

Factors Contributing to Attitude and the Attitudinal Proficiency of Graduates, towards Self-employment and Entrepreneurship

Ushia Rai*, Sabita Mondal, Nikhil Kumar, Sanjay V.C. and Chandan Hui

Department of Agricultural Extension,
UBKV, Coochbehar (West Bengal), India.

(Corresponding author: Ushia Rai*)

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ABSTRACT: A study has been conducted during 2020-21, with graduates, to understand the factors contributing to their attitude and attitudinal proficiency toward self-employment and entrepreneurship. 200 graduates were selected as respondents. Out of which 100 were general graduates taken from Panchanan Barma University and the rest were agricultural graduates taken from Uttar Banga Krishi Viswavidyalaya. Both universities are situated in Coochbehar District of West Bengal. The institutes were selected purposively and respondents were selected randomly. Due to the pandemic situation, physical contact with the respondents was not possible. The response was collected electronically with the help of a questionnaire, sent through google format. Statistical tools like frequency, percentage, mean, ranking and t-test were used. It has been found that proving their ability and confidence in independent decisions contributes more to building the attitude of agricultural graduates, however, profitability and more income contribute to the attitude of general graduates towards self-employment and entrepreneurship. Institutional sources like education, marketing, financial etc were found to have contributed more towards building the attitude of the graduates. Among the mass media available social media was found to be the most popular and affect the attitude of the graduates. The study found that agricultural graduates had more attitudinal proficiency compared to general graduates. The study recommends promoting the concept of entrepreneurship through formal institutions and more exposure of students to enterprises through study tours and training. The study further recommends seeing how well social media can be utilized effectively to motivate students towards self-employment and entrepreneurship. The study also highlights the importance of social media in creating awareness and attitudes of graduates towards self-employment and entrepreneurship.

Keywords: Self-employment, entrepreneurship, attitude of graduates, intention of graduates.

INTRODUCTION

India is an agriculture-based country and a nation of youth where more than 65% of the population is below the age of 35 years, (Worldometer, 2022). It has the third-largest population of technical and scientific people in the world thus, having a vast potential for agribusiness. However, on one hand, we cannot utilize its full potential and on the other hand, there is surplus technical personnel that are unemployed. Entrepreneurship is a risk-oriented and skill-oriented venture, that requires well-educated youth. Kuratko and Richard (2001) stated that entrepreneurship is the dynamic process of creating incremental wealth, which is created by individuals who take major risks in terms of equity, time and career commitment to providing value to some product or service. The product or service itself may or may not be new or unique but the entrepreneur must somehow infuse the value by securing and allocating the necessary skill and resources. In other words, it is the application of energy for initiating and building an enterprise (Fazeil *et al.*,

2015). Of late, unemployment is found to be rising particularly more among educated people. As per CMIE's (2021) report, the unemployment rate across India in 2021 for graduates and higher degree holders was 19.4%. To address the issue of unemployment, the government has initiated several schemes like Stand-up India, Start-up India, Make in India, Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), STEP platform, etc. to direct the youth towards self-employment and encourage them to become a future entrepreneur.

Every year a great number of graduates are passing from different universities in India. As per different studies conducted with students, it has been found that the majority of the graduates, after completion of their graduation opt for either government jobs or choose to work for private and non-governmental organisations. Many others, desire to pursue higher education but negligible of them were found to be interested in self-employment and entrepreneurship. A study by Mehta *et al.* (2011) reported in the case of agriculture graduates, civil/ administrative jobs remained the most preferred

choice followed by educational and research-related jobs, state government jobs, agro-based public sector and private sector and self-employment, while, general jobs and farming were the least preferred job areas. However, there is a corresponding lack of employment opportunities for graduates and professionals in the public sector. To solve this unemployment issue, entrepreneurship and self-employment can be a great opportunity to consider as a career but students have found to have an unfavourable attitude towards them. Attitude is defined by cognitive psychology as the predisposition to respond in a generally favourable or unfavourable manner concerning the object of the attitude. Hence, the present study has been conducted with the following objectives:

- To find out the factors influencing intention of graduates (both general and agricultural) towards self-employment and entrepreneurship.
- To study the factors contributing to attitude of the graduates (both general and agricultural) towards self-employment and entrepreneurship, and
- To compare the attitudinal proficiency between general graduates and agricultural graduates towards self-employment and entrepreneurship.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A. Research Locale

The study has been conducted with graduates from Uttar Banga Krishi Viswavidyalaya, an agricultural university and Panchanan Barma University, a general university in Coochbehar district of West Bengal during 2020-21. The Universities were selected purposively due to the convenience of the researcher and the availability of respondents.

