



Relationship between Profile of Rural Youth and Attitude towards Agriculture

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ARTICLE INFO

Keywords: Attitude, Agriculture, Migration, Rural youth

<http://doi.org/10.48165/IJEE.2021.57303>

ABSTRACT

The study was conducted in Hisar and Bhiwani districts of Haryana, with an objective to analyze the relationship between profile characteristics of rural youth with their attitude towards agriculture. Empirical data were collected personally from 192 respondents comprising 12 rural youth from sixteen villages through a structured interview schedule and analyzed using standard methodology. Findings revealed that 72.39 per cent possessed a less favorable to favorable attitude towards agriculture. The correlation and regression analysis of different variables i.e. occupation, income expectancy, comfort expectancy, affiliation expectancy exhibited positive and significant effect, whereas age, educational status, non-farm skill, proximity to towns and cities, prior migration experience, economic motivation, risk orientation, self-reliance and self-confidence exhibited negative and significant effect. However, farm skills and achievement motivation exhibited non-significant effect but positively correlated with their attitude towards agriculture. Hence, the paper recommends that there is a need of special efforts to attract, train and retain the rural youth in agriculture as a whole by developing more favorable attitude towards agriculture by transforming and making it more agribusiness oriented, scientifically attractive and economically profitable.

INTRODUCTION

India is the land of youth and also the largest young population in the world i.e., poised to increase further in the coming decade. Nearly two-third of India's population is below the age of 35 years. According to the 2011 Census, the youth population in the country including adolescents is around 550 million (Draft National Youth Policy, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, 2012). This pool of youth population is a decisive factor in determining our nation's destiny. The phenomenal rise in the youth population has made India the youngest nation and one of the top human resource metrics in the world. It is vital to utilize this demographic dividend and channelize the youth and their creative energies for nation-building. Hence, India should capitalize to invest on this young pool of India. Migration from rural areas to urban areas has become an inevitable phenomenon during the last two decades. Industrialization of urban

areas, investment opportunities, growing service industry, food security, better health infrastructure, education facilities are some of the factors responsible for the growth of urbanization in India. Urbanization has become an opportunity for the rural youth seeking jobs in urban areas because of its potential of creation more job opportunities.

Agriculture plays an important role in rural economy. But the sector is still not lucrative from investment and employment point of view of due to several risk factors (Hari et al., 2013). Rural farming youth are more interested in going to cities for acquiring necessary skills and getting jobs in companies or corporate sector. Limited access to markets, assets, finance and infrastructure in rural areas, coupled with rapid growth and opportunities in urban areas, increasingly makes cities the obvious choice in the search for a better life (Joshi and Kashyap, 2020). In the coming years, one of the biggest challenges for Indian agriculture would be retaining its youth

in agriculture (National Agriculture Policy, 2020). Unless farming becomes both intellectually stimulating and economically rewarding, it will be difficult to attract or retain rural youth in farming (Som et al., 2018). However, with the help of several evidences available it is observed that attitude of the individual is influenced by the social and cultural factors. Similarly, Nataraju et al., (2017) also highlights that educational status, landholding, risk orientation, innovation proneness, social participation, mass media use, cosmopolitanness, scientist contact significantly influenced and contributed towards the perception of rural youth towards agriculture. Keeping in view the above facts and importance, the present study was conducted with objective to assess the relationship between profile of rural youth with their attitude towards agriculture.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in randomly selected Bhiwani and Hisar districts of Haryana state. From Hisar district two blocks i.e. Hisar and Hansi, whereas Tosham and Bawani Khera from Bhiwani district were selected randomly. From four blocks, sixteen villages were selected by random sampling method. Household of twelve rural youth (6 fully migrated and 6 seasonal migrated) having education up to 12th standard and engaged in agriculture, were selected from each of the selected village, making a total of 192 households. Rural youth in the present study has been defined as a person (male) living in the village within the age group of 15-30 years as per the guidelines of "National Youth Policy, 2014" Government of India. From these households, the eldest male youth available at the time of data collection was interviewed. One youth from one family was considered as unit of data collection. Empirical data were collected through personal interview technique with the help of structured interview schedule and analyzed using 26th version of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for computing frequency, percentage, mean and correlation and regression analysis. In order to measure attitude level, the responses of respondents' were obtained on a five point continuum scale developed by Hari (2014) representing strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, and strongly disagree with scores of 5,4,3,2 and 1 for positive statements and vice-versa for negative statements. Overall attitude level was determined and the respondents were categorized into three categories i.e. less favorable (< 24), favorable (24-30) and more favorable (>30) on the basis of equidistant method of computing categories.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Attitude was actively utilized as the psychological disposition of the rural youth about agriculture in different degrees of

