

International Journal of Agriculture Extension and Social Development

Volume 9; Issue 9; September 2026; Page No. 373-378

Received: 19-06-2026
Accepted: 23-07-2026

Indexed Journal
Peer Reviewed Journal

Development and standardization of entrepreneurial behaviour index for young dairy farmers

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DOI: <https://www.doi.org/10.33545/26180723.2026.v9.i9e.4207>

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Abstract

Dairy farming is increasingly becoming an important entrepreneurial opportunity for young people, but the success of a dairy enterprise depends not only on technical knowledge but also on the entrepreneurial qualities of the farmer. In this context, the present study was undertaken to develop and standardize an Entrepreneurial Behaviour Index (EBI) for young dairy farmers. The relevant dimensions of entrepreneurial behaviour were identified through a review of literature and discussions with experts, dairy farmers, and dairy entrepreneurs. These dimensions were further examined and screened based on expert opinion, and appropriate scale values were assigned using the Normalized Rank Order Method. Statements were then developed for the selected dimensions and evaluated for their relevancy and discriminatory ability through relevancy testing and item analysis. The final index consisted of ten dimensions. The index reliability was tested using the test-retest method, which showed satisfactory consistency in the measurement over time. The developed EBI offers a systematic and practical way to assess the entrepreneurial behaviour of youth involved in dairy farming. It may also serve as a useful tool for researchers and extension personnel to understand entrepreneurial capabilities and to plan need-based training, capacity-building initiatives, and support programmes aimed at strengthening youth participation in dairying.

Keywords: Dairy farming, entrepreneurial behaviour, entrepreneurial behaviour index

Introduction

Dairy farming plays an important role in the lives of rural families, providing them with regular income and employment opportunities throughout the year. It can be taken up along with crop production and other farm activities, making it an attractive enterprise for small and marginal farmers. As the demand for milk and value added products in milk continue to grow, dairy farming is gradually shifting from a traditional livelihood activity to a more organized, business-oriented enterprise that encourages farmers to adopt entrepreneurial approaches. (Raut, 2014) ^[1].

The changing nature of dairy farming has also brought new responsibilities for farmers. Farmers are expected to adopt improved technologies, use resources efficiently, respond to market changes, manage risks and explore better opportunities for increasing the returns from their enterprises. In this context, entrepreneurial behaviour becomes important because the way farmers think, make decisions and respond to opportunities can influence the way they manage and develop their dairy enterprises. Efforts such as the Dairy Business School model have also highlighted the importance of developing entrepreneurial capabilities among dairy farmers (Gayathri *et al.*, 2023) ^[2].

Entrepreneurial behaviour is not limited to a single characteristic. It involves a combination of qualities such as innovativeness, adaptability, decision-making ability, risk-taking behaviour, networking and management ability.

Previous studies among dairy farmers have measured entrepreneurial behaviour using different combinations of these characteristics and have generally found that a considerable proportion of farmers exhibit a medium level of entrepreneurial behaviour (Pisire *et al.*, 2014; Patil *et al.*, 2017) ^[3, 4]. In the changing dairy farming scenario, entrepreneurial qualities such as value chain management, competitiveness, technical skills, and social responsibility have also become increasingly important.

However, the way entrepreneurial behaviour is measured differs from one study to another. Some studies have concentrated mainly on individual entrepreneurial traits, while others have given greater emphasis to management, information seeking, decision making or market-related characteristics. Studies which have been conducted also emphasized the need to understand entrepreneurial behaviour in relation to the changing nature of commercial dairy farming (Somtiya *et al.*, 2024) ^[5]. Hence, a more comprehensive measure is needed to capture the different behavioural characteristics that are relevant to present-day dairy farmers.

A well-designed index can bring together these different characteristics in a simple and meaningful way, making it easier to assess the overall entrepreneurial behaviour of dairy farmers. Such an index can also help extension professionals and development agencies understand the strengths and areas requiring improvement among farmers and accordingly plan

suitable training and capacity-building programmes.

Keeping this in mind, the present study was undertaken to develop and standardize an Entrepreneurial Behaviour Index (EBI) for dairy farmers. The study focused on identifying the key dimensions of entrepreneurial behaviour, developing and screening relevant statements, and establishing the validity and reliability of the index. The finalized index was then used to assess the entrepreneurial behaviour of dairy farmers.

