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Attitude of agricultural students towards agripreneurship development and its relationship with their profile characteristics

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Abstract

Agripreneurship has emerged as a promising strategy for transforming the agricultural sector by generating employment opportunities, promoting innovation, and enhancing rural livelihoods. The success of agripreneurship largely depends on the entrepreneurial attitude of agricultural students, who represent the future human resource for agricultural development. The present study was conducted at Sardarkrushinagar Dantiwada Agricultural University, Gujarat, to assess the attitude of agricultural students towards agripreneurship development and to determine its relationship with their selected profile characteristics. An ex-post facto research design was adopted, and 176 undergraduate agricultural students were selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected through a structured interview schedule and analysed using appropriate statistical tools, including frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation and correlation analysis. The findings revealed that the majority 59.10 per cent of the agricultural students had a favourable attitude towards agripreneurship development, while 23.86 per cent exhibited a highly favourable attitude and 17.04 per cent had an unfavourable attitude. The favourable attitude among students may be attributed to their agricultural background, awareness of self-employment opportunities, and increasing institutional and governmental support for entrepreneurship development. The study also examined the association between selected profile characteristics and agripreneurial attitude, providing useful insights for designing educational interventions and entrepreneurship promotion programmes. The findings suggest that strengthening entrepreneurial education, practical exposure and institutional support can further enhance students' inclination towards agripreneurship, thereby contributing to sustainable agricultural and rural development.

Keywords: Agripreneurship, attitude, graduates, encourage, and agricultural education

Introduction

Agriculture plays a vital role in the Indian economy by providing livelihood to a large proportion of the rural population. However, increasing unemployment among agricultural graduates and declining profitability in farming have highlighted the need to promote agripreneurship as a means of generating employment, enhancing income and ensuring sustainable agricultural development. Agripreneurship encourages agricultural graduates to establish enterprises in agriculture and allied sectors, thereby transforming them from job seekers into job creators (Bairwa *et al.*, 2014)^[3].

The success of agripreneurship largely depends on the attitude of agricultural students towards entrepreneurial careers. A favourable attitude motivates students to identify business opportunities, adopt innovations and undertake entrepreneurial ventures. This attitude is influenced by several socio-personal, educational and psychological characteristics such as academic achievement, innovativeness, self-confidence, risk-taking ability, decision-making ability and family background (Ajzen, 1991; Hisrich *et al.*, 2020)^[1, 5].

Agricultural universities play an important role in developing entrepreneurial competencies through education, skill development and practical exposure. Therefore, understanding the attitude of agricultural students towards agripreneurship development and its relationship with their profile characteristics is essential for designing effective entrepreneurship development programmes.

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Objectives

1. To study the attitude of agricultural students towards agripreneurship development.
2. To determine the relationship between the profile characteristics of agricultural students and their attitude towards agripreneurship development.

Methodology

The study was conducted at Sardarkrushinagar Dantiwada Agricultural University (SDAU), Sardarkrushhinagar, Gujarat using an ex-post facto research design. A total of 176 undergraduate agricultural students were selected through purposive sampling from three constituent colleges, namely C. P. College of Agriculture, Sardarkrushhinagar, College of Agriculture, Tharad, and College of Agriculture, Bhuj. Data were collected through personal interviews using a pre-tested structured interview schedule. The schedule included items on the respondents' profile characteristics and their attitude towards agripreneurship development. The attitude of agricultural students towards agripreneurship development was measured using the attitude scale developed by Bai (2016) [2] with minor modifications to suit the objectives of the present study. The variables were selected based on an extensive review of literature and expert consultation. The collected data were analyzed using appropriate statistical tools such as frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation and correlation analysis to assess the attitude of agricultural students towards agripreneurship development and its relationship with their profile characteristics.

Results and Discussion

Agripreneurial attitude of agricultural students towards agricultural enterprise

An attitude refers to the feelings, beliefs and predispositions of individuals or groups towards a particular idea, practice, or innovation. It encompasses their mental state, disposition, or orientation that influences their behaviour and decision-making.

Table 1: Distribution of the agricultural students according to their attitude towards agricultural entrepreneurship n=176

Sl. No.	Attitude	Number	Per cent
1	Unfavourable (≤ 40.36 score)	30	17.04
2	Favourable (between 40.36 to 46.98 score)	104	59.10
3	Highly favourable (≥ 46.98 score)	42	23.86
	Total	176	100

Mean = 43.67, S. D. = 3.31

It is evident from the table 1 that 59.10 per cent of the agricultural students had favourable attitude towards agricultural entrepreneurship followed by 23.86 per cent of the students with highly favourable and 17.04 per cent of the students with unfavourable towards agricultural entrepreneurship.

