

ATTITUDE OF AGRICULTURAL STUDENTS TOWARDS STUDENT-READY PROGRAMME IN GENERATING EMPLOYABILITY

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ABSTRACT

For the addressing the key issue of employability in agriculture, Government of India and ICAR has initiated many programmes. Student-READY is one such programme for undergraduate students to attract and retain them in agriculture. It aims to provide rural entrepreneurship awareness and practical experience in real life situation in rural agriculture. The present study was conducted to measure attitude of agriculture students towards student-READY programme in generating employability. Attitude scale was developed by using scale product method. The developed scale was implemented in B. A. College of agriculture on a random sample of 120 agriculture students passed out in last three years. The attitude of agriculture students towards student-READY programme in generating employability was observed positive and showed highly significant relationship with rural area working zeal of students and attitude of youth towards agriculture as occupation. Whereas, significant relationship was observed with family background. The attitude of agriculture students was observed non-significant relationship with their age, gender, medium of school education, academic performance, family type, father's education, father's occupation, participation in extracurricular activities, internet exposure, family annual income.

Keywords: attitude, agricultural student, employability, programme

INTRODUCTION

Considering the importance of knowledge of socio-economic situations, an internship programme has been added for agriculture graduates. To work and study in rural areas RAWE programme is offered by SAU's usually in final year (VII or VIII Semester) of undergraduate degree programme. In 12th plan, RAWE programme was reconstructed as student-READY programme and was adopted by Fifth Dean Committee. The programme aims entrepreneurship and awareness development among the youths. READY in student-READY stands for Rural Entrepreneurship Awareness Development Yojana. Based on recommendations of Fifth Dean's Committee, ICAR initiated Student-READY programme and it was launched by our Honourable Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 25th of July 2015.

The B. A. College of Agriculture has implemented student-READY programme for final year students of B.Sc. (Agriculture). During seventh semester RAWE and Agro-Industrial Attachment (AIA) is conducted and experiential learning programme is offered in eighth semester. The students undertake the RAWE and AIA for duration of 20 weeks with weightage of 0+20 credits hours. College offers experiential learning programme for eighth semester of B.Sc. (Agriculture).

This approach is essentially demand driven, and efforts has been made by SAUs to provide necessary requirements. It is equally important to know the attitude of students towards student-READY programme in generating employability and get suggestions from them. In order to know the attitude of agriculture students towards this programme, the present study was conducted with specific objectives

OBJECTIVES

- (1) To study the profile of the agriculture students
- (2) To measure the attitude of agriculture students towards student-READY programme in generating employability
- (3) To ascertain the relationship between the profile of the agriculture students and their attitude towards student-READY programme in generating employability

METHODOLOGY

The study area was undertaken at B. A College of Agriculture, Anand Agricultural University, Gujarat. Agriculture graduates who passed out in the last three years from B. A. College of Agriculture were selected. A total of 120 random sample of agriculture student were taken

for study. Since the study is associated with the attitude of agriculture students towards student-READY programme in employability generation, the Ex-post facto research design was applied. Data was collected through interview schedule with the help of specially designed schedule. With every

possible care, efforts were made to establish a good rapport with students to get reliable and valid information for the study and were analyzed by using simple statistical tools like frequencies, means, standard deviations and percentages.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Profile of the agriculture students

Table 1: Characteristics of the students

(n=120)

Sr. No.	Characteristics	Categories	Percentage
1	Age	Low age (22 years and below)	45.00
		Medium age (23 to 24 years)	51.66
		High age (25 and above)	03.34
2	Gender	Male	47.50
		Female	52.50
3	Medium of school education	Gujarati	55.80
		English	37.50
		Hindi	05.00
		Others	01.70
4	Academic performance	Pass (5.50 to 5.99 OGPA)	0.00
		Second class (6.00 to 6.49 OGPA)	09.13
		First class (6.50 to 7.49 OGPA)	64.20
		First class with distinction (above 7.50 OGPA)	26.67
5	Family background	Rural	39.17
		Semi-Urban	42.50
		Urban	18.33
6	Family type	Joint family	20.00
		Nuclear family	80.00
7	Father's education	No any formal education	02.50
		Primary education (1 st to 7 th standard)	10.00
		Secondary education (8 th to 10 th standard)	15.00
		Higher secondary education (11 th and 12 th standard)	20.84
		Graduate	38.33
		Above	13.33
8	Mother's education	No any formal education	13.33
		Primary education (1 st to 7 th standard)	19.17
		Secondary education (8 th to 10 th standard)	32.50
		Higher secondary education (11 th and 12 th standard)	23.33
		Graduate	8.33
		Above	3.33
9	Father's occupation	Agriculture	12.50
		Agriculture + Laborer	01.61
		Agriculture + Animal husbandry	11.70
		Agriculture + Animal Husbandry + Business	05.00
		Agriculture + Animal Husbandry + services	03.33
		Only business	11.70
		Only services	35.00
		Others	19.16

