Oilseeds Research Station, Tindivanam | 160 | 40 |
| Total | 600 | 150 |

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 agripreneurship

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

3.1.3. Collection of attitude items

Statements concerning the psychological object, ‘agripreneurship,’ 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) ‘Equal Appearing Interval’ scaling technique.

Table 1: List of statements sent for judges opinion

| Sl. | Statements | MUF | UF | N | F | MF |
|-----|------------|-----|----|---|---|----|
|-----|------------|-----|----|---|---|----|

| No. | | | | | | |
|-----|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| 1. | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs have the ability to identify goods or services what people want | | | | | |
| 2. | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs do not have the tendency to identify unmet customer needs | | | | | |
| 3. | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs look for products that provide real benefits | | | | | |
| 4. | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs capture high-quality business opportunity | | | | | |
| 5. | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs are over enthused to initiate business | | | | | |
| 6. | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs have personal bias in assessing consequences of business | | | | | |
| 7. | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs possess over confidence to start a business without adequate resources | | | | | |
| 8. | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs have good social network | | | | | |
| 9. | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs take decision by interacting with team members | | | | | |
| 10. | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs have decide on their own without consulting others | | | | | |
| 11. | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs have low intention to start business | | | | | |
| 12. | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs are the first persons to initiate any new activities | | | | | |
| 13. | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs try to learn from mistakes | | | | | |
| 14. | Prior experience is essential to support | | | | | |

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|-----|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | Agribusiness 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 Agribusiness 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 Agribusiness 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. | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs have the passion to become self-employed | | | | | |
| 25. | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs are eager to provide jobs to others through businesses | | | | | |
| 26. | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs have an aversion to work under others as an employee | | | | | |
| 27. | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs have attribute to develop new products or innovation | | | | | |

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|-----|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| 28. | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs can easily allocate and manage time for business and family | | | | | |
| 29. | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs allocate time to spend with family on their own | | | | | |
| 30. | It is possible to contribute more time with business by entrepreneurs | | | | | |
| 31. | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs possess good communication skill | | | | | |
| 32. | Opportunity alertness is more in the mind of entrepreneur to grab chance | | | | | |
| 33. | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs are interested to work independently | | | | | |
| 34. | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs rummage support to develop new products by experimentation | | | | | |
| 35. | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs have the tendency to take bold actions | | | | | |
| 36. | Agribusiness 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. | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs have quick decision making ability | | | | | |
| 40. | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs have talent to face challenges | | | | | |
| 41. | Out-of-box thinking (above normal person) in business is high among entrepreneurs | | | | | |
| 42. | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs easily prioritize the work with consecutive plan | | | | | |

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|------------|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| 43. | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs are willing to take risks | | | | | |
| 44. | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs are willing to make personal sacrifices for their business | | | | | |
| 45. | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs have the ability to continue despite setbacks | | | | | |
| 46. | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs are ready to adapt new skills/approaches | | | | | |
| 47. | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs have determined, dedicated and committed for their business | | | | | |
| 48. | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs set specific vision to achieve | | | | | |
| 49. | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs have flexibility for changes in business environment | | | | | |
| 50. | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs make timely decisions to implement | | | | | |
| 51. | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs encourage and accept criticism | | | | | |
| 52. | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs maintain a strong work ethic | | | | | |
| 53. | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs rebound quickly from setbacks | | | | | |
| 54. | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs get out of their comfort zone periodically to pursue something important to elevate the business | | | | | |
| 55. | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs uses resources efficiently | | | | | |
| 56. | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs have the ability to turn ideas into reality | | | | | |
| 57. | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs possess sound | | | | | |

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|-----|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | financial background | | | | | |
| 58. | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs able to pool resources from financial institutions | | | | | |
| 59. | Finance position is a hindrance to start business | | | | | |
| 60. | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs join as a member in organisation which support their business | | | | | |
| 61. | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs seeking guidance for marketing the product in member organisation | | | | | |
| 62. | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs use Mass media for quick dissemination and popularization of technologies/products | | | | | |
| 63. | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs participate in promotional activities like exhibition, workshop, forum etc. | | | | | |
| 64. | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs have adequate knowledge on government schemes related to entrepreneurship development | | | | | |
| 65. | Agribusiness 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 **agripreneurship**.

