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## A study on attitude of rural youth towards farming activities

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### Abstract

Youth are the pillar to the nation. They can change the future of the society with their well being and courageous behavior. The youths of rural India can become an effective means of changing traditional village attitudes and in creating the climate for early and widespread acceptance of new methods and practices in agriculture. Attitude of an individual plays an important role in determining the behaviour with respect to a particular object. It could be considered as the covert behaviour. It is generally expected that the rural youths should possess high degree of positive attitude towards agriculture. Analysis of rural youth attitude towards farming activities in the present study focused on visualizing the effect of attitude towards farming activities among the rural youth using Percentage analysis, correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis. The outcome stated that two-third of the rural youth had medium level to high level of attitude in agriculture. The  $R^2$  value was 0.610 which that indicated that 61.00 per cent of variation in the attitude of rural youth in agriculture was explained by fifteen variables selected for the study.

**Keywords:** Rural youth, attitude, farming activities

### Introduction

Youth is best understood as a period of transition from the dependence of childhood to adulthood's independence and awareness of our interdependence as members of a community. Youth is a more fluid category than a fixed age-group. UNESCO will then adopt the definition of "youth" as used by a particular Member State. It can be based for instance on the definition given in the African Youth Charter where "youth" means "every person between the ages of 15 and 35 years". Global population is projected to reach 9 billion by 2050. The number of young people (aged 15 to 24) is also expected to increase to 1.3 billion by 2050, accounting for almost 14 percent of the projected global population.

The youth are the most vital human resource of the nation on whom the present and future of the country depend. There are over 1.8 billion young people in the world today, 90.00 per cent of whom live in developing countries, where they tend to make up a large proportion of the population (Monica Das Gupta *et al.*, 2014). The place of rural youth class is more important for the future of a country. Rural youth are the precious human assets who can play an important role in the development of agriculture and other allied activities.

The rural including youth male and female, because of their family and community background in farming they are active partners in various agriculture and allied activities. The participation of rural youth in the development process is essential in order to bring change in socio-economic structure and improving the quality of life of an individual. An attitude is "a complex mental state concerning beliefs, feelings, values and dispositions to act in definite ways". Attitude inclines to change across time and situations through an interactive process with the environment and can offer a prediction about a person's future events (Carlson, 1985).

### 2. Methodology

The study was conducted in Dharmapuri district of Tamilnadu. Dharmapuri district had eight blocks. Out of those eight blocks, six blocks namely Pappireddipatti, Harur, Morappur, Nallampalli, Karimangalam and Pennagaram, from these blocks, four villages per block were randomly selected. Among these villages total of 120 respondents were selected by using random sampling technique. A well structured and pre -tested interview schedule was used to collect data by personal interview. In this paper, attitude was operationally defined as the degree of positive or negative disposition of farm youths towards agriculture. The attitude of farm youths towards agriculture was measured by the scale developed by Lakshminarayanan (1978) and followed by Lettice Mary (1990) <sup>[4]</sup>. The scale consists of twenty statements, of which twelve statements were positive and eight statements were negative.

### Correspondence

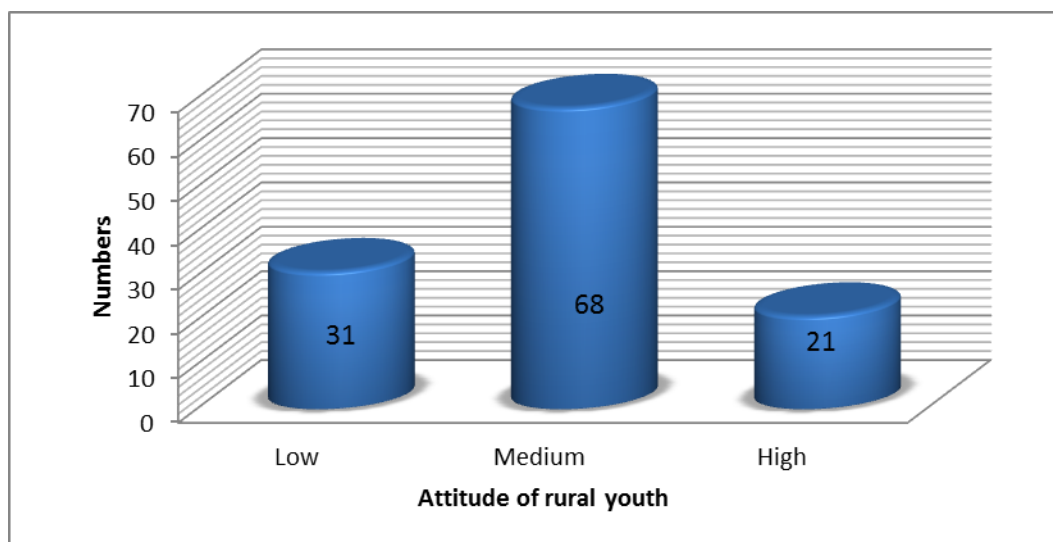
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### 3. Results and Discussions

#### 3.1. Attitude of rural youth towards farming activities

Attitude of an individual plays an important role in determining the behaviour with respect to a particular object.