Sr. No.	Characteristics	Categories	Percentage
10	Family income	Low (Up to ₹4,50,000)	30.00
		Medium (₹4,50,001 to ₹9,00,000)	61.67
		High (₹9,00,001 to ₹13,50,000)	05.00
		Very high (Above ₹13,50,001)	03.33
11	Rural area working zeal	Very unenthusiastic (Up to 16 score)	0.00
		Unenthusiastic (17 to 23 score)	03.33
		Average (24 to 30 score)	31.67
		Encouraging (31 to 37 score)	56.67
		Highly encouraging (Above 38 score)	08.33
12	Attitude of youths towards agriculture as occupation	Highly unfavorable (Up to 25 score)	0.00
		Unfavorable (26 to 36 score)	0.00
		Neutral (37 to 47 score)	06.67
		Favorable (48 to 58 score)	55.83
		Highly favorable (Above 59 score)	37.50
13	Participation in extra curriculum activities	Poor (up to 20 per cent)	06.67
		Below average (21 to 40 per cent)	33.33
		Average (41 to 60 per cent)	32.50
		Above average (61 to 80 per cent)	23.33
		High (above 81 per cent)	04.17
14	Internet exposure	Everyday	70.00
		Alternate days	30.00

The data presented in the Table 1 shows that distributional analysis pertaining to fourteen independent variables of agriculture students. Slightly more than half (51.66 per cent) of students were of 23-24 age group followed by 45.00 per cent were of 21-22 age. The rest 3.34 per cent of the students belonged to 25 & above group. More than half (52.50 per cent) of the agricultural students were female and the remaining 47.50 per cent were males.

More than half of agriculture students had Gujarati as medium of instruction (55.80 per cent) and 37.50 per cent of respondents had English (language of state) as medium of instruction, 5.00 per cent had Hindi and rest 1.70 per cent had other languages as medium of instruction in schools. Two-third (64.20 per cent) of the students studying in agriculture were with first class category of academic performance, followed by 30.80 per cent and 05.00 percent of them were with first class with distinction and second-class category, respectively.

Slightly less than half (42.50 per cent) of the students had enjoyed their childhood in semi-urban area, followed by 39.17 and 18.33 per cent of them had enjoyed their childhood in rural and semi-urban area respectively. Majority (80.00 per cent) of students were from the nuclear type of family system, while the remaining (20.00 per cent) of them were from joint family system.

Slightly more than one-third (38.33 per cent) of the agriculture students' father were graduates. Followed

by 20.84 per cent, 15.00 per cent, 10.00 per cent of them were with higher secondary, secondary and with no formal education, respectively. Only 13.33 per cent of students have father's with more than graduation qualification. Slightly less than one-third (32.50 per cent) of the agriculture students had secondary level of educated mothers, followed by 23.33, 19.17 and 13.33 per cent of students' mother were with higher secondary, primary, and with no formal education, respectively. whereas, 08.33 per cent of them were with graduation degree. Rest 03.33 per cent were having graduation and above level of qualification.

About one-third (35.00 per cent) of students' father were doing only services, 19.16 per cent belongs to 'other' category. The result also indicates that for 12.50 per cent major source of income was from only agriculture. 11.76 per cent were doing only business and same per cent were engaged in agriculture + animal husbandry, 5.00 per cent each of them was dependent either on agriculture + animal husbandry + business work, 3.33 per cent were involved in agriculture + animal husbandry + services and only 1.61 per cent were doing agriculture + laborer work.

Around two-third (61.67 per cent) of students' family income lies in low income (Up to ₹4,50,000) category. Followed by 30.00 per cent falls in medium income (₹4,50,001 to ₹9,00,000) category. 5.00 per cent have high family income (₹9,00,001 to ₹13,50,000) and only 3.33 per cent are having very high family income (Above ₹13,50,001).

Slightly more than half of the agriculture students (56.67 per cent) had encouraging level of rural area working zeal, followed by 31.67 per cent of them were with average level of rural area working zeal and 8.33 per cent of them were with highly encouraging level of rural area working zeal. Only 03.33 per cent of the students were with unenthusiastic degree of rural area working zeal.

