

Training Needs of Rural Youth: An Analysis in Lucknow district of Uttar Pradesh, India

Abstract

India is a country of villages. Most of the population the country resides in villages. Due to this fact the real face of our country is rural India as it represents 68.9% the total population. It is very essential to engage the rural youth in a productive way with their aspirations by providing them plausible opportunities for growth and well being. But in the globalized world, industries demand for more skilled workers. In addition to this technological change, particularly the development of ICT is occurring at extraordinary speed, requiring workers to have more and more multifaceted cognitive skills than ever. Hence, it is important to meet the challenges and prepare India's rural youth with the proper education and skills they require to face the challenging world. There are many programmes formulated by the Government for their development but it is important to note that all of these programmes will be successful only if they are implemented properly. Considering the above facts the present study was conducted with the objective to study the training needs of Rural youth and Suggestions of rural youth to promote their participation in agricultural activities. The study was conducted in the year 2020-2021 in Lucknow district of Uttar Pradesh of India selected. There are four Tehsils in Lucknow namely Bakshi Ka Talab, Lucknow, Malihabad and Mohanlalganj. Out of these four Tehsils Mohanlalganj Block was selected for the study. For present study 5 villages were selected namely Atrauli ,Daudnagar, Bhadesuwa, Hasanpur Kaneri and Barvaliya. From each villages 21 respondents were selected for the study and information were collected regarding their agricultural activities. A total number of 105 respondents were selected through random sampling from eight sample village panchayats. Data was collected through personal interview with a semi-structured schedule from farming and non-farming youth. Percentage, cumulative frequency and rank were used for calculation and drawing the inferences. The results revealed that majority (62.86 per cent) of rural youth need training in cashew and mango production, followed by identification of pest and diseases (58.09 per cent) and post harvest technology (56.19 per cent). Also majority (60.95 per cent) of the respondents suggested local market yard facility should be provided to promote participation of youth in agricultural activities

Keywords: Rural, Youth, Education, Skill Development, Challenges.

Introduction

According to Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Azad "Youth below the age of 25 are the most powerful resources on the earth, under the earth and above the earth. We have to empower them through value-based education and leadership." Agriculture, with its allied sectors, is unquestionably the largest livelihood provider in India, more so in the vast rural areas. It also contributes a significant figure to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Sustainable agriculture, in terms of food security, rural employment, and environmentally sustainable technologies such as soil conservation, sustainable natural resource management and biodiversity protection, are essential for holistic rural development. Indian agriculture and allied activities have witnessed a green revolution, a white revolution, a yellow revolution and a blue revolution. This section provides

the information on agriculture produces; machineries, research etc. Detailed information on the government policies, schemes, agriculture loans, market prices, animal husbandry, fisheries, horticulture, loans & credit, sericulture etc. is also available. Agriculture is still the primary occupation of more than half of Indian population asserting importance of this sector in various socioeconomic aspects of the country. Youth involvement is strongly realized for agricultural reform so that it can keep pace with changing global economy. India being the youngest nation in the world has massive youth resource to offer to agriculture sector but unfortunately, youth participation in agriculture is declining. Agriculture is core to every nation's development and it remains fundamental to poverty reduction and economic growth especially for the developing countries in the 21st century (World Bank, 2008). Presently, Indian agriculture is facing a number of emerging challenges in spite of the production boom that it has experienced as a boon of green revolution. The concerns have shifted from production to more complicated, subtle and multifaceted issues. Some of the contemporary problems in Indian agriculture are land fragmentation, labour shortage, depleting natural resources, climate change, low profitability, competition due to market liberalization, nutrition and gender issues etc. Under such circumstances the agriculture sector needs new ideas, innovations, rebranding and revitalization to combat these prevailing challenges. The present scenario of changing agriculture in India demands the energy and vitality of youth. Provided there is enough opportunity, the innovative mind, energy and vigor of youth which is current demographic strength of the country can boost up the present status of agriculture. On the contrary, there is decreasing youth participation in agriculture over the time. This indeed raises the question if there is scope for leveraging youth in agriculture sector to bring prosperity in the sector and as well as the lives of these young people (Rajarshi Roy Burman et al., 2019).