favorableness or un-favorableness. It is apparent from Table 1 that nearly two-fifth of the rural youth (39.50%) had favorable attitude towards agriculture followed by less favorable (32.81%) and more favorable (27.61%). But when comparison was made between fully and partially migrated respondents, more than two-fifth of the fully migrated respondents (43.75%) had favorable attitude and wished agriculture to be as their main occupation, whereas in case of partially migrated respondents, about two-fifth of them (41.66%) had less favorable attitude towards agriculture. It reflected that most of the rural youth had favorable attitude towards agriculture, but a few of them had less favorable attitude which might be due to several factors like lack of awareness about opportunities in the sector, lack of incentives, high risks involved due to natural hazards and absence of policy measures, *etc.* (Gangwar and Kameshwari, 2016). However, land fragmentation also results in increase in number of marginal and small holdings and low returns from the sector also play a critical role in formation of less favorable attitude towards agriculture among rural youth (Kitturmath et al., 2013). These constraints have to be addressed if the nation wants to retain youth in agriculture. Similar findings were also reported by Preethi et al., (2014) who suggested that there should be an increase in training and exposure visit of rural youth to maximize the use of innumerable applications of technology in agriculture that will eventually help to increase their involvement in agriculture.

The results revealed that the variables, income expectancy, comfort expectancy, stimulation expectancy and affiliation expectancy were found to have positive and significant relationships whereas age, educational status, non-farm skill, proximity to towns and cities, prior migration experience, economic motivation and risk orientation exhibited negative and significant relationships. The results also conveyed that occupational status was found to have positive and significant relationship at five per cent level of probability whereas self-reliance and self-confidence portrayed negative and significant relationships at the same probability level. However, variables such as farm size, farm skill and achievement motivation depicted a non-significant relationship with the dependent variable.

The extent of contribution of independent variables with the dependent variable was worked out using multiple regression analysis and the results presented in Table 2 indicates that R² value was 0.541 which revealed that 54.10 per cent variation in the attitude of rural youth towards agriculture was explained by 17 independent variables selected for the study. The 'F' value 9.325 was significant at one per cent level of probability. Out of the seventeen variables, farm size and farm skill had shown positive significant contribution with the dependent variable 'attitude of rural youth towards agriculture' at one per cent level of probability,

Table 1. Attitude of rural youth towards agriculture

Category	Rural youth			t value
	Fully migrated (n=96) F (%)	Partially migrated (n=96) F (%)	Overall (n=192) F (%)	
Less favorable (< 24)	40(41.66)	23 (23.96)	63 (32.81)	3.498**
Favourable (24-30)	34 (35.42)	42 (43.75)	76 (39.58)	
More favorable (> 30)	22 (22.92)	31 (32.29)	53 (27.61)	

Note: ** Significant at 0.01 probability level, F= frequency

Table 2. Association and contribution of socio-economic and psychological characteristics of rural youth with their attitude towards agriculture (n=192)

