



# A Case Study of Successful Nursery Entrepreneur at Thanjavur District of Tamilnadu, India

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## Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration among all authors. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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## ABSTRACT

This case study showcases the vision and initiative of a young entrepreneur who belonged to business family and who inherited the legacy of entrepreneurial traits from his father and grandfather. The need for the research was to identify the extraordinary and unique farmer who has lead success in the field of Agri-business. The nursery business carries a low risk due to low investment and localization production centers' and as well as the use of local and traditional technology. The type of nursery selected was a wholesale and retail nursery, where plants and flowers were sold to the general public and bulk stocks were being produced. The case study approach was made by preparing a semi structured interview schedule followed by the field visit. Data about the profile, skills and work experience, knowledge of the entrepreneur in nursery

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business were gathered. This case study explores the extraordinary work and discusses in detail the education acquired by the entrepreneur, his vision and how he become an entrepreneur, the milestones achieved by him, major challenges faced by him, the growth enjoyed by him, and his plans for future expansion and growth. Government must support entrepreneurs so they can grow into true businesspeople who expand and diversify to produce wealth and jobs.

**Keywords:** *Entrepreneurial traits; retail nursery; agri-business; nursery business.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

“Entrepreneurship is the process of creating or seizing an opportunity and pursuing it regardless of the resources currently controlled”, Timmons [1].

“An entrepreneur is the one who organizes, manages and assumes the risks of a business or enterprise. Entrepreneurial opportunities differ from normal possibilities to optimize the efficiency of existing products in the sense that the former involves new means-ends relationships” [2].

A nursery is a managed site, designed to produce seedlings grown under favorable conditions until they are ready for planting. All nurseries primarily aim to produce sufficient quantities of high quality seedlings to satisfy the needs of users. In the nursery, the young seedlings are tended from sowing to develop in such a way as to be able to endure the hard field conditions ([education-portal.com/..PlantNursery](http://education-portal.com/..PlantNursery)). The nursery industry is a very wonderful and exciting business, as the production of plants for profit has the potential of providing many personal and financial rewards [3,4]. A successful nursery producer needs knowledge of plants, soils, fertilizers, pesticides, irrigation, machinery, pruning, harvesting methods, overwintering techniques, packing and conveyance practices [5].

Plant nursery business is one of the emerging businesses nowadays in rural as well in urban areas. Application of entrepreneurship in plant nursery business enhance the knowledge of modern entrepreneurship and agro-entrepreneurship. Ahmed [6] reported that “nursery is one of the most important income based activities in Bangladesh, which has led to poverty reduction and socio-economic improvement of the poor section of the population”. It was observed that the nurseries significantly contributes to the national tree plantation program as well they improved their livelihoods. In addition to the forest department

nurseries the private nurseries are rapidly increasing in our state. As per the report of the working group on Horticulture, Plantation crops, and Organic farming for the xi five year plan [7], planning commission, Government of India (GoI), there are 6330 registered nurseries under public and private sectors. In Tamil Nadu, there are about 371 registered public and private nurseries. The research question of the study is why this nursery entrepreneur have been successful and what are the factors responsible for their successes.

