Scale for Measuring Attitude of Farmers towards Social Forestry

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ABSTRACT

A scale was developed to measure the attitude of the farmers towards social forestry based on Likert's technique. A tentative list of 60 statements was drafted keeping in view the applicability of statements suited to the area of study. The statements collected were edited in the light of the informal criteria suggested by Thurstone and Chave, Wang, Bird, Edward and Kilpatrick. These statements were framed in such a way that they expressed the positive or negative attitude. The score of each individual item on the scale was calculated by summing up the weights of the individual items. On the basis of total score, 27 percent of the subjects with the highest total score and also 27 percent of the subjects with lowest total scores were taken assuming that these groups provided criterion groups in terms of high and low evaluated by the individual statement. In order to find out the discriminating index for each item, 't' value was calculated using the formula and procedure given by Edwards. The scale so developed finally consisted of 22 statements (11 positive and 11 negative) whose 't' values were found to be significant at one percent level of probability.

Key words: Attitude scale; Continuum; Reliability; Validity;

 \boldsymbol{A} ttitude has been defined as "the degree of positive or negative feeling, opinion, belief, and action, associated with some psychological object. A psychological object may be any symbol, person, institution, ideal, phrase or idea towards which people may differ from each other with respect to positive or negative aspect. The psychological object for the present study has been symbolised as the practices recommended under social forestry. An attitude scale consists of a number of items which have been carefully selected and edited based on certain specific criteria. The items forming an attitude scale are termed as statements. A statement is any thing that is said about a psychological object. The class of all possible statements that can be made about a given psychological object is called as universe. One of the important assumptions made in the development of an attitude scale is that there is a difference in the belief and disbelief system of individuals with favourable / unfavourable attitude towards a psychological object. Following methodology was adopted to develop an attitude scale towards social forestry based on Likert's technique (1932).

METHODOLOGY

Item collection: As a first step in developing the attitude scale towards social forestry a number of statements about social forestry practices were gathered from books, bulletins, magazines and by discussions with academicians, subject matter specialists, researchers, and forest officials who were directly or indirectly exposed to such knowledge system. A tentative list of 60 statements was drafted keeping in view the applicability of statements suited to the area of study.

Editing of items: The statements collected were edited in the light of the informal criteria suggested by Thurstone and Chave (1929) and Edward and Kilpatrick (1948). These statements were framed in such a way that they expressed the positive or negative attitude. In order to get a five point judgement, five alternative responses, categorised from strongly agree to strongly disagree were assigned to each statement. The statements so collected regarding social forestry practices were discussed with farm scientist / forest officials / extension personnels having exposure to social

Table 1. Attitude Scale developed for measuring the attitude of farmers towards social forestry.

S.No	Statements	't' values
1.	The plants raised for social forestry plantations should be generally fast growing in nature.	3.952**
2.	Social forestry plantation should be done for commercial purpose.	3.311**
3.	The growing demand of food, fodder, fuel etc of the local community can be met by social forestry plantations.	3.855**
4.	Extension support cannot bring about more benefits from social forestry programme to the rural people.	3.562**
5.	Social forestry practices can contribute significantly for the maintenance of ecological balance.	6.867**
6.	Promotion of Social forestry will retard the agricultural production	3.258**
7.	Leaves of Soe – babul should be lopped and mulched into the soil to improve the organic matter content of the soil.	3.673**
8.	Adoption of Social forestry practices by an individual reflects his poor economic status	3.546**
9.	Proper training in nursery raising for Social forestry plantations can be helpful in adoption of this programme	5.364**
10.	The plants raised under Social forestry if planted on farm boundaries affects the nearby crops due to allelopathic effect.	3.425**
11.	Social forestry plantations should be specially recommended for areas having thin forest cover.	3.584**
12.	The plants raised under Social forestry should not be planted on farm boundaries.	3.575**
13.	Social forestry practices can minimise the risk of failure of the agricultural crops	3.846**
14.	Promotion of Social forestry can not enrich bio – diversity.	3.567**
15.	Desertification can be retarded by adoption of Social forestry.	3.651**
16.	Affluent people should not be allowed to participate in social forestry programme	3.246**
17.	Air pollution can be decreased by adoption of Social forestry.	4.213**
18.	Shelter belt plantations under Social forestry is not useful for the crop plants growing under the boundaries of the shelter belt.	3.417**
19.	Social forestry can bring about sustainable development of the society.	5.385**
20.	Recycling of nutrients in soil can not be achieved by social forestry practices.	3.364**
21.	Promotion of Social forestry can create employment opportunities for the rural youths.	4.253**
22.	Social forestry should replace the cereal crops for better income generation.	3.125**

^{**} Significant at 1 percent level of probability.

Validity of the scale: Since the content of the scale developed for measuring the attitude of farmers towards social forestry was derived from the authentic sources like books, journals etc; and opinion of the experts in the concerned field, it was assumed that the scores

obtained by administering the present scale shall measure what it intended to measure. Further the scale was administered on 80 farmers (40 each from two different villages) and the 't' value was found significant validating the scale.

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