Materials and Methods

The study was conducted in 2017 to develop and standardize an Entrepreneurial Behaviour Index (EBI) and to understand the entrepreneurial behaviour of youth in dairy farming in Telangana State (Karthik, 2017) ^[11].

1. Development of entrepreneurial behaviour index

Entrepreneurial Behaviour Index (EBI) was developed and standardized for assessing the entrepreneurial behaviour of young dairy farmers. An attempt was made to explain the various methods and procedures followed to devise the Entrepreneurial Behavior Index under the following sub-heads:

A. Formulation of construct

Operationalizing a concept is essential to make it clear and measurable within a scientific study. A construct can be understood as a concept that is deliberately developed or adopted for a specific scientific purpose (Kerlinger, 2012). In the present study, relevant constructs were identified and operationalized according to objectives of research. Entrepreneurial behaviour of youth in dairy farming was operationally defined as the combined expression of various entrepreneurial dimensions, along with their ability to recognize and pursue new opportunities, which together contribute to developing a dairy enterprise into an economically viable and socially responsible venture.

Kerlinger (2012) defined an Index as “number that is composite of two or more other numbers”. A composite index can be defined as an aggregation of sets of variables for the purpose of meaningfully condensing large amounts of information. Entrepreneurial Behaviour Index of youth in dairy farming is a set of variables for the purpose of measuring the entrepreneurial behaviour young dairy farmers.

B. Entrepreneurial Behaviour Index was developed as under

a. Collection of dimensions

Probing review of literature and discussions with extension experts, scientists, dairy farmers, and dairy entrepreneurs, 24 dimensions were initially identified as relevant for assessing the entrepreneurial behaviour of youth engaged in dairy farming.

b. Screening of dimensions

The dimensions identified in the previous step were further evaluated by a panel of experts to determine their relevance to entrepreneurial behaviour in dairy farming. The experts were asked to rate each dimension on a three-point continuum as Most Relevant, Relevant, or Not Relevant, with scores of 2, 1, and 0, respectively.

$$\text{Relevancy Weightage} = \frac{\text{Most relevant} \times 2 + \text{Relevant} \times 1 + \text{Not relevant} \times 0}{\text{Maximum possible score}}$$

c. Scale value determination and statement development

The Normalized Rank Order Method was used to determine the relative importance of the identified dimensions and assign appropriate scale values to each dimension. For this purpose, a group of judges with expertise and experience in agricultural extension was selected. The judges were asked to rank the dimensions according to relevancy of dimension contributing to entrepreneurial behaviour. 45 judges returned the proforma and were examined for completeness and consistency.

The analysis was then continued by calculating the proportion corresponding to each rank given by the judges using the prescribed formula. These proportions were used in the subsequent calculations to obtain the scale values and weights for the different dimensions.

$$p = \frac{(R_i - 0.5)100}{n}$$

Where,

p = Centile value (area of the dimensions in the normal distribution)

R_i = Reverse order Rank value of the dimension i

n = Number dimension for ranking

Based on the review of relevant literature, a set of statements/items was developed for each dimension. After preparing the items, each statement was carefully reviewed and refined to ensure clarity and to minimize any possible ambiguity.

C. Relevancy test of selected statements/items

The statements retained from the previous stage were presented to a panel of subject matter experts through e-mail and personal distribution of the interview schedule. The experts were asked to assess each statement for its relevance in measuring the entrepreneurial behaviour of young dairy farmers using a three-point continuum: “Most Relevant,” “Relevant,” and “Not Relevant,” assigned scores of 2, 1, and 0, respectively. Out of the experts contacted, 45 returned the duly completed schedules. Based on their ratings, the Relevancy Weightage (RW) was calculated for each statement, and those statements having an RW of more than 0.75 were retained for further analysis.

