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ATTITUDE AND ASPIRATION OF UNDERGRADUATE AGRICULTURAL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Agricultural education forms the foundation for the development of requisite manpower for research, education, training and transfer of technology to the field and extension activities throughout the country.Six colleges of Sardarkrushinagar Dantiwada Agricultural University were selected for the study. List of final year students of all colleges were obtained and among them total 150 students were randomly selected for the study by applying proportionate simple random sampling (59.29%).The finding of the study shows thatNearly three fifth (58.67%) of the respondents held favorable attitude towards higher education. Whereas, in case of educational aspiration majority (82.67%) of the respondents had shown their interest towards higher studies and willing to join for post-graduation. While 32.67 per cent of the agricultural students aspired to secure academic position in agricultural university as their first preference followed by administrative position in the Department of Agriculture (24.67%) in the occupational aspiration. Whereas, in entrepreneurial aspiration, more number (23.33%) of the students were most interested to take up agriculture as an enterprise followed by establishment of organic production unit (12.00%).

Keywords : *attitude, aspiration, entrepreneur, enterprise, higher education*

INTRODUCTION

Agricultural education forms the foundation for the development of requisite manpower for research, education, training and transfer of technology to the field and extension activities throughout the country. The Agricultural education is imparted at the level of diploma, degree (11 major disciplines at undergraduate), masters (95 subjects at post-graduate level) and doctoral level with a total intake capacity of 35,000 students per year. As of now, it is estimated that there are 3, 15,000 professionally qualified persons in agricultural sciences to which about 15000 graduates, 11,000 Masters and 2,500 Ph.D.'s in agriculture are added every year (Anon, 2020).

There is a tendency to opt more for jobs than going back to farming or taking up entrepreneurial activity in agriculture (Jagadeeswari et al., 2019). It may be because of lack of confidence to take up farming on commercial lines and also due to lack of business acumen to take up entrepreneurial activity in agricultural sectors. There is need to change basically the students' attitude to prefer jobs over practical farming or farming as an enterprise.The agriculture sector is important for food security, employment generation and economic growth. However, concern has now been expressed on the decline in agricultural growth. Modern agriculture is knowledge-based in which education at all levels; particularly higher education has an important role.

OBJECTIVES

(1) To know the attitude of undergraduate agricultural students towards higher education

(2) To analyze the aspiration of undergraduate agricultural students

METHODOLOGY

The research study was conducted during year 2021-22 in Sardarkrushinagar Dantiwada Agricultural University. Six colleges of Sardarkrushinagar Dantiwada Agricultural University were selected for the study because of sufficient number of students were studying in under graduation course. List of final year students of all colleges were obtained from the registrar office of S. D. Agricultural University, Sardarkrushinagar. Among the list 150 students were randomly selected for the study by applying proportionate simple random sampling (59.29%).

Attitude of the students was measured with the help of scale developed by Ajit (2004) with due modification. The scale consisted of twenty-five statements which measured with five continuums. Educational aspirationmeasured by

following the procedure of Shreesha (2012), occupational aspirationmeasured by following the procedure of Rahim (2010) and entrepreneurial aspiration was measured by following the procedure of Preethi (2015) by using frequency and percentage.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Attitude of the undergraduate agricultural students towards higher education

Attitude of a person is the degree of his positive or negative feelings associated with any object or thing and thus it plays an important role in determining his behavior. For the respondents, it is worth to know their attitude towards higher education. With this object in mind,attitude of undergraduate agricultural students towards higher education was studied and data are presented in Table 1

Table 1 : Distribution of students according to their attitude of agriculturalstudents towards higher education (n=150)

Sr. No.	Attitude of agricultural students	Frequency	Per cent
1	Unfavorable (< 69.60score)	26	17.33
2	Favorable (69.60 to 109.51 score)	88	58.67
3	Highly favorable (>109.51 score)	36	24.00

Mean= 89.55 S.D. = 19.96

It is evident from the data in Table 1 that nearly three fifth (58.67%) of the students held favorable attitude towards higher education, whereas 24.00 per cent of them had highly favorable attitude and 17.33 per cent of the students had unfavorable attitude towards higher agricultural education. Most of the students were from the families having good literacy rate, good economic condition and good occupational status, these all factors have created a favorable condition for higher agricultural education.