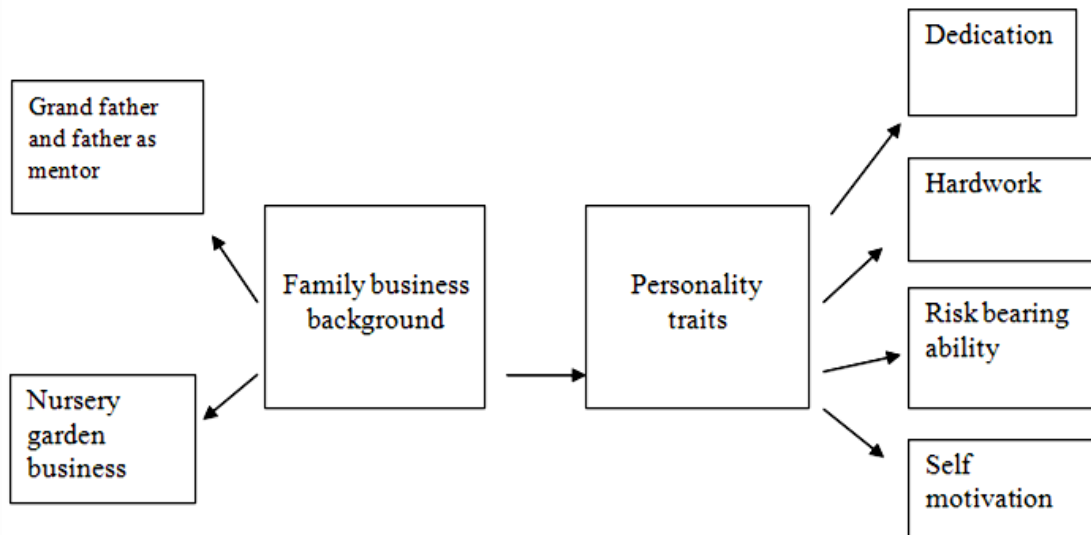
## 2. METHODOLOGY

The present study was conducted in the Thanjavur district.; Case study helps explain both the process and outcome of a phenomenon through complete observation, reconstruction and analysis of the cases under investigation. The entrepreneur was personally interviewed and data was collected with the help of a semi-structured interview schedule.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1 Profile of the Case

A young entrepreneur Mr. Jones Victor aged 28 year was running a nursery business successfully in Tanjore district. He has completed Bachelor in Hotel Management. His grandfather Joseph started this nursery garden named as “Arul nursery” in 1965. He was a B.Sc. (Agri) graduate from Tamil Nadu Agricultural University. Due to some critical factors he faced Joseph couldn’t able to continue this business. Following his grandfather and father now Mr. Jones victor has been successfully running this nursery business with a vision “to make most of the plants available at Thanjavur at affordable cost”. The efforts and passion of his grandfather Arul to become an entrepreneur has motivated Mr. Jones victor to become a successful Agri-entrepreneur. He was a hard working person who was open to new ideas and who would pursue his work with great passion. He asserts that, the personality traits that assisted him in



**Fig. 1. Factors that made the case as an Entrepreneur**

becoming a successful entrepreneur are his dedication, hard work, risk bearing abilities, ability to tap the opportunity on right time, positive attitude and self-motivation.

The entrepreneur stated *“As a part of my desire to do business, I came to understand that investment in nursery business is the best option for me. Hence I would like to start a plant nursery. “Our nursery is developed for plants lovers and garden enthusiasts. We have gained lots of appreciation by our beloved clients which are valuable awards to us”.*

### 3.2 Entrepreneurial Initiatives

Once Mr. Jones Victor decided to do the business of his own he realized that starting a new business required huge capital investment and at that point of time he was not in a position to arrange funds to initiate a start-up. The idea that aroused in his mind was of restarting his grandfather’s nursery garden business which was slow down due to unavoidable reason. Initially they only sold fruit plants in their nursery but due to higher demand for Ornamentals, Indoor plants, Medicinal plants, Seasonal plants, Avenue plants , they started to produce plant saplings on their own and also they sourced wholesale plants from Bengaluru nursery gardens at low price and sold at reasonable price in their nursery. Now Arul nurserybecome one among the leading producers and suppliers of all kinds of plants in Thanjavur. The fact which made him to continue this business were the capital investment was minimal as the nursery

garden was already raised; he as a child accompanied his father to his work place so he already had practical exposure in that business; he already knew the experienced work force had to make little effort to bring the business back in place.

### 3.3 Nursery Activities

The nursery activities are going on all round the year. Arul nursery has unique and diverse collection of plants. In addition they produce and sell coco-peat, nursery pots, vermicompost etc. The selling price are variable depending on the species, type of planting materials, containers and size of the seedlings. In ‘Arul nursery’ they provide Horticulture–Terrace gardening / home gardening services, and raised a wide variety of plant saplings and sold suitable bio-manure. Thus, the Arul nursery serves as an one stop solution for people needs at Thanjavur. The cost involved in the nursery establishment were purchase of seed, polybags, soil, cow dung, fertilizer and insecticides. Rare ornamental and fruit seedlings cost much more than the common seedlings. From the study it was revealed that the income or profit in nursery establishment varied from 50-90% of their investment, whereas the average income becomes 75% of their total investment.

The nursery facilities were warehousing (for storing the seeds, tools, and materials), greenhouses, room for seed sowing, and replacement bed with and without the shading areas as seen in Table 1.

