

Perception and attitude of agricultural students towards transformation in agriculture and ecology

R.Rajasekaran¹, K.Mohanraj², A.Anbarassan³ and N.Periyasamy⁴

1,2 Assistant Professor, Faculty of Agricultural sciences. SRM Institute of Science and Technology, Kattankulathur, Chengalpattu, Tami Nadu

3,4 Assistant Professor, Faculty of Agricultural sciences. SRM Institute of Science and Technology, Kattankulathur, Chengalpattu, Tami Nadu

*rajasekr1@srmist.edu.in

ABSTRACT

The present research study was conducted among the students undergoing agriculture course in the colleges of vellore district. Ex post facto research design was followed in the present investigation. The sample sizes of 272 respondents were purposively selected. Mean and percentage (%) were used as descriptive statistics in the study. Data collection was done by using pretested structured interview schedule. The personal characteristics of the students were analyzed. Among the total (272) respondents 59.2 % and 40.8% were female and male respectively. Respondents age groups lied between 17 to 24 and majority (33.8%) of the respondents age groups were 18. Regarding the educational qualification, all the respondents are agricultural students. Majority (39.3%) of the respondent were undergoing first year of this course. Majority of the students parents were farmers (31.3%) followed by business people (12.1%) and teachers (11%). Majority (33.50 %) of the agricultural students had highly favourable attitude towards ecology and followed by moderately favourable (33.08 %) attitude. Whereas only 10.24 per cent and 08.00 per cent of them had moderately unfavourable and highly unfavourable attitude respectively. Majority of the respondents attitude were positive. 37.00 per cent of the students had moderately favourable attitude and 30.46 per cent of them possessed highly favourable attitude towards transformation in agriculture.

Keywords

Agricultural students, attitude, agriculture and ecology

Introduction

Youth are the milestone of the country. Development of the country depends on the active participation of youth in different societal concern. Especially the areas like ecology and agriculture should be considered and taken up to the youth hands. Without the interventions and participation of youth, it is not possible to conserve the environment and agriculture. Students are the big segment of the total youth group. So, it is important to know the attitude of the students towards transformation in ecology and agriculture. There are several advantages of involvement of youth in agriculture as they have the latent energy. Capacity and ability to produce, propensity to learn and grasp new ideas or technologies faster and they are excellent source of ideas and innovations (Swaminathan, M.S. 2007). Moreover, agriculture students attitude are very much important to take care of agriculture and ecology. Since the study is related to agriculture and ecology, they can give significant contribution towards the conservation of ecology and continuous practicing of agriculture. This study was aimed to find out the attitude of the

students of agriculture towards the transformation in agriculture and ecology. Research methodology procedures adopted and the finding observed in this study are presented below.

Literature Review

Renu Gangwar and Kameswari (2016) reported that majority (85.20 %) of the respondents had neutral attitude towards agriculture followed by 13.90 percent of the respondents who had negative attitude towards agriculture and only 0.90 % respondents had positive attitude towards agriculture. Dilek Bostan Budak, et al (2005) reported that male students were more reluctant to environmental issues than female students. Similar findings were found by other researchers that females more concerned about environment than men. No significant differences were found between students' attitude scores when their educational level ranked. It was found that majority of students (80.00 %) used public media as a main source of information about environmental issues. Rural students were more concerned about environmental issues than urban

ones while male students were more reluctant to environmental issues than female students. It was also determined that younger students were more concerned about the environment and had positive behaviour toward environmental issues.

Table 1. Distribution of agricultural students attitude towards transformation in ecology

S.No	Category	Percentage (%)	Frequency (NOs)
1.	Highly favourable	37.5	102
2.	Moderately favourable	33.1	90
3.	Neutral	11.2	30
4.	Moderately unfavourable	10.2	28
5.	Highly unfavourable	8.0	22
		100	272

Table 2. Distribution of agricultural students attitude towards transformation in agriculture

S.No	Category	Percentage (%)	Frequency (NOs)
1.	Highly favourable	30.46	83
2.	Moderately favourable	37.00	101
3.	Neutral	12.89	35
4.	Moderately unfavourable	12.87	35
5.	Highly unfavourable	06.78	18
		100	272

Attitude and perception of students towards ecology and agriculture

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Methodology

The present research study was conducted during 2019-2020 among the students undergoing agriculture course in the colleges of Vellore district. Ex post facto research design was followed in the present investigation. Data collection was done by using pretested structured interview schedule (Kothari, C.R. 1990).

Attitude of agricultural graduates towards transformation in Agriculture and attitude of agricultural graduates towards transformation in ecology were measured with the help of five point scale developed for the study. The final scale selected with 30 statements was administered to measure attitude of agricultural graduated in the transformation in agriculture and ecology.

