



Career Preferences of Undergraduate Agricultural Students of S V Agricultural College, Tirupati

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ABSTRACT

The primary aim of Agricultural universities is to prepare Agricultural Graduates for serving farming community. The present research carried out to study the career preferences of Agricultural Graduates of S.V. Agricultural College, Tirupati. The total sample for the study constituted 60 boys and 60 girl students. It was observed that majority of the boys preferred administrative jobs followed by bank, extension, teaching, research, sales representative while girls preferred administrative jobs, banks, teaching, research, extension, business and sales representative.

Key words : Agricultural students, Career preferences, Profile characteristics

The career opportunities of agricultural graduates have increased due to the advent of globalization and demand of trained people has increased to meet the need for development in the context of WTO. Students in agriculture, after completion of their degree opt to join the different professional jobs which depend on their preferences and the existing situations. As far as the Acharya N G Ranga Agricultural University is concerned, several of its alumni have gained entry into civil services, state departments, other services besides commercial banks, NABARD etc.

Career preferences of agricultural students are to be studied due to increasing employment opportunities and economic motivation. Though they have a wide variety of careers to choose each one have their own liking and disliking regarding these careers. But due to the prevailing situations Agricultural graduates are forced to take up careers like those in the administrative services and commercial banks rather than teaching, research and extension careers. They also seem to differ in their attitude towards rural oriented careers though the expertise gained by them can be utilized for bringing about development of rural areas. In such circumstances it seems that it will be of great significance to study the present trend of career preferences of agricultural students and their attitude towards rural oriented careers.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Ex-post facto research design was followed for the present study. The present study was conducted in Acharya N G Ranga Agricultural University and out of six Agricultural Colleges only

S.V.Agricultural college, Tirupati was purposively selected. All the students belonging to final year B.Sc (Ag.) were selected which comprises of 60 boys and 60 girls thus making a total sample of 120 respondents.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results thus obtained are presented and discussed here under.

Education of respondents

From the Table 1 it is evident that the educational standards of the respondents before joining B.Sc(Ag) were studied. The respondents were classified into three groups based on the class secured in tenth class and in the pre-degree course. From table 1 it could be inferred that out of the 60 boys, 40 (66.67%) secured distinction and 20 (33.33%) secured first class in the tenth class. None got second class. In case of girls 58 (96.67%) got distinction and 2 (3.33%) secured first class in tenth class. None secured second class. Out of 60 boys, 48 (80.00%) secured distinction, 12 (20.00%) secured first and none secured second class in their pre-degree course. Among girls 58 (96.67%) secured distinction, 2 (3.33%) secured first and none secured second class in their pre-degree.

The findings indicated that the students who got through the common entrance test are academically good. But it could be inferred that the performance was deteriorated in the pre-degree level when compared to the tenth class which can be attributed to the fact that the students might have paid more attention to the common entrance test.

Education of parents

The respondents' parents were categorized based on their educational level. Table 1 clearly shows that out of 60, 16 (26.67%) of the boys fathers had high school followed by 14 (23.33%) with primary school, followed by 12 (20.00%) with bachelors degree and postgraduate each. Only 4 (6.67%) were with pre-degree and 2 (3.33%) were illiterates. With respect to girls out of the total 60, 24 (40.00%) of their fathers had bachelors degree followed by 20 (33.33%) with post graduation followed by 8 (13.33%) with pre-degree, 4 (6.67%) was with high school followed by 2 (3.33%) with primary school and illiterate each. Further, it was found that from Table 1 that 18(30.00%) of the boys mothers had primary school followed by 16 (26.67%) were illiterates, by 10 (16.67%) with high school, 8 (13.33%) with pre degree and bachelors degree. In case of girl students 14 (23.33%) of their mothers had bachelors degree followed by 12 (20.00%) each with post graduate and illiterate, 8 (13.33%) with pre degree and high school and 6 (10.00%) with primary school.

Education of the parents seems to have good bearing on the education of their children to take –up higher professional studies.

