

## Attitude of Research Scholars towards Agricultural Research

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### ABSTRACT

A research was conducted to find out the attitude of research scholars towards agricultural research at the University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore (India). The responses from 110 research scholars were collected through pretested structured questionnaire. Results indicated that two-third of research scholars had favourable attitude towards agricultural research. Research scholars' characteristics such as fellowship, academic achievement, academic awards, participation in professional meets, publications and research guidance received had positive significant relationship with their attitude.

IN India, seeds were sown for initiating agricultural research in the later part of 19th century, with the pioneering efforts of Lord Mayo, 4th Viceroy of India. Then onwards there is a continuous growth and "Green Revolution" became one of the India's "Golden History" in agricultural research and development. Over the years, brilliant and committed Indian scientists evolved thousands of improved varieties for the betterment of farming community. But, in recent past many Indian scientists fear that, research in science subjects is no more a choice for students. Data indicates that, in the last few years the science students have dropped from 32 per cent to less than 19 per cent creating fear among scientific community (Anony., 1998). This is mainly due to dwindling career options in science research, including agricultural research. Correspondingly, quality of the research is not up to the expected standards. Further, present day agriculture demands high competence from the scientific community to address the issues like food security, poverty alleviation

and environmental protection and also to tackle present problems and challenges such as; conservation of bio-diversity, judicious use of chemicals, optimum water use, market agriculture, infrastructural development, use of information technology and reducing knowledge practice gap in adopting agricultural innovations. To face the above problems and challenges, agricultural scientists need to prepare psychologically strong research attitude and attitude. Considering the above challenges former Director General of ICAR, Paroda (2000) stated that, "Indian agriculture is at cross roads as we move in to the 21st century". Keeping in view of the scientific crisis, a study has been conducted to find out the attitude of research scholars towards agricultural research.

*Operational definition of attitude:* Attitude towards agricultural research refers to the individual's degree of favourableness or unfavourableness towards agricultural research.

## METHODOLOGY

*Locale of the study* : The research was conducted at the University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore (India), during 2000-2001.

*Selection of Respondents* : The study was conducted involving all the 110 Ph.D research scholars (73 male and 37 female) studying in different disciplines (Agriculture and Horticulture) in the University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore.

*Measurement of attitude* : A summated rating scale developed by Laharia and Singh (1981) for measuring attitude of farm scientists towards research was appropriately modified to measure the attitude of research scholars towards Agricultural research. The modified scale consisting of 21 statements (10 positive and 11 negative) was administered to the respondents. The responses were obtained on a five point continuum viz., Strongly agree (SA), Agree (A), Un Decided (UD), Disagree (DA) and Strongly Disagree (SDA) with weightages of 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 for positive statements and the reverse for negative statements. The total attitude score for each respondent was calculated. The possible total score of the scale ranged from 21 to 105. Based on the scores obtained by the respondents they were categorized into three categories taking mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) and standard deviation (SD) as measures of check.

Attitude category	Attitude score
Less favourable ( $<\bar{X} - \frac{1}{2} SD$ )	$<73.50$
Favourable ( $\bar{X} \pm \frac{1}{2} SD$ )	73.50 to 83.44
Most favourable ( $>\bar{X} + \frac{1}{2} SD$ )	$>83.44$

*Measurement of respondents characteristics* : To quantify the respondents' personal and socio-economic characteristics, standard pretested measurement tools such as; procedures and structured schedules were used. Responses from respondents were collected personally by distributing pretested structured questionnaire.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results revealed that (Table I and Fig. 1.) a substantial number of research scholars (30.91 and 36.36 per cent) had either most favourable or favourable attitude towards agricultural research. Nearly, one-third of research scholars (32.73 per cent) had less favourable attitude towards agricultural research. Favourable attitude of research scholars may be mainly because of their

TABLE I  
*Attitude of research scholars towards agricultural research*  
(n=120)

