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## ATTITUDE OF RAINFED FARMERS TOWARDS AGRI-ENTREPRENEURSHIP

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**Abstract**

*In the contemporary scenario, the agriculture sector around the world has experienced profound changes in its core areas. Among these, a paradigm shift from agriculture to agri-entrepreneurship is one of the essential pathway to rejuvenate Indian agriculture and to make more attractive and profitable venture. Understanding this, the present exploration was carried out to assess the attitude of the rainfed farmers towards agri-entrepreneurship in Anantapuramu district of Andhra Pradesh. A survey was conducted among the farmers of Anantapuramu district with a sample of 100 respondents selected by simple random sampling. The results revealed that, more than half of the farmers' had favourable attitude (45%) towards agri-entrepreneurship followed by moderately favourable (36%) and unfavourable (19%) attitude towards the agri-entrepreneurship and the factors such as education, scientific orientation, trainings undergone, extension contact and economic motivation were the factors, positively and significantly influencing the farmers' attitude towards agri-entrepreneurship. The study also depicted the ranking of various agri-business activities as preferred by the farmers and it revealed that, 'sheep rearing' ranks first preferred agri-business activity followed by millets value addition, dairy farming, seed processing units, poultry farming, mushroom production, medicinal crops cultivation and apiculture. In order to improve the farmers' attitude towards agri-entrepreneurship and convert them to agripreneurs, regular skill oriented training programmes should be conducted on the agri-business activities with special emphasis on rain fed agriculture.*

**Key words:** Farmers, Ex-post facto, Agripreneurs, Quartiles, Correlation

**Introduction**

Agriculture is the state subject in our country. But, today's agriculture in rural areas is highly complex, diverse and risk prone due to the ever changing climatic conditions in agriculture (Scoones *et al.*, 2008). Especially, the rainfed agriculture scenario is completely unpredictable in the Anantapuramu district of Andhra Pradesh. The majority of the cultivable area in the district comes under rainfed agriculture in which the farmers are continuously confronting the challenges with the unprecedented rainfall pattern in the district (Raizada *et al.*, 2018). With this unforeseen and unresolved threats, majority of the farming clientele ended up their lives in farming and migrated to cities and towns for the employment. In the past few years the rate of migration is growing in an alarming rate where the urban employment also is in the state of complete saturation. Hence, it's the need of the hour to throw some light on self-employment opportunities in the rural areas with global competencies. The Indian farming clientele has the tremendous indigenous traditional knowledge potential to get succeed in any adverse conditions that are going to emerge in the near future. Merely, the farmers' are need to train in such a way that they have to exploit their hidden wisdom and link it with advanced scientific knowledge for creative ideas in agri- entrepreneurship.

Agri-entrepreneurship is also called as agripreneurship. It is defined as generally sustainable, community oriented and directly marketed agriculture. It comprises of activities as gathering of information, communication with chain partners, market orientation, strategic decision making, learning and commercialisation etc. Agri-entrepreneurship has the potential to contribute to a range of social and economic development such as employment generation, income generation and poverty reduction, improvements in nutrition, health and overall food security in the national economy. As the Indian economy is growing in business mode, the Governments have given utmost priority to this sector and several initiatives have been taken up to promote agri-entrepreneurship in the country. It is firmly believed that, India has an enormous knowledge pool with virtually limitless capability to become entrepreneurs. Therefore, committing oneself to creating the right environment is important to develop successful entrepreneurs. To attain this, India needs to focus on inculcating entrepreneurial culture among the rural farming clientele in the country (Sivacharan, 2014). Improving agri-entrepreneurship can

bring about a paradigm shift in the country's agricultural scenario, thereby developing a sustainable farming system that is technologically feasible, environmentally stable, economically viable and socially acceptable, which regulates the country's growth and development is possible (Deepika, 2014). However, there is a research divide in understanding the basic attitude of farmers that distinguishes agripreneurs from non-agripreneurs. It is, in this context, it was found to be topical and of immense value to study the agri-entrepreneurial attitude of the rainfed farmers in the district. With this construal, the study conducted to investigate the farmers' attitude towards the agri-entrepreneurship along with the factors affecting the attitude of farmers towards agri-entrepreneurship in the Anantapuramu district of Andhra Pradesh.