Occupation of parents

The respondents parents were categorized into seven categories based on their occupation as shown in Table 1.

It is evident from Table 1 that 24 (40.00%) of the boys fathers were in farming followed by 18 (30.00%) in government 8 (13.33%) in Business, 6 (10.00%) in skilled/unskilled workers and 4 (6.67%) in non-government. None were included in unemployed and retired. In case of girls, 34 (56.67%) of their fathers were in government service followed by 6 (10.00%) in business and non-government each.

With regard to the occupation of boys mothers, Table 1 indicated that in case of boys 32 (53.33%) of their mothers were unemployed, 18 (30.00%) were in farming followed by 9 (10.00%) with skilled/unskilled laborers 2 (3.33%) in business and government each. None of them were reported in non-government service and retired. While mothers of girl students were taken into consideration, 40 (66.67%) of them were unemployed, 10 (16.67%) were in government service followed by 8 (13.33%) in farming, 2 (3.33%) in skilled/unskilled. None of them were found in non-government, business and retired employees. Most of the respondents' fathers were in government whereas majority of the mothers were unemployed.

Due to increased benefits with the government employment viz. pay pension allowances, security services and because of more job opportunities respondents fathers might have settled in government services. The financial security provided by the job might have helped the fathers to provide their children with professional education.

Rural –Urban background

It is evident from Table 1 that out of 60 boys 22 (36.67%) had urban background and the remaining 38 (63.33%) had rural background. In case of girls out of 60, 36 (60.00%) had urban background and 24 (40.00%) had rural background. On the whole, of the respondents were from rural background.

The probable reason might be that as the urban students might not be opting B.Sc (Ag.) degree as it is related to agricultural background which should be learnt in the rural areas Moreover the rural students and their parents might had shown interest in the degree as they were from rural background.

Type of family

It is observed from Table 1 that 48 (80.00%) of the boys came from nuclear families and 12 (20.00%) from joint families. In case of girls 60 (100.00%) hailed from nuclear families and none were from joint families. Majority of the respondents hailed from nuclear families.

The above results revealed that majority of the respondents had educated parents who might have understood the importance of nuclear families in the present situation. Lesser the family size more the money they can save which enables the respondents parents to provide good education to the children. Also majority of the respondents came from rural background where the cultural shift from joint to nuclear family had been taken place.

Parents' income

It shows that out of 60 boys 26 (43.33%) belonged to high income group, 16 (26.67%) belonged to medium income group and 18 (30.00%) belonged to low income group. In case of girls 44 (73.33%) belonged to high income group 12 (20.00%) belonged to medium income group and 4 (6.67%) belonged to low income group. Majority of the respondents belonged to high income group.

This might be due to the fact that the high income group can provide better prospects of life to their children. Their parents could afford the coaching for entrance examination. This calls for a change in the educational policy to make the coaching

Table 1. Distribution of respondents according to their profile characteristics.

1. Education of respondents									
S.No.	Class secured	Tenth class				Pre degree			
		Boys(n=60)		Girls(n=60)		Boys(n=60)		Girls(n=60)	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
1	Distinction	40	66.67	58	96.67	48	80.00	58	96.67
2	First class	20	33.33	2	3.33	12	20.00	2	3.33
3	Second class	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2. Education of parents									
S.No.	Educational level	Parents of respondents							
		Father				Mother			
		Boys(n=60)		Girls(n=60)		Boys(n=60)		Girls(n=60)	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
1	Post-graduate	12	20.00	20	3.33	-	-	12	20.00
2	Bachelor's degree	12	20.00	24	40.00	8	13.33	14	23.33
3	Pre degree	4	6.67	8	13.33	8	13.33	8	13.33
4	High school	16	26.66	4	6.67	10	16.67	8	13.33
5	Primary school	14	23.30	2	3.33	18	30	6	10.00
6	illiterate	2	3.33	2	3.33	16	26.67	12	20.00
3. Parents occupation									
1	Govt	18	30.00	34	56.67	2	3.33	10	16.67
2	Non govt	4	6.67	6	10.00	-	-	-	-
3	Business	8	13.33	6	10.00	2	3.33	-	-
4	Farming	24	40.00	14	23.33	18	30.00	8	13.33
5	Skilled/ unskilled	6	10.00	-	-	6	10.00	2	3.33
6	Retired	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
7	Unemployed	-	-	-	-	32	53.33	40	66.67

