

## PERCEPTION OF AGRICULTURE GRADUATES TOWARDS STUDENT READY PROGRAMME

**P. Vaishnavi<sup>1</sup>, D. A. Nithya Shree<sup>2</sup> and Sunil V.halakatti<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Asst. Professor, Dept. of Agril. Extension, School of Agricultural Sciences, Dhanalakshmi Srinivasan University, Samayapuram, Trichy - 621112

<sup>2</sup> Professor, Dept. of Agril. Extension Education, College of Agriculture, University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad- 580005

<sup>3</sup> Professor, Dept. of Agril. Extension Education, College of Agriculture, University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad - 580005

Email: p.vaishnavi1997@gmail.com

### ABSTRACT

*The Student Rural Entrepreneurship Awareness Development Yojana (READY) Programme, initiated by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) in 2015, aims to equip final-year agricultural undergraduates with essential entrepreneurial skills. This study investigates the perceptions of agriculture graduates toward the SRP, focusing on its effectiveness, relevance, and impact on their future careers in agriculture. The research, conducted in seven agricultural universities in South India, involved a sample of 350 graduates who had completed the program in 2022. The study employed an Ex-post-facto research design, and data were collected using a Likert-type summated rating scale. Statistical analyses such as mean, index values, ranking, and ANOVA were used. The findings revealed a generally positive perception of the programme, with the overall perception index of 80.88. Among the programme components, village attachment recorded the highest overall perception index (84.57). Within the Experiential Learning Programme (ELP), the item “develops physical and mental skills” received the highest score (89.20). In unit/institutional attachment, “helps to understand the organizational pattern and functions of KVK/Research Station/NGO” was rated highest (82.86). In the village attachment component, “builds rapport with farmers” ranked highest (86.29). Similarly, within the Plant/Agri Clinic component, “helps to diagnose pests and diseases in crops” obtained the highest perception index (79.71). In the Agro-Industrial Attachment (AIA) component, “students get exposure to the agro-industrial environment” recorded the highest score (83.20). For the Student Project Report component, “improves skills in presentation and use of sketches, schematic diagrams and graphs” received the highest index (83.77). A statistically significant variation across universities ( $F = 4.008, p < 0.01$ ) further highlights that differences in institutional resources and support influence graduates perception. The study provides valuable insights for refining and enhancing the SRP to better prepare graduates for entrepreneurship in agriculture.*

**Keywords:** agriculture graduates, entrepreneurial skills, perception, student READY programme

### INTRODUCTION

The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) introduced the Student Rural Entrepreneurship Awareness Development Yojana (READY) Programme, officially launched by the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, on July 25, 2015. This initiative has been implemented across Agricultural Universities (AUs) in the country (Vaishnavi and Nithya Shree, 2024). Since the academic year 2016-2017, the programme has been incorporated into the final year of various undergraduate degree courses in agriculture and allied sciences (Arundhathi *et al.*, 2024). The primary aim of the program is to equip final-year undergraduates with the essential skills and competencies needed to succeed as entrepreneurs in the agricultural sector

(Vaishnavi *et al.*, 2023).

Earlier studies such as Sajeev and Gowda (2013), Lal *et al.* (2021), and Arundhathi *et al.* (2024) have documented student's experiences, benefits, and constraints associated with different components of the READY Programme. These studies indicate that experiential learning opportunities strengthen problem-solving abilities, communication skills, and practical exposure. However, limited research has specifically assessed the overall perception of agriculture graduates toward all components of the SRP across multiple universities, especially in South India. Additionally, existing studies do not adequately compare institutional variations or analyse perception differences using statistical tests such as ANOVA.

Therefore, the present study fills this research gap by assessing the perception of agriculture graduates towards the SRP and comparing variations across seven agricultural universities.