It could be considered as the covert behaviour. It is generally expected that the rural youths should possess high degree of positive attitude towards agriculture.



**Fig 1:** Distribution of respondents according to their overall attitude towards farming activities

The data in figure 1, reveals that two-third of the rural youth (74.2 per cent) had medium level to high level of attitude in agriculture. This is a positive sign and scope to involve rural

youth in future agriculture development. Only 25.8 per cent of the respondents had low level of attitude in farming activities.

**Table 1:** Distribution of respondents according to their attitude towards farming activities (n=120)

| Sl. No | Statements  | Agree  |          | Undecided |          | Disagree |          |
|--------|---|--------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|
|        |   | Number | Per cent | Number    | Per cent | Number   | Per cent |
| 1.     | Agriculture leads to overall development of farm youths family  | 98     | 81.67    | 2         | 1.67     | 20       | 16.66    |
| 2.     | Agriculture does not give opportunity for intellectual growth of farm youth   | 42     | 35.00    | 5         | 4.17     | 73       | 60.83    |
| 3.     | Agriculture is the foundation of all other industries and so it is opportunity for farm youth                             | 77     | 64.17    | 23        | 19.17    | 20       | 16.66    |
| 4.     | Agriculture is not a paying proposition to farm youth   | 58     | 48.33    | 9         | 7.50     | 53       | 44.17    |
| 5.     | Agriculture is practical as farm youth are utilizing all their resources solve fixed problems                             | 59     | 49.17    | 6         | 5.00     | 55       | 45.83    |
| 6.     | Agriculture is good for farm youth but the results obtained are not encouraging   | 96     | 80.00    | 1         | 0.84     | 23       | 19.16    |
| 7.     | Agriculture should be undertaken by all farm youth  | 77     | 64.16    | 24        | 20.00    | 19       | 15.84    |
| 8.     | Agriculture is a business which involves a variety of activities  | 81     | 67.50    | 12        | 10       | 27       | 22.50    |
| 9.     | Agriculture is the best solution to improve the livelihood status of farm youth   | 55     | 45.84    | 16        | 13.33    | 49       | 40.83    |
| 10.    | The foundation of rural prosperity does not depend on agriculture.  | 76     | 63.34    | 11        | 9.16     | 33       | 27.50    |
| 11.    | Scientific agriculture is commercial in nature and more remunerative  | 47     | 39.17    | 55        | 45.83    | 18       | 15.00    |
| 12.    | Agriculture does not require any specialized knowledge every one can do   | 104    | 86.67    | 4         | 3.33     | 12       | 10.00    |
| 13.    | It influence rural youth to take up agriculture as an occupation  | 56     | 46.66    | 16        | 13.37    | 48       | 40.00    |
| 14.    | The profit earned from agriculture by a farm youth is less than the money invested  | 104    | 86.67    | 3         | 2.50     | 13       | 10.83    |
| 15.    | Farm youth can achieve a reasonably good living by agriculture  | 68     | 56.67    | 2         | 1.67     | 50       | 41.66    |
| 16.    | Agriculture is not the solution to remove poverty of rural youth  | 99     | 82.50    | 3         | 2.50     | 18       | 15.00    |
| 17.    | It is only through development of agriculture the economic condition and standard of living of farm youth can be improved | 81     | 67.50    | 5         | 4.16     | 34       | 28.34    |
| 18.    | Agriculture is not interesting to farm youth to do the same activities in a routine and systematic way                    | 95     | 79.16    | 10        | 8.34     | 15       | 12.50    |
| 19.    | Agriculture is a profitable occupation  | 65     | 54.17    | 14        | 11.67    | 41       | 34.16    |
| 20.    | Agriculture does not give prestige to farm youth  | 98     | 81.67    | 0         | 0        | 22       | 18.33    |

\*- multiple responses

From the Table 1, it could be inferred that more than three – fourth (81.67 per cent) of the youths agreed with agriculture leads to overall development to farm youth's family. Only 16.66 per cent disagreed with this statement. Agriculture is a traditional occupation of rural people and fundamental livelihood and also had a lot of scope and importance to lead overall life of farmer's families. However, some proportion of

youth (16.66 per cent) disagreed with this statement. More than half of the respondents (60.83 per cent) agreed as agriculture does give an opportunity for intellectual growth of farm youth because more than half (55.80 per cent) of the respondent's family had farming as their main occupation. Thirty five percentage of the respondents showed controversy, expressed their unfavourableness as they agreed this item.