affordable to the low income groups. The colleges can take up entrance coaching besides dealing with syllabi of the pre degree course on par with the private coaching centres. A provision can also be made by the policy makers to bring out a change in the admissions through common entrance test by giving appropriate weightage of marks to the pre degree examinations also.

Achievement motivation

It is evident that out of 60, 56 (93.33%) of the boys had medium level achievement motivation followed by 4 (6.67%) with high achievement motivation and none had low achievement motivation. Out of 60 girls 50 (83.33%) had medium achievement motivation followed by 8 (13.33%) having high and 2 (3.33%) with low achievement motivation.

This might be due to their inferior tendency to compromise with the situations they encounter in the environment. This calls for proper guiding by the educationists and the parents to mould the career of students and to inspire them to achieve their best.

Overall grade point average

It could be inferred from the Table 1 that out of 60 boys 16(26.67%) had 7.6-8.0 OGPA. While 18(30.00%) had 8.1-8.5OGPA followed by 2(3.33%) with 7.1 -7.5 OGPA. The remaining 4 (6.67%) ,18 (30.00%), 2 (3.33%) of the boys had OGPA of 6.6 - 7.0, 8.6-9.0, 9.1 and above respectively. None were in 6.0 – 6.5. in case of girls out of 60, 38 (63.33%) had 8.1-8.5 OGPA followed by 14 (23.33%) with 8.6-9.0 OGPA. While 8 (13.33%) had OGPA in the range

4. Rural urban background

		Respondents				Total (n=120)	
		Boys(n=60)		Girls(n=60)			
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
1	Urban	22	36.67	36	60.00	58	48.33
2	Rural	38	63.33	14	40.00	62	51.67

5. Type of family

1	Joint	12	20.00	-	-	12	10.00
2	Nuclear	48	80.00	60	100	108	90.00

6. Parents Income

1.	High income	26	43.33	44	73.33	70	58.33
2.	Medium income	16	26.67	12	20.00	28	23.33
3.	Low income	18	30.00	4	6.67	22	36.33

7. Achievement motivation

1.	High achievement motivation	4	6.67	8	13.33	12	10.00
2.	Medium achievement motivation	56	93.33	50	83.33	106	88.33
3.	Low achievement motivation	-	-	2	3.33	2	1.67
Mean		18.73		17.6			
S.D		1.96		1..61			

8. Over all grade point

1.	6.0-6.5	-	-	-	-	-	-
2.	6.6-7.0	4	6.66	-	-	2	3.33
3.	7.1-7.5	2	3.33	-	-	1	1.66
4.	7.6-8.0	16	26.66	4	13.3	12	20
5.	8.1-8.5	18	30	19	63.3	28	4.66
6.	8.6-9.0	18	30	7	23.3	16	26,66
7.	9.1 & above	2	3.33	-	-	12	1.66

9. Extra curricular activities

1.	High participation	4	6.67	12	20.00	16	13.33
2.	Medium participation	48	80.00	44	73.33	92	76.67
3.	Low participation	8	13.33	4	6.67	12	10.00
Mean		3.13		2.23			
S.D		1.08		1.308			

10. Mass media exposure

1	High mass media exposure	4	6.67	4	6.67	8	6.67
2	Medium mass media exposure	54	90.00	44	73.33	98	81.66
3	Low mass media exposure	2	3.33	12	20.00	14	11.67
Mean		10.93		10.8			
S .D		2.17		2.26			

Table2. Distribution of boys according to their career preferences.