The findings are similar with Ramijyani (2013),Bai (2016)and Gade (2020).

Aspiration of the undergraduate agricultural students

Aspiration is defined as the 'level for standard of achievement which an individual set for himself or herself and which he or she expects to attain.' In the present study, aspiration was operationally defined as the standard of achievement set by the final year student with regard to his/her education, occupation, entrepreneurial and society.

(A) Educational aspiration

At higher levels, agricultural education is primarily undertaken to prepare students for employment in the agricultural sector.With this object in mind, educational aspiration of the undergraduate agricultural students towards higher education was studied and data are presented in Table 2 and Table 3.

Table 2 : Distribution of the respondentsaccording to their interest for higher studies (n=150)

Sr. No.	Higher studies	Frequency	Per cent
1	Interested	124	82.67
2	Not interested	26	17.33

It could be seen from Table 2 reveal that vast majority (82.67%) of the respondents had shown their interest towards higher studies, whereas remaining 17.33 per cent of the respondents had shown no interest towards higher studies, respectively.

Table 3 : Distribution of the respondents according to their educational aspirations (n=150)

Sr. No.	Name of the course	Frequency	Per cent
1	M.Sc. / M.Tech.	81	64.80
2	Preparing for competitive exams	22	17.60
3	Abroad studies	11	08.80
4	ABM / MBA	10	08.00

It can be observed from the data presented in Table 3 that nearly two third (64.80%) of the respondents had M.Sc./M.Tech. as their educational aspirations followed by 17.60 per cent were in preparing for competitive exams, 8.80 per cent were in Abroad studies and 8.00 per cent were in ABM / MBA, respectively.

This result is in conformity with the Warwadekar *et al.* (2007) andBora and Barman(2022).

(B) Occupational aspiration

It is thereby expected that respondents with high degree of occupation aspiration have more inclination to make progress in her future and for that their rings changes in the way of life and does all those contacts through modern media which are valuable for their progress.

Table 4 shows the occupational aspirations of students of agricultural colleges. The results reveal that nearly one third (32.67%) of the agricultural students aspired to secure academic position in agricultural university as their first preference followed byadministrative position in the Department of Agriculture (24.67%), secure job

Table 4: Distribution ofthe respondentsaccording to their occupational aspirations (n=150)

Sr. No.	Statement	I Preference		II Preference		III Preference	
		f	%	*f*	%	*f*	%
1	To secure the administrative job in Government department	16	10.67	12	08.00	24	16.00
2	To secure administrative position in the Department of agricultural sector	37	24.67	41	27.33	52	34.67
3	To secure academic position in Agricultural University	49	32.67	36	24.00	38	25.33
4	Seed production business	02	01.33	01	00.67	00	00.00
5	To secure job in banks	19	12.67	24	16.00	18	12.00
6	Social worker	00	00.00	0	00.00	02	01.33
7	Self-employment enterprises	08	05.33	09	06.00	07	04.67
8	To secure job in company (pesticide, insurance, fertilizer and seed production)	06	04.00	04	02.66	06	04.00
9	To become executive officers in private company	04	02.67	06	04.00	02	01.33
10	To become landscape expert	05	03.33	08	05.33	00	00.00
11	To become agency in drip irrigation	03	02.00	07	04.67	01	00.67
12	Interested in laboratory works	00	00.00	02	01.33	00	00.00
13	Service in any agriculture or horticulture farms	01	00.67	0	00.00	00	00.00

f =Frequency, %= Per cent

in bank (12.67%) and administrative job in government department (10.67%). Whereas, second preference given to administrative position in the Department of Agriculture (27.33%), academic position in agricultural university (24.00%), secure job in bank (16.00%) and administrative job in government department (08.00%). while third preference were; administrative position in the Department of Agriculture (34.67%), academic position in agricultural university (25.33%), administrative job in government department (16.00%) and secure job in bank (12.00%).