Attitude category	Attitude Score	Research scholars	
		Number	Per cent
Less favourable	Up to 74.50	36	32.73
favourable	73.50 to 83.44	40	36.36
Most favourable	Above 83.44	34	30.91

	Possible score	Obtained score
Maximum:	105	104
Minimum	21	60
Obtained average score : 78.94		

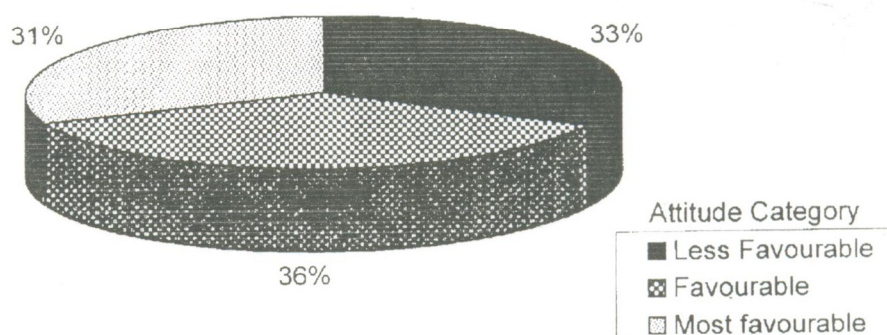


Fig. 1 : Attitude of research scholars towards agricultural research

intrinsic motivation and commitment towards agricultural research. Further, this may be due to their belief that agricultural research provides stimulating experience, research work is enjoyable, develops individuals personality and characters and above all agricultural research contributes to the overall development of the nation. Less favourable attitude of nearly one-third of research scholars might be due to the fear that, agricultural research provides limited career options.

Table II indicates that researcher characteristics such as fellowship, academic achievement, academic awards, participation in professional meets, publications and research guidance received, had significant positive relationship with their attitude. It is evident that the attitude of research scholars is influenced more by academic achievement factors. Further, pursuing academic progress by fellowship eases the financial difficulty and facilitates the researcher to concentrate on useful research. Participation in professional meets (Seminars, Workshops, Conference, Training, Symposia, etc.) and scientific

publications had positive significant relationship. This might be mainly due to the sharing and exchange of scientific information and experiences from across the scientific community, which stimulates the interest and provides motivation among the research scholars.

Interestingly, the variable place of birth had negative significant relationship. This might be due to the fact that majority of research scholars in agricultural research hail from rural areas. Further, rural area research scholars are more exposed to agriculture and they express more favourable attitude towards agricultural research. Research scholars from urban background tend to possess less commitment for agricultural profession and hence had less favourable attitude towards agricultural research. Other characteristics such as; gender, parental education, parental occupation, family annual income, family land holding, family size, place of education, medium of education, personal interest in Post Graduate studies, library and laboratory facilities had non significant relationship with attitude towards agricultural research.

TABLE II  
*Relationship between attitude towards  
 agricultural research and personal,  
 socio-economic characteristics of  
 research scholars*

Characteristics	Correlation Co-efficient (r)
Gender	0.033 NS
Father's Education	0.030 NS
Mother's Education	0.040 NS
Fathers's Occupation	0.010 NS
Mother's Occupation	0.010 NS
Family Annual Income	0.024 NS
Family Land Holding	-0.043 NS
Family Size	-0.173 NS
Place of Birth	-0.232*
Place of Education	-0.128 NS
Medium of Education	-0.080 NS
Fellowship	-0.242*
Academic Achievement	0.195*
Academic Awards	0.197*
Personal Interest in Post Graduate Studies	0.185 NS
Participation in Professional Meets	0.259**
Publications	0.202*
Research Guidance Received	0.207*
Library Facility	0.115 NS
Laboratory Facilities	-0.009 NS

Results of this investigation suggest that, a majority of research scholars had favourable attitude towards agricultural research. Research scholars' characteristics such as; fellowship, academic achievement, academic awards, participation in professional meets, publications and research guidance received had positive and significant relationship with their attitude. However, nearly one-third of research scholars had less favourable attitude towards agricultural research.

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