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# Hope of success and fear of failure among agriculture diploma students

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#### **Abstract**

The present study investigated the hope of success (HS) and fear of failure (FF) among agriculture diploma students. The data was collected through cross sectional survey 123 diploma agriculture students from the Mahatma Phule Krishi Vidyapeeth Agriculture university, Maharashtra. Data were collected using hope of success and fear of failure standardized scale and analysed through descriptive statistics and correlation coefficients to explore the relationship between personal characteristics and motivational tendencies. Findings indicated that an overwhelming majority (86.99 per cent) demonstrated a high level hope of success, characterized by eagerness to test abilities, confidence in problem-solving, and strong motivation for achievement. Conversely, a significant proportion (75.61 per cent) also exhibited high level fear of failure, reflecting anxiety in uncertain situations, pressure to perform, and apprehension about potential failure. This duality highlighted the coexistence of optimistic drive and performancerelated stress. Correlation analysis showed that mother's education (r = 0.230\*\*), father's occupation (r =  $0.170^*$ ), family type (r =  $0.153^*$ ), and scholarships (r =  $0.210^*$ ) were significantly associated with higher HS. Whereas, age ( $r = 0.170^*$ ), father's occupation ( $r = 0.155^*$ ), and scholarships ( $r = 0.147^*$ ) were positively related to FF, suggesting that both motivational forces were influenced by sociodemographic factors. The study highlights the coexistence of strong aspirations and substantial anxieties among students, underscoring the dual nature of achievement motivation.

Keywords: Hope of success, fear of failure, achievement motivation, agriculture diploma students

### Introduction

Hope of Success (HS) refers to the optimistic anticipation of attaining positive outcomes in a given task or situation (Atkinson, 1964) [2]. Individuals with high hope of success show confidence in their abilities, perseverance, and a forward-looking orientation toward challenges. Atkinson (1957) [1] described HS as an approach-oriented tendency, where individuals are motivated by the expectation of favorable results and satisfaction derived from accomplishment. Similarly, McClelland (1961) [11] emphasized that hope of success is closely tied to striving for excellence, self-improvement, and the belief in one's competence. Hope of Success refers to the individual's positive expectation that efforts will lead to desirable outcomes (Elliot and Church, 1997) [7]. Students with high HS tend to set challenging goals, take initiative, and engage in problem-solving with confidence (McClelland, 1987) [13]. The hope of success can be interpreted as positive emotions and confidence of individuals to achieve success before success is achieved (Steinmayr and Spinath, 2009; Smith, 2015) [16, 17]. Hope of success is considered a dominant motivational tendency, and it is often equated with the characteristics of individuals who possess high levels of achievement motivation. According to Kumar and Stoody (as cited in Olanrewaju, 2010) [14], people with a strong hope of success typically demonstrate greater persistence, confidence in their abilities, and a proactive orientation toward attaining goals, which are identical to the defining criteria of highly achievement-motivated individuals. They perceive success as attainable through effort and are intrinsically motivated to learn and perform. Research has shown that HS fosters persistence, creativity, and resilience, thereby contributing to higher levels of academic achievement (Elliot and Church, 1997; Pekrun, 2006) [8, 15]. Such students are more likely to embrace difficult tasks, demonstrate enthusiasm in learning, and perceive failure as a temporary setback rather than a threat.

Fear of Failure (FF) represents the apprehension and anxiety associated with the possibility of poor performance or negative evaluation. According to Atkinson and Litwin (1960) [3], individuals dominated by fear of failure often display avoidance behavior, preferring to withdraw from challenging situations to minimize the risk of experiencing shame or criticism. Heckhausen (1974) [9] further explained that FF is linked with feelings of insecurity and avoidance of tasks that could lead to unfavourable judgments. The fear of failure is closely related to negative emotions and fear against targets outside of abilities even if such failure has not happened (Steinmayr and Spinath, 2009; Smith, 2015) [16, 17]. Fear of Failure reflects the anxiety and avoidance tendencies arising from the anticipation of negative outcomes. Students with high FF are often preoccupied with the possibility of failing, criticism, or loss of self-worth, which may lead them to avoid challenging situations (Conroy, 2001) [4]. This tendency creates self-handicapping behaviors, procrastination, and reduced confidence in academic performance. Although some students with FF may still strive to achieve under pressure, their motivation is primarily driven by avoidance of failure rather than aspiration for success (Elliot & Thrash, 2004) [8].