**OBJECTIVE**

To assess the perception of agriculture graduates towards Student READY Programme

**METHODOLOGY**

An *Ex-Post-facto* research design was used in the study to measure the perception of graduates towards Student READY Programme (SRP). The study was conducted in seven agricultural universities of South India, viz., University of Agricultural Sciences, Bengaluru (UASB); University of Agricultural Sciences Dharwad, (UASD); University of Agricultural Sciences, Raichur (UASR); Acharya N.G. Ranga Agricultural University (ANGRAU), Professor Jayashankar Telangana State Agricultural University (PJTSAU), Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU) and Kerala Agricultural University (KAU). From each university, one agriculture college was selected for the study. From each agriculture college 50 graduates who had passed out in the year of 2022 were selected randomly for the research. Thus the total sample size for the study was 350 agriculture

graduates.

- **Research philosophy:** Positivism, as the study involves objective measurement of perceptions.
- **Research approach:** Deductive, since the study tests predefined statements on student perception.
- **Methodological choice:** Quantitative, using structured scales and numerical analysis.
- **Research strategy:** Survey method, using personal interviews and Google Forms.
- **Time horizon:** Cross-sectional, as data were collected at a single point in time.
- **Data collection:** A scale developed using the method proposed by Likert (1932) was followed to measure perception (as used by Vaishnavi *et al.* 2024). Data were collected using an interview schedule through personal interviews and Google Forms.
- **Data analysis:** The collected data were analysed using mean score, perception index, ranking, and ANOVA. Statistical analysis was carried out using Microsoft Excel and Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 25.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Table 1: Perception of agriculture graduates towards Student READY Programme**

(n = 350)

Sr. No.	Statements	Overall Index
<b>I</b>	<b>Experiential learning programme</b>	
1	Develops both physical and mental skills in various fields of agricultural sciences	89.20
2	Enhances the team performance of students	88.17
3	Develops confidence to discover solutions for challenging situations	84.06
4	Encourages self-evaluation of students	83.37
5	Improves enterprise management ability and skills	82.87
6	Availability of equipment and input facilities from the institutions	50.00
7	Develops professionalism after degree	78.91
8	The profits gained in ELP is distributed to students	57.89
<b>II</b>	<b>Unit / Institutional attachment</b>	
9	Students get acquainted with the activities of KVK/ARS/RSK etc...	80.51
10	Helps to understand the organization pattern and functions of KVK/Research station/NGO	82.86
11	Helps to interact easily with extension personnel/scientist	82.00
12	Inspires to find out the job opportunities in various departments	75.54
<b>III</b>	<b>Village attachment</b>	
13	Students realizes the adoption patterns and adoption gaps among farming community	82.97
14	Develops leadership qualities	83.37
15	Improves communication skills	85.89
16	Builds rapport with the farmers	86.29
17	Helps to understand the constraints in application of modern farm technology in the farmers field	85.26

Sr. No.	Statements	Overall Index
18	Helps to obtain first-hand knowledge from farmers	84.91
19	Builds confidence to address the field problems	83.31
<b>IV</b>	<b>Plant / Agri clinic</b>	
20	Helps to diagnose pests and diseases in crops	79.71
21	Helps to identify the nutrient deficiency and other physiological disorders in crops at farmers field	78.63
22	Helps to know about soil and water testing	77.03
<b>V</b>	<b>Agro industrial attachment (AIA)</b>	
23	Students get exposure to agro-industrial environment	83.20
24	Helps to know the potential marketing of agricultural products	82.29
25	Motivate the youths to become entrepreneurs	79.77
26	Students realize the problems in identification of suitable enterprises	80.74
<b>VI</b>	<b>Student project report</b>	
27	Improves skills in presentation and use of sketches, schematic diagrams and graphs	83.77
28	Creates exposure to learn various aspects that cannot be taught in a class room or laboratory	83.60

The result in Table 1 indicates the perception of agriculture graduates towards SRP. Under the ELP component, the highest overall perception index (89.20) for the item 'develops both physical and mental skills in various fields of agricultural sciences'. The reason behind the high perception indicates the ELP bridges the gap between theoretical knowledge gained in classrooms and real-world experiences. This integration allows graduates to see how their academic learning is directly applicable to practical situations. Engaging in real-world agricultural sectors challenges graduates to think critically, analyze problems, and come up with innovative solutions. Such experiences improve their problem-solving abilities, which are essential skills in any profession.

