



RESEARCH PAPER

Perception of rural youth towards agriculture as an occupation

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Abstract : The present investigation is conducted in Marathwada region of the Maharashtra state during 2022-2023 with the objective to study “Perception of rural youth towards agriculture as an occupation”. One districts namely Beed was selected randomly from Marathwada region. Three talukas from Beed district and five villages from each talukas were selected randomly for the study. From each selected village, ten rural youth were selected randomly who was able to express their views on agriculture as an occupation, which comprising total sample of 150 respondents were considered for the study. An Ex-post-facto research design was followed for the study. Data was gathered using a well-structured interview schedule created with the study’s objectives in mind. The collected data was analysed, classified and tabulated. Statistical tools such as frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, and co-efficient correlation were used to interpret findings and draw conclusions. The findings shows that detailed analysis of dependent variable indicated that majority of rural youth had medium level (72.00%) of perception towards agriculture as an occupation followed by low (16.67%) and high (11.33%).

Key Words : Rural youth towards agriculture

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INTRODUCTION

The most influential demographic in a nation is its youth. The future’s hopes rest with today’s youngsters. They serve as the foundation of the nation. The type of adolescents living in rural regions has a significant impact on the socio-economic growth and prosperity of those areas since they are better equipped to self-direct themselves to follow the development process’ main stream. They serve as a reflection of a country’s potential and as its life force. Thus, the growth of the youth dictates the growth of the community and the nation.

The goal of the current inquiry is to gauge rural youth perceptions of agriculture as a profession. If correctly utilized, the enormous potential of rural youth can be greatly beneficial for the development of agriculture. It is crucial to involve rural adolescents in agriculture, to promote in them a positive perception of agriculture. Additionally, the study will show the relationship of personal and socio-psychological characteristics of rural youth with perception. The adoption of any innovation depends upon the perception and investment capacity of an individual. It has been accepted that the perception of an individual plays a

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pivotal role in influencing youth's behavior. Hence, the perception of rural youth in India towards modern agriculture will most certainly have bearing on the future of agricultural development in this country. Finally, an effort has been made to pinpoint the constraints each rural youth faces in choosing agriculture as a career. The policy makers would therefore be better equipped to plan and design agricultural development strategies so that the potential of rural youth could be utilized in a more productive and effective way.

Objectives :

- To study profile of rural youth.
- To measure perception of rural youth towards agriculture as an occupation.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The present study was undertaken in Marathwada region in the Maharashtra State. The research study was carried out in Beed district of Marathwada region in Maharashtra State. Out of 11 Talukas in Beed district, 3 Talukas namely Ashti, Patoda and Shirur (kasar) were randomly selected for the study. From each selected taluka, five villages with highest youth population were purposively selected for the study. Thus, a total of fifteen villages were selected for study. From each of selected villages, 10 rural youth (15-35 yrs. age group) were selected randomly who was able to express their views on agriculture as an occupation, which comprising total sample of 150 respondents. An ex-post-facto research design was followed to achieve the objectives of the study as the variables have already occurred. The interview schedule was constructed by formulating relevant questions in accordance with the study objectives. The schedule was divided into two parts. The questions related to personal, socio-economic, situational and psychological characteristics of respondents were included in first part. The questions related to the perception of rural youth in second part. The collected data was analysed, classified and tabulated. Statistical tool such as frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation and co-efficient correlation were used to interpret findings and draw conclusions.

Majority (72.00%) of rural youth had medium level of perception towards agriculture as an occupation, followed by the rest with low (16.67%) and low (11.33%) levels of perception.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The detailed analysis of profile characteristics of rural youth indicated that majority of them had secondary high school (35.33%) education, having small land holdings (35.33 %), medium annual income (60.00%), medium size families (57.33 %), belonging to joint families (62.00%), engaged in Agriculture + Animal husbandry occupation (32.67%), had medium extension contact (55.33%), low level of social participation (42.00%), medium level of mass media exposure (56.00%), medium level of economic motivation (56.67%), medium level of risk orientation (45.33%) and medium level of innovativeness (59.33%). The findings shows that detailed analysis of dependent variable indicated that majority of rural youth had medium level (72.00%) of perception towards agriculture as an occupation followed by low (16.67%) and high (11.33%).

According to overall perception analysis, it was found that majority (72.00%) of rural youth had medium level of perception towards agriculture as an occupation, followed by the rest with low (16.67%) and low (11.33%) level of perception. The reason might be due to respondents tend to stick to the same old ways of cultivating their crops with indigenous varieties, leading to a lack of change and innovation. Additionally, small to medium-sized landholdings, average innovativeness, limited scientific knowledge, and little exposure to mass media and extension services are also contributing factors.