D. Computation of the composite index

Since entrepreneurial behaviour comprises several dimensions with different numbers of indicators, the possible range of scores varies across dimensions. Therefore, the total score obtained for each dimension was converted into a unit score using the following formula.

$$EBI = \frac{\sum_{n=1}^{10} \frac{Tn}{Mn}}{\sum_{n=1}^{10} Rcn} \times 100$$

i.e.,

$$EBI = \frac{\sum Tn_1}{Mn_1} \times Rcn_2 + \frac{\sum Tn_2}{Mn_2} \times Rcn_2 \dots \dots \frac{\sum Tn_{10}}{Mn_{10}} \times Rcn_2$$

Where,

EBI= Entrepreneurial behaviour index of Youth in Dairying

Tn = Total obtained score of the dimension ‘ n ’

Mn = Maximum obtainable score of the component 'n'

Rcn = Scale value of the component 'n'

n = Number of components (10)

$n_1, n_2, n_3, \dots, n_{10}$ are selected dimensions

D. Item Analysis

The statements retained after the relevancy test were revised and refined based on the suggestions provided by the subject matter experts. The modified statements were then administered to 30 young dairy entrepreneurs involved in dairy farming. These respondents were randomly selected from a non-sample mandal of the state. Data were collected through personal interviews, and the respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with each statement on a five-point continuum ranging from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree," with scores of 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1, respectively.

The statements developed under the ten dimensions of the Entrepreneurial Behaviour Index were further subjected to item analysis to determine their ability to distinguish between respondents having higher and lower levels of entrepreneurial behaviour. For this purpose, the respondents were ranked based on their overall scores, and the top one-third and bottom one-third groups were identified. The mean score for each statement was calculated separately for both groups, and the difference between the two group means was assessed using the t-value. Statements showing better discriminatory ability were considered suitable for further inclusion in the scale.

$$t = \frac{X_H - X_L}{\sqrt{SX_H^2 - \frac{(SX_H)^2}{n_1} + SX_L^2 - \frac{(SX_L)^2}{n_2}}}$$

X_H = High score group mean score for given statement

X_L = Low score group mean score for a given statement

SX_H^2 = High score group sum of the squares of individual score

SX_L^2 = Low score group sum of squares of individual score

SX_H = Given statement high score group for given statement

SX_L = Given statement high score group for given statement

n_1 = Selected high score 1/3rd of respondents

n_2 = Selected low score 1/3rd of respondents

E. Standardization of the scale

A good scale should accurately measure the concept it is intended to assess and produce consistent results. Therefore, before being used or recommended for wider application, the scale needs to be properly standardized. In the present study, standardization of the scale was carried out by establishing its validity and reliability.

F. Test of reliability

A scale is said to be reliable when it consistently produces same results when applied to the same sample (Goode and Hatt, 1952) [7]. After developing the statements for the Entrepreneurial Behaviour Index, its reliability was assessed to make sure that the scale would give consistent results over time. The test-retest method was used for this purpose. The developed scale was first administered to 30 dairy farmers who were not included in the main sample. After an interval of 30 days, the same scale was administered to the same respondents again. The scores obtained from the two administrations were then correlated to determine the

consistency of the scale over time. The correlation coefficient obtained from the two sets of scores was used as the measure of test-retest reliability.

G. Test for validity

A scale possess validity when it actually measures what it claims to measure (Goode and Hatt, 1952) [7]. In this study, the validity of the attitude scale was ensured through content validity.

H. Content validity

This form of validity is non-statistical in nature and focuses on how well the items represent the dimensions intended to measure the variable under study. In the present study, validity was established through the judges' opinion method. A panel of experts reviewed the items and assessed their suitability and relevance to the respective dimensions, thereby ensuring that the items adequately reflected the intended aspects of entrepreneurial behaviour.

2. Measuring Entrepreneurial Behaviour of Youth in Dairying

To assess the entrepreneurial behaviour of youth engaged in dairying, a total of 220 young dairy farmers were selected using a multistage stratified sampling procedure. Data were collected through personal interviews using the standardized Entrepreneurial Behaviour Index (EBI) developed for the study. The entrepreneurial behaviour score of each respondent was obtained by aggregating the scores across all the indicators included in the index. Based on the resulting EBI scores, the respondents were categorized into low, medium, and high levels of entrepreneurial behaviour using the class interval method.

Results and Discussion

The findings of the study are presented in two broad areas. The first focuses on the development and standardization of the Entrepreneurial Behaviour Index (EBI), covering the selection of dimensions, assignment of scale values, item analysis, validity and reliability. The second presents the entrepreneurial behaviour of young dairy farmers based on the developed EBI.

