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Relationship between profile characteristics and career aspirations of students undergoing agriculture polytechnic programme

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Abstract
The present study was conducted under the jurisdiction of Mahatma Phule Krishi Vidyapeeth, Rahuri university as all Agriculture polytechnics in Maharashtra are under this university. There are total thirteen Agriculture polytechnic under Mahatma Phule Krishi Vidyapeeth, Rahuri university. All thirteen Agriculture polytechnics were selected for the study. From each Agriculture polytechnic ten students were selected. Therefore total 130 respondent students were selected for the study. The design used for the study was *Ex-post facto* research design. The data was collected by personal interview of Agriculture polytechnic students using interview schedule which was pre-tested. The collected data then analysed by using statistical tools such as frequency, percentage and rank. The findings in the study of revealed that out of all the independent variables, age, academic performance, gender, father's education, mother's education, family annual income, family land holding, participation in extra-curricular activity had positive and significant relationship with their career aspirations. The relationship of family size with career aspirations was found to have negative and non-significant.

Keywords: Profile characteristics, Agriculture Polytechnic, Relationship

1. Introduction

Aspiration is a key factor for academic success and is considered a component of achievement motivation. It centres on a strong desire to succeed and setting of clear and specific goals, whether to perform well in certain educational fields or achieve a particular grade (Chauhan *et al*., 2024) [1]. Career aspirations reflect the path a person plans to follow to shape their future and achieve their desired lifestyle. They represent personal choices and preferences related to career options after completing education. This is a very essential and important decision a student has to make for a long-term success. During their academic journey, many often find themselves thinking about the questions like, "What do I hope to become later in life?" or "Which career direction is the right fit for me?" (Niranjan *et al*., 2018) [2]. The "Diploma in Agriculture Polytechnic" is a three-year Agriculture Polytechnic programme conducted in English, provided by the Agricultural Universities of Maharashtra. Mahatma Phule Krishi Vidyapeeth, Rahuri presently manages one constituent and twelve affiliated Agriculture Polytechnics, each with a capacity to admit 40 students annually. The Agriculture Polytechnic programme period is of three years, which is divided into six semesters. Candidates who have passed the 10th standard examination, with English as a mandatory subject, are eligible for admission to the Agriculture Polytechnics based completely on merit. The instruction is conducted in English, and the programme is open to both male and female candidates. The Agricultural Polytechnic serves as a foundational step in education related to agriculture. Its aim is to provide students with the essential knowledge, skills, and experience to become valuable contributors to the agricultural sector. (Vihari *et al.,* 2022) [3]. Diploma courses are structured to help students understand the technologies and techniques that enhance farming and agricultural practices. It is important to explore the different characteristics of polytechnic students and their connection with career aspirations as the results of the study can give useful ideas to policy-makers and educators related to the career aspirations of students. This can help in developing more targeted curricula that better equip students for the job market and align with their professional goals.

2. Methodology

The present study was conducted under the jurisdiction of Mahatma Phule Krishi Vidyapeeth, Rahuri university of Maharashtra state as all Agriculture polytechnics in Maharashtra are under this university. There are total 13 Agriculture polytechnics under Mahatma Phule Krishi Vidyapeeth, Rahuri university. All 13 Agriculture polytechnics were considered for the study. From each selected Agriculture polytechnics, 10 respondents were selected from the third year of Agriculture polytechnic by simple random sampling method.

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A total of 130 students were chosen as respondents for the study which was conducted using a research design called *Ex-post facto* research design. The data was collected by personal interview of Agriculture polytechnic students using interview schedule which was pre-tested. The collected data then analysed by using statistical tools such as frequency, percentage, and rank.

3. Result and Discussion

3.1 Profile characteristics of students undergoing agriculture polytechnic programme

Distribution of students undergoing Agriculture Polytechnic programme revealed that all (100.00 %) students belong to the young age group, no one belongs to the category middle and old age group.

Around half of Agriculture Polytechnic students (50.77 %) achieved first-class academic performance. This was followed by 28.46 per cent of students who secured second class, while 20.77 per cent of the students attained first class with distinction. Most of students of Agriculture Polytechnic (67.70 %) were male, while 32.30 per cent were female. More than three-fifth of the students (64.61 %) were from small-sized families, then 26.16 per cent from medium-sized families, while only 09.23 per cent belong to large-sized families**.** Nearly half (46.16 %) of the student's fathers completed their higher secondary education, 26.92 per cent completed secondary education, 15.39 per cent were graduates, and 11.53 per cent achieved their primary education. Nearly two-fifth (40.77 %) of the student's mothers had completed primary education, 26.16 per cent have achieved secondary education, 21.54 per cent were functionally literate, and 11.53 per cent had education up to higher secondary level. Majority of the respondent's families (54.61 %) have a medium annual income ranging from ₹2,40,001/- to ₹4,20,000/-. Furthermore, 28.47 per cent fall within the low-income category (up to ₹2,40,000/- per year), while only 16.92 per cent are classified as high-income earners, earning ₹4,20,001/- or more annually. Majority of the students (44.62 %) were from families with small land holdings, after that 30.00 per cent were with land holding of size semi-medium and 21.53 per cent came from marginal land holdings. Only 03.85 per cent were from families possessing land holdings medium size. Notably, there were no students from families with land holdings of large size. Most (54.61 %) of the students exhibited a medium level of contribution in extracurricular activities. Then 30.77 per cent had low participation, while only 14.62 per cent showed high participation in these activities.