The individual Hope of Success is stronger than Fear of Failure are more likely to view challenges as opportunities for growth and mastery. They demonstrate persistence, self-confidence, and resilience, which positively influence academic performance and personal development (McClelland, 1985; Heckhausen, 1991) [10, 12].

On the other hand the Individual with stronger fear of failure than hope of success are learners tend to experience anxiety, avoidance behaviors, and reduced academic engagement. Emphasized that excessive fear of failure often leads to self-handicapping and underachievement, as individuals are more concerned with protecting their self-worth than striving for success Covington (1992) <sup>[5]</sup>. The balance between Hope of success and Fear of Failure is crucial in shaping academic experiences. While HS encourages active engagement and positive learning strategies, FF often results in stress, underachievement, and dissatisfaction (Covington, 1992) <sup>[5]</sup>. Hope of Success (HS) and Fear of Failure (FF) plays a pivotal role in determining an individual's overall achievement motivation. According to Atkinson (1964) <sup>[2]</sup>, achievement

behavior is the result of the interaction between these two motivational forces: the tendency to approach success and the tendency to avoid failure.

Balanced Hope of success and Fear of Failure: A relative balance between the two can create motivational conflict. Elliot and Church (1997) [7] noted that students who simultaneously hope for success but fear failure may show effort, yet their anxiety can limit optimal performance. Such individuals may engage in achievement tasks but with hesitation and stress.

#### **Materials and Methods**

The study was conducted at Mahatma Phule Krishi Vidyapeeth, Rahuri, Maharashtra, during the academic year 2023-2025 to assess Hope of Success (HS) and Fear of Failure (FF) among 123 Agricultural Technical School students. Who voluntarily participated in the study.

The hope of success and fear of failure were measured using a structured scale developed by Dahme et al., (1993) [6]. This scale is basically achievement motivation scale but it has two major dimensions: (1) Hope of Success— measuring eagerness to test abilities, accept challenges, and solve problems, and (2) Fear of Failure—measuring anxiety, uneasiness, and apprehension in uncertain or difficult situations. The scale used a five-point Likert continuum ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5). Data were collected through a Google Form questionnaire with clear instructions, ensuring accuracy, confidentiality, and voluntary participation. The data were then coded, tabulated, and analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequency and percentage) and Kendall Tau-B correlation was to explore the relationship between student sociopersonal characteristics and their scores on the scales of hope of success and fear of failure.

#### Results and discussion

**3.1 Personal Profile:** The study examined the profile characteristics of diploma students with reference to various demographic and socio-economic factors, including age, gender, social category, type and size of family, family background, parental education levels, parental occupations, annual family income, cumulative grade point average (CGPA), and scholarship status.

Sr. No	¥7	Respondents (n=123)		
Sr. No	Variables	Frequency	Percentage	
I.	Age			
1	Up to 17 years	45	36.59	
2	18 to 20 years	78	63.41	
	17- 20years	123	100	
II.	Gender			
1	Male	65	52.85	
2	Female	58	47.15	
III.	Social Category			
1 SC		26	21.14	
2	ST	24	19.51	
3 OBC		32	26.02	
4	General	41	33.33	
IV.	Family Type			
1	Joint family	17 13.8		
2 Nuclear family		106	86.18	
V.	Family Size			
1	Small family (2-4 members)	71	57.72	
2	Medium family (5-10 members)	50	40.65	
3	Big family (>10 members)	2	1.63	
VI.	Family background			
1	Rural	26	21.14	

