



P-ISSN: 2349-8528
E-ISSN: 2321-4902
IJCS 2019; SP6: 749-751

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(Special Issue -6)
3rd National Conference
On

**PROMOTING & REINVIGORATING AGRI-HORTI,
TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS
[PRAGATI-2019]
(14-15 December, 2019)**

**Factors influencing over all aspiration attitudes of
farm graduates in India**

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Abstract

Agricultural education aims in agricultural human resource development for not only generating new technologies, but also in their assessment, refinement and dissemination to the farming community. The present study aims to find out the aspirations of the agricultural graduates regarding their career. The study was conducted among B.Sc. Agriculture degree holders through open online survey using 'Google forms' and 'Facebook'. Among the sixty four respondents, majority of the respondents are having medium level of educational, agricultural, career, economic and social aspiration. Overall aspiration is positively associated with respondent's gender, parent's occupation, mass media exposure and information seeking behaviour. Age of the respondents and the place where family is dwelling is negatively associated with their overall aspiration. Majority of the students had medium level of overall aspiration. Therefore, efforts should be made to change the medium level of aspiration to high level of aspiration by eliminating the technical gaps in the present educational system.

Keywords: Agricultural graduates, education, career, over all aspirations

Introduction

Presently India is having one of the world's largest agricultural education system guided by various components of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR). Agricultural education has now to evolve in tune with fast changing national and international scenario of globalization, food insecurity, climate change etc. The present situation demands a renewed focus for enhanced quality and relevance of higher agricultural education where agricultural scholars needed to develop knowledge; skills, ability and entrepreneurship to provide village specific extension services. Aspirations are defined as forward-looking goals or targets (Locke and Latham, 2002) [3]. It is a mental image created by people about their future opportunities and regarding when, where and how they can achieve them. Majority of the studies from India reveals that most of the students pursuing agricultural graduation had medium to high level of occupational aspiration. Most of them wanted to pursue a Government job career because of the job security, attractive salary, power, attached better promotional chances, lack of risk and good status. (Mishra, R. *et al.*, 2014) [4]. In a study conducted by Dhakre (2014) [1] regarding aspiration of agriculture students towards agriculture enterprise in West Bengal, 73.8 percent students joined Agriculture College for getting job and aspiration of students towards agriculture enterprise were positively and significantly associated with father education and with father occupation, family size and aim of joining. The majority of Girl Students (71.00%) had overall medium level aspiration among which 56 Percent of them interested to do higher education. (Yomgam and Tekale, 2014) [8]. The present study aims to find out the socio personal traits influencing over all aspirations of agricultural undergraduate students.

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Materials and Methods

The study was conducted in Kerala among the agricultural graduates. Ex-post facto research design was used in this study to suit the objectives and type of information needed. Well-structured questionnaire was organised and validated with the help of 'Google forms', an online application provided by Google Platform. The online form was then published in different Student's Community groups through the social networking site Facebook for a period of one month. Facebook was selected for this purpose due to the wider popularity of this site among youth of India as a social networking tool. Among the sixty seven random respondents, sixty four students who pursued their Under Graduation Degree in Agriculture (B.Sc. (Hons.) Agriculture) in the last ten years were selected based on the objective of the study. Statistical tools like percentage analysis, Cumulative Frequency and Simple correlation analysis were used for analysing the data.

Results and Discussion

Aspirations of farm graduates

Level of aspiration is operationalized as the goal that the individual sets for himself and that he/she strives to achieve. Aspirations play an important role in influencing how young people make life choices, how they think and feel about themselves (Schaefer and Meece, 2009) [6] and ultimately their life outcomes. Social science studies of young people's aspirations tend to be concentrated on career (occupational and vocational) aspirations. (Leavy and Smith, 2010) [2]. In this present study on aspirations of agricultural graduates of Kerala, their educational, agricultural, economic and social aspirations are studied along with the career aspirations. Because aspirations of the agricultural graduates are having greater influence in future development of agriculture in a country.

The educational aspiration is the aspiration of the agricultural towards continuing education after completing graduation in agricultural education. Vast majority of the respondents (84.38%) categorised under medium level of educational aspiration followed by 25 percent respondents had low level and 10.94 percent of the respondents had high level of aspiration.

The Agricultural aspiration determines the real attitude of the agricultural graduates towards farming activities and to serve the farming community. Three-fifth of the respondents (64.06%) belongs to medium level of agricultural aspiration followed by 20.31 percent categorised under high agricultural aspirations and 15.63 percent had low level of agricultural aspiration.

The career aspirations of the agricultural graduate are studied to understand what they perceive themselves to be in coming future. had medium level of career aspiration. About 17.19 percent had low level of career aspiration and 14.06 percent of respondents had high level of career aspiration.

The economic motivation is one of the basic drives against the activities of an individual and it has more influence on the career aspirations of the agricultural graduates. Nearly three-fifth of the respondents (71.88%) had medium level of economic aspiration followed by 14.06 percent of the respondents had low and high economic aspiration.

The social aspirations of the agricultural graduate are studied to understand what they wanted to contribute to the society. Nearly three fifth of the respondents (68.75%) respondents had level of social aspiration followed by 15.63 percent had low and high level of social aspiration.