It is concluded from the table 1 that majority of the agricultural students had favourable attitude towards agricultural entrepreneurship. It might be due to reason that most of the students pursuing agriculture may have genuine interest in farming or any other related fields, making them more inclined towards entrepreneurship in agriculture and due to various opportunities for self-employment and job creation. Many governments offer support, provides incentives and resources for agricultural entrepreneurship, making it an attractive option for students to develop a positive attitude towards agricultural entrepreneurship. The present findings are in agreement with the findings of Bai (2016) [2], Jayasudha and Shantha Sheela (2018),

and Sane (2017) [11], who also reported that agricultural students generally possessed a favourable attitude towards agricultural entrepreneurship.

Relationship between the profile characteristics of agricultural students and their attitude towards agripreneurship development

Table 2: Relationship between characteristics of agricultural students and their agripreneurial attitude towards agriculture enterprise n = 176

Sl. No.	Independent variables	Correlation Coefficient ('r' value)
X ₁	Gender	-0.021
X ₂	Caste	-0.049
X ₃	Academic achievement	0.015
X ₄	Self confidence	0.154*
X ₅	Father's education	0.067
X ₆	Father's occupation	-0.025
X ₇	Innovativeness	0.257**
X ₈	Risk taking ability	0.225**
X ₉	Decision making ability	0.191*
X ₁₀	Mass media exposure	0.182*

* Significant at 5 per cent level of probability

** Significant at 1 per cent level of probability

The relationship between the selected profile characteristics of agricultural students and their attitude towards agripreneurship development is presented in Table 2. The results revealed that self-confidence ($r = 0.154$), *decision-making ability ($r = 0.191$), and mass media exposure ($r = 0.182$) had a positive and significant relationship with the attitude of agricultural students towards agripreneurship development at the 5 per cent level of significance. This indicates that students possessing higher self-confidence, better decision-making ability and greater exposure to mass media tended to exhibit a more favourable attitude towards agripreneurship development. Self-confident students are more willing to undertake entrepreneurial ventures, while effective decision-making skills facilitate the evaluation of business opportunities and entrepreneurial risks. Similarly, greater mass media exposure enhances awareness of government schemes, successful agripreneurs, innovative technologies and market opportunities, thereby fostering a positive entrepreneurial attitude. These findings are in accordance with Bai (2016) [2] and Priyanka (2019) [10], who reported that self-confidence and exposure to information sources positively influenced students' entrepreneurial attitude.

Further, innovativeness ($r = 0.257$ **) and risk-taking ability ($r = 0.225$ **) exhibited a positive and highly significant relationship with students' attitude towards agripreneurship development at the 1 per cent level of significance. This suggests that innovative students with a greater willingness to take calculated risks are more likely to possess favourable attitudes towards agripreneurship. Entrepreneurial activities inherently involve innovation and uncertainty; therefore, these characteristics are essential for developing entrepreneurial orientation among agricultural students. Similar findings were reported by Thakkar (2020) [12], who observed that innovativeness and risk-taking ability significantly contributed to entrepreneurial orientation among agricultural students.

On the other hand, gender, caste, academic achievement, father's education and father's occupation did not show a significant relationship with the attitude towards agripreneurship development. This implies that demographic and family background characteristics alone may not substantially influence students' entrepreneurial attitude. Instead, psychological and

behavioural characteristics appear to play a more important role in shaping positive attitudes towards agripreneurship. The non-significant relationship of demographic characteristics with entrepreneurial attitude is supported by the findings of Krishna (2017)^[7].

Conclusion

The study revealed that the majority (59.10%) of agricultural students possessed a favourable attitude towards agripreneurship development, indicating a positive inclination towards entrepreneurial activities in agriculture. The relationship analysis showed that self-confidence, innovativeness, risk-taking ability, decision-making ability, and mass media exposure had a positive and significant relationship with the agripreneurial attitude of agricultural students. In contrast, gender, caste, academic achievement, father's education, and father's occupation did not show any significant relationship with their attitude. The findings suggest that psychological and communication-related characteristics play a more important role than demographic factors in shaping students' agripreneurial attitude. Therefore, strengthening these attributes among agricultural students can enhance their entrepreneurial orientation and encourage them to pursue agripreneurship as a viable career option. The findings support earlier reports emphasizing the importance of entrepreneurial competency development among agricultural graduates (Bairwa *et al.*, 2014; Hisrich *et al.*, 2020)^[3, 5].

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are suggested:

1. Agricultural universities should organize regular Entrepreneurship Development Programmes (EDPs), workshops and hands-on training to strengthen students' entrepreneurial attitude.
2. Educational programmes should focus on developing self-confidence, innovativeness, risk-taking ability and decision-making skills, as these characteristics were found to be significantly associated with agripreneurial attitude.
3. Greater use of mass media and digital platforms should be encouraged to disseminate information on successful agripreneurs, government schemes, startup opportunities and innovative agricultural enterprises.
4. Agricultural students should be provided with practical exposure through agribusiness incubation centres, field visits, internships and interactions with successful agripreneurs to enhance their entrepreneurial competence and motivation.
5. Policymakers and agricultural universities should strengthen institutional support by facilitating mentorship, startup guidance, financial literacy programmes and access to entrepreneurship support schemes for aspiring agripreneurs.

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