Socioeconomic and psychological character	Fully Migrated (n=96)				Partially Migrated (n=96)				Overall (n=192)			
	r' value	PRC	SE	t' value	r' value	PRC	SE	t' value	r' value	PRC	SE	t' value
Age	-0.229*	-1.425	1.007	-1.398 ^{NS}	-0.359**	0.609	1.419	-0.427 ^{NS}	-0.267**	-0.661	0.705	-0.935 ^{NS}
Education	-0.273*	0.810	0.746	1.197 ^{NS}	-0.326**	-1.059	0.873	-1.209 ^{NS}	-0.259**	-1.059	0.520	-2.049*
Occupation	-0.256*	-0.613	1.137	-0.529 ^{NS}	-0.030 ^{NS}	-2.967	1.929	-1.528 ^{NS}	0.184*	0.670	0.779	0.859 ^{NS}
Farm size	-0.131 ^{NS}	1.117	0.851	1.326 ^{NS}	0.099 ^{NS}	3.699	1.199	3.161**	-0.029 ^{NS}	1.713	0.598	2.861**
Farm skill	0.585**	5.302	1.719	2.997**	NA	NA	NA	NA	0.010 ^{NS}	5.550	1.543	3.594**
Non-farm skill	-0.083 ^{NS}	-0.193	2.052	-0.083 ^{NS}	-0.490**	-6.389	2.189	-2.890**	-0.305**	-2.420	1.369	-1.759 ^{NS}
Proximity to town	-0.455**	-1.895	1.174	-1.653 ^{NS}	-0.307**	-1.121	1.973	-0.569 ^{NS}	-0.436**	-2.061	0.909	-2.265*
Prior migration experience	-0.191 ^{NS}	2.216	2.294	0.979 ^{NS}	-0.359**	-3.142	2.381	-1.299 ^{NS}	-0.304**	2.340	1.225	1.951 ^{NS}
Economic motivation	-0.315**	0.411	0.272	1.469 ^{NS}	-0.361**	0.749	0.339	2.211*	-0.405**	0.046	0.170	0.259 ^{NS}
Achievement motivation	-0.073 ^{NS}	0.612	0.357	1.782 ^{NS}	0.169 ^{NS}	0.301	0.291	1.019 ^{NS}	0.052 ^{NS}	0.440	0.193	2.254*
Risk orientation	-0.261*	-0.059	0.322	-0.189 ^{NS}	-0.039 ^{NS}	-0.571	0.219	-2.598**	-0.271**	-0.020	0.139	-0.151 ^{NS}
Self-reliance	-0.113 ^{NS}	-0.368	2.046	-0.181 ^{NS}	-0.212 ^{NS}	1.526	2.399	0.670 ^{NS}	-0.159*	-1.987	1.290	-1.541 ^{NS}
Self confidence	-0.347**	-0.145	0.534	-0.273 ^{NS}	0.089 ^{NS}	0.298	0.179	1.649 ^{NS}	-0.189*	0.199	1.140	1.420 ^{NS}
Income expectancy	0.543**	-0.013	0.371	-0.026 ^{NS}	0.287**	0.129	0.219	0.567 ^{NS}	0.474**	0.083	0.179	0.463 ^{NS}
Comfort expectancy	0.616**	1.288	0.539	2.469**	0.467**	0.069	0.327	0.219 ^{NS}	0.587**	0.530	0.245	2.147*
Stimulation expectancy	0.544**	0.763	0.361	2.035*	0.061 ^{NS}	-0.217	0.318	-0.658 ^{NS}	0.391**	0.101	0.234	0.438 ^{NS}
Affiliation expectancy	0.508**	-0.562	0.332	-1.709 ^{NS}	0.361**	0.928	0.349	2.659**	0.498**	0.190	0.201	0.945 ^{NS}
R ²			0.647				0.624				0.541	
F Value			6.639**				6.497**				9.325**	
Constant			2.183				36.516				17.640	

PRC = Partial Regression Co-efficient; NS = Non Significant; SE = Standard Error; * = Significant at 0.05 level; ** Significant at 0.01 level

whereas variables like achievement motivation and comfort expectancy had shown positively significant contribution at five per cent level of probability. However, variables like educational status and proximity to towns/cities had shown negative significant contribution at five per cent level of probability. This revealed that a unit increase in farm size, farm skill, achievement motivation and comfort expectancy would result in an increase in favorable attitude towards agriculture by 1.713, 5.550, 0.440 and 0.530 units respectively. It could be observed from the table that among the four significantly contributing variables, farm size and farm skill were found to contribute much on 'attitude towards agriculture'. In general, increased farm size would enhance a favorable mind-set towards agriculture. Increased employment generation and increased income because of increased farm size would be the reason behind the development of favorable attitude. Similarly, possession of farm skill is positively related to the attitude of rural youth towards agriculture. The more the possession of farm skill, more would be the dexterity to manage the farm and this would probably lead to possess a positive attitude towards agriculture. Strong achievement motivation might enhance the positive attitude of an individual to earn more income and profit from the farming. Higher achievement motivation also might pave way for the comfortable risk management endeavor (Senthilkumar, 2009). Pertaining to comfort expectancy, more the expectation of living in a pleasant and socially amenable commune, more would be the rural youth's intention to retain in agriculture. Thus achievement motivation level and comfort expectancy of the rural youth would positively influence their attitude towards agriculture.