The agricultural graduates were requested to give responses to each statement in terms of their own degree of agreement or disagreement on a five point continuum. Each statement of scale was provided with five point continuum viz., strongly agree (SA), agree (A), undecided (UD), disagree (DA), strongly disagree (SDA) with scores of 5,4,3,2 and 1 respectively for positive statements and 1,2,3,4 and 5 for negative statements. The total score of the respondent on the scale was obtained by summing up the scores of all the statements in the scale. The respondents were grouped into the following five categories

based on the scores obtained by each of them duly following mean.

Data Analysis

The sample size of 272 respondents were purposively selected from Don Bosco College of agriculture, Vellore district. Mean and percentage (%) were used as descriptive statistics in the study. Entire analysis of data was carried out using Microsoft Office, Excel and SPSS software

Results

1. Profile characteristics of the respondents

The personal characteristics of the students were analyzed. Among the total respondents 59.2 % and 40.8% were female and male respectively. Respondents age groups lied between 17 to 24 and majority (33.8%) of the respondents age groups were 18. Regarding the educational qualification, all the respondents are agricultural students. Majority (39.3%) of the respondent were undergoing first year of this course. Majority of the students parents were farmer (31.3%) followed by business people (12.1%) and teachers (11%). From the research it was found that majority of the students fathers were marginal and medium farmers. More than fifty percent (52.2%) of the students grandfathers were farmers. Regarding patterns of settlement and area of settlement majority of them were living along with community (84.2%) and in villages (56.6%) respectively. Most of the students (80.5%) were from nuclear type of family.

2. Agricultural students' attitude towards transformation in ecology

Majority (37.50 %) of the agricultural students had highly favourable attitude towards ecology and followed by moderately favourable (33.1 %) attitude. whereas only 10.24 per cent and 08.00 per cent of them had moderately unfavourable and highly unfavorable attitude respectively

3. Attitude of Agricultural students towards transformation in agriculture

Majority (37.00 %) of the students had moderately favourable attitude. 30.46 per cent of them possessed highly favourable attitude and 12.87 per cent of them had moderately favourable attitude towards transformation in agriculture.

Discussions

1. Agricultural students' attitude towards transformation in ecology

Attitude is one of the important qualitative aspects of all human beings. Favourable or unfavourableness towards any object or issues decides the values of the particular things. The attitude may differ from person to person. It is so important to know the attitude of people to make positive changes in the desired areas.

It is apparent from the table 1. that, majority (37.50 %) of the agricultural students had highly favourable attitude towards ecology and followed by moderately favourable (33.1 %) attitude. whereas only 10.24 per cent and 08.00 per cent of them had moderately unfavourable and highly unfavorable attitude respectively. It is considerable point that 11.2 per cent of the students had neutral level of attitude towards ecological concern. This percentage is so close to moderately unfavorable attitude. Majority of the respondents were first years and comparatively they may lack in understanding the concerns of ecology, than other students. This might be the reason for the very less differences observed between neutral and unfavourable attitude of the students.

While looking at the findings of personal characteristics of the students, majority of the variables like education, fathers and grandfather's occupation, patterns of settlement and area of settlement were related to agriculture and ecology. The findings of the personal profile might indirectly influence and supports the students towards having favourable attitude.

As a whole, leading portion of the agricultural students possessed favourable attitude towards farming. This is so fortunate that more than one third of the students had positive attitude towards ecology.

2. Attitude of Agricultural students towards transformation in agriculture

Table 2 indicates that majority of the respondents attitude were positive. 37.00 per cent of the students had moderately favourable attitude and 30.46 per cent of them possessed highly favourable attitude towards transformation in agriculture. Majority of the students were from agricultural background and they are studying

agriculture as a course. This might be the reason for the positive attitude found in the research. Regarding negative attitude, only 06.78 per cent of the students had highly unfavourable attitude towards transformation in agriculture. This is followed by 12.87 per cent of the students had moderately unfavourable attitude. More or less same percentage of the people possessed neutral and moderately unfavourable attitude. The finding of this research is not on par with the findings of Renu and V.L.V.Kameswari (2016.)

During the survey, it was learnt that most of the students are having positive attitude towards farming, up to a certain period. This might be due to the 'we feeling nature' towards their own subject that what they are studying. Especially after completion of the course they may be exposed to different areas other than agriculture that leads to the diversion of mindset from agriculture to other areas.

Limitations and Future Studies

This study is concerned with agricultural students' attitudes and perception towards agriculture and ecology among agricultural colleges of Vellore district of Tamil Nadu. The study will contribute to knowledge and help decision makers in the area of environmental awareness and protection. The study has its limitations including financial constraints, time constraints and inability to expand the study to cover all the districts of the state.

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