(n=60)

S.No	Career	Highly preferred		Preferred		Least Preferred		Total score	Rank
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%		
1.	Teaching	13	43.33	12	40.00	5	1.67	68	3
2.	Research	15	50.00	11	36.00	4	13.33	71	2
3.	Extension	6	20.00	8	26.67	16	53.33	44	7
4.	Bank	12	43.33	9	30.00	8	26.67	62	4
5.	Sales	1	3.33	7	23.33	21	70.00	38	8
6.	representative Administrative job	1	43.33	14	46.67	5	1.67	72	1
7.	Cultivation	5	1.67	7	23.33	17	56.67	46	6
8.	Defence	2	6.67	6	20.00	22	73.33	38	8
9.	Business	9	3.33	4	1.33	17	56.67	52	5

Table 3. Distribution of girl respondents according to their career preferences.

(n=60)

S.No	Career	Highly preferred		Preferred		Least Preferred		Total score	Rank
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%		
1.	Teaching	9	30.00	14	46.67	7	23.33	62	3
2.	Research	9	30.00	11	36.67	10	33.33	59	4
3.	Extension	2	6.67	13	43.3	15	50.00	42	7
4.	Bank	17	56.67	9	30	5	16.67	74	1
5.	Sales	2	6.67	2	6.67	27	90.00	37	9
6.	representative Administrative job	12	40.00	10	33.3	7	23.33	63	2
7.	Cultivation	3	10.00	9	30	18	60.00	45	5
8.	Defence	2	6.67	5	16.66	23	76.67	39	8
9.	Business	3	10.00	8	26.6	19	63.33	44	6

7.6–8.0. none had 9.1 and above and 6.6-7.0 OGPA respectively. Majority of the boys had OGPA in the range 8.1-8.5 and 8.6-9.0 where as majority of the girls had 8.1-8.5 OGPA.

Participation in extracurricular activities

It is clear from Table 1 that in case of boys out of 60, 48(80.00%) had medium participation in extracurricular activities followed by 8 (13.33%) and 4 (6.67%) having low and high participation in extracurricular activities respectively. Out of 60 girls, 44 (73.33%) had medium participation in extracurricular activities followed by 4(6.67%) and

12(20.00%) having low and high participation respectively. Majority of the respondents had medium participation in extracurricular activities.

This may be due to their heavy workload, increase in number of courses per semester and lot of practical record work might be the reason where they get little time to spend on extra curricular activities. Continuous internal and external examinations, lack of interest in sports and games and no separate special classes have not taken for the students who attended extra curricular activities were the reasons for this trend.

Mass media exposure

It is clear from the table 1 that out of 60 boys, 54 (90.00%) had medium mass media exposure followed by 4 (6.67%) and 2 (3.33%) having high and low mass media exposure respectively. Out of 60 girls, 44 (73.33%) had medium mass media exposure followed by 12 (20.00%) and 4 (6.67%) having low and high mass media exposure respectively. Majority of the respondents had medium mass media exposure.

As stated earlier this may be due to the reason that the students get little time to spend on reading magazines, watching television etc. because of their busy schedule of lab work, record work, assignments, projects to be completed in a stipulated time.

Career preferences of Undergraduate Agricultural Students

Career preferences in order as indicated by the respondents including boys and girls are depicted in Table 2 and 3.

Career Preferences of Boys

Based on the data presented in the Table 2 it could be inferred that administrative job ranked first among boys. 2 (3.33%) highly preferred, 28 (46.67%) preferred it and 10 (1.67%) least preferred administrative careers. As far as research was concerned it ranked second and preferred by 30 (50.00%), highly preferred by 22 (36.00%) and least preferred by 8 (13.33%). Then next career in the order of preference for boys students was a teaching career which ranked third and it was preferred by 24 (40.00%), highly preferred by 26 (43.33%) and least preferred by 10 (1.67%) the bank career ranked fourth and it was preferred by 18 (30.00%) and highly preferred and least preferred by 24 (43.33%) and 16 (26.27%). Business was in the fifth position it was preferred by 8 (13.33%), 18 (30.00%) highly preferred and 34 (56.67%) least preferred business as their career. Among other careers cultivation was ranked sixth. It was preferred by 14 (23.33%) where as it was highly preferred by 10 (16.67%) and least preferred by 34 (56.67%). Extension came next in the ranking order and it was preferred by 16 (26.67%) where as it was highly preferred by 12 (20.00%) and least preferred by 32 (53.33%). Regarding sales representative it was ranked eighth and it was preferred by 14 (23.33%), highly preferred by 2 (3.33%) and least preferred by 42 (70.00%). Defence was also ranked eighth it was preferred by 12 (20.00%), highly preferred 4 (6.67%) least preferred by 44 (73.33%).

