

ATTITUDE OF AGRICULTURE GRADUATE STUDENTS TOWARDS HIGHER STUDIES IN ABROAD

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ABSTRACT

Over the last decade, the pursuit of international education has undergone a profound transformation in India. This trend is contingent upon a number of factors, including global exposure, better career prospects, and an improved quality of education. This study aims to provide valuable information on the attitude of agriculture graduate students towards higher studies in abroad, the reasons perceived by them to pursue their studies abroad thus offers valuable insights that can help to address gaps in our education system, guiding efforts to improve quality and align with international standards. The study was conducted in Anand Agricultural University with a sample size of 120 through structured interview schedule. The sample consisted of 42 postgraduate students and 78 undergraduate students, through proportionate random sampling. An ex-post facto research design was adopted for this study. The exposure to earn and employment opportunities was found to be the major reason governing positive attitude of students towards higher studies in abroad. The place of living, and annual family income is positively correlated with their attitude towards higher studies in abroad, and are significant at 5% level of significance.

Keywords : higher studies in abroad, attitude, reasons, abroad education

INTRODUCTION

Education and employment are commonly seen as the primary drivers motivating people to relocate to urban areas. International education has emerged as a significant industry, with a rising trend in the concept of studying abroad. Indian students are being considered as highly price-conscious and focused on maximizing the quality derived from the education. While thinking about studying abroad, they tend to seek options that offer lower costs along with promising career prospects. A significant increase in Indian students migrating to Canada was observed due to Canada's Post-Graduation Work Permit Program introduced in 2006 that permits students to pursue permanent residency in the country. Similarly, Australia's point-based immigration policies have increased the number of Indian students studying there by 15%. On the other hand, after post-study employment permits were eliminated, the number of students entering the UK decreased. However, the number of Indian students choosing to study in the UK increased by an astounding 93% in 2019 when the country changed its post-study visa laws (Choudaha, 2019).

The absence of comprehensive data on how agriculture students perceive foreign education limits the ability of universities, policy-makers, and advisors to effectively guide and support students in making informed decisions. Therefore, it becomes essential to explore and analyse the attitudes of agriculture graduate students toward higher studies abroad, identify influencing factors, and assess the level of interest and preparedness among them. This research aims to address this gap by systematically examining the attitudes of agriculture graduate students, thereby contributing to the formulation of strategies that can better support students' educational aspirations in an increasingly globalized academic environment.

OBJECTIVES

- (1) To study the profile of the agriculture graduate students
- (2) To understand the attitude of agriculture graduate students towards higher studies in abroad
- (3) To ascertain the relationship between profile of the students and their attitude towards higher studies in abroad

- (4) To examine the reasons perceived by them to pursue their studies in abroad

METHODOLOGY

The present study was conducted with a sample size of 120 students enrolled in B.A College of Agriculture, Anand Agricultural University selected by proportionate random sampling. Forty-two students pursuing post-graduation and seventy-eight students currently pursuing under graduation were selected for the study. *Ex-post facto* research method was followed for carrying out the study. A structured interview schedule was developed in accordance with the objectives of the study and it was pretested. The data were collected through personal interview and was analysed using statistical tools such as frequency, percentage, mean score and Karl Pearson's co-efficient of correlation in SPSS software. Then it was interpreted in order to make the finding meaningful.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Profile of the respondents

It was observed from Table 1, that more than three-fourth (76.67%) of the respondents were female, followed by

23.33 per cent of them were male. Majority (63.33%) of them belong to rural place of living, followed by 44 per cent of them in urban area. Majority of the respondents were having academic performance of 7 to 7.999 (48.33%), followed by O.G.P.A of above 8 (36.66%) and 6 to 6.999 (15%). None of them were having O.G.P.A of less than 6. Slightly more than one-third (36.67%) of the respondents have annual family income more than 5 lakhs, followed by 30.00 per cent of them having annual income of three to five lakh, 23.33 per cent and 10.00 per cent with annual income of one to three lakh and less than one lakh, respectively.

With respect to family education, more than two-fifth (43.33%) of the respondents were having higher secondary education, followed by 28.33 per cent of them ha and 18.33 per cent of them having graduation and above. Only 10.00 per cent of the respondents were having up to primary education followed by none of them were illiterate.

The major source of credit that favor the migratory behavior of the respondents was scholarships (36.67%), followed by parents (35.00%), earning abroad (25%) and relatives (3.33%). The information sources which motivated the respondents for migrating for higher studies were students studying abroad (38.33%), followed by friends and family (21.67%), study abroad websites (21.67%), academic advisors (18.33%), respectively.

Table 1. Distribution of profile of the respondents

(n=120)

Sr. No.	Profile	Categories	Frequency	Percent
1	Gender	Male	28	23.33
		Female	92	76.67
2	Place of living	Rural	76	63.33
		Urban	44	36.67
3	Academic performance (OGPA)	5.000 to 5.999	00	00.00
		6.000 to 6.999	18	15.00
		7.000 to 7.999	58	48.33
		Above 8.000	44	36.66
4	Annual family income	Less than 1 lakh	12	10.00
		1 to 3 lakhs	28	23.33
		3 to 5 lakhs	36	30.00
		More than 5 lakhs	44	36.67
5	Parents education	Illiterate	00	00.00
		Primary education	12	10.00
		Secondary education	34	28.33
		Higher secondary education	52	43.33
6	Source of credit for abroad education	Graduation and above	22	18.33
		Parents	42	35.00
		Scholarships	44	36.67
		Earning abroad	30	25.00
7	Sources of information	My relatives	04	3.33
		Students studying abroad	46	38.33
		Family and friends	26	21.67
		Study abroad websites	26	21.67
		Academic advisors	22	18.33