**Materials And Methods**

A survey was conducted using pre tested and structured interview schedule during 2018-2019 among the rainfed farmers in Anantapuramu district of Andhra Pradesh to assess the statements about the attitude of farmers towards agri-entrepreneurship and to find out the influence of personal, socio-economic and psychological attributes of the farmers towards their agri-entrepreneurship. The district was purposively selected, because it is the hub for rainfed agriculture with highest number of rainfed farmers in the state where there is an ample scope to initiate various agri-business enterprises. Based on the objectives of the study, *ex-post facto* design of social research was followed. A total of 100 rainfed farmers were selected from the five mandalas with ten villages and ten farmers from each village with equal proportions through proportionate random sampling method. All the farmers were individually interviewed using pretested interview schedule to collect the primary data and statistical techniques like quartile deviation, arithmetic mean, standard deviation, frequencies and percentage were used.

Attitude in this study was operationally defined as the degree of positive or negative feeling of rainfed farmers towards agri-entrepreneurship. The attitude scale developed by Sivacharan *et al.* (2017) was used with slight modification to measure the attitude of rainfed farmers towards agri-entrepreneurship (Table 1). The scale was constituted of 16 statements, 11 positive and 5 negative statements. The scoring pattern was followed in 5 point continuum as given in Table 2. The study was conducted with special reference to agri-entrepreneurial activities which are suitable

to rainfed agriculture. Based on the total scores, the respondents were classified into 3 categories using quartiles, as measure of check (Table 3). The minimum (16) and maximum (80) possible scores range was considered to derive the quartiles for categorisation. The study also depicted the influence of respondent's personal, socio-economic and psychological attributes on their attitude towards agri-entrepreneurship by Pearson's coefficient of correlation analysis and ranking of various agri-entrepreneurial activities as perceived by the rainfed farmers in Anantapuramu district of Andhra Pradesh.

### Results And Discussion

The data collected from our sampled respondents tabulated and analysed using appropriate statistical tools.

#### Attitude of rainfed farmers towards agri-entrepreneurship

The attitude scale was administered to the rainfed farmers from the selected locations and the farmers' attitude towards agri-entrepreneurship revealed that majority of the respondents had favourable attitude (45%) towards agri-entrepreneurship followed by moderately favourable attitude (37%) and unfavourable attitude (18%) respectively towards agri-entrepreneurship (Table 4). Hence, majority of the farmers have shown favourable to moderately favourable attitude towards agri-entrepreneurial activities with special reference to rainfed agriculture. The reason that could be attributed for this kind of results might be that most of the farmers were much aware of entrepreneurial development programmes in agriculture and allied activities. Farmers also perceived the motives of agri-entrepreneurship in the light of relative profits over the uncertain, complex and unprecedented challenges in climate change which posed a major threat to rainfed farming clientele to sustain in the farming community. Although majority of the respondents have shown positive intent towards agri-entrepreneurship, lack of technology, capital, capacity building and family support, lack of knowledge on the bankable loans for agri-business activities, lack of technical knowledge on the preparation of agri-business projects and the lacuna in the rapport of various stakeholders involved in the existing marketing system forced the farming community to suppress their innovative ideas in agri-entrepreneurial activities. Hence, the rainfed farmers couldn't tap the available resources and capitalise on the same in the way they have shown the positive attitude towards agri-entrepreneurship. Few farmers who had the chance to undergo various training programmes on agri-entrepreneurship have shown the favourable attitude. These findings signifies that congenial environment, timely trainings, low cost technologies, frequent market oriented training programmes and linkage cum convergence among the farmers, public and private stakeholders might stimulate the respondents to move from moderately favourable attitude to favourable attitude. The finding are in accordance with the findings of Dipika and Padaria (2016) who conducted the study on agripreneurial attitude among the farmers of National Capital Region of Delhi.