1. Development and standardization of the entrepreneurial behaviour index (EBI)

A. Selection of dimensions through relevancy weightage

The dimensions were assessed for their relevance using the Relevancy Weightage (RW) method. Dimensions obtaining a relevancy weightage of more than 0.75 were considered suitable and retained for the study. Based on this criterion, ten dimensions were selected. These included Innovativeness (n_1), Adaptability (n_2), Risk-taking ability (n_3), Decision-making ability (n_4), Networking ability (n_5), Social responsibility (n_6), Value chain management (n_7), Competitiveness (n_8), Management ability (n_9), and Technical ability (n_{10}).

B. Determination of scale values of the dimensions using Normalized Ranking order

The proportion (p) values corresponding to the ranks assigned by all 45 judges were calculated and are presented in Table 1 for the Entrepreneurial Behaviour Index (EBI). The obtained p values for the different ranks ranged from 5 to 95.

The next step involved determining the corresponding C

values for each rank. The correct order of ranks was represented by r_i , whereas the reverse order of ranks was represented by R_i . The C values corresponding to each rank were obtained from Table M of Guilford's Psychometric Methods (1954, p. 577). Since the EBI consisted of 10 dimensions, the C values were identified from the row corresponding to 10 stimuli and the respective rank (r_i). For example, for rank 10, the corresponding C value was 2. The same procedure was followed to determine the C values for all other ranks and the values were entered in Table 1. In the subsequent step, the $\sum f_{ij}C$ values were calculated for each dimension. This was done by multiplying the frequency of judges (f_{ij}) corresponding to each rank by its respective C value and summing the resulting products for each

dimension. The overall mean of the frequencies was calculated as $2250/450 = 5$, while the mean of the C values was $50/10 = 5.00$.

The $\sum f_{ij}C$ values obtained for each dimension were divided by the total number of judges $n=45$ to derive the corresponding scale values (M_c , R_j , or R_c), representing both the mean response and relative position of each dimension on the scale continuum. Across all ten dimensions, the grand mean was 5.00, with a standard deviation of 1.55 and a standard error of 0.23. The resulting scale values for each of the ten dimensions are detailed in Table 1 under the row labeled $M_c/R_j/R_c$.

Table 1: Frequencies of ranks as given by 45 judges, proportions (p), C values and R_c values for ten dimensions of EBI using Normalised Rank Order Technique

r_i	R_i	Ten dimensions of Entrepreneurial Behaviour index (EBI)										$\sum n$	p	C
		n_1	n_2	n_3	n_4	n_5	n_6	n_7	n_8	n_9	n_{10}			
1	10	32	3	6	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	45	95	8
2	9	4	31	4	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	45	85	7
3	8	5	2	2	27	3	4	2	0	0	0	45	75	6
4	7	2	5	21	6	0	7	0	0	1	3	45	65	6
5	6	1	2	7	3	1	29	1	0	1	0	45	55	5
6	5	1	1	0	2	28	5	0	6	2	0	45	45	5
7	4	0	1	3	2	6	0	24	4	1	4	45	35	4
8	3	0	0	2	0	1	0	7	14	12	9	45	25	4
9	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	5	13	23	3	45	15	3
10	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	8	5	26	45	5	2
$\sum f_{ji}$		45	45	45	45	45	45	45	45	45	45	450	M=5.0 s=1.55	
$\sum f_{ij}C$		336	302	269	262	237	236	168	157	152	131	2250		
M_c or R_j or $R_c \left(\frac{\sum f_{ji}C}{\sum f_{ji}} \right)$		7.47	6.71	5.98	5.82	5.27	5.24	3.73	3.49	3.38	2.91	50		
n _i = Correct rank order, R _i =reverse rank order, $\sum$ = Sum, p= proportions, C= C values of respective ranks, M _c = Mean value, R _j = Response value, R _c = Scale value, σ =Standard deviation.							Standard error for $M_c = \frac{s}{\sqrt{N}} = \frac{1.55}{\sqrt{45}} = 0.23$							

Table 2: Selected dimensions under Entrepreneurial behaviour

S. No.	Dimensions	Scale values
1.	Innovativeness (n_1)	7.47
2.	Adaptability (n_2)	6.71
3.	Decision making ability (n_3)	5.98
4.	Risk taking ability (n_4)	5.82
5.	Social responsibility (n_5)	5.27
6.	Networking ability (n_6)	5.24
7.	Value chain management (n_7)	3.73
8.	Competitiveness (n_8)	3.49
9.	Management ability (n_9)	3.38
10.	Technical ability (n_{10})	2.91

C. Relevancy test of selected statements/items

Based on the relevancy ratings provided by the subject matter experts, the Relevancy Weightage (RW) was calculated for each statement. Of the 117 statements assessed across ten dimensions, 61 statements having an RW greater than 0.75 were selected for further analysis.