Conclusion:

It was observed from the relevant findings that the majority of the respondents had moderately favourable perception towards agriculture as an occupation, so it is essential to take efforts on improving their perception towards agriculture as an occupation. The study revealed that rural youth have medium level of perception towards agriculture as an occupation. The research study helped the rural youth in understanding importance of agriculture and agriculture related allied business as their source of occupation. We can motivate the rural youth to select agriculture as an occupation by creating awareness, providing educational facilities, etc. Finally this will help to the agriculture sector's growth and sustainability, assuring a successful and bright future for both youth and the nation's society.

Perception of rural youth towards agriculture as an occupation

Table 1 : Content analysis of per caption of rural youth towards agriculture as occupation											
Sr. No.	Statement	SA		A		UD		DA		SDA	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1.	Extension researchers should impart knowledge of advanced technologies feasible at farm level to the youth for agriculture	116	77.33	10	06.67	09	06.00	09	06.00	06	04.00
2.	Government should make efforts to impart good knowledge about agriculture and allied business	112	74.67	08	05.33	13	08.67	09	06.00	08	05.33
3.	There is a need to provide credit facilities to the youth in the agricultural sector through micro finance and rural commercial Banks	99	66.00	21	14.00	13	08.67	08	05.33	09	06.00
4.	Farming is for the older and uneducated members of society	13	08.67	14	09.33	14	09.33	109	72.67	00	00
5.	Farming is a low-level career.	12	08.00	16	10.67	18	12.00	55	36.67	49	32.67
6.	Rural youth clubs are essential for rural conditions and agriculture	40	26.67	83	55.33	21	14.00	04	02.67	02	01.33
7.	Agriculture as occupation regarded as source of employment by unemployed	66	44.00	61	40.67	10	06.67	08	05.33	05	03.33
8.	Agriculture as an occupation disrupts family life	04	02.67	15	10.00	22	14.67	68	45.33	41	27.33
9.	Agriculture is an occupation that fits only for illiterates	12	08.00	09	06.00	15	10.00	31	20.67	83	55.33
10.	Agriculture as an occupation helps in economic upliftment	39	26.00	63	42.00	20	13.33	23	15.33	05	03.33
11.	Agriculture is a profitable occupation	63	42.00	65	43.33	16	10.67	03	02.00	03	02.00
12.	Agriculture as an occupation has more influence on the overall development of community	135	90.00	12	08.00	03	02.00	02	01.33	01	0.67
13.	Agriculture as an occupation helps in upgrading one's livelihood	59	39.33	68	45.33	13	08.67	08	05.33	02	01.33
14.	Agriculture as an occupation provides enough opportunity for career development	69	46.00	68	45.33	10	06.67	03	02.00	00	00
15.	Agriculture is an occupation with reduced employability due to modernization	33	22.00	41	27.33	42	28.00	31	20.67	03	02.00
16.	Agriculture as an occupation requires timely operations and usage of required agricultural inputs to optimum out put	121	80.67	17	11.33	07	04.67	02	01.33	03	02.00
17.	Agriculture is an occupation with scope to enhance subsidiary agro entrepreneurial activities	145	96.67	02	01.33	01	0.67	01	0.67	01	0.67
18.	Employment can be increased by using improved farming practices	145	96.67	01	0.67	02	01.33	01	0.67	01	0.67
19.	Agriculture is not a traditional occupation rather it is a scientific activity	146	97.33	03	02.00	01	0.67	00	00	00	00

Table 2 : Contd.....

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20.	Appropriate skill training will improve the participation of youth in agriculture	146	97.33	01	0.67	01	0.67	01	0.67	01	0.67
21.	Agriculture is an occupation that helps in promoting food security	148	98.67	01	0.67	01	0.67	00	00	00	00
22.	Agriculture as a business improves the economic status of farmers	143	95.33	03	02.00	02	01.33	01	0.67	01	0.67
23.	Water resources are very much needed to increase agricultural production	148	98.67	01	0.67	00	00	00	00	01	0.67
24.	I am proud of being a member of an agriculture family	147	98.00	00	00	00	00	02	01.33	01	0.67
25.	Agriculture is an occupation that can only be carried with passion	60	40.00	73	48.67	11	07.33	04	02.67	02	01.33
26.	Agriculture as a business improves the economic status of farmers	54	36.00	61	40.67	07	04.67	22	14.67	06	04.00
27.	Agriculture as an occupation can't be considered as a career due to lack of developmental opportunities	55	36.67	75	50.00	15	10.00	05	03.33	00	00
28.	Agriculture as an occupation that doesn't bring daily income like other professions	58	38.67	70	46.67	10	06.67	12	08.00	00	00
29.	Agriculture is the only occupation that guarantees physical health and mental Peace	27	18.00	24	16.00	17	11.33	62	41.33	20	13.33
30.	Agriculture as an occupation is noble and prestigious profession	82	54.67	41	27.33	16	10.67	06	04.00	05	03.33

Table 2 : Overall perception of rural youth towards agriculture as an occupation

Sr.No.	Perception level	Frequency	Per cent
1.	Low (upto 119.10)	25	16.67
2.	Medium (119.11-126.23)	108	72.00
3.	High(126.24 and above)	17	11.33
	Total:	150	100.00

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