



Full Length Research Article

DETERMINANTS OF ATTITUDE OF RURAL YOUTH TOWARDS AGRICULTURE AS MEANS OF LIVELIHOOD

***¹Renu Gangwar and ²Kameswari, V.L.V.**

¹Ph. D Scholar Agricultural Extension and Communication, Govind Ballabh Pant University of Agriculture and Technology, Pantnagar, Uttarakhand

²Professor Department of Agricultural Communication, Govind Ballabh Pant University of Agriculture and Technology, Pantnagar, Uttarakhand

ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Received 16th June, 2016
Received in revised form
28th July, 2016
Accepted 13th August, 2016
Published online 30th September, 2016

Key Words:

Agriculture,
Attitude,
Livelihood,
Rural Youth.

ABSTRACT

Agriculture sector plays a pivotal role in the economic development of the country. In spite of this, rural youth faced challenges regarding livelihood. As a result, they often prefer to migrate to urban areas to take up low paying jobs. The present study was focused on the determinants of attitude of rural youth towards agriculture as a means of livelihood. The study was conducted in four villages of Uttarakhand. Data was collected from 115 rural youth through interview schedule. It was found that occupation of head of the household and size of the land holding had significant relationship with the attitude of rural youth towards agriculture as a means of livelihood. On the other hand, education, total family income, mass media exposure, cosmopolitanism, extension contact, achievement motivation and change proneness had non significant relationship with attitude of rural youth towards agriculture as a means of livelihood.

Copyright©2016, Renu Gangwar and Kameswari. This is an open access article distributed under the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

INTRODUCTION

Globally, the youth population in the age group of 15 to 24 year was one billion in the year 2000. This number increased to 1.2 billion by the year 2011. Out of these, 754 million (85 per cent) live in developing countries and approximately 60 per cent live in Asia alone. Growth rate of youth population is generally higher in the poor countries and their number has tripled since 1950s. Realizing the significance and role of youth in the development of society, the United Nations declared 2011 as the 'International Year of Youth'. About 70 per cent India's population is below the age of 35 years, making it the youngest nation in the World. This predominance of youth in the Indian population is expected to last until 2050. This high percentage of youth can be utilized for taking Indian agriculture to new heights by channelizing their creative energies through development of appropriate skills, knowledge and attitude.

There are several advantages of involvement of youth in agriculture as they have the latent energy, capacity and ability to produce, propensity to learn and grasp new ideas or technologies faster and they are excellent source of ideas and innovations. Agriculture sector is the main source of livelihood for Indian people and have a high employment potential. Despite this, agriculture remains unattractive to the youth leading to their movement from rural to urban in search of opportunities and better life.

In recent times, migration of young people to urban areas in search of job has reduced availability of labour force for agricultural production. Ghadiri (2005) found that low level of attitude of rural youth towards agricultural activities is the reason for migration to urban areas and their inclination to pseudo jobs. If agriculture is profitable, then it can serve as a source of gainful employment for the youth. This will go a long way in solving the problem of migration of youth arising due to under or disguised unemployment. In view of the above, the present study was designed to find out the factors that determine the attitude of rural youth towards agriculture as a means of livelihood.

***Corresponding author: Renu Gangwar,**

Ph. D Scholar Agricultural Extension and Communication, Govind Ballabh Pant University of Agriculture and Technology, Pantnagar, Uttarakhand.

