



Research Note

Participation of rural youth in decision making in paddy farming

B.M. PATEL, J.K. PATEL AND D.K. BADHE

Abstract : The present study was conducted in 12 villages of Tarapur Taluka of Anand District. Selection of 120 respondents was made with proportionate random sampling having minimum three years of experience of paddy farming. The findings indicate that majority of the rural youths had minimum to higher participation (83.34 per cent) in decision making about paddy farming.

Key Words : Rural youth, Participation, Decision making, Paddy farming

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Rural youth are expected to be more progressive than old people. The number of youth in the age group of 13-35 years, as per the 1991 Census, was estimated at about 34 crores, and about 38 crores in 1997, which is anticipated to increase to about 51 crores by the year 2016. The percentage of youth in the total population, according to the 1996 Census projections is estimated to be about 37 per cent in 1997. It is also likely to increase about 40 per cent by the year 2016. Population of youth in total population in India is 41.05 per cent in 2001. The availability of human resources of such magnitude for achieving socio-economic change and technological excellence needs commensurate infrastructure and suitable priorities to maximize its contribution to national development Anonymous (2001).

The participation of rural youth in agriculture and particularly in paddy farming makes more important, because it solves the problems of unemployment and another is that the

youth farmers are more innovative and accept new farm technology earlier than the old ones. On the other hand, there are also a few studies stating that youth are encouraged to participate in activities for increasing the rate of adoption of innovations. Because youth served as an effective transmitter to their parents and village elders regarding diffusion of innovations. Understanding that, none of the detailed study has yet carried in this regards so to know the extent of participation of rural youth in paddy farming a study was undertaken with following specific objective : To study the participation of rural youth in decision making about paddy farming.

Tarapur taluka of Anand district was purposively selected, because the taluka had more paddy growing area and majority of youth paddy growers resides in the taluka. Ten paddy growing villages were randomly selected from Tarapur taluka. For this study 120 rural youth who had minimum 3 years of experience in paddy cultivation were selected randomly and they were considered as a sample. Then the data were collected with the help of well-structured, pre-tested, interview scheduled through personal contact and data were compiled, tabulated, analyzed and interpreted to draw valid conclusion. On the basis of total decision making score of an individual rural youth decision making index was calculated by using the following formula:

— MEMBERS OF RESEARCH FORUM —

Author of the Correspondence :

B.M. PATEL, Department of Extension Education, B.A. College of Agriculture, Anand Agricultural University, ANAND (GUJARAT) INDIA

Address of the Coopted Authors :

J.K. PATEL AND D.K. BADHE, Department of Extension Education, B.A. College of Agriculture, Anand Agricultural University, ANAND (GUJARAT) INDIA

Table 1 : Distribution of the rural youth according to their level of participation in decision making about paddy farming (n = 120)

Sr. No.	Participation in decision making	Number	Percentage
1.	Low (below 47.62)	20	16.66
2.	Medium (between 47.62 to 68.00)	77	64.18
3.	High (above 68.00)	23	19.16
Total		120	100.00

$$\text{Decision making index} = \frac{\text{Decision making score of the rural youth}}{\text{Maximum possible decision making score}} \times 100$$

In order to know the level of participation of rural youth in decision making about paddy farming, they were grouped on the basis of their decision making index. The data are presented in Table 1.

Data presented in the Table 1 indicated that, slightly less than two third (64.18 per cent) of the rural youth had a medium participation in decision making about paddy farming, followed by higher (19.16 per cent) and lower (16.66 per cent) participation in decision making about paddy farming. This clearly shows that most of the rural youth had medium level of participation in decision making about paddy farming as many decisions requires guidance of functionally literate elders might be the possible explanation for this type of results. This finding is similar with the findings of Nale (2003).

Conclusion:

From above discussion it can be concluded that slightly less than two third (64.18 per cent) of the rural youths had a medium participation in decision making about paddy farming. More efforts should be made by the extension agencies to establish in-depth extension contact with the rural youth as well as their background factors which influence the participation of the rural youth in decision making about paddy farming.

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