D. Item analysis

The analysis showed that 54 out of the 61 statements had significant t-values as indicated in Table 4, indicating that these statements were able to clearly distinguish between the high and low groups. The remaining nine statements showed non-significant differences, suggesting that they had

comparatively lower discriminating ability. Based on the predetermined criterion of $t \geq 1.75$, the nine non-significant statements were excluded from further analysis. Thus, 54 statements were retained for the subsequent stages of development of the Entrepreneurial Behaviour Index.

D. Test of reliability

The reliability assessment showed a test-retest correlation coefficient of 0.79, which was significant at the 0.01 level of probability. This indicates that the respondents gave reasonably consistent responses when the scale was administered at two different points in time. The obtained coefficient therefore suggests that the developed Entrepreneurial Behaviour Index had good stability and satisfactory reliability for assessing the entrepreneurial behaviour of dairy farmers.

Final developed Entrepreneurial Behaviour Index:

The final developed index consists of 54 statements covering ten dimensions of dairy entrepreneurship: innovativeness, adaptability, decision-making ability, risk-taking behaviour, social responsibility, networking ability, value chain management, competitiveness, management ability, and technical ability as indicated in Table 3. Among these, 22 statements are negative statements which are marked with an asterisk (*).

Table 3: Entrepreneurial Behaviour Index of Youth in Dairy

S. No	Statements	SA (5)	A (4)	UD (3)	DA (2)	SDA (1)
I.	Innovativeness					
1	When technologies such as milking machines, concentrate feed, nutrient supplementation etc are available I would like to adopt					
2	Learning new ways in managing enterprises such as utilization of precision farming technologies is essential in dairying					
*3	In dairying there is no need to try new ideas as there is lack of compatibility with existing situations					
4	I always believe that they are new and better ways of doing things					
*5	When there is constraint there is no need to experiment in the enterprise					
II.	Adaptability	SA	A	UD	DA	SDA
1	Access to information plays an important role for adaptability					
2	I always have faith and trust on my own judgement which helps to make me adaptable					
3	I would try to know success stories of successful entrepreneurs which makes me adaptable					
4	I would see the failures as an opportunity to learn something new					
*5	I do get upset when I get negative feedback about the way I manage my enterprise					
III.	Decision making ability	SA	A	UD	DA	SDA
1	In order to make a decision I try to list out the choices in order to obtain better alternative					
*2	I would prefer to make routine decisions as it is time saving					
3	It is necessary to judge pros and cons in decision making in order to avoid bias					
*4	I feel that family norms and customs influence my decisions					
IV.	Risk taking behaviour	SA	A	UD	DA	SDA
1	A thorough analysis is required before starting up an enterprise					
*2	In order to avoid risk I take routine decisions which are common in day to day activities					
3	I would like to sell milk directly to the customers if more chances of profit					
*4	Diversification to off farm activities is not rewarding as it increases expenditure					
*5	Animals must be vaccinated only after appearance of symptoms					
V.	Social Responsibility	SA	A	UD	DA	SDA
1	There is need for protection of natural resources as they are going to exhausted in future					
*2	Crossbreds must be encouraged as the milk yield is high when compared to indigenous breeds though it causes genetic loss					
*3	Adulteration of milk is necessary as it can meet increasing demand of milk					
4	I would maintain quality of milk, for wellbeing of my customers					
5	It is essential for management of waste produced from dairy farm					
*6	There is no need to utilize energy efficient devices in farm as availability of these devices is less					
*7	I would prefer to utilize resources such as fodder, labour and other resources outside the local area					
8	I am aware of air, water and land pollution caused by dairy farming					
*9	I feel it is better to cull the diseased and aged dairy animal than providing treatment.					
VI.	Networking ability	SA	A	UD	DA	SDA
1	It is necessary to attend melas, training programmes, exhibitions etc to develop professional contacts					
*2	I lack dedication to common purpose hence I donot participate in group activities					
3	Value addition, collective purchase and marketing is only possibly through community participation					
*4	I feel that there are differences in social and economic structures inhibiting the interaction among members					
5	Networking with few active members in group will enhance survival of enterprise					
VII.	Value chain management	SA	A	UD	DA	SDA
1	One should have thorough knowledge about market avenues for proper disposal of goods					
2	I would prefer for specialized products for the market					
3	I feel that extension agents can play a major role in helping to identify, investigate and evaluate opportunities in value chain management in dairying					
*4	To improve value of milk there is no necessary one should have knowledge about scientific milk production					
*5	I would never try to enter contracts in production and marketing					
6	In order to improve quality of milk, there is need to integrate processes that add value to milk					
VIII.	Competitiveness	SA	A	UD	DA	SDA
1	I feel that competition is culturally accepted, encouraging and helps to increase productivity.					
*2	I feel that unfriendly attitudes towards one another develop when individuals compete.					
3	I feel that competition makes me best utilize resources in limited quantity.					
4	I always welcome healthy competition to give quality products to the market					
*5	I would never try to identify competitors and identify their strength and weakness					
IX.	Management ability	SA	A	UD	DA	SDA
1	Entrepreneur needs to deal with the problems and opportunities in right moment and in the right way					
*2	I do not believe in strategically planning for utilization of resources					
3	Entrepreneur needs to frequently visit his unit in order to understand resources needed and understand the problems					
*4	In managing an enterprise there is not necessary to motivate people					
5	I would prepare written plans and check the progress of the plans					
X.	Technical ability	SA	A	UD	DA	SDA
1	As an entrepreneur, I utilize optimum quantity of input for the enterprise					
2	I try to manage my enterprise in most profitable and sustainable manner					
*3	Record keeping of all production activities like rearing, feeding, watering, disease control as it is waste of time and it is not necessary in dairying					
4	It is good to attend training to improve technical knowledge about production					
5	I have expertise and experience essential for successfully running dairy enterprise					