The marginal and small youth family might not be in the position to pay for the technologies because of their poor economic condition and that might be contributed for their response.

Majority of the youth (64.17 per cent) had agreed with agriculture is the foundation of all other industries and so it is opportunity for farm youth followed by (19.17 per cent) with undecidedness and least (16.66 per cent) of the rural youth disagreed. Almost equal number of the respondents had given equal response of agreed (48.83 per cent) and disagreed (44.17 per cent) and 7.50 per cent were neutral state with agriculture is not a paying proposition to farm youth. Unfortunately, up to now there were not enough incentive policies in place to encourage young workforce to work in agriculture.

Agriculture is practical as farm youth are utilizing all their resources solve fixed problems were placed by half of the respondents (49.17 per cent) followed by 45.83 per cent of respondents disagreed and only five percentage of youth expressed their undecidedness. An absolute majority of the youth (80.00 per cent) agreed with Agriculture is good for farm youth but the results obtained are not encouraging followed by disagreed (19.16 per cent) and very least with undecidedness (0.84 per cent). A rising number of rural youth in developing and emerging economies were turning their back on small-scale agriculture. Limited access to markets, assets, finance and infrastructure in rural areas, coupled with perceived employment opportunities in urban areas increasingly making cities to the preferred choice in the search for a better life, it might be to the reasons why youth agreed.

Two-third (64.16 per cent) of the youths agreed with agriculture should be undertaken by all farm youth followed by 15.84 per cent youth's who disagreed and twenty percentage of youth showed undecidedness. Young minds are creative minds and youth are capable of achieving impossible tasks such as monsoon management, climate change adaptation and mitigation and enduring malnutrition. Just above more than two-third (67.50 per cent) of the youths agreed with agriculture is a business which involves a variety of activities followed by 22.50 youth disagreed and only ten percentage of youth showed undecidedness. For young people to take agriculture, farming must be both intellectually satisfying and economically rewarding.

Agreement on agriculture is not the solution to remove poverty of rural youth was placed by majority of the respondents (82.50 per cent) who agreed followed by eighteen percentage of youth expressed as undecidedness. One-fourth of respondents (15.00 per cent) disagreed with above the statement. Poverty is also characterized by a lack of participation in decision making process and in civil and socio-cultural life. It is inseparably linked to lack of access to or loss of control over resources. Without these resources, youths have limited access to institutions, markets, employment opportunities and public services. The empowerment of youth through agricultural development programmes will reduce poverty and provide them with opportunities that would enable them to be gainfully employed.

Two-third of the youth (67.50 per cent) agreed with It is only through development of agriculture, the economic condition and standard of living of farm youth can be improved followed by 28.34 per cent of youth were disagreed and only 4.16 per cent of youth stated undecidedness. Agriculture is not interesting to farm youth to do the same activities in a

routine and systematic way was concluded that majority of the respondents (79.16 per cent) agreed with this statement followed by little more than one-tenth (12.50 per cent) of youth disagreed and 8.34 per cent of the respondents expressed that undecidedness with this statement. Little more than half of the respondents (54.17 per cent) agreed with agriculture is a profitable occupation. Similarly one - third of youth (34.16 per cent) disagreed and 11.67 per cent of the respondents expressed as undecided. Green jobs can provide more sustainable livelihoods in the long run, and can be more labour intensive and ultimately involve more value added. Many are unemployed or work informally-often in unpaid, low-skilled, insecure and sometimes hazardous jobs. Faced with little or no access to land, markets finance and education, rural youth struggle to make small-scale agricultural activities profitable.

Agriculture does not give prestige to farm youth was placed by vast majority of the respondents (81.67 per cent) followed by one-fourth of respondents (18.33 per cent) disagreed. Moreover, from cultural value system point of view, the majority of youth consider that working in non-agricultural sectors is more prestigious. They prefer going to the cities to work as construction laborers, merchants or civil servants. Unfortunately, up to now there have been no incentive policies in place to encourage young workforce to work in agriculture.

#### 4. Conclusion

The study revealed that understanding attitudes of the rural youth towards farming activities. Most of the rural youths have a medium level of positive sign and scope to involve rural youth in future agriculture development. The importance of the youths to the community and national development is without doubt because the various programs directed at them by the government at various times gives credence to this goal. The participation of rural youth in the agricultural development process is essential in order to bring change in socio-economic structure and improving the quality of life of an individual.

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