**Table 1. Arul Nursery facilities**

No	Kinds of facilities	Quantity (unit)	Capacity	Purpose
1	Warehouse	1	14m	Storing of seeds, tools and materials
2	Nursery office	1	20m	Management and administration of nursery
3	Greenhouse	1	40m	Making of point for bud cutting and seed sowing
4	Germination house	1	40m	Seed treatment and seed sowing
5	Washing base	1	2m	Cleaning of nursery working tools
6	Shading area	1	800m	Protecting seedlings from the direct sunlight in the replacement bed

**Table 2. Plant list and its price (INR) in the Arul nursery garden**

Flowering		Fruiting		Herbal		Tree seedling	
Plant	Price/plant	Plant	Price/plant	Plant	Price/plant	Tree seedling	Price/plant
Table rose	20.00	Guava	80	Aloevera	25	Eucalyptus	20
Lily	30.00	Papaya	80	Pirandai	25	Cassurina	20
Alamanda creeper	40.00	Sapotta	80	Black tulasi	25	Acacia sp.	20
Nanthiyavattum(sp)	40.00	Lemon	80	Mint	25	Rain tree	20
Jathi malli	40..00	Pomegranate	60	Vallarai	25	Polyathia	20
Rose	40.00	Plums	60	Lemon grass	25	Teak	15
Arali	40.00	Jackfruit	120	Beetle vine	20	Vengai	15
Plumeria pudica	60.00	Red banana	120	Nilavembu	15	Crocodile bark tree	15
Kodi sampange	60.00	Rasthazhi	120	Vettiver	15	Red wood tree	15
Hibiscus (BG)	40.00	Coconut	120	Clove	10	Bamboo	60
Exora	40.00	Orange	80	Spear mint	15	Mahogany	15
Marigold, nerium, button flowers	5.00	Gooseberry	50	Insulin	15	Rosewood	25

**Chart 1. Swot Analysis of Agri-entrepreneur**

<b>Strength</b>	<b>Weakness</b>
Suitable geographical condition	Dependence on climatic condition
Availability of raw materials	Low interest among people to buy plants
Availability of labors	Maintenance
Personal interest and determination	Skilled labor
Strong traditional knowledge	Transportation cost
Additional employment generation	Lack of support from government schemes
Public demand	
Eco-friendly practices	
<b>Opportunity</b>	<b>Threats</b>
Increasing market span	Unexpected competition
More employment generation	Climatic variation
Proper utilization of resources	Natural calamities
Promoting Agribusiness	Cost of modern equipment's
Providing employment to unemployed	Disease outbreaks

### 3.4 Employment Generation

Four skilled workers on regular basis and around 8-10 laborers had been hired as per need of the fruit plant propagation works. Indirectly many villagers are also getting employment opportunities in terms of supplying inputs to his nursery.

### 4. CONCLUSION

Gardening serves a variety of functions for the gardener, from improving property value and promoting social connection and to reducing stress. It is obvious that motivation is an essential part of all successful entrepreneurs. Government support also plays an important role in developing entrepreneurs. Apart from this, nursery garden importantly requires factors such as enclosed structures, water, light, temperature, gas exchange, electricity, green house, shade net etc,. It might be reassuring to conclude that the success of business venture or long term survivability of business totally depends upon the nature of entrepreneur motivational factors.

It is also found from the above study that;

- About 15% employments are generated in the field of nursery business.
- It is very easy to start own venture.
- To start the plant nursery business requirement of technical knowledge is less.
- More Training Centre and financial support are needed in this sector.
- Nursery entrepreneur don't need of huge investment.
- Assistance from government department is welcome.

It can be said that an Entrepreneur in true sense, backed up by the proper guidance and support can lead to successful life. Further to say, government must nurture entrepreneurs so that they become entrepreneurs in true sense, by expanding and diversifying to create wealth and employment.

### 5. FUTURE STRATEGY

The demand for landscaping and ornamental gardening was day by day increasing among the people. The entrepreneur has planned to expand his nursery business by providing landscape designing services. Because home landscape may represent an important option for the preservation of biodiversity. He has also planned to open a sales counter for fruit saplings at road side to popularize and expand his enterprise.

### COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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