#### Distribution of respondents based on their personal, socio-economic and psychological attributes of the farmers under the study

Distribution of respondents based on their personal, socio-economic and psychological attributes of the farmers in relation to agri-entrepreneurship was given in the table 5. A detailed and careful perusal of Table 5 further revealed that more than half of the respondents belonged to the 'middle aged' category (58 %) followed by 'young and old aged' categories with equal proportions. Out of 100 respondents, majority of the respondents had high school education (30%) followed by higher secondary education (22%), college and above education (20%), primary education (18%) and illiterates (10%) respectively. It was perceived that nearly half of the respondents (49%) were

moderately experienced followed by less experienced (26%) and highly experienced (25%) respectively. Observing the respondents distribution with respect to scientific orientation, more than half of the respondents had medium level of scientific orientation (58%) followed by high level of scientific orientation (27%) and low level of scientific orientation (15%) respectively. In case of information seeking behaviour of the respondents, nearly half of the respondents' information seeking behaviour was medium (49%) followed by high (34%) and low (17%) respectively. It is also evident from the table 5 that majority of the respondents have undergone moderate number of trainings (58%) followed by more number of trainings (28%) and less number of trainings (14%) respectively. With respect to social participation more than half of the respondents had medium level of social participation followed by low level of participation (27%) and high level of participation (21%) respectively. In case of extension contact, more than half of the respondents (57%) had medium level of extension contact followed by high level of extension contact (27%) and low level of extension contact (16%) respectively. In case of achievement motivation, majority of the respondents had medium and high levels of achievement motivation with equal proportions (42%) followed by low level of achievement motivation (16%) respectively. With respect to economic motivation, majority of the respondents had moderate level of economic motivation (43%) followed by high level of economic motivation (37%) and low level of economic motivation (20%) respectively.

#### Relationship between personal, socio-economic, psychological attributes and attitude of rainfed farmers with respect to agri-entrepreneurship

The results of Pearson's coefficient of correlation analysis were taken into consideration for analysing the influence of respondent's personal, socio-economic and psychological attributes on the attitude of respondents towards agri-entrepreneurship (Table 6). The results of correlation analysis revealed that out of ten personal, socio-economic, psychological factors studied, five factors namely, education, scientific orientation, trainings undergone, extension contact and economic motivation were found to be the chief contributory factors which were positively and significantly correlated with extent of attitude towards agri-entrepreneurship. Whereas on the other hand five factors namely, age, farming experience, information seeking behaviour, social participation and achievement motivation were not correlated with extent of attitude towards agri-entrepreneurship (Table 6).

From the glance of table 6 further revealed that education level of the farmers was found to have positive and significant relationship with their attitude towards agri entrepreneurship. The reason for this might be that the level of education might have brought more knowledge and positive intent in the attitude of farmers. The above finding are in accordance with the finding of Priyanka and Meena (2013) who conducted the study on attitude of farmers towards agro processing industries. Scientific orientation of the rainfed farmers was found to have positive and significant relationship with their attitude towards agri entrepreneurship. The reason for this might be that the farmers had experienced the relative advantages of newly released varieties, innovative technologies and various means of marketing with the advancement of science and technology in agriculture. Hence, the farmers who had more scientific orientation proportionately had more favourable attitude towards agri-entrepreneurship. The number of trainings undergone by the farmers was found to have positive and significant relationship with their attitude towards agri-entrepreneurship. This might be because the training enlightens the knowledge, skill and attitude in a desirable way hence those who undergone more number of trainings had favourable attitude of farmers towards agri-entrepreneurship. The above findings are in accordance with the

