



## Research Article

# MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS FOR JOINING DIPLOMA IN AGRI INPUTS PROGRAMME OF TNAU THROUGH OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING (ODL)

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**Abstract:** In the current trend of looming unemployment status in our country, entrepreneurship is the need of the hour to have an effect on the social and economic status of the people, especially in the rural areas. One such initiative to support such cause is the Diploma in Agri Inputs course offered through ODL by TNAU. It provides sufficient knowledge on various agricultural technologies to the learners, which would be useful to setup an agro-enterprise. As a whole, in order to study the inducing factors responsible for joining this diploma course, a sample size of 120 respondents who had already pursued the course were selected for the study. The study brings out the different intrinsic and extrinsic inducing characteristics that influence the people to join the course thereby looking for various suggestions to improvise the course related aspects in order to increase the enrolment in the course.

**Keywords:** Diploma in Agri Inputs, ODL, Entrepreneurship, Intrinsic, Extrinsic

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## Introduction

India is a developing country having the second largest population with the seventh largest geographical region of the world. Having such a vast area and population, it is a tough task to provide education to everyone with the unique feature of our country namely 'Unity in Diversity'. In this scenario, the utilization of the Open and Distance Learning programme plays a vital role in providing education to the people who are in the remote areas and also to the weaker sections of the society such as women, children, school dropouts and others. With such a background, the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University which started its Distance Learning programme in 2005 brought out the Diploma in Agri Inputs programme during the year 2015 with the aim of enhancing entrepreneurship skills among the farmers and rural people to set up an agro-enterprise and support their livelihood. There are various reasons responsible for the learners to join this Diploma course in which they had been divided into two types namely Intrinsic and Extrinsic Factors. This paper puts light on the different inducers inducing the people to join the Diploma in Agri Inputs programme.

## Materials and Methods

Ex post facto design was used for conducting this study, since the researcher has to examine the past occurrences in order to understand the current state. Two of the study centres under the Directorate of Distance Learning (DODL) offering the Diploma in Agri Inputs course namely, Agricultural College and Research Institute (AC & RI), Madurai and Soil and Water Management Research Institute (SWMRI), Thanjavur were purposively selected for the research. The study was based in covering the Eastern and Southern districts of Tamil Nadu viz., Madurai, Dindigul, Virudhunagar, Tirunelveli, Kanyakumari, Thanjavur, Kumbakonam, Tiruvarur, Nagapattinam and Mannargudi. The sample of the study taken was the Diploma in Agri Inputs students of the batch 2016-17 and 2017-18 who have completed their course.

A total number of 143 and 65 students were enrolled for the course during these two years (2016-17 and 2017-18) in AC & RI, Madurai and SWMRI, Thanjavur study centres respectively. From the enrolled students, a sample size of 120 respondents was selected by using proportionate random sampling method.

## Findings and Discussion

Maslow (1943) has defined Motivation as the result of a person's attempt at fulfilling five basic needs: psychological, safety, social, esteem and self-actualization. Maslow accepts that the etiquette of an individual can be swayed through the effects of these basic needs of motivation. Intrinsic Motivational Factors responsible for joining the Diploma course. Intrinsic motivation involves engaging in a behaviour because it is personally rewarding; essentially, performing an activity for its own sake rather than the desire for some external reward. The Intrinsic Motivational Factors that are responsible for the students to join the Diploma in Agri Inputs course are ranked in [Table-1].

Table-1 *Intrinsic Motivational factors responsible for joining the Diploma programme, (n=120)*

Intrinsic Factor	Mean	Rank
Desire to become an Entrepreneur / Agripreneur	3.76	I
Desire to improve farming techniques	3.74	II
Desire to enhance farm income	3.61	III
Personal interest in the agriculture field	3.50	IV
To obtain in-depth knowledge and skill in agricultural technologies	3.47	V
To enhance self-confidence	3.43	VI
Attracted by the professional Diploma course	3.37	VII
To get additional qualification	2.79	VIII
To relieve boredom	2.38	IX
Taken up the course as a challenge	2.18	X
Desire to become an opinion leader	1.50	XI

Table-2 Extrinsic Inducing factors responsible for joining the Diploma programme, (n=120)

