



Characteristics Influencing the Aspirations of Agricultural Graduates in Gujarat

Laveti Mohini Devi, Minaxi Bariya and N B Jadav

Department of Agricultural Extension
College of Agriculture, J.A.U., Junagadh, 362001 (Gujarat)

ABSTRACT

Aspiration is a strong desire to achieve something which helps us to reach our goal. A study was conducted in all the four State Agricultural Universities of Gujarat to know the aspirations of agricultural graduates and to find out the characteristics that influence their aspirations. One college from each university and thirty agricultural graduates from each college were selected randomly. Thus, the total sample size was 120 agricultural graduates. The study was conducted using a questionnaire through google form. The study revealed that the most preferred aspiration of agricultural graduates was to pursue higher studies followed by securing a job. Academic performance, mass media exposure, achievement motivation, economic motivation and risk orientation had a positive and highly significant relationship; Parental occupation, annual income and self-confidence had a positive and significant relationship; Age, place of residence, size of land holding and agricultural business anxiety had a positive and non-significant relationship, whereas family type and family size had a negative and non-significant relationship with aspirations of agricultural graduates. This study will be helpful for the agricultural universities to know the extent of aspirations and to develop new plans and policies accordingly.

Key Words: Agriculture, Aspirations, Career, Education, Graduates.

INTRODUCTION

Agriculture is the engine of growth for most developing countries and agricultural development is one of the most effective ways to alleviate hunger and poverty (Amungwa and Baye, 2014). To endure, diversify and comprehend the potential of the agricultural sector, it is necessary to develop skilled human resources. This agricultural human resource development is a continuous process carried out by agricultural universities by training and educating the students so that they could occupy the agricultural sector, carry out various activities in a scientific manner and thereby boost the production and productivity. Education in agriculture also provides many career opportunities locally, nationally and globally. So, the agricultural students should opt for suitable career options after completion of their

degree, depending on their motivations, career perceptions and the existing national and global situations. At present, agricultural education has become very intricate and highly specialized due to the technology revolution and the current situation of specialization coming in, the opportunity for employment of agricultural graduates has greatly condensed. The relative proportion of agricultural graduates finding employment in the public sector in India is also shrinking gradually (Parimaladevi *et al*, 2006). Therefore, there is need to find out the aspirations of agricultural students and sensitize them according to their capability in the increasing job market scenario. The present study was carried out to find the aspirations of agricultural graduates and the relationship between the profile of agricultural graduates with their aspirations

Corresponding Author's Email: mohini.devi555@gmail.com

1M. Sc. (Agri.), Dept. of Agricultural Extension, College of Agriculture, J.A.U., Junagadh, Gujarat

2Associate Professor, Dept. of Agricultural Extension, College of Agriculture, J.A.U., Mota Bhandariya (Amreli), Gujarat

3Senior scientist and Head, Krishi Vigyan Kendra, JAU, Pipalia (Rajkot-II)

Table 1. Distribution of aspirations of agricultural graduates. (n = 120)

Sr. No.	Aspiration	Mean score	Rank
1.	To pursue higher studies (M. Sc./Ph. D.)	2.84	I
2.	To secure a central government job	2.80	II
3.	To secure a state administrative job	2.77	III
4.	To become an agricultural scientist	2.68	IV
5.	To become a professor in a State Agricultural University	2.61	V
6.	To secure a job in an agricultural company	2.59	VI
7.	To secure a job in the banking sector	2.50	VII
8.	To secure a job in Non-Governmental Organization	2.48	VIII
9.	To establish an agri-business/agri-clinic	2.43	IX
10.	To become a farmer	2.40	X
11.	To establish an agricultural consultancy	2.28	XI
12.	To establish a Non-Governmental Organization	2.15	XII

which would help the universities to prepare the curriculum that suits the needs and interests of the students and also helps in fulfilling the demands of the agricultural industry.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The *ex-post facto* research design was followed for carrying out the study. For drawing the sample for the study multistage random sampling technique was used. The study was conducted in all the four State Agricultural Universities of Gujarat state *viz.*, Anand Agricultural University (AAU), Navsari Agricultural University (NAU), Junagadh Agricultural University (JAU) and Sardarkrushinagar Dantiwada Agricultural University (SDAU). One agricultural college under each State Agricultural University was selected randomly for the study. Thus, the four agricultural colleges that were selected randomly were College of Agriculture, Vaso, AAU; College of Agriculture, Waghai, NAU; College of Agriculture, Junagadh, JAU and C. P. College of Agriculture, Dantiwada, SDAU. A total of 120 fresh graduates, *i.e.*, only those who have graduated in the past two years from their respective colleges, were selected randomly for the study. Thirty respondents were selected randomly from each agricultural college. Thus, a total of 120 respondents were selected for the study.

