

Original Research Article

**Higher Education, Placement, Employment and Earning Contours of Farm Graduates during the Pre and Post-COVID-19 Regimes**

**Abstract**

The issue of COVID-19 and its impact on higher education is an emergent focus of debate across the globe. Higher education sectors all over the world are exceptionally disordered and disrupted radically and students are struggling a lot to navigate this crisis. An Analysis of Higher Education, Placement, Employment and Earning Contours of TNAU Farm graduates during the Pre and Post COVID 19 Regimes was conducted with the following objectives

For the present study, 372 past candidates were contacted. Data were collected by mailed Questionnaire. The issue of COVID-19 and its impact on higher education is an emergent focus of debate across the globe. Higher education sectors all over the world are exceptionally disordered and disrupted radically and students are struggling a lot to navigate this crisis.

Among the respondents 57 per cent were girls and 43 percent were boys. Around 42 per cent of the graduates were from rural backgrounds, 31% from urban and the remaining from peri-urban areas. Over 61 per cent of the passed-out graduates were preparing for competitive examinations, 26 per cent were pursuing higher education and only 13 per cent were employed. The percentage of graduates doing higher education and employed has reduced by nearly 50 percent during the COVID. All the students were employed within India during the pre and post-COVID period and the difference between these periods was negligible. However, it could be noted that the number of graduates being employed in the private sector reduced drastically in the first year of Covid while it increased by 35 percent during the second year after CoVID. The choice of jobs was prioritized in the following preference. They were Salary, passion and job security. However, it can be found that the job security aspect has been reduced by 20 percent in the Covid situation. About 59 per cent indicated that their jobs were not secured and 36 per cent expressed that they found it difficult to get admission in national and international institutions due to covid pandemic and 17.2 per cent indicated that they were not able to pursue education in National and International institutions even after getting admissions and fellowships. COVID has impacted higher education and job prospect abroad and far way places

**Keywords:** COVID, Higher Education, Farm Graduates

**Comment [WU1]:** RECAST THE TOPIC FOR CLARITY SAKE. I SUGGEST THIS: "Employment and Earning Contours of Farm Graduates during the Pre and Post-COVID-19 Regimes in Higher Education,.....Country specific where the research work is conducted."

**Comment [WU2]:** PRECISE NUMBER OF WORDS AND PAGE REQUIREMENT FOR AN ARTICLE ADHERED TO. PUT THE HEADING IN UPPER CASE.

**Introduction** The global higher education landscape has dramatically changed in the past few months due to the spread of COVID-19. The issue of COVID-19 and its impact on higher education is an emergent focus of debate across the globe. Higher education sectors all over the world are exceptionally disordered and disrupted radically and students are struggling a lot to navigate this crisis.

**Comment [WU3]:** LET THIS COME ON TOP

Following the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak, Indian students aspiring to higher education overseas have to reconsider their options. Projections for the long-shadow implications of COVID-19 range from a five-year disruption to six months. Forecasts predict anywhere from a 15% to 25% decline in enrolment, depending on which part of the world the calculations are made (UWN, 2020). Right now, this pandemic has added a new layer of complexity and confusion to the higher education sector and to those who seek to study in colleges and universities, both in India and abroad. COVID-19 has exacerbated learning gaps further, taking 1.6 billion students out of school at its peak. (Anonymous 2020)

There has been a shift from culture by doing online learning. As of now, many agricultural universities started accommodating the new system of education and learning environment. The academic and financial situations of farm institutions are to undergo a challenging phase in the days ahead. Higher education opportunities (both domestic and overseas), job markets/employment avenues in Government and other non-institutional sectors, as well as the salary packages even for meritorious and front-line farm students, would face a challenge in post COVID-19 environment. It is expected that this transformation will affect farm students' recruitment/placement and higher education openings. International employment and overseas education, getting visas are a matter of apprehension. Social distancing and restricted travel, both domestic and international mobility create a challenging milieu for career options for graduates in general and farm graduates in particular. In the short run, international student mobility (both in and out) will decline significantly. Students' preference to go abroad for higher education without work visas will have a say on enrolments in renowned foreign educational institutes. There are instances and reports that women graduates are restricted to pursue education (both in national and foreign institutions) and are not allowed to take up challenging employment/assignments outside their place of domicile by their families. This will create a vacuum in the job market in the long run and promising and talented aspirants (women candidates) will not occupy the decision-making hierarchy. These are some of the prickling issues in the sector that need to be analysed to formulate workable strategies and policy prescriptions.