findings of Priyanka *et al.* (2012) who conducted the study on attitude of farmers towards agro based enterprises. Extension contact is one of the factor positively and significantly influencing the attitude of rainfed farmers towards agri-entrepreneurship. Farmers who had regular and frequent interaction with various extension agencies like Krishi Vigyan Kendra's, District Agricultural Advisory and Transfer of Technology Centres and Agricultural offices might have gained first-hand knowledge on the agri-entrepreneurial activities hence, the farmers who had frequent extension contact in turn showed most favourable attitude towards agri-entrepreneurship. Economic motivation of the rainfed farmers is another contributory factor which was found to have positive and significant relationship with their attitude towards agri-entrepreneurship. The reason for this might be the long term revenues in any entrepreneurial activity leads to favourable attitude towards agri-entrepreneurship. The results are in accordance with the findings of Sivacharan *et al.* (2015) who conducted the study on entrepreneurial behaviour of rural young agri-entrepreneurs and relationship between entrepreneurial behaviour and profile characters.

#### Ranking of various agri-business activities based on farmers' perception

A Perusal of the Table 7 revealed the ranking of various agri-business activities by the respondents with special reference to rainfed agriculture. It could be evident from the table 7 sheep rearing was the highly profitable and suitable activity to rainfed agriculture as perceived by majority of the farmers (61%), hence it was the first ranked agri-entrepreneurial activity in the district followed by millets value addition (57%) as the second ranked activity, dairy farming (48%), seed processing units (42%), poultry farming (27%), mushroom production (26%), medicinal and plantation crops production (21%) and apiculture (18%) with consecutive preferred agri-entrepreneurial activities by majority of the farmers in Anantapuramu district respectively. This might be because, majority of the farmers in the district were trained and encouraged to go for sheep farming as part of IFS model, the residual income generated in sheep farming along with various agricultural crops is relatively higher than any other agri-entrepreneurial activity. With respect to millets value addition, majority of the area in the district comes under rain shadow region, in these extreme climatic circumstances also farmers can gain the profits from millets by adding the value to millets in terms of their nutritional benefits. Dairy farming also most preferred activity after sheep rearing and millets value addition wherein majority of the farmers perceived the relative economic benefits over other enterprises.

#### Conclusion

The study revealed that the majority of the respondents had favourable attitude (45%) towards agri-entrepreneurship followed by moderately favourable attitude (37%) and unfavourable attitude (18%) respectively towards agri-entrepreneurship. However there were respondents possessing unfavourable attitude towards agri-entrepreneurship. This unfavourable attitude should be abridged by creating the awareness on the existing schemes and programmes that are uplifting and supporting the agri-business activities in rainfed agriculture. Provision of financial assistance to the eligible farmers with simplified loan sanctioning procedure could help the farming community to take up more number of agri-business activities in the future and could become the prime asset to boost the Indian economy.

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**Table 1. Attitude scale used to evaluate rainfed farmers attitude towards agri-entrepreneurship**

S.No.	Attitude statements on agri-entrepreneurship	SA	A	N	DA	SDA
1	Having job either private/ public is better than starting enterprise.					
2	Subsidies and incentives provided by the government for rural farmers were not adequate and supporting.					
3	Agri-entrepreneurship is better option for the rainfed farmers in the present context of climate change in agriculture sector.					
4	Farmers requires prior expertise in establishing and running an enterprise before actually starts an agri-enterprise in a commercial way.					
5	Training programmes on agri-entrepreneurship development should be conducted regularly to provide adequate knowledge and expertise in agri-business activities					
6	Rainfed farmers need to adopt climate resilient practices to be successful in agri-entrepreneurship.					
7	Agri-entrepreneurship is the source of self-employment for framers to arrest					

	their migration to nearby cities.					
8	I want to become a role model for other entrepreneurs by succeeding in my own enterprise.					
9	Agri-entrepreneurship is not essentially a creative activity.					
10	Government policies are encouraging rural farmers towards entrepreneurship					
11	Seasonal agri-enterprises are not remunerative.					
12	Success of agri-entrepreneurship is depends on the available natural resources in that particular area					
13	Agri-entrepreneurship is a self-motivated activity to achieve his/her goals.					
14	Agri-entrepreneurship is the future of farmers in rainfed areas					
15	Agri-entrepreneurship requires certain skills to plan and implement any entrepreneurial ideas					
16	The entrepreneurs do not get help from the entrepreneurship related programmes/ schemes/organisations.					