B. Method of data Collection

A total of 200 students, 100 each from both universities was randomly selected. Thus 100 agricultural graduates and 100 general graduates constituted the sample of the study. Due to the pandemic situation, the respondents could not be contacted physically, the questionnaire in google format was sent to their mail and WhatsApp numbers and responses were collected electronically. Statistical tools like mean, percentage, rank and t-Test were used to find out the result.

C. Data Analysis

1. Factors influencing intention of the graduates.

Total 14 factors were presented to the respondents to find out the major factors that has influenced their intention towards adopting self-employment and entrepreneurship as future career. Responses thus collected were analysed and factors were ranked according to the preferences given by the respondents.

2. Contribution of various institutional and non-institutional sources of information.

Respondents were asked to select among the sources of information like formal or non-formal institutional sources, social Institutional sources and supporting institutions that gives them the most required information and influence them towards building a favourable attitude towards self-employment and entrepreneurship as future endeavour. Responses thus collected were analysed and

sources were ranked according to their contribution in forming the attitude of the respondents.

3. Comparison between the attitudinal proficiency of general graduates and agricultural graduates.

The scale of Shivacharan *et al.* (2017) consisting of 17 attitudinal statements was used and the responses were collected in 5-point continuum ranging from 1 to 5 with slight modification. Individual response for each statement was summed up and used for comparison of attitudinal proficiency between the two graduates.

Statistical tools and Software. The statistical tools like mean, percentage, rank and t-Test were used to do the analysis. SPSS software was used for analyzing the data.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Factors influencing the self-employment and entrepreneurship intentions of the graduates (both agriculture and general)

The theory of reasoned action by Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) says that behaviour is best predicted by intentions, which are derived from the individual's attitude towards performing the action and social pressures or "subjective norms". Thus, attitude and social factors predict intentions, which in turn predict behaviour. Intentions thus serve as a mediator for action. The decision to take up self-employment and entrepreneurship, depends on several motivational factors of intention. Motivational factors, like earning huge profits, gaining personal satisfaction as an entrepreneur and working at the location of choice etc., make self-employment more attractive. Such factors may attract and encourage young adults to start their own business (Schwarz *et al.*, 2009; Krueger *et al.*, 2000, Van Gelderen *et al.*, 2008; Zhang *et al.*, 2015; Nguyen *et al.*, 2019).

Table 1 reveals that out of 14 factors presented to both type of graduates, thought to have impact on students' intention, it has been found that in case of agricultural graduates, (74 %) have considered confidence on independent decision as the major factor influencing their self-employment and entrepreneurship intention and has been ranked as 1st, followed by prove their ability (73%) and desire to create something new (71%) were ranked 2nd & 3rd respectively. However, for general graduates, to prove their ability (57%) was found to be the major factor that influences their self-employment and entrepreneurship intention and has been ranked 1st, followed by to prove innovation is profitable (53%) and to earn more income (49%) were ranked 2nd & 3rd respectively. Similar findings were reported by Schwarz *et al.* (2009); Krueger *et al.* (2000); Van Gelderen *et al.* (2008); Zhang *et al.* (2015); Nguyen *et al.* (2019).

2. Factors contributing to attitude of the graduates (both general and agricultural) towards self-employment and entrepreneurship, and

A. Contribution of various institutional sources of information on attitude towards self-employment and entrepreneurship.

The result of Table 2 shows that for both agriculture and general graduates, formal/non-formal institutional

sources like educational institutes, marketing institutions, NGOs, agri-clinics, agribusiness centres, financing institutions etc. are the primary sources of information contributing to their attitude towards self-employment and entrepreneurship. Hence, formal/non-formal institutions were preferred over social institutions like family members, friends, neighbors, and progressive neighbors as well as over supporting institutions like MANAGE, NIESBUD, NABARD, SIDCO, MSME, DST, DIC, KVIC etc., when it comes to sources of information impacting to their attitude towards self-employment and entrepreneurship. The role of institutions in shaping the entrepreneurial activities of people has already been found by Stephan *et al.* (2014).

B. Contribution of Media on creating awareness and building attitude of the graduates towards self-employment and entrepreneurship.

Table 3 shows that social media, viz; Facebook, twitter, Instagram, youtube, LinkedIn WhatsApp, google was found to be the major media contributing in creating awareness and building attitude towards self-employment and entrepreneurship for both agriculture and general graduates. Thus, social media has been ranked 1st, found to be most popular among all other medium and preferred over other medium meant for spreading awareness and building attitude like Mass media (TV, Radio, Mobile phone, Internet, Newspaper,

Magazines, Poster etc.) and extension activities (Kisan Mela, Exposure to enterprise, educational tour/visit, training related to Entrepreneurship).