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 | | |
| 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 |
| 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 |

I

II

| | | | | |
|----|------|------|------|------|
| 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 |

III

| | | | | | |
|----|------|------|------|------|-------------|
| 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 | |
| 57 | 0.78 | 3.02 | 0.02 | 1.58 | VI |
| 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 | |
| 16 | 0.96 | 3.68 | 0.03 | 2.24 | VIII |
| 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 | Scale | Q | Statement | Nature of the |
|-------|-------|---|-----------|---------------|
|-------|-------|---|-----------|---------------|

| Item No. | Mean Value | Standard Deviation | Statement | Reliability |
|----------|------------|--------------------|---|--------------|
| 10 | 4.12 | 0.55 | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs decide on their own without consulting others | Favourable |
| 7 | 3.65 | 0.93 | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs possess over confidence to start a business without adequate market research | Unfavourable |
| 26 | 3.36 | 0.72 | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs have an aversion to work under others as an employee | Favourable |
| 57 | 3.02 | 0.78 | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs possess sound financial background | Unfavourable |
| 38 | 2.73 | 1.05 | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs possess forward looking behaviour to run a business | Favourable |
| 53 | 2.38 | 0.66 | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs rebound quickly from setbacks | Favourable |
| 58 | 2.07 | 0.36 | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs able to pool resources from financial institutions | Favourable |
| 65 | 1.94 | 0.37 | Agribusiness Entrepreneurs approach government officials to obtain financial assistance | Favourable |
| 1 | 1.63 | 0.52 | Agribusiness 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.

$$R_{whole} = (2r)/(1+r)$$

Where, r is the correlation coefficient between the two halves of the test

n is the factor by which the number of items will be multiplied

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 for attitude

| 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 agribusiness

Table 5: Distribution of entrepreneurs based on their attitude levels towards agribusiness:

(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 agribusiness, 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 agribusiness, entrepreneurs with prior farming experience show a strong preference for this sector. These factors contribute to the moderate to highly favorable attitudes observed.

4.2. Limitations of the study

1. **Sample Size and Generalizability:** The study's findings may be limited by the sample size and specific characteristics of the respondents. To enhance the generalizability of the results, a larger and more diverse sample could be considered.
2. **Cultural and Regional Nuances:** The study's findings may be specific to the cultural and regional context of the study area. Further research is needed to explore how attitudes towards agribusiness vary across different regions and cultures.
3. **Depth of Analysis:** While the study provides valuable insights into entrepreneurs' attitudes, a deeper exploration of the underlying motivations, barriers, and facilitators of agribusiness ventures could be undertaken.

4.3. Future directions for research

1. **Comparative Analysis:** A comparative analysis of entrepreneurs' attitudes and behaviors across different countries or regions could provide valuable insights into the global landscape of agribusiness entrepreneurship.
2. **Qualitative Research:** Qualitative research methods, such as interviews and case studies, can provide a deeper understanding of the factors influencing entrepreneurs' decisions and the challenges they face.
3. **Digital Technologies and Agribusiness:** The impact of digital technologies on agribusiness entrepreneurship can be explored in future research. This includes the use of e-commerce, mobile technologies and data analytics to improve efficiency, market access and decision-making.
4. **Social and Environmental Impact:** The social and environmental impact of agribusiness ventures can be assessed. This includes the impact on rural livelihoods, food security, and sustainable agriculture practices.

5. Conclusion

The analysis of attitudes towards **agribusiness** 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 agribusiness. Despite the risks associated with seasonal fluctuations in agriculture, entrepreneurs who have prior experience in farming or related activities demonstrate a strong inclination towards agribusiness. 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 agribusiness 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 agribusiness sector.

Disclaimer (Artificial intelligence)

Option 2:

Author(s) hereby declare that generative AI technologies such as Large Language Models, etc. have been used during the editing or language check of manuscripts. This explanation will include the name, version, model, and source of the generative AI technology and as well as all input prompts provided to the generative AI technology

Details of the AI usage are given below:

1. Gemini

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