Conversely, the lowest overall perception index (50.00) for the item 'availability of equipment and input facilities from the institutions'. It is found that the availability of modern and adequate equipment in agriculture requires financial investments. Universities lack sufficient funding, it can result in a limited range of equipment and facilities which can hamper graduates' learning opportunities and negatively affect their perception of the programme.

In case of unit/institutional attachment component, 'helps to understand the organization pattern and functions of Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK)/Research station/NGO' had a highest overall perception index of 82.86. It is clear that attachments to institutions/ organizations often involve interactions with experienced professionals and experts in the agricultural field. This mentorship and guidance can provide valuable insights, knowledge, and skill development. During the attachment period, agriculture graduates likely encounter various challenges faced by these institutions/organizations

in the field of agriculture.

Regarding village attachment, the perception index of graduates was more than 80.00 in case of all the items and it ranged between 86.29 for 'builds rapport with the farmers' to 82.97 for 'students realizes the adoption patterns and adoption gaps among farming community'. This could be attributed to the fact that graduates get the opportunity to work closely with farmers, understand their needs, and experience the realities of agricultural practices in the field. This hands-on exposure enhances their understanding of farming practices, challenges, and the context in which agricultural decisions are made. Graduates build trust and relationships within the farming community. This rapport-building enhances the effectiveness of the village attachment programme.

Under plant/agri clinic component, the overall perception index (79.71) for 'helps to diagnose pests and diseases in crops'. The reason for the above results might be working in a plant/agri clinic allows graduates to engage in real-world problem-solving scenarios, enhancing their problem-solving abilities and critical thinking skills. Successfully diagnosing and addressing pests and diseases can lead to a sense of accomplishment and personal satisfaction among graduates, positively impacting their perception of the component. Positive feedback from farmers and successful outcomes in crop health management can further contribute to the overall positive perception of the component. The results align with the findings of Sajeev and Gowda (2013); Lal *et al.* (2021); Vegad *et al.* (2024); Jagadeeswari *et al.* (2019); Anusha *et al.* (2024).

In Agro-Industrial Attachment (AIA) component, the overall perception index of graduates was more than

80.00 in case of three items viz., ‘students get exposure to agro-industrial environment’ had overall perception index of 83.20 followed by 82.29 for ‘helps to know the potential marketing of agricultural products’ and 80.74 for ‘students realize the problems in identification of suitable enterprises’. It was found that, AIA provide graduates with practical learning experiences in a real-world industrial setting. This hands-on exposure enhances their understanding of agro-industrial processes, technologies, and operations. It often employs cutting-edge technologies and innovative practices. The exposure to such advancements enhances awareness and graduates’ knowledge of the latest trends in the agricultural industry. AIA programme with strong institutional support, efficient coordination, and effective supervision are positively influence graduates’ perceptions of the AIA component. A similar kind of finding was reported by Sajeew and Gowda (2013); Kumar et al. (2024); Saba and Saini (2024); Darji et al. (2024).