Considering this data it can be concluded that administrative job and bank jobs were the two most preferred careers in case of both girls and boys. Where as sales representative and defence were the least preferred careers among them.

The possible reasons for career preferences of boys administrative job, was mostly by many boys and was ranked first. The reasons for this might be that power and prestige, unique nature of job and high salary. Enables professional growth, self satisfaction in job and provision for higher achievement in the area of discipline were the reasons stated by respondents for preferring research career. For career of teaching, the reasons stated were future advancements and promotions as well as safe and comfortable nature of job. Bank job was preferred due to amenities for work, social status and higher monetary benefits given for work. Satisfaction in working for villagers, helps to develop a clear understanding of rural living conditions, enhances practical knowledge and skill were reasons mentioned for preferring extension worker. Business career was preferred due to the capacity to do the job. Similarly for the sales representatives' career, challenging nature of job and skill in marketing of products were the reasons attributed by the respondents. Capacity to do the job, risky nature of job and little scope to do were reasons attributed for preferring career in defence and cultivation respectively. The findings are in conformity with Sailaja (1991), Rao (1993) and Bijula Balan (2003).

Career Preferences of Girls

It is evident from Table 3 that in case of girls bank job ranked first and it was highly preferred by 34 (56.67%) preferred by 18 (30.00%) and least preferred by 10 (16.67%). Where as administrative job was ranked second and preferred by 20 (33.33%) highly preferred by 24 (40.00%) and least preferred by 14 (23.33%). Teaching job ranked third and was preferred by 28 (46.67%), highly preferred by 18 (30.00%) and least preferred by 14 (23.33%). With respect to research career which ranked fourth it was preferred by 22 (36.67%) of the girls and 20 (33.33%) least preferred it and 18 (30.00%) highly preferred the teaching career. Cultivation career was ranked fifth 36 (60.00%) least preferred it followed by 18 (30.00%) preferred and 6 (10.00%) highly preferred cultivation as their career. Business was sixth in the ranking order was least preferred by 38 (63.33%), preferred by 16 (26.67%) and highly preferred by 6 (10.00%). Extension was ranked seventh. it was least preferred by 30 (50.00%), preferred by 26 (43.33%) and highly preferred by 4

(6.67%). Defence got eighth rank and it was least preferred by 46 (76.67%), preferred by 10 (16.67%) and highly preferred by 4 (6.67%). Sales representative was ranked last among all the careers. It was least preferred by 54 (90.00%) of the girls, 4 (6.67%) each were preferred by and highly preferred by respectively.

Taking into consideration the relevant reasons in relation to the careers preferred by girls it could be inferred that bank job was ranked first. The reasons were amenities for work, social status and higher monetary benefits given for the work. Administrative job was preferred second because of power and prestige, unique nature of job and high salary by the girl students. While, third ranked career namely teaching the reasons stated were future advancements and promotions safe and comfortable nature of job. Enables professional growth in the area of discipline, self satisfaction in job and provides scope for higher achievements in the area of discipline were the reasons mentioned for career in research. Where as preferring extension career, the reasons included satisfaction in working for villages, help to develop a clear understanding of rural living conditions and enhances practical knowledge and skill. Business career was preferred with the reason of capacity to do the job. The cultivation career was preferred on account of personal interest, less risky job. Defense and sales representative were least preferred with the reasons of risky nature of job and little scope to do the job respectively. The findings are in conformity with Rexlin and Seetharaman (1997) and Waman *et al.* (2000).

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