

## **Attitude of the Undergraduate Students of Agriculture towards Agricultural Education and Their Occupational Aspiration**

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### **Abstract**

*The development of a well trained workforce is critically important to the competitive success and the profitability of agriculture. Building capacity through formal agriculture education is needed for the production of skilled manpower to serve the agricultural sector in several areas. A total of 141 under graduate students randomly selected from this college. Data were collected with the help of structured interview schedule. The majority (60.28 per cent) of the respondents held favorable attitude towards agricultural education, 29.79 per cent had an unfavorable attitude and 9.93 per cent of the respondents did not express any clear-cut opinion about their attitude toward agricultural education. There were lower caste students except higher job aspiration, which was quite interesting. Usually the higher caste students, due to their good occupational, social and economic background aspire for higher jobs as compared to their lower counter parts. At present due to the reservation system lower caste students are having good chances to join any higher studies or they can join any high profile jobs. The majority of the respondents were having favorable attitude (60.28 per cent) towards agricultural education and medium to high level of occupational aspiration (71.63 per cent). It could also be concluded from the results that variables like academic achievement, father's education, family educational status, father's occupation, family income, size of land holding and father's social participation had a positive and significant correlation with the attitude towards agricultural education.*

Key words: Attitude, Undergraduate Students, Agricultural Education, Occupational Aspiration

### **Introduction**

The agriculture education system in the country has made significant contribution in the development of critical human resource that played an important role in providing scientific base for growth and development of Indian agriculture. This in turn helpful to achieve a major break through in agricultural production and productivity which lead to ushering in of Green revolution. (Abubakar 2011). However, majority of farmers have limited access to modern inputs, tractors and are confronted with high cost of labour. Thus the farmers remain stagnated and economic situations unimproved as daily income is less than one US Dollar per day (Edache 2006).

Hoover and Scanlon (1991) reported that the image of the agriculture profession and perceived future value of agricultural education were obstacles to student enrollment in the study area. Thompson and Russell (1993) reported that talented young students are being counseled or attracted into engineering, business, and medicine in pursuit of economic security and status. Onuekwusi and Ijeoma (2008) also agreed

that students did not perceive agriculture as a discipline with a professional status. Goecker, Whatley and Gilmore (1999) suggested that "much greater efforts will be required to attract sufficient numbers of outstanding students to prepare for very challenging careers in the world's food, agricultural, and natural resources system." Talbert, Larke, Jones and Moore (1997) noted that the majority of the undergraduate students enrolling in colleges of agriculture represent non-urban areas and suggested that college recruitment efforts should focus on students from urban areas. Jamali (2009) indicated that there was a need to change the mindset of people, who tend to be overly influenced by tradition and social/cultural norms. base for growth and development of I

### **Methodology**

The present study was undertaken at B. A. College of Agriculture, Anand. A total of 141 under graduate students randomly selected from this college. Data were collected with the help of structured interview schedule. For the measurement of various variables, suitable scales developed by various social scientists were used. Mean, standard deviation and

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co-efficient of correlation were used to analyze the data.

**Results and Discussion**

*Attitude towards Agricultural Education*

It was evident from the Table 1 that the majority (60.28 per cent) of the respondents held favorable attitude towards agricultural education, 29.79 per cent had an unfavorable attitude and 9.93 per cent of the respondents did not express any clear-cut opinion about their attitude toward agricultural education.

Table 1: Attitude of the respondents towards agricultural education (n=141)

S.No.	Attitude	Number	%tage
1.	Favorable (more than 50 score)	85	60.28
2.	Unfavorable (below 50 score)	42	29.79
3.	Neutral (50 score)	14	9.93

**Level of Occupational Aspiration**

The data given in Table 2 revealed that majority of the respondents (39.72 per cent) had medium level of occupational aspiration followed by 31.91 per cent of the respondents, who were having high level of occupational aspiration and a 28.37 per cent of respondents were having low level of occupational aspiration.

Table 2: Occupational aspiration of the respondents (n = 141)

S.No.	Occupational aspiration level	Number	%tage
1.	Low level (up to 49.90)	40	28.37
2.	Medium level (50.00 to 66.66)	56	39.72
3.	High level (66.67 and above)	45	31.91

**Correlates of attitude**

*Academic achievement and attitude*

The academic achievement was found to have a positive and significant relation with the attitude toward agricultural education. The main reason behind that may be the fact that only those who are positively inclined towards agricultural education, could put in more efforts and take an interest in their course work, thus leading them to have a good academic performance.

*Father's education and attitude*

Definitely father's good educational level could motivate the children to have a good interest and positive attitude towards higher studies. Most of the children wanted to acquire more educational qualification than their father due to the constant encouragement and guidance from their father. This may be the probable reason behind the positive

relationship between father's education and students' attitude towards education.

**Family educational status and attitude**

An educated person recognizes the true value and importance of agriculture in our economy, the contribution of agriculture graduates towards the agricultural development of our country and thus fully understands the scope it would provide for the agricultural graduates. This awareness among the family members helps the children to develop a positive attitude towards agricultural education.