The data of this study were collected with the help of a questionnaire in the form of a google form sent to the respondents through an e-mail. The collected data were classified, tabulated and analysed to make the findings meaningful. The statistical measures such as frequency, percentage, mean score, standard deviation and coefficient of correlation were used in the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Aspirations of agricultural graduates

Aspiration can be defined as a level of possible goals set by an individual. It is a strong desire for excellence and a desire to accomplish what one sets out to do. The data regarding the aspirations of the agricultural graduates are presented in Table 1.

It was evident (Table 1) that most of the agricultural graduates aspired to pursue higher studies followed by most of them aspired to get some job. The probable reason for this might be, the agricultural graduates were probably interested in standard, safe and secure white-collar jobs. The findings also revealed that the number of agricultural graduates who aspired to become a farmer, establish an agribusiness, agricultural consultancy and a Non-Governmental Organization were quite low. The probable reason for this might be due to the

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heavy investment and high level of risk involved in these careers. The finding of the present study was similar to the findings of Hase and Deshmukh (2012) and Ansari and Ansari (2019) where most of the students aspired to pursue higher studies followed by securing a job. According to Das and Chowdhury (2014), most of the graduates preferred to secure a job.

Characteristics influencing the aspirations of agricultural graduates

To know the characteristics that influence the aspirations of agricultural graduates, certain profile characteristics of the agricultural graduates were selected for the study. Therefore, to ascertain the relationship between the characteristics of the agricultural graduates and their aspirations, the correlation coefficient ('r') was calculated and the data were presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Correlation between profile of the agricultural graduates and their aspirations (n=120)

Sr. No.	Name of the independent variable	'r' value
1.	Age	0.0784 ^{NS}
2.	Academic performance	0.2422**
3.	Place of residence	0.0477 ^{NS}
4.	Family type	- 0.0442 ^{NS}
5.	Family size	- 0.0273 ^{NS}
6.	Parental occupation	0.1974*
7.	Size of land holding	0.1362 ^{NS}
8.	Annual income	0.2001*
9.	Mass media exposure	0.2466**
10.	Achievement motivation	0.2554**
11.	Agricultural business anxiety	0.0460 ^{NS}
12.	Economic motivation	0.2441**
13.	Risk orientation	0.2363**
14.	Self-confidence	0.1815*

* = Significant at 0.05 level; ** = Significant at 0.01 level; NS = Non-significant

The characteristics of the agricultural graduates *viz.*, academic performance, mass media exposure, achievement motivation, economic motivation and risk orientation had a positive and highly significant relationship with the aspirations of agricultural graduates *i.e.*, strong influence on the aspirations of agricultural graduates. The present finding related to economic motivation was in line with Preethi (2015).

The characteristics of the agricultural graduates *viz.*, parental occupation, annual income and self-confidence had a positive and significant relationship with the aspirations of agricultural graduates *i.e.*, significant effect on the aspirations of agricultural graduates.

The characteristics of the agricultural graduates *viz.*, age, place of residence, size of land holding and agricultural business anxiety had a positive and non-significant relationship, whereas family type and family size had a negative and non-significant relationship with the aspirations of agricultural graduates *i.e.*, no significant effect on the aspirations of agricultural graduates. The present finding related to place of residence was in line with Kavitha (2018).

The present findings related to age, academic performance, parental occupation, agricultural business anxiety, risk orientation and self-confidence were similar to the findings reported by Reddy *et al* (2020), whereas the findings related to family type, family size, annual income and achievement motivation were similar to the findings reported by Ansari and Ansari (2019) and the findings related to size of land holding and mass media exposure were similar to the findings reported by Rohit (2018).

CONCLUSION

Efforts should be made to enhance the favourable perception towards agricultural education by creating awareness among the students about the role of agriculture in our daily life and the challenges that are going to be faced

regarding food security in the future to attract more students. The agricultural universities should keep the facts like heavy investment and high level of risk involved in agriculture in mind while preparing the academic curriculum so that the students can obtain the potential to opt for any kind of career. The factors that had a significant relationship with the aspirations of agricultural graduates should be considered while making plans and policies to satisfy the needs of students by the agricultural universities.

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Received on 3/2/2022

Accepted on 15/3/2022