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| Journal Name: | [**South Asian Journal of Social Studies and Economics**](https://journalsajsse.com/index.php/SAJSSE) |
| Manuscript Number: | **Ms\_SAJSSE\_144863** |
| Title of the Manuscript: | **Developing a standardized scale to assess farmers' attitudes toward agricultural diversification in northern Bangladesh** |
| Type of the Article | **Original Research Article** |

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| PART 1: Comments | | |
|  | Reviewer’s comment **Artificial Intelligence (AI) generated or assisted review comments are strictly prohibited during peer review.** | **Author’s Feedback** (It is mandatory that authors should write his/her feedback here) |
| **Please write a few sentences regarding the importance of this manuscript for the scientific community. A minimum of 3-4 sentences may be required for this part.** | The manuscript is relevant to research in that it addresses an important gap in agricultural study through the development of a standardized scale for measuring farmers’ attitudes toward agricultural diversification in northern Bangladesh. Studies of this scope that relate to attitude, are vital and imperative, as they offer relevant insights about the behavioral and psychological tendencies which affect the adoption of diversification processes, that are not given utmost consideration and attention in policy development and extension initiatives. Basically, through the provision of a scientifically tested, consistent, and reliable tool, the study is a strategic contribution to future research and interventions in Bangladesh and across other developing countries which have similar agricultural contexts. This study will offer guidance to policymakers, extension services, and researchers towards designing well-structured and target-oriented programs which look into the opinions, experiences and challenges of smallholder farmers. The manuscript ultimately offers a validly needful contribution to agricultural extension and rural development research. | Thanks to reviewer for valuable comments regarding the importance of this manuscript. |
| **Is the title of the article suitable?**  **(If not please suggest an alternative title)** | The title “Developing a standardized scale to assess farmers' attitudes toward agricultural diversification in northern Bangladesh,” is clear, concise and sufficiently descriptive. | I am happy with the comments of reviewer. |
| Is the abstract of the article comprehensive? Do you suggest the addition (or deletion) of some points in this section? Please write your suggestions here. | The abstract is quite comprehensive, as it clearly outlines the objectives, methodology, results, and implications of the study. Albeit, there are some areas that require slight improvement to make the abstract more concise and academically oriented:  1. The abstract’s methodology section is too verbose. For example, making emphasis like “40 statements, 32 retained, 25 tested, 14 finalized” as much as it is useful, could be shortened to emphasize the process instead of numbers.  2. The abstract should provide a brief explanation about the reliability of Cronbach's Alpha (0.985), which the result excellently highlighted. This will show what it means for practical use.  3. Instead of stating “can be applied by other academics”, the conclusion should instead clearly highlight how this scale can be utilized for subsequent studies or policy development.  Suggestion: While keeping the details of the methodology concise, the abstract should be aligned on the scale’s significance and wider applicability. | Thank you for your opinions for this section. My response is as follows:   * You mentioned that the abstract’s methodology section is too verbose. I fully agree, but it has been arranged in this way to explain the process in a more understandable way. * A Cronbach's alpha of 0.985 indicates excellent internal consistency and high reliability. Besides, it indicates the individual test items are very closely related to each other. * The conclusion has been revised, like “this standardized scale can be utilized by other academics and researchers in related domains to assess farmers' attitudes, which will aid policymakers and extension professionals in right decision-making to enhance the adoption of agricultural diversification”. |
| Is the manuscript scientifically, correct? Please write here. | Considering the methodology and statistical procedures deployed in the study, the manuscript is scientifically valid. It presents the use of advanced psychometric approaches which include Likert, Thurstone, item analysis, t-tests, Cronbach’s alpha, and content validity, which is appropriate and in alignment with current literature. The author also clearly explained the steps that were taken to ensure reliability and validity. In spite of this, there are two issues that need to be considered here:  1. There are some sections where formulas are only introduced (e.g., for relevancy weightage and t-values) but they were not elaborately presented. This will make it difficult for readers to comprehend the focus of the usage of these formulae.  2. The sample size of 32 farmers as respondents for a study of this scope, is relatively insufficient, as it could affect generalizability. It is needful and imperative to address this limitation more clearly in the discussion section of the work | I have carefully doublechecked the two issues that you have notified me. My responses are as follows:The considerable score of relevancy percentage, relevancy weightage, and mean relevancy was mentioned for the final statement selection, while t values of 25 statements were presented in Table 1.Seby & Alex (2024); Vavilala et al., (2024); and Shitu et al., (2018) was conducted a pilot survey with 32 farmers of non-sample areas for a similar type of scale development for measuring attitude. So, I think that sample size of 32 farmers as respondents for this study is acceptable. |
| **Are the references sufficient and recent? If you have suggestions of additional references, please mention them in the review form.** | The references used for the study are quite sufficient and include both classical sources (Likert, Thurstone, Edwards) and recent works (2020–2024). Albeit, integrating some crucial international references on agricultural diversification and behavioral adoption, which are outside the scope of Bangladesh, could give the study more global value and relevance. Reports from FAO or World Bank that highlight diversification strategies, would be quite strategic. The study also has a few web-based references such as from newspaper articles like Imdad, (2021). Although they provide context, bringing in some more peer-reviewed sources could enhance the credibility of the study.  Additional references suggested:  FAO (2017). The future of food and agriculture: Trends and challenges. FAO, Rome.  Pingali, P. (2007). Agricultural diversification: Opportunities and constraints. World Bank Working Paper. | Thank you for your suggestions to read out the mentioned documents and bring in some more peer-reviewed sources in the context of the article to enhance the credibility of the study. I go through the FAO (2017) documents and didn’t find related points of my article, while I am unable to access another Pingali, P. (2007). |
| Is the language/English quality of the article suitable for scholarly communications? | The study used a language tone that is generally simple and understandable. However there are several stylistic and grammatical issues that need to be addressed. For example:  There are inconsistent capitalization (e.g., “material and methods” should be written as “Materials and Methods”).  There are some sentences that are unnecessarily long, but could be made more concise for clarity and readability (in the Introduction section, the sentence that began with “Agricultural diversification is recognized as a critical strategy…”) is a clear example.  There is also the issue of awkward phrasing, such as “agriculture in Bangladesh is embarrassed due to hazards” (should be “hampered” or “challenged”).  The author should do a thorough copyediting, to make the manuscript more appropriate for scholarly communication and acceptance. | I have corrected the sentences following the suggestions. |
| Optional/General comments | Furthermore, the section on “Consent” is not really necessary, since the study is not based on a medical or clinical case report. For this, it should be discarded. While the methodology is elaborate and detailed, adding a brief conceptual framework or figure that can illustrate how statements were reduced from 40 to 14, would really benefit the paper by improving its readability and enhancing the reader's understanding. With respect to the conclusion, it could be made much stronger if more emphasis is put on practical implications, such as how extension agents or policymakers can utilize the scale towards identifying target groups and designing more targeted interventions. | As per suggestion, I have removed the consent section from this article. |

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| **PART 2:** | | |
|  | **Reviewer’s comment** | **Author’s Feedback** (It is mandatory that authors should write his/her feedback here) |
| **Are there ethical issues in this manuscript?** | *(If yes, Kindly please write down the ethical issues here in details)* |  |