2	Urban	42	34.15
3	Semi-urban	55	44.72
VII.	Father's education	33	44.72
-		0	6.50
1	Illiterate	8	6.50
2	Primary school	4	3.25
3	Secondary school	9	7.32
4	Higher secondary school	44	35.77
5	Graduation	39	31.71
6	Post-graduation	15	12.20
7	PhD and above	4	3.25
VIII.	Mother's education		
1	Illiterate	10	8.13
2	Primary school	11	8.94
3	Secondary school	30	24.39
4	Higher secondary school	36	29.27
5	Graduation	24	19.51
6	Post-graduation	11	8.94
7	PhD and above	1	0.81
IX.	Father's occupation	1	0.01
1	Agriculture	26	21.14
	Business		-
2		24	19.51
3	Government sector service	33	26.83
4	Private sector service	33	26.83
5	Self- employment	6	4.88
6	Not applicable (don't have father)	1	0.81
X.	Mother's occupation		
1	House wife	55	44.72
2	Agriculture	6	4.88
3	Business	3	2.44
4	Government sector service	18	14.63
5	Private sector service	18	14.63
6	Self- employment	22	17.89
7	Not applicable (don't have mother)	1	0.81
XI.	Income Group	-	
1	Low income group (25000-139999)	27	21.95
	Lower middle income group (140000-	-	
2	249999)	34	27.64
3	Upper middle income group (250000-399999)	27	21.95
4	High Income group (Above 400000)	35	28.46
XII.	CGPA/ Percentage		
1	First class with distinction (8.00 to 10.00)	80	65.04
2	First class (7.00 to 7.99)	35	28.46
3	Second class (6.00 to 6.99)	8	6.50
4	Pass class (5.00 to 5.99)	0	0.0
XIII.	Scholarship	U	0.0
1	ICAR- JRF	0	0.00
2			
	ICAR NTS	1	0.81
3	Mukul Madhav Foundation	0	0.00
4	Merit cum means	5	4.07
5	S.R Jindal Scholarship	0	0.00
6	MahaDBT (EBC)	16	13.01
7	MahaDBT- Miniority	0	0.00
8	MahaDBT- Disability	0	0.00
9	MahaDBT- VJNT	21	17.07
10	MahaDBT- SBC	0	0.00
11	MahaDBT- ST	21	17.07
12	MahaDBT- OBC	17	13.82
13	MahaDBT- SC	19	15.45
14	Seeding Talent	4	3.25
15	None None	19	15.45

The data in table 1 presents the demographic, socioeconomic, and academic characteristics of the diploma students. The majority of respondents (63.41 per cent) were in the age group of 18-20 years, while 36.59 per cent were below 17 years. A nearly balanced gender composition was observed, with males constituting 52.85 per cent and females 47.15 per cent. In terms of social category, most respondents belonged to the general category (33.33 per cent), followed by OBC (26.02 per cent), SC (21.14 per cent), and ST (19.51 per cent). The data further revealed that a significant proportion of students came from nuclear families (86.18 per cent) with small family sizes of 2-4 members (57.72 per cent). With respect to residential background, 44.72 per cent of respondents were from semi-urban areas, 34.15 per cent from urban areas, and 21.14 per cent from rural regions.

Parental education and occupation presented varied patterns. Most fathers had completed higher secondary education (35.77 per cent) or graduation (31.71 per cent), while smaller proportions held postgraduate (12.20 per cent) or doctoral degrees (3.25 per cent). Mothers, however, showed comparatively lower educational levels, with the largest share completing higher secondary (29.27 per cent) or secondary schooling (24.39 per cent). Regarding occupations, fathers were primarily employed in government (26.83 per cent) and private sector jobs (26.83 per cent), while 21.14 per cent were engaged in agriculture. A considerable proportion of mothers were homemakers (44.72 per cent), followed by tHSe selfemployed (17.89 per cent) or working in government and private services (14.63 per cent each). The socio-economic and academic profiles of the respondents provided additional insights. Income analysis indicated that 28.46 per cent belonged to high-income families (above ₹4,00,000 annually), while 27.64 per cent fell into the lower-middle-income group. Academically, a substantial majority (65.04 per cent) achieved first class with distinction, while only 6.50 per cent obtained second class. Regarding scholarships, the largest proportions of students were supported under MahaDBT-ST (17.07 per cent), VJNT (17.07 per cent), SC (15.45 per cent), and OBC (13.82 per cent) categories, whereas 15.45 per cent did not receive any scholarship assistance. Overall, the findings suggested that the diploma students represented a diverse socio-economic background, demonstrated strong academic performance, and showed partial reliance on government-funded scholarship schemes.