3.2 Career aspirations of students undergoing agriculture polytechnic programme

Majority (44.62 %) of the students exhibited medium level of career aspirations. After that, 35.38 per cent of the students showed a high level of career aspirations and one-fifth (20.00 %) of the students were with low level of career aspirations.

4. Relationship between career aspirations and profile characteristics of students undergoing agriculture polytechnic programme

Table 1. Relationship between career aspirations and profile characteristics of Students undergoing Agriculture Polytechnic programme

Sr. No.	Independent Variables	Correlation (r)
1	Age	0.354**
2	Academic performance	0.310**
3	Gender	0.261**
4	Family size	-0.120^{NS}
5	Father's education	0.245**
6	Mother's education	0.229**
7	Family annual income	0.193*
8	Family land holding	0.188*
9	Participation in extra-curricular activities	0.384**
	* = Significant at 5 per cent probability	
	** = Significant at 1 per cent probability	
	NS = Non-Significant	

4.1 Age and career aspirations

The correlation coefficient observed between age and career aspirations was positive (0.354*). This indicates that there is a significant relationship between age and career aspirations. This suggests that as students grow older, their career aspirations tend to become more defined or ambitious.

The above findings are similar to the results reported by Jayasudha *et al.* (2020) [4], Gomase *et al.* (2021) [5] and Jayasudha *et al.* (2024) [6].

4.2 Academic performance and career aspirations

The correlation coefficient observed between academic performance and career aspirations was positive (0.310*). This indicates that there is a significant relationship between the academic performance and career aspirations. This implies that students with better academic performance possesses higher or more focused career aspirations.

The present findings are similar to the results reported by Shelke *et al.* (2017) [7], Bind *et al.* (2018) [8] and Reddy *et al.* (2020) [9] and.

4.3 Gender and career aspiration

The correlation coefficient observed between gender and career aspirations was positive (0.261*). This points to the conclusion that there is a significant relationship between gender and career aspirations. This is probably because male students often show a greater willingness to migrate for employment or further education.

The findings of the study are consistent with those reported by Anandraja *et al.* (2019) [10], Shanmukh *et al.* (2023) [11] and Bhoyar *et al*. (2024).

4.4 Family size and career aspirations

The correlation coefficient observed between family size and career aspirations was found to be negative (-0.120) and it is related to a non-significant relationship. The possible reason may be that in large families, educational resources are divided among the members which limits individual access to educational support and that results in lower career aspirations among students.

The above findings are similar to the results reported by Ansari and Ansari (2019), Jayasudha *et al.* (2020) [4] and Devi *et al.* (2022) [12].

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4.5 Father's education and career aspirations

The correlation coefficient observed between the father's level of education and the career aspirations of the children was positive (0.245*). This indicates that there is a significant relationship between father's education and career aspirations. The possible explanation is that a father's higher educational attainment may inspire and motivate children to develop a stronger interest and a more positive outlook toward enrolling in an Agriculture Polytechnic programme.

These findings are similar to the results reported by Bind *et al.* (2018) [8], Reddy *et al.* (2020) [9] and Bhoyar *et al*. (2024).

4.6 Mother's education and career aspirations

The correlation coefficient observed between the mother's level of education and the career aspirations was positive (0.229*). This indicates that there is a significant relationship between mother's education and career aspirations. This could be attributed to the fact that mothers with a moderate level of education often stress the value of education and personal development.

The above findings are similar to the results reported by Bondre *et al.* (2017) [13], Bind *et al.* (2018) [8] and Bhoyar *et al*. (2024).

4.7 Family annual income and career aspirations

The correlation coefficient observed between the family annual income and the career aspirations of the children was positive (0.193*). This indicates that there is a significant relationship between family annual income and career aspirations. The possible reason may be that students from medium family income have greater access related to education, guidance which motivate them to focus for higher level careers.

The above findings are similar to the results reported by Niranjan *et al.* (2018) [2], Reddy *et al.* (2020) [9] and Lad *et al.* (2024) [14].

4.8 Family land holding and career aspirations

The correlation coefficient observed between the family land holding and career aspirations was positive (0.188*). This indicates that there is a significant relationship between family land holding and career aspirations. The possible reason may be that families with better land holding has long term planning and they encourage students to take further agriculture education.

The above findings are similar to the results reported by Chinchmalatpure *et al.* (2019) [15], Devi *et al.* (2022) [12] and Bhoyar *et al*. (2024).

4.9 Participation in extra-curricular activity and career aspirations

The correlation coefficient observed between participation in extra-curricular activities and career aspirations was positive (0.384*). This shows that there is a significant relationship between participation in extra-curricular activity and career aspirations. This may be because even basic involvement in such activities helps develop essential skills and confidence and enhances awareness of various career options.

The above findings are similar to the results reported by Chinchmalatpure *et al.* (2019) [15], Gomase *et al.* (2021) [5] and Bhoyar *et al.* (2024).

5. Conclusion

All students were from the younger age group. A majority of Agriculture Polytechnic students attained first-class academic results, with most respondents being male. Majority of the students were from families of small size. Most of their fathers had an education up to higher secondary level, while most of their mothers had primary education. Most of the students came from families with a medium level of annual income. Additionally, most of the student's family had small land holdings. Majority of the students had medium level of participation in extracurricular activities. Majority of students undergoing Agriculture Polytechnic programme had medium level of career aspirations. In conclusion, among all the independent variables age, academic performance, gender, father's education, mother's education, family annual income, family land holding, participation in extra-curricular activity showed a positive and significant relationship with career aspirations. Family size had negative and non-significant relationship with career aspirations.

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