SN	Extrinsic Inducing Factors	Mean	Rank
1	Convenience of the ODL courses than the regular courses for the home makers/ senior citizens / differently abled persons	3.73	I
2	Good contact with TNAU	3.72	II
3	Affordable and Quality education	3.70	III
4	Study while working (Part time education)	3.68	IV
5	Flexibility of ODL in terms of age and qualification	3.58	V
6	Dropouts from conventional education	3.55	VI
7	Support from family members	3.53	VII
8	Living in remote and backward areas	3.48	VIII
9	Importance of the course for the improvement of agriculture and livelihood of the farmers	3.43	IX

From the [Table-1], it can be revealed that when considered about the Intrinsic Motivation factors, the first three major influencing factors were the desire to become an entrepreneur/agripreneur (3.76) followed by the desire to enhance farm income (3.74) and the desire to improve farming techniques (3.61). These top three factors would have influenced more on the Diploma learners to join the course since the interest on various agricultural related technologies and to physically handle them both for their own purpose as well as for setting up an enterprise to acquire the modern inputs and disseminate to the farmers who currently face numerous challenges in farming related techniques might have been the reason for higher mean values. On the other hand, the least three important factors were the desire to become an opinion leader (1.50) followed by taking as a challenge (2.18) and relief from boredom (2.38). This bottom three factors would have not been influenced the learners more to join the course since they intrinsically would have created interest to join the course and not to gain prominence among the society. From these findings, it can be said that since this Diploma course is related to entrepreneurship, the respondents would have aimed to join in the course intrinsically owing to the current situation of jobless growth in the country by which the individual may set up his/her own enterprise for their livelihood survival.

#### Extrinsic inducing Factors responsible for joining the Diploma course

Motivation is the process of stimulating people to actions to accomplish the goals which they desire. In the context of distance learning, the motivational factor decides the accomplishment of the career goal of becoming an entrepreneur after studying this Diploma course. Extrinsic motivation occurs when we are motivated to perform behaviour or engage in an activity to earn a reward or avoid punishment. The Extrinsic inducing Factors which cause the students to join the Diploma in Agri Inputs course are rated in [Table-2]. Viewing the Extrinsic inducing factors, the convenience of the ODL course (3.73), good contact with TNAU (3.72) and affordable and quality education being provided by the university (3.70) obtained the first, second and third places respectively and when considered about the last three places, importance of the course for agriculture (3.43), living in remote areas (3.48) and support from the family members (3.53) got fitted in. From the perusal of the above findings, it can be interpreted that Distance education majorly targets the weaker sections of the society to be educated since they would have opted to pursue the course to have an enterprise for themselves for their livelihood. Also hearing the eminence of TNAU and its ODL programme, the learners would have shown interest to have at least a diploma as theirs. In addition to these reasons, the respondents might have heard about the importance of the course and its requirement for obtaining license to start (or) to continue the enterprise in provision of agricultural inputs as instructed by the government which might also be a reason for such a turnout.

#### Conclusion

When enquired about the suggestions being provided by the respondents to further develop the course, majority of them felt that there is a need to increase the number of practical classes and exposure visits for the students as this might help them provide knowledge on different aspects of a particular technology and could fulfil the principle of "seeing is believing". With this knowledge, it would be useful for the entrepreneurs to recommend improved practices for the farmers who depend them. Also, the entrepreneurs' feeling of having an interactive session with the ODL Directorate as to know their current status after completing the course would have been because the requirements of the respondents to the

current situation might not have been fulfilled according to what they would have undergone during their course period. Catering to such needs by the respondents by TNAU would increase the motivation among the upcoming generation of students to pursue the course in the future which can cause a limelight on the Diploma in Agri Inputs programme.

**Application of research:** The research which was carried out can be used by the Directorate of Open and Distance Learning (DODL), TNAU for catering the requirements of the learners and modifying the programme and its related aspects pertaining to the Diploma course. Also, this research can also be an eye opener for the future researchers to conduct research on other ODL programmes of TNAU and also can cause a sensitization on educating via Open and Distance Learning on the various technological innovations being brought out every day in agriculture and its allied activities.

**Research Category:** Extension Education

**Abbreviations:** ODL: Open and Distance Learning  
DODL: Directorate of Open and Distance Learning  
AC & RI: Agricultural College & Research Institute  
SWMRI: Soil and Water Management Research Institute

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**Conflict of Interest:** None declared

**Ethical approval:** This article does not contain any studies with human participants or animals performed by any of the authors.  
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