Table 3: Correlation of characteristics of the respondents with their attitude towards agricultural education and occupational aspiration (n=141)

Sr.No.	Characteristics	Correlation coefficient	
		Attitude	Occupational aspiration
1.	Age	0.07196	0.04137
2.	Birth order	0.02487	-0.15267
3.	Caste	-0.00107	-0.21383*
4.	Academic achievement	0.16927*	0.21968*
5.	Participation in extra curricular activities	0.13074	-0.03525
6.	No. of family members	0.07647	-0.08765
7.	Father's education	0.22509*	0.09083
8.	Family educational status	0.19350*	0.03377
9.	Father's occupation	0.17153*	0.17153*
10.	Family occupational status	0.13203	0.21026*
11.	Family income	0.21336*	0.11485
12.	Family land holding	0.22266*	0.03696
13.	Father's social participation	0.20200*	0.19450*
14.	Class status	0.08411	0.26264*

*Father's occupation and attitude*

The father's occupation was found to have a positive and significant relationship with the attitude of the students towards agricultural education. Due to the fact that professional or semi-professional father and father involved in clerical work, sales or similar occupation were emphasizing more on idealistic, thought provoking and ability developing type of education like professional education and higher education.

*Family income and attitude*

The parents could provide complete facilities and could afford higher education for their children leading to aspire for their children to be well educated. These support and encouragement from the family help the children to develop a favourable attitude towards education. This could probably explain the reason for family income having a positive and significant relation on the attitude toward veterinary education.

*Family land holding and attitude*

When the land holding of the family is big, the family members would be more interested towards farming and farm related aspects and some of them must be involved fully in farming. Thus, the children also would develop a favourable attitude towards farming and agricultural education, because through practical experience they must know the importance of agricultural education in farming and many of them would opt it for higher studies for the better management of their farm.

*Father's social participation and attitude*

As the father's participation in social organizations increased increased their contacts with agricultural officers and extension personnel and helping them to receive correct information about agricultural education. Thus, armed with knowledge they would have influenced their children to follow into agricultural education, with favourable attitude.

*Correlates of occupational aspiration**Academic achievement and occupational aspiration*

In the selection of various central services academics achievements were also giving proper weightage to excellent academic background. Good academic achievements add advantage to the students in all the interviews, which he is being attended. Considering the above facts the high academic achievements may have developed high level of occupational aspiration.

*Father's occupation and occupational aspiration*

It is a general tendency of parents to wish higher prestigious occupation for their children than what they are engaged in may be the probable cause for the higher level of occupational aspiration for their children.

*Family occupational status and occupational aspiration*

The correlation coefficient value given in the Table 3 indicated a significant and positive relationship between family occupational status and the student's occupational aspiration. Higher level of occupation of the family members affects the occupational choice of the student in such a way that the students would prefer an occupation, which is more prestigious than that of the other family members. It is a general tendency that the students prefer an occupation, which is higher level than their parents, brothers and sisters.

*Father's social participation and occupational aspiration*

With increase participation in social organization there would be increase in contact with different kind of persons with powerful positions and respectable occupations and would acquire knowledge of various occupations available for agricultural graduates.

*Class status and occupational aspiration*

It is a common view that class status determines the resources in the society conducive to fulfill the aspirations. The financial aspect is invariably involved in getting the proper education, which is a pivotal factor in job placement. Naturally, the students coming from these families develop higher occupational aspiration. Due to education and media exposure, the individual is expected to reach and achieve different standards of different excellent goals which he strives to attain. It may be the probable reason behind the relationship between class status and occupational aspiration of the student.

*Caste and occupational aspiration*

Table 3 indicated that caste had negative influence on the expression of occupational aspiration. The analysis data showed that lower caste students except higher job aspiration, which was quite interesting. Usually the higher caste students, due to their good occupational, social and economic background aspire for higher jobs as compared to their lower counter parts. At present due to the reservation system lower caste students are having good chances to join any higher studies or they can join any high profile jobs.

Our findings are similar with Ayanda et al (2012) who reported that 43.2% of the students' father and 33.3% of the mothers were civil servant. In addition 7.4% of the students' mothers and fathers were medical personnel respectively. However 12.4% of the father and 43.2% of the mother were in various private business enterprises. It was 3.7% of the parents that were professional agriculturists while the same percentages of parents were in military service and professional educationists. The students were mostly from elites and professional family who understood the value of education and would like the best for their children.

Our findings are also similar with Marcus and Ganpat (2010) who reported that Students' responses for both "prestigious" and "non-prestigious" schools for the importance of agriculture to Trinidad and agriculture as a career option were compared. The results revealed that there was no significant difference with respect to the students' perception of the importance of agriculture. Both categories of students overwhelmingly agreed (with equal percentages; 96% yes and 4% no) that agriculture was important to Trinidad. However, there is a significant difference ( $p < 0.0001$ , based on Fisher's exact test) between their opinions about choosing agriculture as a career option. "Non-prestigious" school students were more likely to choose agriculture as a career

option (76% Yes) in contrast to “prestigious” secondary school students (4% Yes).

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