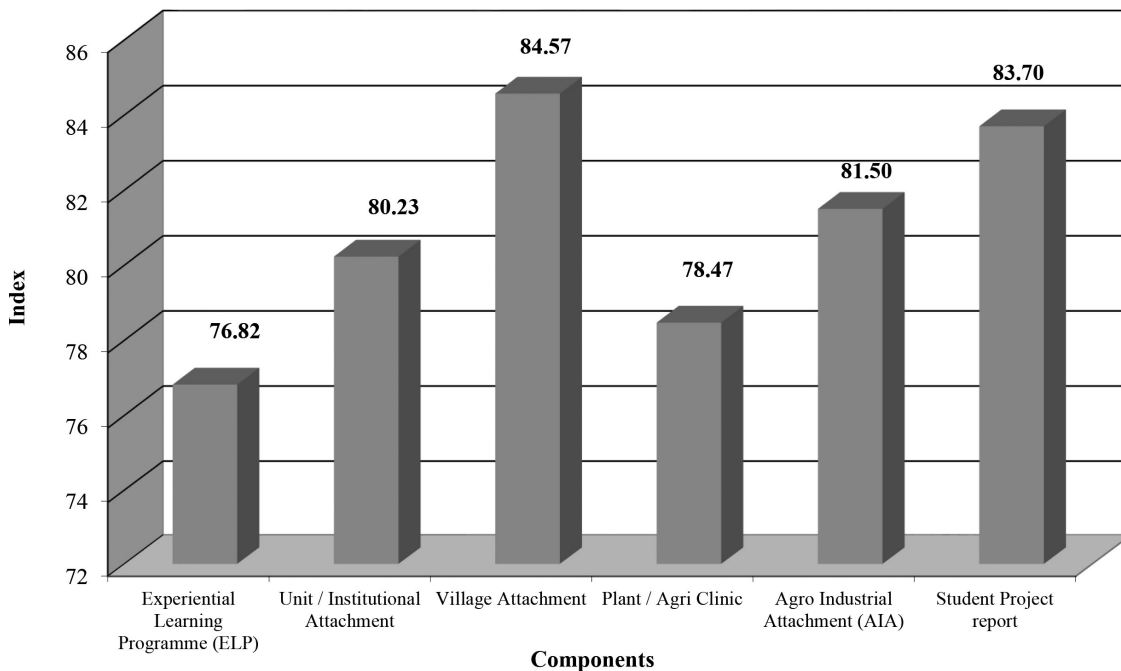
Under the student project report component, the overall perception index was 83.77 for ‘improves skills in presentation and use of sketches, schematic diagrams and graphs’ followed by overall perception index for ‘creates exposure to learn various aspects that cannot be taught in a class room or laboratory’ was found to be 83.60. This clearly states that the component fosters creativity among graduates in designing and presenting, leading to a positive perception of the learning experience.

**Table 2: Component wise overall perception of agriculture graduates towards Student READY Programme (SRP)**

(n = 350)

Sr. No.	Components	Overall Index	Rank
1	Experiential learning programme (ELP)	76.82	VI
2	Unit / Institutional attachment	80.23	IV
3	Village attachment	84.57	I
4	Plant / Agri clinic	78.47	V
5	Agro industrial attachment	81.50	III
6	Student project report	83.70	II

The component wise overall perception of agriculture graduates towards the Student READY Programme (SRP) is presented in Table 2. Among the six components, village attachment ranked first with overall perception index of 84.57. One of the reasons behind this high perception could be that the village attachment components directly relate to the practical skills and knowledge required in the agriculture sector. By providing hands-on experience and exposure to real-life situations in rural communities, the programme effectively prepares the graduates for their future roles in the agriculture sector. This practical approach helps the graduates develop the necessary skills and competencies to address the challenges and demands of working in rural areas (Fig. 1).



**Fig. 1 : Component wise overall perception of agricultures towards Student READY Programme**

**Table 3: University wise overall perception of agriculture graduates towards Student READY Programme**

(n = 350)

Sr. No.	Universities	Overall Index	Rank
1	UASB	82.31	III
2	UASD	77.22	VII
3	UASR	84.57	I
4	ANGRAU	80.31	IV
5	PJTSAU	80.30	V
6	TNAU	77.90	VI
7	KAU	83.55	II
	<b>Overall perception of agriculture graduates</b>	80.88	-

The overall perception index for agriculture graduates towards SRP was found to be 80.88 (Table 3). The reason behind the high perception indicates that SRP is generally well received by the graduates, and the programme seems to be effective in fulfilling its objectives. SRP components directly relate to the practical skills and knowledge required in the agriculture sectors, graduates are more likely to hold a positive perception.