Overall aspiration level of agricultural graduates

Table 1: Distribution of respondents according to their overall aspiration level (n=64)

Sl. No	Categories	Low Level		Medium		High	
		No.	(%)	No.	(%)	No.	(%)
1	Educational aspiration	3	25.00	54	84.38	7	10.94
2	Agricultural aspiration	10	15.63	41	64.06	13	20.31
3	Career aspiration	11	17.19	44	68.75	9	14.06
4	Economic aspiration	9	14.06	46	71.88	9	14.06
5	Social aspiration	10	15.63	44	68.75	10	15.63
6	Overall aspiration level	11	17.19	42	65.25	11	17.19

In case of overall aspiration of agricultural scholars from Table 1, it was observed that, more than three-fifth of the respondents (71.00%) had overall medium level of aspiration. Only 17.19 percent of the respondents had high level of overall aspiration and 17.19 falls in low level of aspiration. Agricultural scholars fall in the category of medium level for all the five aspirations selected for the study viz. Educational aspiration (84.38%), Agricultural aspiration (64.06%), Career aspiration (68.75%), Economic aspiration (71.88%), and Social aspiration (68.75%).

Relationship between independent variables with overall aspiration

Correlation analysis was performed to find out the association of independent variables namely with the dependent variable overall aspiration.

Table 2: Correlation analysis of independent variables with overall aspiration of the agricultural scholars (n=64)

Sl. No.	Independent variables	Aspiration
1	Age	-0.266**
2	Gender	0.298**
3	UG Marks	0.214*
4	School stream	0.173 ^{NS}
5	Interest on agriculture course before joining	-0.191 ^{NS}
6	Father education	0.112 ^{NS}
7	Mother education	0.037 ^{NS}
8	Father occupation	-0.229*
9	Land holding	0.254*
10	Annual income	0.098 ^{NS}
11	Family dwelling	-0.361**
12	Leadership	-0.226*
13	Mass media exposure	0.388**
14	Information seeking behaviour	0.316**

From Table 2, it could be observed that out of fourteen variables taken for the study, four variables namely Gender (X2), Mass media exposure (X13), Information seeking behavior (X14) exhibited significant and positive correlation with overall aspiration at one percent level of significance Under Graduate Marks (X3) land holding (X9) at five percent level of significance. Age (X1) and Family dwelling (X11) showed negative and significant association with overall aspiration of respondents at five percent level of significance. Leadership (X12) and Father Occupation (X8) showed negative and significant association with overall aspiration of respondents at one percent level of significance. Annual income (X10), School stream (X4), Interest on Agriculture Course before joining (X5), Father Education (X6) and Mother Education (X7) had no relationship with overall aspiration

Positive and significant association of gender with aspiration

of the respondents shows that girl students had more aspiration levels compared to boys. It confirms the statement by Morrison Gutman and Akerman (2008) that girls are consistently found to have higher educational and career aspirations than boys, in spite of the reality that men continue to achieve higher occupational status, career enhancement and financial rewards. Whereas the age of the respondents had negative and significant association with overall aspiration. Agricultural graduates at younger age is likely to have more educational aspiration compared to their elders. As age increases the graduates may get settled in their life and future aspiration may get reduced. Mass media exposure, Information seeking behaviour exhibited significant and positive correlation with overall aspiration of the graduates, which shows that students with higher aspiration levels are likely to be more engaged in information gathering activities through different media regarding agricultural and non-agricultural matters. It is confirmed by the positive and significant association between marks obtained by the students and their aspiration level. Interest on agriculture course before joining, or stream in which they did their school education are having no relationship with the overall aspiration of the graduates. The attitude towards agriculture and agriculture education may change with course of time during the degree program.

Parent's education level is having no relationship with the aspiration level of the children whereas, the occupation level of father is having a negative and significant association with overall aspiration of the agricultural graduates. It can be concluded that students coming from farm families is having higher aspiration level comparing with others. This is confirmed with the positive and significant relationship of the landholdings of the families of agricultural scholars with their aspiration level. Positive and significant association of family dwelling area with aspiration of the respondents shows that students coming from rural areas are having better aspirations than those farm urban and semi-urban areas. It points to the fact that agricultural student from the farm families had higher agricultural aspiration.

From the above discussions it is concluded that the majority of the students had medium level of overall aspiration. A report by the M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation says that, "At present, most of the farm graduates are either taking jobs in the government, or financial institutions, or in private sector industry. They are seldom taking to farming as a profession," Therefore efforts should be made to change the medium level of aspiration to high level of aspiration so that the farming community of the India got benefitted. Another conclusion of the study is that students coming from the farm families had higher agricultural aspiration. This result can be seen echoed in the poll by the National Sample Survey Organisation, a government body which shows that 40% of Indian farmers would quit farming, if they had a choice. Thus, the parents from the farming community are encouraging their children to develop higher career aspirations. Thus, it should be mandatory for every agricultural academia in our country to develop superior agricultural aspiration among agricultural scholars so that it ultimately good to farming community.

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