In the case of fully migrated rural youth, the correlation analysis between seventeen independent variables and attitude towards agriculture revealed that variables like farm skill, income expectancy, comfort expectancy, stimulation expectancy and affiliation expectancy were found to have positive and significant relationships at one per cent level of probability level whereas proximity to towns and cities, economic motivation and self-confidence exhibited a negative and significant relationships at the same probability level. It was also found out that age, education, occupation and risk orientation portrayed negative and significant relationships at the five per cent probability level. Further, it could be observed that, the multiple regression analysis with respect to fully migrated rural youth indicated a significant R² value of 0.647 which revealed that 64.70 per cent variation in the attitude of rural youth towards agriculture, which was explained by seventeen variables selected for the study. The 'F' value (6.639) was significant at one per cent level of probability. Out of the seventeen variables, farm skill and comfort expectancy had shown positive significant contribution with the dependent variable at one per cent level of probability where as one variable namely stimulation expectancy had shown a positively significant contribution at five per cent level of probability. Hence it could be concluded that a unit increase in farm skill, comfort expectancy and stimulation expectancy ceteris paribus would result in an increase in favorable attitude towards agriculture by 5.302, 1.288 and 0.763 units respectively.

With regard to partially migrated rural youth, the results of correlation analysis revealed that the variables namely comfort expectancy and affiliation expectancy were found to have positive

and significant relationships at one per cent level of probability level whereas age, educational status, non-farm skill, proximity to towns/cities, prior migration experience and economic motivation exhibited a negative and significant relationships at the same probability level. One variable namely income expectancy was found to have positive and significant relationship at five per cent level of probability. The regression analysis portrayed that the R^2 value was 0.624 which revealed that 62.40 per cent variation in the attitude of rural youth towards agriculture, which was explained by seventeen variables selected for the study. The 'F' value 6.497 was significant at one per cent level of probability. Out of the seventeen variables, farm size and affiliation expectancy had shown positive significant contribution with the dependent variable 'attitude of rural youth towards agriculture' at one per cent level of probability, whereas one variable namely economic motivation had shown a positively significant contribution at five per cent level of probability. However, variables like non-farm skill and risk orientation had shown negative significant contribution at one per cent level of probability. This revealed that a unit increase in farm size, economic motivation and affiliation expectancy ceteris paribus would enhance the favorable attitude of rural youth towards agriculture by 3.791, 2.205 and 0.933 units respectively. The comparative study of the contribution of the profile of the fully migrated and partially migrated youth with their attitude towards agriculture reveals that farm skill, comfort expectancy, stimulation expectancy, farm size, economic motivation and affiliation expectancy positively favor their attitude towards agriculture. These findings were partially supported by the report of D'Silva et al., (2010) who also revealed that education, landholding, risk orientation, innovation proneness, social participation, mass media use, cosmopolitanism, scientist contact significantly influenced and contributed towards the perception of rural youth towards agriculture and Yadav (2017) where the attitudinal dimensions identified for sustainability of Bt cotton in the form of environmental, economic, social and technological aspects of Bt cotton production technology were positive and favourable.

CONCLUSION

The results indicated that 72.39 per cent of the rural youth possessed less favorable to favorable attitude towards agriculture. The partially migrated rural youth possessed a more positive attitude towards agriculture than the fully migrated ones. The comparative study of the contribution of the profile of the fully migrated and partially migrated youth with their attitude towards agriculture revealed that farm skill, comfort expectancy, stimulation expectancy, farm size, economic motivation and affiliation expectancy positively favor their attitude towards agriculture. In respect of attitudinal pattern, a sizeable section of rural youth exhibited a negative disposition towards agriculture. This is a critical observation which needs to be addressed through intensification of efforts to change the mind set of rural youth towards agriculture. The pessimistic image and perceptions about agriculture must be addressed properly to entice more youth to choose agriculture and allied fields as a career. The positive aspects of choosing agriculture should be emphasized to the youth i.e. owning own business,

choosing own hours and having a variety of daily responsibilities. This would be possible if appropriate extension strategies are being taken up. The appropriate extension strategy is being sensitized through organizing 'Rural Youth Clubs' in the rural areas, with a major mandate of developing a positive cognition for rural youth towards rural setting and farming.

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