Slightly more than half (55.83 per cent) of the students were favorable to take up agriculture as occupation followed by 37.50 per cent belongs to highly favorable category to take up agriculture as occupation. Rest 06.67 per cent of respondents were in the middle of road state or neutral state and no respondents showed unfavorable attitude towards taking agriculture as occupation.

About one-third (33.33 per cent) of students had below average level (21.00 to 40.00 per cent score) of participation, 32.50 per cent belongs to average level (41.00 to 60.00 per cent score) of participation, 23.33 per cent had above average level (61.00 to 80.00 per cent score) of participation in extra-curricular activities, 06.66 per cent belong to poor level (up to 20.00 per cent score) of participation and only 04.16 per cent of them had high level (above 80.00 per cent score) of participation.

Majority of agriculture students (70.00 per cent) had every day exposure to internet, out of which 33.33 per cent, 21.66 per cent, 10.83 per cent, and 04.10 per cent of them used it up to four hours, above four to six hours, above six to eight hours, and above eight hours, respectively. Rest 30.00 per cent of the agriculture students had alternate day exposure to internet. out of which, 14.16 per cent, 14.16 per cent, 01.66 per cent and none of them used internet up to four hours, above four to six hours, above six to eight hours and above eight hours, respectively.

Attitude of agriculture students towards student-READY programme in generating employability

The data pertaining to attitude of the agriculture students towards student-READY programme in generating employability are given in Table 1

The Table 01, reveals that slightly less than three-fourth (70.83 per cent) of students had positive attitude towards student-READY programme in employability generation, followed by 19.17 per cent students showed highly positive attitude towards role of student-READY programme in generating employability. This is probably due to series of phases associated with student-READY which exposes students to tremendous opportunities in rural areas, village stay attracts students towards peaceful village environment, resources availability, increasing demand of rural marketing,

Table 1: Distribution of students according to their attitude towards student-READY programme in employability generation (n=120)

Sr. No.	Categories	Frequency	Per cent
1	Highly negative (Up to 20 score)	00	0.00
2	Negative (21 to 29 score)	00	0.00
3	Neutral (30 to 38 score)	12	10.00
4	Positive (39 to 47 score)	85	70.83
5	Highly positive (Above 48 score)	23	19.17

experiential learning phase etc. Majority (90.00 per cent) of agriculture students had positive attitude or highly positive attitude towards student-READY programme in generating employability. This result is in consistent with the findings of Jakhar *et al.* (2017), Jagadeeswari *et al.*, (2019), Jayalaxmi *et al.* (2020) and Patel *et al.*, (2020)

Relationship between profile of agriculture students and their attitude towards student-READY programme in employability generation

Table 2 : Relationship between profile of students and their attitude towards student-READY programme in generating employability (n=120)

Sr. No.	Independent variables	Correlation coefficient (r value)
A	Personal variables	
X ₁	Age	-0.111
X ₂	Gender	-0.004
X ₃	Medium of instruction	0.002
X ₄	Academic performance	-0.047
X ₅	Family background	0.214*
X ₆	Family type	0.062
X ₇	Parent education	0.006
X ₈	Father's occupation	-0.101
X ₉	Family income	-0.158
B	Psychological variable	
X ₁₀	Rural area working zeal	0.367**
X ₁₁	Youth towards agriculture as occupation	0.595**
C	Social and Communicational variables	
X ₁₂	Participation in extra-curricular activities	-0.005
X ₁₃	Internet exposure	0.060

* Significant at 0.05 level of probability

** Significant at 0.01 level of probability

The Table 02, reveals that, attitude of agriculture students towards student-READY programme was observed positive and highly significant correlation with rural area working zeal of students and youth towards agriculture as occupation. Whereas, it was observed positive and significant relation with family background. The attitude of agriculture students towards student-READY programme was observed non-significant relationship with their age, gender, medium of school education, academic performance, family type, parent education, father's occupation, participation in extracurricular activities, internet exposure, family annual income.

CONCLUSION

The findings of the study have shown that majority of agriculture students have positive attitude or highly positive attitude towards student-READY programme in generating employability. Out of thirteen independent variables, two variables viz., rural area working zeal and youth towards agriculture as occupation showed positive and highly significant influence on attitude of students towards student-READY programme in generating employability. Family background of agriculture students showed positive and significant influence on their attitude towards student-READY programme in generating employability. Whereas, age, gender, medium of school education, academic performance, family type, father's education, father's occupation, parent's annual income, participation in extra-curricular activities and internet explorer failed to show any significant relationship with attitude of student towards student-READY programme in generating employability.

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