2. Measuring entrepreneurial behaviour of youth in dairying

The developed EBI was used to assess the entrepreneurial behaviour of the dairy farmers. The respondents were categorized into low, medium and high levels based on their

EBI scores. As presented in Table 3, the largest proportion of respondents (43.65%) belonged to the medium level of entrepreneurial behaviour. This was followed by 35.45 per cent of respondents in the low category, while 20.91 per cent were in the high entrepreneurial behaviour category. The

findings are in line with the findings of Laishram (2012) who also reported that the majority of dairy farmers belonged to the medium level of entrepreneurial behaviour category.

Table 4: Distribution of respondents according to their entrepreneurial Behaviour (n=220)

Categories	Frequency	Per cent
Low (48-56)	78	35.45
Medium (57-65)	96	43.65
High (66-74)	46	20.91
Total	220	100

The predominance of respondents in the medium category indicates that most of the dairy farmers possessed a moderate level of entrepreneurial behaviour. At the same time, the considerable proportion of farmers in the low entrepreneurial behaviour category indicates a need for further strengthening of their entrepreneurial skills and capabilities. Providing greater exposure to successful dairy entrepreneurs, along with practical training, technical guidance, timely market information, and opportunities for value addition, could help farmers build their confidence and improve their ability to manage dairy farming as a viable enterprise.

Conclusion

The study led to the development of a comprehensive Entrepreneurial Behaviour Index (EBI) for young dairy farmers, covering key behavioural qualities that contribute to the establishment, management, and growth of a dairy enterprise. The systematic process of identifying relevant dimensions, developing and screening statements, obtaining expert feedback, and assessing the items helped ensure that the index was appropriate for measuring entrepreneurial behaviour among young dairy farmers.

The developed index provides a practical way to understand the entrepreneurial characteristics of young dairy farmers and to identify areas where they may need further support. It can be useful for extension personnel, researchers, and development agencies in planning need-based training and capacity-building programmes. Developing entrepreneurial qualities alongside technical, managerial, and market-related skills can help young dairy farmers make better-informed decisions, recognize and respond to emerging opportunities, and manage their dairy enterprises more effectively.

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