Table 1. Characteristics of the Rural Youth

S. No.	Variables	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Age		
	Very young (up to 17 years)	24	20.87
	Young (18-23 years)	77	66.96
	Mature (above 23 years)	14	12.17
2.	Education		
	Illiterate	3	2.60
	Can read only	0	0
	Can write only	0	0
	Can read and write	0	0
	Primary education	10	8.70
	Secondary education	27	23.48
	Higher secondary education	36	31.30
	Diploma	10	8.70
	Graduate	27	23.48
	Post graduation	2	1.74
3.	Present employment status		
	Employed	22	19.54
	Unemployed	26	22.91
	Student	54	46.96
	Farmer	12	10.59
4.	Family size		
	Small (up to 4)	23	20
	Medium (5-8)	79	68.70
	Large (above 8)	13	11.30
5.	Family type		
	Nuclear	46	40
	Joint	63	54.79
	Extended	6	5.21
6.	Marital status		
	Unmarried	99	86.08
	Married	16	13.92
7.	Caste		
	General caste	21	19.50
	Other backward caste	74	64.50
	Schedule caste and Schedule tribes	18	16
8.	Occupation of head of the household		
	Labour	10	8.70
	Caste occupation	3	2.60
	Business	12	10.44
	Independent profession	0	0
	Cultivation/farming	79	68.70
	Service	11	9.56
9.	Main source of income of family		
	Labour	9	7.90
	Caste occupation	4	3.50
	Business	13	11.20
	Farming	79	68.70
	Service	10	8.70
10.	Size of land holding		
	Up to 1 acre	61	53
	Up to 5 acres	36	31.30
	Up to 10 acres	10	8.70
	Up to 15 acres	8	7
11.	Total family income		
	APL (more than Rs. 27,000 p.a)	82	71.30
	BPL (less than Rs. 27,000 p.a)	33	28.70
12.	Media ownership		
	Low (up to 1)	12	10.40
	Medium (2-3)	98	85.20
	High (above 3)	5	4.40
13.	Mass media exposure		
	Low	15	13.05
	Medium	83	72.17
	High	17	14.88
14.	Extension contact		
	Low (up to 1)	19	16.53
	Medium (2-5)	88	76.52
	High (6-9)	8	6.95
15.	Cosmopolitaness		
	Low	30	26.10
	Medium	84	73.10
	High	1	0.80
16.	Achievement motivation		
	Low	32	28
	Medium	81	70
	High	2	2
17.	Change proneness		
	Low	1	0.90
	Medium	67	58.30
	High	47	40.80

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present study was conducted in Udham Singh Nagar district of Uttarakhand state. The district comprises of eight blocks out of which two blocks (Kichha and Sitarganj) were selected purposively. Two villages from each block were selected purposively as they have large number of households. Ajeetpur and Bara from Kichha block and Sisaiya and Barri from Sitarganj block were selected. Thirty per cent youth in the age group of 15-24 years belonging to households owning agricultural land and residing permanently in the village were selected randomly. Total 115 respondents were selected and data collection was done using pretested structured interview schedule. After going through various theories as career choice, education, present employment status, family size, family type, marital status, caste, occupation of head of the household, main source of income of family, size of the land holding, total family income, number of family members involved in agriculture, media ownership, mass media exposure, extension contact, cosmopolitaness, achievement motivation and change proneness were taken as independent variables for the present study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Sampling characteristics

Findings of study revealed that about one third (31.30 per cent) youth had educational qualification up to higher secondary level. Majority of the respondents (46.96 per cent) were students and (22.91 per cent) were unemployed. This figure is higher than the national figure of unemployed youth. Majority of the respondents belonged to medium size family (68.7 per cent) and from joint family (54.79 per cent). These findings are similar to finding of Butt (2011), he observed that receptivity and responsiveness is more in the younger group and process of learning is quick among youth, they are mentally alert, socio-economically considerate, open to new ideas, and are able to experiment and adopt innovations quickly.

Table 2. Correlation between independent and dependent variables

S. No.	Variables	Coefficient correlation (r)	of	t _{cal}
1.	Education	-0.05		-0.59
2.	Occupation of head of the household	0.49**		6.12
3.	Size of the land holding	-0.25**		-2.79
4.	Total family income	-0.01		-0.16
5.	Mass media exposure	-0.04		-0.52
6.	Extension contact	-0.008		-0.09
7.	Cosmopolitaness	0.02		0.29
8.	Achievement motivation	-0.16		-1.75
9.	Change proneness	0.032		0.34

** At 0.05 per cent level of significance

Further, it was found that majority of the households relied on agriculture as the primary source of income (68.70 per cent), owned up to one acre of cultivable land (53 per cent) and belonged to Above Poverty Line (APL) category households (71.30 per cent).