# 3.2 Hope of Success among Diploma Agriculture students

**Table 2:** Distribution of students according to their hope of success of diploma agriculture students.

Sr. no.	Statements	SD	D	N	A	SA
	Hope of Success					
1	"I like situations, in which I can find out how capable I am".	4 (3.25)	2 (1.63)	14 (11.38)	64 (52.03)	39 (31.71)
2	"When I am confronted with a problem, which I can possibly solve, I am enticed to start working on it immediately"	2 (1.63)	2 (1.63)	13 (10.57)	71 (57.72)	35 (28.46)
3	"I enjoy situations, in which I can make use of my abilities".	3 (2.44)	0 (0.00)	11 (8.94)	67 (54.47)	42 (34.15)
4	"I am appealed by situations allowing me to test my abilities.	3 (2.44)	1 (0.81)	11 (8.94)	69 (56.10)	39 (31.71)
5	"I am attracted by tasks, in which I can test my abilities".	3 (2.44)	2 (1.63)	11 (8.94)	63 (51.22)	44 (35.77)

The table presented in Table 2 presents the distribution of diploma agriculture students according to their hope of success. The results revealed that most students displayed a positive orientation toward testing their abilities and solving problems. Regarding the statement, "I like situations in which I can find out how capable I am," a majority of respondents (52.03 per cent) agreed, while 31.71 per cent strongly agreed. Only a small proportion expressed disagreement, with 3.25 per cent strongly disagreeing and 1.63 per cent disagreeing. This pattern indicated that the students possessed a strong inclination toward self-assessment and confidence-building activities. A similar trend was observed in other statements reflecting motivation and self-efficacy. When faced with solvable problems, 57.72 per cent of students agreed and

28.46 per cent strongly agreed that they immediately felt motivated to work on them. Likewise, 54.47 per cent agreed and 34.15 per cent strongly agreed that they enjoyed situations where they could use their abilities. In response to statements about being attracted to situations that allowed them to test their capabilities, 56.10 per cent agreed and 31.71 per cent strongly agreed. Furthermore, 51.22 per cent agreed and 35.77 per cent strongly agreed that they were drawn to tasks that provided opportunities for ability testing. Only a negligible fraction of respondents expressed disagreement across these items. These findings suggested that diploma agriculture students generally demonstrated a high level of motivation and a constructive outlook toward personal growth and achievement.

Table 3: Distribution of students according to their levels for hope of success of diploma agriculture students.

Sr. No	Levels	Respondents (n=123)		
51.10	Levels	Frequency	Percentage	
1	Up to 9 Low level hope of success	3	2.44	
2	9-18 medium level hope of success	13	10.57	
3	>18 high level hope of success	107	86.99	

The hope of success is distributed as in 3 levels Up to 9 Low level hope of success, 9-18 medium level hope of success, >18 high level hope of success in the table 3 and showed the distribution of students according to their levels of hope of success among diploma agriculture students (n=123): It was observed that the majority of the students, i.e., 107 students 86.99 per cent, had a high level of hope of success (>18 score). This indicated that most diploma agriculture students

were highly motivated and optimistic about their academic and career achievements. A smaller proportion, 13 students 10.57 per cent, fell under the medium level of hope of success (scores 9-18), suggesting that they had a moderate level of confidence and expectation toward success. Only 3 students 2.44 per cent were found to have a low level of hope of success (up to 9 scores), showing that very few students lacked strong motivation or belief in their ability to succeed.

