



## Research Article

# A SCALE TO MEASURE THE LEASE-IN BEHAVIOUR OF TENANT FARMERS

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**Abstract:** A scale to measure the lease-in behaviour of tenant farmers was developed using the Likert's method of summated rating. A tentative list of seventy statements each expressing the lease-in behaviour of tenant farmers were collected from available literature, in consultation with the tenant farmers and extension personnel. The statements were framed such that they expressed positive and negative behaviour. The respondents were asked to specify their degree of agreement or disagreement with each statement on a five-points scale ranging from strongly - agree to strongly - disagree. The score of each individual item on the scale was obtained by summing up all the scores of the individuals pertaining to the item. Based on the total scores, the respondents were arranged in descending order. The top 25 percent of the respondents with their total scores and the bottom 25 percent of the respondents with their total scores were considered as the high-group and low-group respectively. The scale so developed finally consisted of twenty statements.

**Keywords:** Tenant farmer, Lease-in, Behaviour, Reliability, Validity

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## Introduction

Tenant farming is the cultivation of crops on leased lands. The trend of tenant farming is increasing these days. Lack of helping hands at home for farming and migration of land owners from rural to urban for increased amenities has paved way for tenancy in farming. Landless agricultural labour is utilizing this opportunity to enhance their social and economic status. Small and marginal farmers are also leasing-in the agricultural land to supplement their farm income. But tenancy in India is mostly informal depriving the tenant farmers from government benefits. Today tenancy has pushed rentals into informality, ensures short term rental periods and making it difficult for tenants to access loans, crop insurance, drought relief and other benefits. Studies on tenant farming found that the land lease rents in many parts of the country was very expensive for the tenants to afford. Some of the problems expressed by tenant farmers also revealed that the land lease rents are to be paid before the crop season in cash, the tenures were shorter, the land lease rents were increasing year after year, financial support from banks was lacking, interest rates at private money lenders were exorbitant, lease contracts were informal; input subsidy, crop insurance, weather insurance, *etc* are not applicable for tenant farmers [1-4]. Due to short term land tenures, the farmers are unable to plan long term land development activities. Further the tenant farmers are trying to gain maximum from the land without considering soil health management as there is very little guarantee for him to till the land in the coming years. Today farming means dumping bags and bags of chemical fertilizers without adding organic manures, using harmful weedicides, indiscriminate use of plant protection chemicals, thus causing threat to soil health, plant health, environment and finally to human health. Government formulated laws and acts for legalising or formalizing of land leasing to help tenant farmers to access credit, insurance, inputs and consequently to increase productivity of lease-in land. At times during weather vagaries viz., drought, cyclones *etc*, it is the tenant farmer who is affected the most as they are not legally recognised as farmers neither in revenue records nor in the relief code, it is the land owner who becomes eligible

for compensation. The Government of Andhra Pradesh also introduced Loan Eligibility Cards (LEC) to license tenants so that they can access banks for credit, insurance, subsidy, *etc*. But these cards are given with the authorization of owner farmers. As a result, all tenant farmers are not issued with LECs. The farmers who have the LECs are not getting government benefits, as they hardly know the purpose of LEC. Inspite of these problems, Cess Report, 2014 indicates that there are about 13,48,035 tenant farmers in AP [5]. At this juncture an attempt was made to develop a scale to measure the lease-in behaviour of tenant farmers in Andhra Pradesh.

## Methodology

For the purpose of the study tenant farmer was operationalised as a person who practices agriculture on a rented land. Lease-in behaviour is operationalised as the attitude of tenant farmer towards hiring the agricultural land for cultivation of crops. A scale to measure the lease-in behaviour of tenant farmers was developed using the Likert's method of summated rating. Seventy statements each expressing the lease-in behaviour of tenant farmers were collected from available literature, in consultation with the tenant farmers and extension personnel. The statements were edited on the basis of criteria suggested by Thrustone and Chave (1929) [6], Jha (2009) [7] and Edward (1957) [8]. Out of seventy statements, sixty statements were retained after editing. These statements were administered to 100 respondents. The respondents were asked to indicate their degree of agreement or disagreement with each statement on a five-points scale ranging from strongly - agree to strongly - disagree. The scoring pattern adopted was 5 for strongly - agree response, 4 for agree response, 3 for undecided response, 2 for disagree response and 1 for strongly - disagree response, if it was positive statement and for negative statement, the scoring pattern was reversed viz., 'strongly - agree' response with 1, 'agree' with 2, 'undecided' with 3, 'disagree' with 4 and strongly - disagree with 5 score. The responses were recorded. The summated score for the total statements was obtained.

Based on the total scores, the respondents were arranged in descending order. The top 25 percent of the respondents with their total scores and the bottom 25 percent of the respondents with their total scores were considered as the high-group and low-group respectively. These two groups provide criterion groups in evaluating the individual statements as suggested by Edwards (1957). Thus, out of 100 tenant farmers to whom the items were administered for the item analysis, 25 tenant farmer respondents with highest scores and 25 tenant farmer respondents with lowest scores were used as criterion groups to evaluate individual items. The critical ratio, the 't' value which is a measure of the extent to which a given statement differentiates between the high and low groups of respondents for each statement was calculated by using the formula suggested by Edwards (1957).

$$t = \frac{\bar{X}_H - \bar{X}_L}{\sqrt{\frac{(X_H - \bar{X}_H)^2 + (X_L - \bar{X}_L)^2}{n(n-1)}}}$$

$$\sum (X_H - \bar{X}_H)^2 = \sum X_H^2 - \frac{(\sum X_H)^2}{n}$$

$$\sum (X_L - \bar{X}_L)^2 = \sum X_L^2 - \frac{(\sum X_L)^2}{n}$$

Where

$\bar{X}_H$  = The mean score on a given statement for the high group

$\bar{X}_L$  = The mean score on a given statement for the low group

$\sum X_H^2$  = Sum of squares of the individual score on a given statement for high group

