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## Attitude of the agriculture graduates and general graduates towards agricultural entrepreneurship and self-employment

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### Abstract

India is a nation of youth and an agriculture based country hence there is a vast potential for agribusiness. The country has one of the largest agricultural education system. The state of West Bengal consists of two Agriculture universities and number of other general universities. Every year huge number of students complete their graduation and opt for various jobs or higher education. Many remain unemployed, though there is a huge scope for empowerment of graduates both agriculture and general through agriculture and allied enterprises but negligible number of them are interested in entrepreneurship or self-employment. The study aims to assess the attitude of the graduates both agriculture and general towards agriculture entrepreneurship and self -employment so that, the students can be motivated to become self- employed rather than employment seeker. The study has also analyzed the association between various independent variables and the attitude of the graduate towards agriculture entrepreneurship. Total 200 respondents were selected for the study. 100 were agriculture graduates and rest 100 were general graduates. The questionnaire in google format was sent to them electronically. The data thus collected were finally analysed with the help of various statistical tools used like frequency, percentage, mean, S.D and coefficient of correlation. It has been found that various independent variables have significant relationship with the attitude of the graduates towards entrepreneurship and self-employment like gender, residential area, father's education, father's occupation, self-confidence, innovativeness, risk taking ability, achievement motivation and market orientation. The study also states that agriculture graduates had shown moderately favourable to high attitude towards entrepreneurship however, general graduates had shown low to moderately favourable attitude towards entrepreneurship. It has been expressed by the agricultural graduates that entrepreneurship includes risk, requires leadership quality, communication skill and more capital infusion whereas, general graduates had emphasised more on past experience or exposure and convincing skill along with the thought that it includes risky activities and communication skill. Hence, it is recommended that the graduates must be exposed more to skill oriented programme, exposure visits as well as managerial training to develop confidence, leadership quality and communication skill. They should be made aware of different government schemes meant for encouraging entrepreneurship among youth along with different credit schemes available.

**Keywords:** agriculture entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship, graduates, self- employment

### Introduction

India is a nation of youth, based on world meter elaboration of the latest United Nations data, India's population has crossed 141 crores, there are more than 65% of population below the age of 35 presently in the country. On the other hand, it is an agriculture based country and hence has a vast potential for agribusiness. However, the interest of youth in agriculture is reducing thus engaging and retaining youth in this sector has become crucial for the food security of nation in future. The youth need to be attracted and their interest need to be rejuvenated to develop aspiration to become agri entrepreneur or opt self -employment as career.

The country has one of the largest agricultural education system with 3 Central Agricultural Universities, 63 State Agricultural Universities, 4 Deemed Universities and 4 general Central Universities with Agriculture faculty (Anon., 2018). Every year these institutions enroll on about 15,000 students in UG level and approx. 7,000 students in various PG courses and about 1,700 students for doctorate degree. Besides this, there are number of private colleges affiliated or non-affiliated to different SAUs which also annually enroll quite a good number of students. The state of West Bengal consists of two Agricultural universities one in South Bengal i.e., Bidhan Chandra Krishi Viswavidyalaya and other one is in North Bengal namely

Uttar Banga Krishi Viswavidyalaya. It has been reported that rural youth are playing important role in the field of agriculture and contributing in family farming (Dhakre, 2014). There is a huge scope for empowerment of graduates both agriculture and general through agriculture and allied enterprises. But It has been seen that students after completion of their graduation opt for either government jobs or choose to work for private and non -governmental organisations. Many others, pursue higher education but negligible of them were found to be interested in entrepreneurship or self-employment.

### Objectives of the study

Keeping this in mind, the study aims to assess the attitude of the graduates both agriculture and general towards agriculture entrepreneurship and self-employment so that, the students can be motivated to become self-employed rather than mere employment seeker. The study has also analysed the relationship between various independent variables with the attitude of graduate students towards agriculture entrepreneurship and self-employment.