These findings are in conformity with the findings of Pakale (2016),Rout*et al*. (2020) and Osman *et al.* (2021).

(C). Entrepreneurial aspiration

Entrepreneurial aspiration was measured by following the procedure of Preethi (2015). The respondents were asked to indicate the interest to the choices they made for entrepreneurship after the degree and scores of 3, 2, and 1 were given for the most interested, moderately interested and least interested, respectively and analyzed by using frequency and percentage.

Table 5 : Distribution of the respondentsaccording to their entrepreneurial aspirations (n=150)

Sr. No.	Enterprises	Most interested		Moderately interested		Least interested	
		f	%	*f*	%	*f*	%
1	Agriculture(crop production)	35	23.33	16	10.67	00	00.00
2	Dairy/Food technologist	09	06.00	06	04.00	08	05.33
3	Poultry	00	00.00	04	02.67	44	29.33
4	Sericulture	00	00.00	00	00.00	38	25.34
5	Bee keeping	03	02.00	08	05.33	06	04.00
6	Small scale industry	13	08.66	14	09.33	00	00.00
7	Agro service/Agribusiness center	12	08.00	11	07.33	00	00.00
8	Bio fertilizer lab	06	04.00	04	02.67	04	02.67
9	Soil testing lab	04	02.67	06	04.00	08	05.33
10	Vermicompost unit	03	02.00	06	04.00	00	00.00
11	Green house technology	07	04.67	13	08.67	00	00.00
12	Marketing enterprise	04	02.67	07	04.67	00	00.00

Sr. No.	Enterprises	Most interested		Moderately interested		Least interested	
		f	%	*f*	%	*f*	%
13	Farm machinery/Agricultural engineer	09	06.00	05	03.33	00	00.00
14	Post-harvest technology and value addition	08	05.33	12	08.00	00	00.00
15	Nursery management	12	08.00	15	10.00	03	02.00
16	Establishment of organic production unit	18	12.00	20	13.33	00	00.00
17	Bakery/Preservation	07	04.67	03	02.00	39	26.00

f=Frequency, %= Per cent

The data presented in Table 5 reveal that more number (23.33%) of the students were most interested to take up agriculture as an enterprise followed by establishment of organic production unit (12.00%), small scale industries (08.66%) and same per cent (08.00%) were agro service centre and nursery management. While same percent students (06.00%) were aspired in dairy/ food technologist and farm machinery/ agricultural engineer.

Moderately interested entrepreneurial aspirations of the students were; establishment of organic production unit (13.33%), agriculture enterprises (10.67%), nursery management (10.00%), small scale industries (09.33%), green house technology (08.67%), post harvest technology/ value addition (08.00%) and agro service/agri business centre (07.33%).

The least interested entrepreneurial aspirations of the students were; Poultry (29.33%), bakery/preservation (26.00%), sericulture (25.34%), dairy/food technologist and soil testing laboratory (05.33%).

The findings of the study are similar to the findings of Kavitha (2018), Patel et al. (2022).

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded from the above study that Nearly three fifth (58.67%) of the respondents held favorable attitude towards higher education, whereas 24.00 per cent of them had highly favorable attitude and 17.33 per cent of the respondents had unfavorable attitude towards higher agricultural education. Whereas, in case of educational aspiration majority (82.67%) of the respondents had shown their interest towards higher studies and willing to join for post-graduation. While 32.67 per cent of the agricultural students aspired to secure academic position in agricultural university as their first preference followed by administrative position in the Department of Agriculture (24.67%), secure job in bank (12.67%) and administrative job in government department (10.67%) in the occupational aspiration. Whereas, in entrepreneurial aspiration, more number (23.33%) of the students were interested to take up agriculture as an enterprise followed by establishment of organic production unit (12.00%).

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

This is to declare that there is "No conflict of interest" among researcher.

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