Among the universities, UASR ranked first with perception index of 84.57. One of the key factors contributing to UASR's success as narrated by the coordinator in personal interview may be they choose the best three groups and provide prizes for graduates who actively participate during the entire program. This kind of recognition and incentive can motivate graduates to engage more actively in academic activities, leading to a higher overall perception of the university. Furthermore, the university's strong organization and implementation of the SRP play a crucial role and leaves a positive impression on the graduates (Fig. 2.).

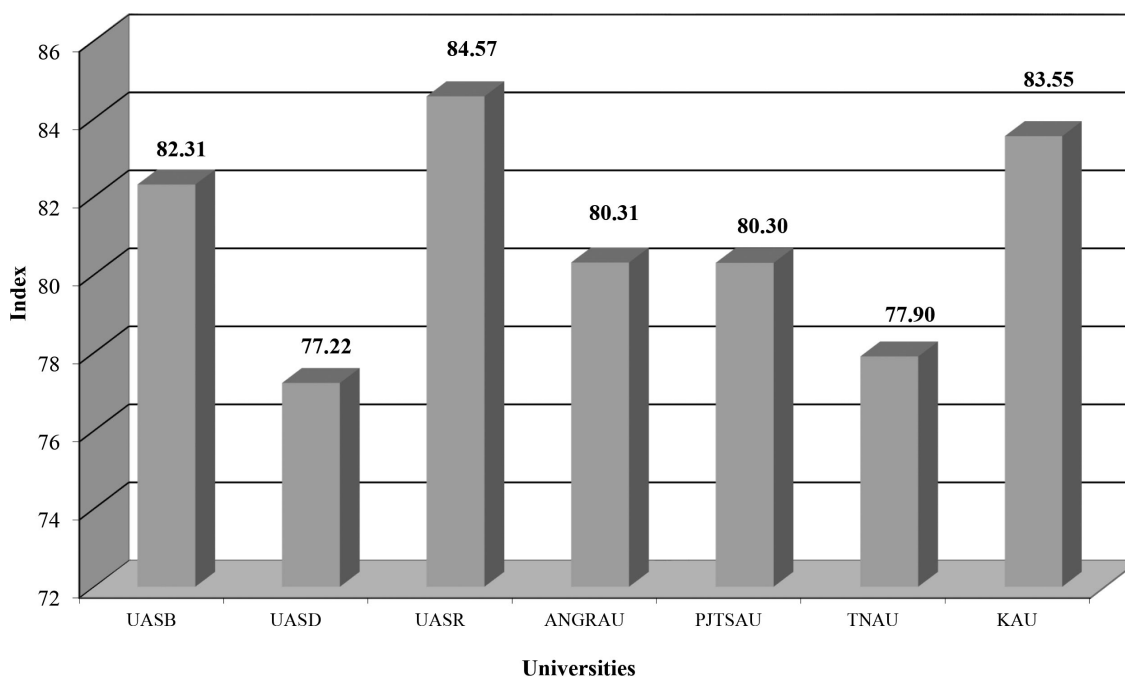
**Fig. 2. University wise overall perception of agriculture graduates towards Student READY Programme (SRP)**

Table 4 provides insights into the variation in perception of agriculture graduates towards the SRP. It is due to different universities may have varying approaches to implementing the SRP. Universities with better resources,

facilities, and funding for the SRP may offer more enriching experiences to their graduates. This could lead to higher perception scores among graduates.

**Table 4: Comparison of perception of agriculture graduates towards Student READY Programme (n = 350)**

Sr. No.	Universities	Mean	F value	SEM	CD value
1	UASB	114.60	4.008**	1.765	4.909
2	UASD	107.90			
3	UASR	117.30			
4	ANGRAU	112.84			
5	PJTSAU	112.44			
6	TNAU	108.64			
7	KAU	115.96			

\*\* Significant at 1 per cent level

### CONCLUSION

The overall positive perception, with a perception index of 80.88, indicates that the Student READY Programme (SRP) successfully meets its objectives of fostering entrepreneurship and enhancing agricultural knowledge. The findings also show that universities with better resources and organizational support tend to have higher perception scores, emphasizing the importance of funding, infrastructure, and institutional coordination. While the programme is effective, continuous improvements in facilities and resource availability are essential to further strengthen its impact and relevance in the agricultural sector.

### POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- Universities may strengthen infrastructure and equipment availability to enhance experiential learning outcomes.
- Greater institutional coordination and supervisory support should be ensured across SRP components for uniform implementation.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) for their full-term centrally-administered doctoral fellowship, which provided invaluable support throughout the entire process of completing this research.

### CONFLICT OF INTEREST

This is to declare that there is “No conflict of interest” among researchers.

### REFERENCES

Anusha Velamuri, Vinaya Kumar H. M. and Neha Parik (2024). Construction and Validation of Research Satisfaction Scale (RSS) for Post-Research

Analysis of Graduates. *Indian Journal of Extension Education*, 60 (1): 120-123. <https://doi.org/10.48165/IJEE.2024.601RT>

Arundhathi, C. H., Ganesamoorthi, S., Shivalingaiah, Y. N., Latha, H. S. and Mohan Kumar, T. L. (2024) Constraints of Student READY Programme in State Agricultural Universities. *Journal of Scientific Research and Reports*. 30(5):78-81.

Darji, A.R., Panchasara, B.R. and Vinaya Kumar H.M. (2017). Determinates of attitude of postgraduate research scholars towards the use of computer for their empowerment. *Gujarat Journal of Extension Education* 28 (2): 277-281

Jagadeeswari, B., Vinaya Kumar H. M., and Patel, J. B. (2019). Attitude of postgraduate students towards research, *Gujarat Journal Extension Education*, 30(1), 87-89.

Kumar, A. U., Sreenivasulu, M., Naik, R. (2024) Student advisory system of PJTSAU: to study the relationship between the profile characteristics and effectiveness of advisory system. *Gujarat Journal of Extension Education*, 38(1):146-149. <https://doi.org/10.56572/gjoe.2024.38.1.0024>.

Lal, B., Sheetal. and Anas. (2021) Perception and suggestions of students of agriculture university Jodhpur towards Student READY Programme. *Indian Journal of Extension Education and Rural Development*. 29:12-16.

Likert, R. (1932) A technique for the measurement of attitudes. *Psychology study*. 5:106-107.

Saba, Samreen and Saini, Hemlata (2023) A tool to measure attitude of agriculture students towards student READY programme in employability generation. *Gujarat Journal of Extension Education*, 36(1):113-118. <https://doi.org/10.56572/gjoe.2023.36.1.0022>.

Sajeev, M. V. and Gowda, K. N. (2013) Perceptions on Experiential Learning: A Study of Agriculture Students in Kerala. *Indian Research Journal of Extension Education*. 13(1):48-55.

Vaishnavi, P. and Nithya Shree, D. A. (2024) Evolution of student READY programme (SRP) in agricultural education. In: Shubham and Arulmanikandan B. (Eds.). *Advancing in Extension Education Innovations and Insights*. 94-102.

Vaishnavi, P., Nithya Shree, D. A. and Sunil V. Halakatti.

(2024) A scale to measure the perception of graduates towards Student READY Programme. *Asian Journal of Agricultural Extension, Economics & Sociology*. 42(6):96-104.

Vaishnavi, P., Nithya, D. A. Shree and Halakatti, Sunil V. (2023) A scale to measure the perception of staff towards student READY programme. *Gujarat*

*Journal of Extension Education*, 36(1):12-17.  
<https://doi.org/10.56572/gjoe.2023.36.1.0003>.

Vegad, N. M., Chauhan N. B. and Vinaya Kumar H. M. (2021). Factors affecting knowledge about e-extension amongst the postgraduate scholars of agricultural extension and communication. *Gujarat Journal of Extension Education* 32 (2): 81-84.

---

*Received : August 2025 : Accepted : October 2025*