### Materials and methods

The study was carried out during 2020-21. Two universities, one agriculture and one general namely Uttar Banga Krishi Viswavidyalaya and Panchanan Barma University respectively, were selected for the study. Both the academic institutions are situated in Pundibari, Cooch Behar, district of West Bengal in India. The state, district and academic institutions were selected purposively due to the convenience of the researcher as well as the availability of the respondents. Among the selected 200 respondents for the study, 100 were agriculture respondents and the rest 100 were general graduates. Due to the Covid restrictions, the physical contact with students was not possible and hence, the questionnaire in google format was sent to them electronically. The data thus collected were finally analysed with the help of various statistical tools used like frequency, percentage, mean, S.D and coefficient of correlation.

### Results and Discussion

**Table 1:** Relationship between the independent variables and the attitude of graduates towards agricultural entrepreneurship and self - employment.

| Sl. No. | Independent Variables                     | Correlation Co-efficient (r)   |                           |
|---------|-------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
|         |                                           | Agricultural graduates (n=100) | General graduates (n=100) |
| 1       | Gender                                    | -.321**                        | -.572**                   |
| 2       | Age                                       | -.106                          | .073                      |
| 3       | Religion                                  | .141                           | -.149                     |
| 4       | Residential area                          | -.299**                        | .447**                    |
| 5       | Caste                                     | .043                           | -.218*                    |
| 6       | Participation in co-curricular activities | .141                           | -.115                     |
| 7       | Parent's education (Father)               | .044                           | .326**                    |
| 8       | Parent's education (Mother)               | .049                           | .139                      |
| 9       | Family's occupation (Father)              | .067                           | .354**                    |
| 10      | Family's occupation (Mother)              | .052                           | -.004                     |
| 11      | Divisions of last examination passed      | 0.0                            | .176                      |
| 12      | Family type                               | -.116                          | -.043                     |
| 13      | No. of siblings                           | -.064                          | -.179                     |
| 14      | Self-confidence                           | .907**                         | .494**                    |
| 15      | Awareness                                 | .163                           | -.204*                    |
| 16      | Achievement motivation                    | .786**                         | .276**                    |
| 17      | Innovativeness                            | .759**                         | .495**                    |
| 18      | Risk taking ability                       | .779**                         | .038                      |
| 19      | Market orientation                        | .697**                         | .460**                    |

\*\* Significant at one percent level of probability

\* Significant at five percent level of probability

Data presented in table 1, reveals that the independent variable Gender for both agriculture graduates as well as general graduates were found to be positively and significantly associated at 0.01 percent level of probability, with the attitude of the students towards agriculture entrepreneurship and self-employment. It has been found that the male students are more inclined towards entrepreneurship compared to their counterpart.

The independent variable Residential area was found to have negative and significant association at 0.01 percent level of probability with the attitude of the agriculture graduates towards agriculture entrepreneurship and self-employment however, the same variable was found to have positive and significant association at 0.01 percent level of probability with the attitude of the general graduates towards agriculture entrepreneurship and self-employment. The probable reason might be the motivation and confidence, the agriculture

graduates get from the experience and exposure to agriculture along with the theoretical knowledge, that helps to build the positive attitude towards entrepreneurship unlike graduates from general stream.

The variable Caste was found to have no significant relation with the attitude of the agriculture graduates towards agriculture entrepreneurship and self-employment, because irrespective of what caste the students belong to, they all get to learn agriculture. Therefore, caste was not found to have any association with their attitude. However, Caste was found to have negative and significant association at 0.05 percent level of probability with the attitude of the general graduates towards agriculture entrepreneurship and self-employment. It can be explained with the fact that people from lower caste are more associated with agriculture and allied and hence their children find an inclination and develop an attitude towards Agriculture entrepreneurship.

The independent variable Parent's education (father) was found to have positive and significant association at 0.01 percent level of probability with the dependent variable attitude towards agriculture entrepreneurship and self-employment of general graduates but the same was found to have no significant relation with the attitude of the agriculture graduates. Higher educational qualification of parent (father) motivates the children to keep greater aspiration, provides encouragement and guidance through all up and downs and hence they feel more confident in taking risk.