Attitude of agriculture graduate students towards higher studies in abroad

Table 2 : Distribution of respondents according to their attitude towards higher studies in abroad

(n=120)

Sr. No.	Category	Frequency	Percent
1	Less favourable (Up to 31.00 score)	06	10.00
2	Favourable (31.01 to 38.00 score)	47	78.33
3	More favourable (above 38.00 score)	07	11.67

Attitude was conceptualized as positive or negative feelings of the students towards higher education in abroad. The data presented in Table 2 shows that majority (78.33%) of the respondents had favourable attitude towards higher studies in abroad, followed by 11.67 per cent of them with more favourable attitude. Only 10.00 percent of them were having less favourable attitude towards higher studies in abroad. This can be attributed to the significant influence of social media, which showcases global opportunities and success stories, along with students' aspirations for a higher standard of living, exposure to advanced educational infrastructure, greater career prospects, and the desire for personal and professional growth in a multicultural environment. This findings were found somewhat in congruity with Chaudhary *et al.* (2023).

Table 4 : Reasons perceived by the respondents to pursue their studies in abroad

(n=120)

Sr. No.	Statements	Mean score	Rank
1	Going abroad will help in seeking education qualification with worldwide recognition	3.88	VI
2	Abroad education will pave for more employment opportunities	4.10	II
3	Abroad education will facilitate international exposure in the field of study	4.03	III
4	It provides exposure to different cultural experience	3.73	VII
5	Unavailability of the course in India	2.53	IX
6	It provides more opportunity to earn living while studying	4.13	I
7	Higher studies in abroad will increase my independence and critical thinking skills	4.02	IV
8	Learning other culture, foreign language	3.98	V
9	Going abroad will increase my status and privilege	2.55	VIII

The table 4. represents data regarding the reasons the respondent finds for their decision on pursuing higher studies in abroad. The mean score was calculated by dividing the total score given by all the respondents to each of the statement by the total number of respondents. Based on the mean score, ranking was given. Most of the respondents had expressed that abroad education provides more opportunity to earn living while studying ranked first (MS 4.13), followed

Table 3 : Relationship between profile of the respondents with their attitude towards higher studies in abroad

(n=120)

Sr. No.	Variable	Correlation
X ₁	Gender	-0.128 ^{NS}
X ₂	Place of living	0.259**
X ₃	Academic performance	0.220*
X ₄	Annual family income	0.270**
X ₅	Parents education	0.113 ^{NS}
X ₆	Source of credit	0.138 ^{NS}
X ₇	Source of Information	-0.112 ^{NS}

(* Significant at 0.05 level, ** significant at 0.01 level, NS Non significant)

The data pertaining to the relationship between the profile of the respondents and their attitude towards higher education presented in the table 3 clearly indicates that the independent variables; place of living and annual family income were found to have positive and highly significant correlation with the attitude towards abroad education. This indicates people living in urban area are more willing to pursue on higher education in abroad than people in rural area. This can be because urban people having more standard of living considers abroad education as more valuable, career-oriented and has more technological supports. Furthermore, more the annual family income, more they can afford the expenses of higher studies in abroad. However, academic performance had positive and significant correlation with the attitude whereas, gender and source of information possessed negative correlation with their attitude towards higher studies in abroad. The findings were found similar to Patel *et al.* (2020) and Patel *et al.* (2022).

by abroad education will pave for more employment opportunities (MS 4.10), abroad education will facilitate international exposure in the field of study (MS 4.03), higher studies in abroad will increase my independence and critical thinking skills (MS 4.02), learning other culture ,foreign language (MS 3.98), provides exposure to different cultural experiences (MS 3.78), going abroad will help in seeking education qualification with worldwide recognition (MS

3.88), going abroad will increase my status and privilege (MS 2.55), followed by unavailability of the course India (mean score 2.53). These findings are in conformity with findings of Agarwal (2021), Kakkad & Nair (2015); Parmar *et al.* (2024); Zala *et al.* (2024); Karravula and Naik (2023); Shukla *et al.* (2022).

CONCLUSION

In this era of unparalleled global access to resources and technologies, education also transcending boundaries and illuminating minds across the world. This study aimed at analyzing the attitude of agriculture graduate students towards higher studies in abroad. The study revealed that 78.33% of the respondents have favourable attitude towards higher studies in abroad. Majority of the respondents were female, belonged to rural areas, currently doing under graduation with good academic performance, annual family income more than 5 lakh, parent's education having higher secondary education. Major source of credit is from scholarships and information source regarding higher studies in abroad is from students already studying in abroad. The study showed that variables such as place of living, annual family income were found positively significant with their attitude towards higher studies in abroad. This shows that overall attitude of students is to choose abroad as they think it provides more opportunities to earn and employment and will try to go abroad if financial conditions are met. On the other hand, it shows that Indian education needs to take innovative strategies that will improve the quality of education to international standards, should provide opportunities to earn while studying and ensure employment that the youth get attracted to choose their home country and thus reduce brain drain of the country.

IMPLICATIONS

- (1) The government should invest in enhancing the quality, accessibility, and global competitiveness of local higher education institutions, offering diverse programs and world-class facilities to retain talent within the country
- (2) Create national initiatives that connect students to international-standard career pathways, including internships, research collaborations, and skill-building platforms within India, reducing the incentive to seek opportunities abroad

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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