# 3.3 Fear of Failure among Diploma Agriculture students

Table 4: Distribution of students according to their fear of failure of diploma agriculture students.

Sr.no	Statements		D	N	A	SA
	Fear of Failure					
1	"I am afraid of failing in somewhat difficult situations, when a lot depends on me".					32 (26.02)
2	"I feel uneasy to do something if I am not sure of succeeding".	2 (1.63)	3 (2.44)	15 (12.20)	72 (58.54)	31 (25.20)
3	"Even if nobody would notice my failure, I'm afraid of tasks, which I'm not able to solve".	2 (1.63)	3 (2.44)	25 (20.33)	66 (53.66)	27 (21.95)
4	"Even if nobody is watching, I feel quite anxious in new situations".					19 (15.45)
5	"If I do not understand a problem immediately, I start feeling anxious".	2 (1.63)	3 (2.44)	20 (16.26)	69 (56.10)	29 (23.58)

The data presented in Table 4 illustrates the distribution of diploma agriculture students based on their fear of failure. The results indicated that a majority of students agreed with the statement, "I am afraid of failing in somewhat difficult situations when a lot depends on me," with 57.72 per cent agreeing and 26.02 per cent strongly agreeing. Only a very small proportion, 0.81 per cent strongly disagreeing and 1.63 per cent disagreeing, reflected a negative viewpoint. When asked whether they felt uneasy attempting tasks when unsure of success, 58.54 per cent of students agreed and 25.20 per cent strongly agreed, while just 2.44 per cent disagreed and 1.63 per cent strongly disagreed. These findings suggested that many students were cautious or hesitant to engage in uncertain situations. Similarly, regarding fear of tasks they were unable to solve even without external observation, 53.66 per cent agreed and 21.95 per cent strongly agreed, while only 2.44 per cent disagreed. This implied that the fear of failure persisted even in the absence of external evaluation. In relation to anxiety experienced in new situations, 47.97 per cent of respondents agreed and 15.45 per cent strongly agreed, whereas 32.52 per cent remained neutral, indicating that unfamiliar circumstances often evoked feelings of apprehension. Furthermore, for the statement, "If I do not understand a problem immediately, I start feeling anxious," 56.10 per cent agreed and 23.58 per cent strongly agreed; only 2.44 per cent disagreed and 1.63 per cent strongly disagreed. These results revealed that a majority of students experienced immediate anxiety when confronted with problems they could not solve readily, thereby reflecting a prevalent sense of performance-related anxiety among diploma agriculture students.

Table 5: Distribution of students according to their levels for fear of failure of diploma agriculture students.

Sr. No	Levels	Respondents (n=123)		
Sr. No	Leveis	Frequency	Percentage	
1	Up to 9 Low level fear of failure	1	0.81	
2	9-18 medium level fear of failure	29	23.58	
3	>18 high level fear of failure	93	75.61	

The Fear of Failure is distributed as in 3 levels Up to 9 Low level fear of failure, 9-18 medium level fear of failure, >18 high level fear of failure in the table 5 and showed the distribution of students according to their levels of fear of failure among diploma agriculture students (n=123): It was revealed that the majority of the students, 93 students 75.61 per cent, had a high level of fear of failure (>18 scores). This finding suggested that a large proportion of diploma agriculture students were highly conscious of failure and possibly experienced academic pressure or anxiety regarding their performance. A considerable number, 29 students 23.58 per cent, were categorized under the medium level of fear of failure (scores 9-18), indicating a moderate concern about failure that might have influenced their motivation and

academic behavior. On the other hand, only 1 student 0.81 per cent reported a low level of fear of failure (up to 9 scores), reflecting that very few students experienced minimal fear in the learning process.