The result is in line with the findings of Tran & Von Korfflesch(2016) report, where social networking sites were found to allow people to develop a profile and interact with a number of users.

3.Comparison between the attitudinal proficiency of agricultural and general graduates.

By attitudinal proficiency we mean how apt or competent is person's attitude towards some idea, so in order to find the attitudinal proficiency of agricultural and general graduates, the sum of the attitude scores of both graduates were taken and comparison was done between the two samples with the help of t-Test.

It has been revealed from the Table 4 that there is a significant difference in the mean of attitude of agricultural and general graduates. So, the study concludes that there is a significant difference between the attitude of agriculture graduates and general and that the agricultural graduates possess more attitudinal proficiency towards self-employment and entrepreneurship compared to general graduates. The same might be true because Agricultural universities as an institution exposes their students more into profession courses and field exposure. They offer a full semester dedicated to provide them industrial and entrepreneur exposure.

Table 1: Factors influencing the self-employment and entrepreneurship intentions.

Sr. No.	Factors	Agricultural graduates n=100 (%)	Rank	General graduates n=100 (%)	Rank
1.	Prove innovation is profitable.	69	IV	53	II
2.	Prove ability.	73	II	57	I
3.	Satisfy ego.	21	XII	22	XII
4.	Develop social status.	50	IX	36	VIII
5.	Achieve a better standard of living.	60	VI	42	VI
6.	To earn more income.	66	V	49	III
7.	Set an example for others.	57	VII	37	VII
8.	Confidence on independent decision.	74	I	48	IV
9.	Receiving government support.	30	X	22	XII
10.	Competition.	30	X	23	XI
11.	Desire to create something new/innovate.	71	III	47	V
12.	Have fun.	25	XI	18	XIII
13.	Eliminate unemployment.	53	VIII	39	IX
14.	Build business to pass on.	30	X	26	X

Table 2: Contribution of various institutional sources of information on attitude towards self-employment and entrepreneurship.

Sr. No.	Category	Agricultural graduates n=100 (Mean score)	Rank	General graduates n=100 (Mean score)	Rank
1.	Formal / Non formal Institutional sources (Education institute, Marketing institutions, NGOs, Agri-clinics, and agribusiness centres, Financing institutions viz banks, Co-operatives, etc.)	2.01	I	0.66	I
2.	Social Institutional sources (Family members, Friends, Neighbours, Progressive Entrepreneurs, etc.)	1.84	III	0.44	II
3.	Supporting institution(EDII, Manage, NIESBUD, NABARD, SIDCO, MSME, DST, DIC, KVIC etc)	1.86	II	0.42	III

Table 3: Contribution of Media on creating awareness and building attitude of the graduates towards self-employment and entrepreneurship.

Sr. No.	Category	Agricultural graduates n=100 (mean score)	General graduates n=100 (mean score)	Rank
1.	Mass media (TV, Radio, Mobile phone, Internet, Newspaper, Magazine, Poster)	2.01	0.57	II
2.	Social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn WhatsApp, Google)	2.1	0.73	I
3.	Extension Activities (Kisan Mela, exposure to enterprise, educational tour/ visit, training related to Entrepreneurship)	1.81	0.4	III

Table 4: Comparison between the attitudinal proficiency of agricultural and general graduates.

		t-Test for equality of means						
		t	df.	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean difference	Std. error difference	95% confidence interval of the difference	
							Lower	Upper
Attitude	Equal variances assumed	7.887	198	.000	20.72000	2.62695	15.53962	25.90038

CONCLUSION

Confidence and creativity were found to be the major factor among agricultural graduates that builds their intention towards self-employment and entrepreneurship, which is probably due to the course structure offered to them by the institute. However, profitability and more earnings were found to be the major factors that contribute to the intention of general graduates. Formal institutions including educational, marketing, financial etc., were found to have a great impact on the attitude building of the graduates. In case of media, social media was time and again found to be the most popular and effective media for building the attitude of the students. Overall, it has been found agricultural graduates possess more attitudinal proficiency toward self-employment and entrepreneurship compared to general graduates. Thus, the study recommends that the course structure offered by general universities for graduates be modified as per the professional courses as well as more exposure to enterprises and markets to be provided to their students. The study further recommends seeing how well social media can be utilized effectively to motivate students towards self-employment and entrepreneurship. The study has emphasized on inclusion of more practical oriented courses as well as exposure to industries in the UG program to develop a favorable attitude towards self-employment and entrepreneurship. A similar type of program can be conducted for other professional courses also to assess the attitude of educated people towards entrepreneurship ventures.

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Conflict of Interest. None.

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