In case of Family occupation (fathers') the similar result has been found, the general graduates were found to have a positive and significant association at 0.01 percent level of probability between their Father's occupation and their attitude towards entrepreneurship. A person with a better occupation earns more hence, family income would be more, such a family can afford the expenses requires as an initial investment to start an enterprise. It can thus be concluded that the education and occupation of a father has an association with children's attitude. However, no association could be established between father's occupation and agriculture graduates, attitude.

Variables like Self-confidence was found to have positive and significant relation with dependent variable attitude of both agriculture and general graduates towards agriculture entrepreneurship. Self-confidence has positive impact on many areas like it helps to cope up with anxiety and stress. It is also believed to promote self-improvement.

Achievement motivation was found to have positive and significant association at 0.01 percent level of probability with dependent variable attitude of the graduates both agriculture and general towards entrepreneurship. The plausible explanation might be that higher education motivates the students to have aspiration for challenging jobs. Innovativeness among students expands their horizon in the social system and thus exposed them to noble ideas and experiences. This wisdom helps them to build a favourable

attitude towards any new creation hence, Innovativeness was found to have positive and significant relation at 0.01 percent level of probability with dependent variable attitude of the graduates both agriculture and general towards entrepreneurship.

Market orientation was found to have positive and significant association at 0.01 percent level of probability with dependent variable attitude of the graduates both agriculture and general towards entrepreneurship as it improves their market intelligence and gives them the required confidence which enhances their attitude.

The independent variable Awareness was found to have no significant association with the attitude of the agriculture graduates however the same independent variable was found to have negative and significant association with attitude of the general graduates. It can be said here that awareness could not establish any association with the attitude of the graduates as the dependent variable require more self-confidence, risk taking capability along with leadership and communication skill along with awareness.

The independent variable Risk taking ability of agriculture graduates was found to have positive and significant association at 0.01 percent level of probability with their attitude towards entrepreneurship whereas, in case of general graduates the same independent variable was found to have no significant association with their attitude. It can be explained with the fact that more knowledge and exposure provides more confidence and hence greater risk taking ability which the agriculture graduates found to possess more.

The independent variables like Age, Religion, Participation in co-curricular activities, Mother's education, Mother's occupation, Division of last exam passed, Family type and No. of siblings for both agriculture graduates as well as general graduates were found to have no significant association at 0.05 percent level of probability with the attitude of the students towards agriculture entrepreneurship and self-employment.

**Table 2:** Distribution of graduates based on their attitude towards agriculture entrepreneurship and self-employment.

| Attitudinal category          | Agricultural graduates ( in percent) | General graduates (in percent) |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Less favourable (up to 29)    | 17                                   | 46.0                           |
| Moderately favourable (29-57) | 36                                   | 42.0                           |
| Highly favourable (58-85)     | 47                                   | 12.0                           |
|                               | Mean =2.3, SD =0.74                  | Mean =1.66, SD=0.68            |

In case of agricultural graduates, it has been observed that the majority (47%) of the students had shown highly favorable attitude towards agriculture entrepreneurship, a good number of students (36%) had also shown moderately favourable attitude whereas, only some of the students (17%) had a less favorable attitude towards agricultural entrepreneurship and self-employment. This finding is similar with the findings of Chamela Bai (2016) <sup>[2]</sup> who stated that majority of the agriculture graduates had favorable attitude towards agricultural entrepreneurship. Also, Dilip Kumar (2017) in his study revealed the majority of the respondents (57.73%) had a

moderately favorable attitude towards agricultural entrepreneurship.

Only some of the graduates (12%) from general streams had shown highly favourable attitude towards agri entrepreneurship and self-employment. However, majority (46%) of the students had shown less favourable attitude towards agriculture entrepreneurship followed by good percentage (42%) of students with moderately favourable attitude towards agriculture entrepreneurship and self-employment.