**Methodology** The survey was conducted with students of 13 UG and also PG students. A total of 372 students covering both pre and post covid batches were enquired for the survey. Responses were received from 107 graduates of Pre Covid batch (2019) and 265 graduates of Post Covid (2020 and 2021) batch.

**Comment [WU4]:** LET THIS BE ON TOP BEFORE THE WRITE UP. YOUR RESEARCH DESIGN IS NOT CLEARLY STATED AND HOW YOU APPLIED IT IN THIS RESEARCH WORK.

## **Results**

Among the respondents 57 per cent were girls and 43 percent were boys. Around 42 per cent of the graduates were from rural backgrounds, 31% from urban and the remaining from peri-urban areas. Over 61 per cent of the passed-out graduates were preparing for competitive examinations, 26 per cent were pursuing higher education and only 13 per cent were employed. The percentage of graduates doing higher education and employed has reduced by nearly 50 percent during the COVID.

**Comment [WU5]:** PICTORAL PRESENTATION OF YOUR RESULTS WILL ATTRACT MORE READERS TO YOUR ARTICLE. PLEASE DO SO.

All the students were employed within India during the pre and post-COVID period and the difference between these periods was negligible. However, it could be noted that the number of graduates being employed in the private sector reduced drastically in the first year of Covid while it increased by 35 per cent during the second year after CoVID. The choice of jobs was prioritized in the following preference. They were Salary, passion and job security. However, it can be found that the job security aspect has been reduced by 20 percent in the Covid situation.

Among the salaried group, about 44 per cent were earning less than Rs.20,000 /month; 47 per cent between Rs.20,000-50,000 and the rest over Rs.50,000/month. It was indicated by 28.4 per cent of the graduates that the salary during Covid decreased significantly and 64.6 per cent opined that their lifestyle in terms of income, employment and standard of living changed during the Covid. The self-employed graduates are very negligible and insignificant.

About 94 per cent expressed that there was no gender disparity in the institutions, in which they were employed during the pandemic. About 59 per cent indicated that their jobs were not secured and 36 per cent expressed that they found it difficult to get admission in national and international institutions due to covid pandemic and 17.2 per cent indicated that they were not able to pursue education in National and International institutions even after getting admissions and fellowships.

Among the students doing higher education, 71.5 per cent were pursuing the course of their own choice while the remaining were by chance. The reason for preference of the academic programme by chance was done for fellowship purposes by 51 cents. Only 18.6 per cent of the students were given some kind of fellowship while the rest are doing it on their own. The cost of education varied from Rs.25 lakhs in IITs to Rs.50000 for PG Diplomas. The average cost for OG education was 3 lakhs and there was not much change during the Pre and post covid periods.

All the students during the Covid pandemic were doing higher education in India. The support extended by the parents for doing higher education was mainly for arranging finance (over 50 per cent). The general opinion was that Covid had delayed the completion of the degree programme in time which led to the non-availability of preferred courses in the desired location and envisioned job/employment.

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### Conclusion:

COVID has hit the student's higher education and employment in one way or the other. The general opinion was that Covid had delayed the completion of the degree programme in time which led to the non-availability of preferred courses in the desired location and envisioned job/employment. About 59 per cent indicated that their jobs were not secured and 36 per cent expressed that they found it difficult to get admission in national and international institutions due to covid pandemic and 17.2 per cent indicated that they were not able to pursue education in National and International institutions even after getting admissions and fellowships.

### References

Anonymous (2020), "Indian Students' Mobility Report 2020- Impact of Covid-19 on Higher Education Choices" (Bengaluru: Q S I - E R A I n d I a P v t L t d).

Anonymous (2020) COVID-19 has fuelled a global 'learning poverty' crisis World Economic Forum. <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/12/covid-19-pandemic-education-learning-poverty-world-bank/>

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<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/business/news/coronavirus-graduate-jobs-impact-applications-withdrawn-a9465096.html>.

**Comment [WU6]:** BEFORE THE CONCLUSION PROVIDE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FOLLOWING:  
i.PRACTICE  
ii.THEORY  
iii. FUTURE REASERCHERS  
iv.EMPIRICISM  
A SUMMARY OF THE ARTICLE THEN FOLLOWED BY THE "CONCLUSION"

**Comment [WU7]:** I GIVE YOU THUMBS UP FOR THE VERY CURRENT CITATIONS SEEN IN YOUR REFERENCES

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Marguerite Dennis 2020, “Higher education opportunities after COVID-19”, **University World News**: 9.5.2020.

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**Comment [WU8]:** WHICH STYLE OF REFERENCING ARE YOU USING E.G APSA OR HAVARD.

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