$\sum X_L^2$  = Sum of squares of the individual score on a given statement for low group

$\sum X_H$  = Summation of scores on a given statement for high group

$\sum X_L$  = Summation of scores on a given statement for low group

n = Number of respondents for in each group

$\sum$  = Summation

After computing the 't' values for all the items presented in Table 1, the statements with highest 't' value equal to or greater than 1.75 were selected and included in the final attitude scale. As the content of the attitude thoroughly covered the entire universe of the tenant farmers with special emphasis on lease-in behaviour through literature, consultation and expert opinion, it was assumed that the present scale satisfied the content validity. Test and retest method were used to find out the reliability. In this method, the scale was further administered to 100 tenant farmers and the 't' value was found significant validating the scale.

## Results and Discussion

The scale developed for measuring the lease-in behaviour of tenant farmers consisted of twenty statements. The statements are as presented in Table 1. The statements with t value more than 1.75 are there is no other option to increase my income except land lease-in (4.369), there are no good avenues for marketing of farm produce at large scale (3.189), the source of security for my family is lease-in (3.807), poor financial status is compelling me for land lease-in (4.174), lease-in promotes no contacts with the people in the society (2.489), lease-in on large scale is better than limited scale (3.376), lease-in is the traditional practice in our family (2.783), lease-in is a better option than opting agricultural labour work (3.798), lease-in fulfils the urge of possession of land (3.023), land lease rents are exorbitant to afford (3.145), inspite of having less land holding, I enjoy the status of big farmer through lease-in (2.121), I prefer to lease-in the land if the tenure is long term (2.944), I prefer only commercial linkage with my owner (2.046), I have my own obligation with the owner for lease-in (2.541), I have enough labour force to cultivate substantial area of land (3.711), I am leasing-in the land to meet my farming system needs (3.574), I am happy in cultivating the crops (4.236), I am

forced to be a lease-in farmer as I have low education (3.745), climatic problems are discouraging lease-in farmers (3.892), acquisition of inputs is difficult in lease-in cultivation (2.203).

The statements of the final scale on lease-in behavior expressed the farmers attitude. The primary purpose of lease-in was to increase the income. Lease-in provides an opportunity for small and marginal farmers to become big farmers and thus creating a platform for selling their produce on large scale to get better price. Many expressed that lease-in was the source of security for their family in meeting their needs. The financial status of the farmers was another reason expressed by the farmers to go for lease-in. The tenants also expressed that it was better to lease the land on large scale rather than on small scale.

Table-1 Scale developed for measuring the lease-in behaviour of tenant farmers

S	Statement	't' value
1	Climatic problems are discouraging lease-in farmers.	3.892*
2	There is no other option to increase my income except land lease-in.	4.369*
3	Lease-in fulfils the urge of possession of land.	3.023*
4	Insipite of having less land holding, I enjoy the status of big farmer through lease-in.	2.121*
5	I am happy in cultivating the crops.	4.236*
6	The source of security for my family is lease-in.	3.807*
7	Acquisition of inputs is difficult in lease-in cultivation.	2.203*
8	I have enough labour force to cultivate substantial area of land.	3.711*
9	I prefer to lease-in the land if the tenure is long term	2.944*
10	Lease-in is a better option than opting agricultural labour work.	3.798*
11	I prefer only commercial linkage with my owner.	2.046*
12	Poor financial status is compelling me for land lease-in.	4.174*
13	I am forced to be a lease-in farmer as I have low education.	3.745*
14	Lease-in is the traditional practice in our family.	2.783*
15	Lease-in on large scale is better than limited scale.	3.376*
16	I have my own obligation with the owner for lease-in.	2.541*
17	There are no good avenues for marketing of farm produce at large scale.	3.189*
18	I am leasing-in the land to meet my farming system needs.	3.574*
19	Lease-in promotes no contacts with the people in the society.	2.489*
20	Land lease rents are exorbitant to afford.	3.145*

(\*) Indicates the statements having the t values greater than 1.75 and are included in the final attitude scale

## Conclusion

The existing farmers through leasing could fulfil the need of possessing land and also enjoy the status of big farmer. Some farmers even felt that lease-in is a better option than working as agricultural labour as it shows employment round the crop season. Tenancy is an opportunity which could be utilized by the landless, agricultural labour and existing farmers to increase their income. Going for tenant farming is prestigious than practicing agricultural labour.

In many cases, tenant farmers had to pay land lease rents prior to the crop season which is a burden to them. The existing farmers can lease-in land and cultivate on a large scale thus enjoying the status of a big farmer as well make a better use of the labour force. Leasing land for long term is beneficial as land developments could be made for better yields. The scale further says that because of the personal relation with the land owners and unavoidable reasons some farmers are accepting the lease-in while a few farmers have no other relationship other than commercial. Cultivating land would be easy for farmers having labour force.

**Application of research:** A few respondents maintained livestock for which lease-in was required to meet fodder needs. Some respondents expressed that they like the cultivation of crops hence they preferred lease-in. A few expressed that because of their low education status they had no option other than lease-in as they lack technical skills. Because of climate change the weather is unpredictable and is a discouragement for the lease-in farmers. The scale would be of immense use to academicians, students, researchers in finding out the reasons and behaviour of tenant farmers for agricultural land lease in.

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