It was also found that majority of respondents had medium level of media ownership (85.20 per cent) and media exposure (72.17 per cent). Majority of the youth (76.52 per cent) had medium level of extension agency contact. Further, the youth are rarely seen as potential clients by these agencies. Majority of the respondents had medium level of cosmopolitanism (73.10 per cent), achievement motivation (70 per cent) and change proneness (58.30 per cent). This indicates that very few youth in the study area were in touch with outside environment/sources and do not have a high urge to do things solely for their own satisfaction or to prove their worth. However, they are enthusiastic to accept change and new practices. Narendran (2000) found that 54 per cent of the school going rural youth had higher achievement motivation and 46 per cent had lower achievement motivation. On the other hand, among non-school going rural youth, 16 per cent had higher achievement motivation and 84 per cent had lower achievement motivation.

Determinants of attitude towards agriculture as a means of livelihood

The results of analysis of the relationship between socio-economic, psychological and communication characteristics of rural youth and their attitude towards agriculture as a means of livelihood are given in Table no. 2. It was found that education, total family income, mass media exposure, extension agency contact, cosmopolitanism, achievement motivation and change proneness have no correlation with the attitude of youth towards agriculture as a means of livelihood. Sajjan et al. (2012) in a study found that attitude towards agriculture as a career showed significant relationship with education, annual income, size of the land holding, local institutional participation, extension participation and mass media ownership. Whereas, occupation of the head of the household had significant positive relationship with the attitude of the youth towards agriculture. This significant relationship is due to the fact that only those rural youth whose family owned agriculture land was selected for study. This also indicates that agriculture is still the primary source of employment in rural areas. It was also found that the size of the land holding owned by the respondent's household was negatively associated with attitude towards agriculture. This relationship between the size of the landholding and attitude towards agriculture as a means of livelihood is due to the fact

that households with bigger farm size are able to provide better educational opportunities to their children, have greater access to media and outside world and financial resources which contribute towards exploring other livelihood options.

Conclusion

Rural youth constitute a significant proportion of India's population. For the development of the nation as well as youth it is necessary to involve rural youth in agriculture. Their active participation is possible only if they are imparted relevant concepts and issues related to agriculture. The present study was carried out to find out the determinants of attitude towards agriculture as a means of livelihood. Size of the land holding and occupation of the head of the household are strongly related to attitude formation. Hence, policy measures should aim at encouraging youth belonging to farming families to take up agriculture by providing suitable incentives, information and incentives. Further, extension agencies should especially focus on them and design extension activities to encourage youth participation in agriculture.

REFERENCES

- Butt, T.M., Hassan, M.J.Y. and Sahi, S.T. 2011. Role of rural youth in agricultural and rural development: A self perceived case study. *Journal of Agricultural Extension and Rural Development*. 3(2): 23-28.
- Government of India 2012. Ministry of youth affairs and sports. Draft national youth policy.
- Ghadiri, M. 2005. Effective factors of rural youth attitude about employment in agricultural activities. Unpublished research paper, Department of Rural Development, Science and Research Branch. Iran.
- Narendran, K. 2000. Occupational aspirations of rural youth. Thesis, M.Sc. (Agri.). University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore, Karnataka.
- Sajjan, S.P., Manjunath, M., Halakatti, S.B. 2012. A study on the attitude of rural youth towards agriculture. *Research Journal of Agricultural Sciences*. 9(2):131-136.
- World Youth Report 2012. Youth employment: Youth perspectives on the pursuit of decent work in changing times. New York: United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs.