Table 2. Scoring pattern of statements

Category	For positive statements	For negative statements
Strongly disagree	1	5
Disagree	2	4
Undecided	3	3
Agree	4	2
Strongly agree	5	1

Table 3. Categorization of respondents

Category	Quartile classification
Unfavourable	Between Q <sub>1</sub> - Q <sub>2</sub>
Moderately favourable	Between Q <sub>2</sub> -Q <sub>3</sub>
Favourable	More than Quartile deviation 3

Table 4. Distribution of farmers based on their attitude towards agri-entrepreneurship

Category	Farmers (n=100)	
	Frequency	Percentage
Unfavourable (Quartile <sub>1</sub> – Quartile <sub>2</sub> )	19	19
Moderately favourable (Q <sub>2</sub> -Q <sub>3</sub> )	36	36
Favourable (>Quartile <sub>3</sub> )	45	45
Quartiles under each class of respondents	Quartile <sub>1</sub> -32; Quartile <sub>2</sub> -48; Quartile <sub>3</sub> -64	

Table 5. Distribution of respondents based on their personal, socio-economic and psychological attributes of the farmers under the study

Sl. No	Personal, socio-economic and psychological attributes of rainfed farmers	Category	Respondents	
			Frequency	Percentage
1	Age	Young	21	21
		Middle	58	58
		Old	21	21
2	Education	Illiterate	10	10
		Primary	18	18
		High school	30	30
		Higher Secondary	22	22
		College and above	20	20
3	Farming experience	Less experienced	26	26
		Moderately experienced	49	49
		Highly experienced	25	25
4	Scientific orientation	Low	15	15
		Medium	58	58
		High	27	27
5	Information seeking behaviour	Low	17	17

		Medium	49	49
		High	34	34
6	Number of Trainings undergone	Low	14	14
		Medium	58	58
		High	28	28
7	Social Participation	Low	27	27
		Medium	52	52
		High	21	21
8	Extension contact	Low	16	16
		Medium	57	57
		High	27	27
9	Achievement motivation	Low	16	16
		Medium	42	42
		High	42	42
10	Economic motivation	Low	20	20
		Medium	43	43
		High	37	37

**Table 6. Relationship between personal, social and psychological attributes of the farmers and their attitude towards agri-entrepreneurship**

S.No.	Variable	Correlation co-efficient 'r' value
		Farmers (n=100)
X <sub>1</sub>	Age	- 0.118
X <sub>2</sub>	Education	0.233*
X <sub>3</sub>	Farming experience	0.187
X <sub>4</sub>	Scientific orientation	0.390**
X <sub>5</sub>	Information seeking behavior	0.163
X <sub>6</sub>	Trainings undergone	0.612**
X <sub>7</sub>	Social Participation	0.182
X <sub>8</sub>	Extension contact	0.281*
X <sub>9</sub>	Achievement motivation	0.049
X <sub>10</sub>	Economic motivation	0.353**

\*: Significant at 0.05 level of probability; \*\*: Significant at 0.01 level of probability

**Table 7. Ranking of various agri-business activities based on farmers' perception**

S. No.	Agri-entrepreneurial activities suitable for dryland agriculture	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
1	Sheep rearing	61	61	1
2	Millets value addition	57	57	2
3	Dairy farming	48	48	3
4	Seed processing units	42	42	4
5	Poultry farming	27	27	5
6	Mushroom production	26	26	6
7	Medicinal and Plantation crops production	21	21	7
8	Apiculture	18	18	8