**Table 3:** Graduates' attitude towards agri entrepreneurship and self-employment

| Sl. No. | Statements                                                                                                                | Agricultural graduates (n=100) |      | General graduates (n=100) |      |
|---------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|------|---------------------------|------|
|         |                                                                                                                           | Mean score                     | Rank | Mean score                | Rank |
| 1.      | Entrepreneurship require good communication.                                                                              | 3.95                           | IV   | 2.8                       | I    |
| 2.      | Graduates having leadership ability can be successful entrepreneurs.                                                      | 4.03                           | III  | 2.38                      | VII  |
| 3.      | Not only education but specialized training or workshop creates confidence to accept entrepreneurship as occupation.      | 3.06                           | XII  | 2.24                      | VIII |
| 4.      | Entrepreneurship helps to improve living standards.                                                                       | 3.11                           | X    | 1.81                      | XIII |
| 5.      | Entrepreneurship is a step for reduction of unemployment in country and is the best opportunity for unemployed graduates. | 3.25                           | IX   | 2.07                      | X    |
| 6.      | Entrepreneurship require capacity of hard working, working with flexibility and working for long hours.                   | 3.74                           | VIII | 2.23                      | IX   |
| 7.      | Entrepreneurship helps to develop negotiating abilities and strategic thinking.                                           | 3.1                            | XI   | 1.96                      | XI   |
| 8.      | Entrepreneurship provide year-round income and is an profitable business.                                                 | 2.76                           | XV   | 1.89                      | XII  |
| 9.      | Entrepreneurship develop strong sense of independence.                                                                    | 3.82                           | V    | 2.42                      | VI   |
| 10.     | Graduates with creative nature prefer to start entrepreneurship.                                                          | 2.96                           | XIII | 1.96                      | XI   |
| 11.     | Entrepreneurship include risk activities.                                                                                 | 4.17                           | I    | 2.75                      | III  |
| 12.     | More capital is required to establish enterprise.                                                                         | 4.08                           | II   | 2.56                      | V    |
| 13.     | Entrepreneurship is related with social responsibilities.                                                                 | 2.7                            | XVI  | 1.68                      | XIV  |
| 14.     | Self-employment/Entrepreneurship is better than job.                                                                      | 2.87                           | XIV  | 1.6                       | XVI  |
| 15.     | Priority should be given to entrepreneurship for development of nation.                                                   | 2.96                           | XIII | 1.64                      | XV   |
| 16.     | Past experience or exposure of family business can be a pushing factor.                                                   | 3.81                           | VI   | 2.78                      | II   |
| 17.     | Convincing ability is more important for successful entrepreneur.                                                         | 3.77                           | VII  | 2.67                      | IV   |

In table 3, the Mean score was calculated by dividing the total scores given by all the respondents to the statement by the total number of respondents. Based on the mean score value, the ranking was done. Most of the agricultural graduates had expressed that entrepreneurship include risk activities and ranked it as I, many more had stated that entrepreneurship require more capital infusion followed with the fact that entrepreneurship require leadership qualities and communication skill hence ranked them as II, III and IV respectively. Whereas, most of the General graduates though that entrepreneurship require good communication skill followed with the fact that it requires past experience or exposure, they also expressed that entrepreneurship include risk activities and convincing ability is must to become a successful entrepreneur and thus places the said statements as I, II, III and IV respectively.

### Conclusion

It has been found that various independent variables have significant relationship with the attitude of the graduates towards entrepreneurship and self-employment like Gender, Residential area, fathers' education, father's occupation, self-confidence, innovativeness, risk taking ability, achievement motivation and market orientation. The study also states that agriculture graduates had shown moderately favourable to high attitude towards entrepreneurship however, general graduates had shown low to moderately favourable attitude towards entrepreneurship. It has been expressed by the agricultural graduates that entrepreneurship includes risk, requires leadership quality and communication skill and need more capital infusion whereas, general graduates emphasised more on past experience or exposure and convincing skill along with the fact that it includes risk and communication skill. Hence, it is recommended that the graduates must be exposed to more skill oriented practicals rather than theoretical classes. They should be made aware of different government schemes meant for encouraging entrepreneurship among youth along with different credit schemes available.

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