# 3.4 Relationship between personal characteristics and Hope of success and Fear of failure of Diploma Agriculture students

The data were then coded, tabulated, and analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequency and percentage) and Kendall Tau-B correlation was to explore the relationship between student socio-personal characteristics and their scores on the scales of hope of success and fear of failure.

Table 6: Distribution of students according to their correlation coefficient of agriculture diploma students.

Sr. No.	Independent variables	Correlation Coefficient (r)		
		Hope of Success (HS)	Fear of Failure (FF)	
1	Age	0.02	170*	
2	Gender	0.03	0.07	
3	Categories	0.08	0.11	
4	Family Type	153*	0.01	
5	Family size	0.11	0.11	
6	Family background	0.07	0.02	
7	Father's education	0.08	0.02	
8	Mother's education	230**	0.10	
9	Father's occupation	170*	155*	
10	Mother's occupation	0.03	0.00	
11	Income	0.03	0.01	
12	CGPA	0.07	0.10	
13	Scholarship	210**	147*	

<sup>\*\* =</sup> Significant at 0.01 level of probability, \* = Significant at 0.05 level of probability

The analysis of the correlation coefficient between independent variables and hope of success as well as fear of failure among agriculture diploma students revealed significant associations. It was found that family type, mother's education, father's occupation, and scholarship had a positive and significant correlation with the hope of success. Particularly, mother's education showed the highest correlation (r = 0.230\*\*), followed by scholarship (r = $0.210^*$ ), father's occupation (r =  $0.170^*$ ), and family type (r = 0.153\*). This indicated that students wHSe mothers were better educated, who received scholarships, and who belonged to favorable family types and occupations were more hopeful of achieving success in their academic pursuits. In terms of fear of failure, age, father's occupation, and scholarship showed significant positive correlations. Age was positively correlated (r = 0.170\*), suggesting that older students were more likely to experience fear of failure compared to their younger counterparts. Similarly, father's occupation (r = 0.155\*) and scholarship (r = 0.147\*) also had significant associations, which implied that students from certain occupational backgrounds and tHSe receiving scholarships might have been more cautious and experienced anxiety regarding failure. Other independent variables such as gender, categories, family size, family background, father's education, mother's occupation, income, and CGPA did not show significant relationships with either hope of success or fear of failure. This suggested that while certain socio-demographic and economic factors influenced students' motivation and anxieties, many variables did not play a major role. Overall, the findings highlighted the importance of family and educational support in fostering hope of success, while age and certain socio-economic aspects contributed to fear of failure among agriculture diploma students.

# Conclusion

The study on hope of success (HS) and fear of failure (FF) among agriculture diploma students revealed a complex interplay between motivational drivers and sociodemographic characteristics. The majority of students demonstrated a high level of hope of success, indicating strong optimism, perseverance, and eagerness to test their abilities in academic and personal challenges. At the same time, a significant proportion also reported high levels of fear of failure, reflecting heightened anxiety, performance pressure, and apprehension in uncertain situations. This coexistence highlights the dual nature of achievement motivation, where aspirations for success are often accompanied by concerns about failure. Correlation analysis indicated that age was positively associated with fear of failure, suggesting that older students experience greater pressure regarding academic and career expectations. Mother's education and father's occupation significantly enhanced hope of success, underscoring the role of parental support and socio-economic stability in fostering confidence and achievement orientation. Scholarships were found to strengthen both HS and FF, reflecting their dual effect of motivating students to excel while also instilling caution to avoid losing financial support. Family type also significantly influenced hope of success, while variables such as gender, family background, and income showed negligible associations. Overall, the findings highlight that agricultural diploma students are highly motivated but simultaneously vulnerable to academic anxiety. Strengthening guidance, mentorship, and stress management programs may help balance these motivational tendencies, enabling students to

channel their aspirations into productive outcomes while minimizing the adverse effects of fear of failure. Educational institutions and families play a vital role in nurturing hope of success and mitigating excessive fear of failure to promote holistic academic and personal growth.

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