

Development of Scale to Measure Attitude of Rural Youth Towards Agriculture as an Occupation

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ABSTRACT

Youth are the most potent segment of the population of a country. They are the back bone of the country. Youth have been playing quite a significant role in almost every country of the world as they possess zeal and vigour. If the talents and abilities of rural youth are properly nurtured and systematically guided, agriculture which is the backbone of national economy can attain sustained growth and bring prosperity to the country. Here an effort was made to develop a scale which can measure attitude of rural youth towards agriculture as an occupation. Among the techniques available, 'scale product method' was chosen to develop the scale. The scale developed was found highly reliable as the co-efficient of reliability calculated by the Rulon's formula was 0.79.

Keywords : Rural youth attitude

INTRODUCTION

Rural youth are the most important segment of the country like India where agriculture is the back bone of national economy. Thus, to make our country agriculturally prosperous, it becomes quite essential that the energies and potential of the rural youth are properly molded and utilized. As per one estimate, more than 380 million youth, "India's best resource", will be unable to find job by the year 2016 (Anonymous 2009), and their potentialities will be wasted through unemployment, underemployment and disgust. So there is a huge scope to use potential of rural youth in agriculture to achieve our target of food production.

But, rural youth now a days, have been losing their interest in agriculture. Instead of being self employed in agriculture and allied activities, they are now turning to be "Job seekers". This picture is quite disgusting and not hopeful for future. This situation necessitates studying the attitude of rural youth towards agriculture. With this in view, an effort was made here to develop the scale which can measure the attitude of rural youth towards agriculture as an occupation.

METHODOLOGY

Among the techniques available, 'scale product method' was chosen which combines the Thurston's techniques of equal appearing interval scale (1946) for

selection of item and Likert's technique of summated rating (1932) for ascertaining the response on the scale as proposed by Eysenck and Crown (1949).

Item collection

Initially, large number of statements reflecting attitude of rural youth towards agriculture as an occupation were collected from relevant literature and constructed through discussion with experts and extension personnel. The statements thus selected were edited on the basis of criteria shown by Edwards (1957) and at last, 14 statements for attitude of rural youth towards agriculture as an occupation were selected as they were found to be non-ambiguous.

Judge's rating of attitudinal statements

Seventy slips of these statements were distributed among 70 selected experts working in Department of Extension Education and Directorate of Extension Education of four Agricultural Universities of Gujarat as well as Extension Education Institute, Anand Agricultural University. The judges were asked to judge the degree of unfavourableness or favourableness of each statement for its inclusion in the final scale on the five point equal appearing interval continuum. Out of these experts, 50 experts returned the statement after duly recording their judgments and were considered for the analysis.

Determination of scale values

The scoring on five point rating scale was made by assigning score ranging from 1 (for strongly unfavourable) to 5 (for strongly favourable). Based on the judgment, the median value of the distribution for each of 26 statements was calculated by using following formula:

$$S=L + \frac{0.50 Pb}{Pw} \times i$$

Where,

S = the median or scale value of the statement

L = Lower limit of the interval in which the median falls

P = the sum of the proportion below the interval in which the median falls.

P_w = the proportion within the interval in which the median falls

i = the width of the interval which is assumed to be equal to 1.0 (one).

The inter-quartile range (Q = Q3 - Q1) for each statement was also worked out for determination of ambiguity involved in the statement.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

When there was a good agreement among the judges in judging the degree of unfavourableness or favourableness of a statement, Q value was observed smaller than the scale value, but when there was relatively little agreement among the judges, Q value was observed bigger than the scale value. Only those items were selected whose (median) scale values were greater than Q values. However, when a few items had the same scale values, items having lowest Q value were selected. Based on the scale (median) and Q values, 14 statements were finally selected to constitute the scale to measure attitude of rural youth towards agriculture as an occupation. The final format of scale was as under.

Scale to measure attitude of rural youth towards agriculture as an occupation

Sr. No.	Statements	‘S’ value	‘Q’ value
1	I feel that Agriculture is an effective occupation to earn more money from agricultural land.	1.75	1.08
2	I think that Agriculture is an effective way to utilize natural resources.	1.50	1.11
3	I feel that Agriculture is the best occupation for rural youth.	2.36	1.76
4	Agriculture is the best way of earning money using creativity.	2.02	1.5
5	Agriculture makes the person bankrupt.	1.33	1.11
6	I prefer Agriculture as an occupation.	3.02	1.14
7	I feel that Agriculture is not remunerative enterprise.	2.97	1.72
8	I avoid Agriculture as it a tedious job.	2.11	1.08
9	Agriculture can provide sustainable livelihood to rural youth.	3.22	1.86
10	It is better to do job with less salary then to adopt agriculture as an occupation.	1.87	1.0
11	I feel pride to engage in agriculture occupation.	2.73	1.45
12	I feel sorry for those who abandon agriculture and migrate to cities for a small job.	1.93	0.94
13	Agriculture is our ancestral occupation and I would like to continue it.	2.54	1.33
14	Village can’t prosper unless rural youth adopt agriculture occupation.	2.00	1.33

Reliability of the scale

The reliability of this scale was measured by split-half method was used because of limited time and resources available to the researcher. The 14 statements were divided into two halves with 7 odd numbered in one half and 7 even-numbered statements in the other. These were administered to 20 respondents. Each of the two sets of statements was

treated as a separate scale and then these two sub-scales were correlated. The co-efficient of reliability was calculated by the Rulon’s formula (Guilford, 1954), which came to 0.79. Thus, the scale developed was found highly reliable

Content validity of the scale

The validity of the scale was examined for content validity by determining how well the content of the scale

is representative of the domain subject matter under study. Since as many items covering the subject matter under study as possible were selected by discussion with the experts, reviewing the literature and strict adherence to the judges' ratings, it was assumed that the scale has satisfactory content validity.

CONCLUSION

The scale developed to measure attitude of rural youth towards agriculture as an occupation is reliable and valid, hence it may be used in future studies with due modifications

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