It is observed that India has the relative advantage at present over other countries in terms of distribution of youth population. India's advantage in young population is also evident when it is compared with other Asian countries. India is seen to remain younger longer than China and Indonesia, the two major countries other than India which determine the demographic features of Asia. These three countries together accounted for 68 per cent of the population of Asia in the year 2010 and the share of Asia itself is about 60 per cent in world population.

The proportion of female in the youth age bracket, is generally lower, on account of better longevity of female compared to male. The difference on account of gender is seen to be higher in developed region (UNESCO, 2017). In case of India, the gender differentials are less pronounced than in other countries. The shifts in age distribution of population to higher age groups results in lower share for the age group 15-34 years, which in itself is an indication of increasing longevity. The widening differences on account of gender, characterizes such a situation, with the general population ageing and female doing more, so depicting still lower share of youth among the female. Coincidentally, in case of India, the proximity of share of youth among male and female is indicative of prevalence of healthy fertility levels in the general population and net addition to the population pool.

It is widely documented that education is key to overcoming development challenges in rural areas. There is not only a direct link between food security and education of rural children, but it has also been shown that basic numeracy and literacy skills help improve farmers' livelihoods (FAO, 2007). Access to knowledge and information by the youth is crucial for addressing the main challenges they face in agriculture. In order for rural youth to shape agricultural policies affecting them directly, in terms of access to markets and finances, as well as green jobs and land, they need to receive appropriate information and education. While this is true in developed and developing countries alike, it is of particular concern in the latter, where young rural inhabitants may lack access to even the most rudimentary formal education and where educational institutions are often less developed. Formal primary and secondary education can provide young people with basic numeracy and literacy, managerial and business skills, and introduce youth to agriculture. Meanwhile, non-formal education (including vocational training and extension services) and tertiary agricultural education can offer youth more specific knowledge related to agriculture. In developing countries, access to information and education is often worse in rural areas than in urban areas and this discrepancy is observable as early as primary school. In many rural areas of developing countries, children are hungry and do not have the energy to attend school or to easily absorb the information provided. During seasonal peaks in the agricultural cycle, there can be labor shortage and parents may see no other option than letting their children contribute to household and agricultural activities instead of attending school. The physical infrastructure of rural schools is often bad and classroom materials are sometimes lacking. Schools can be far away from rural communities making access difficult for rural children (FAO, 2009).

Social media is all about people. It is a way to build relationships, share information and connect with diverse audience of people; you may never meet in real life. So interacting on social media, whether it is Twitter, Facebook, or Pinterest, allows you to develop a community and share your story in a way that was never possible before now. The general public still has faith in farmers and ranchers, but some are still wary of modern farm practices. It is important that agriculture unites and has a chance to tell its side of the story. India is losing more than 2,000 farmers every single day and since 1991, the overall number of farmers has dropped by 15 million (Sainath, 2013). This has several implications for the future of Indian agriculture and India's food security. Young farmers can play an important role in ensuring food security if they are encouraged to get involved in farming and the challenges they face are addressed. Over the past few years, rural youth have been shying away from agriculture and globally there is an increasing interest in finding ways of engaging youth in agriculture (IFAD, 2012; Paisley, 2013).

Considering the above facts the present study was conducted with the objective -

- To study the training needs of Rural youth.
- Suggestions of rural youth to promote their participation in agricultural activities.

Materials and Methods

The study was conducted in the year 2020-2021 in Lucknow district of Uttar Pradesh of India selected. Exploratory Research Design was used for the study. There are four Tehsils in Lucknow namely Bakshi Ka Talab, Lucknow, Malihabad and Mohanlalganj. Out of these four Tehsils Mohanlalganj Block was selected for the study. For present study 5 villages were selected namely Atrauli, Daudnagar, Bhadesuwa, Hasanpur Kaneri and Barvaliya. From each village 21 respondents were selected for the study and information was collected regarding their agricultural activities. A total number of 105 respondents were selected through random sampling from eight sample village panchayats. Data was collected through personal interview with a semi-structured schedule from farming and non-farming youth. Percentage, cumulative frequency and rank were used for calculation and drawing the inferences.

Results and Discussion

It is noticed from the Table-1 that, majority (62.86 per cent) of rural youth need training in cashew and mango production, followed by identification of pest and diseases (58.09 per cent) and post harvest technology (56.19 per cent). Further they need training in vermicompost/compost making (54.28 per cent), integrated nutrients management (52.38 per cent), organic vegetable production (51.42 per cent) and mixed farming (50.47 per cent), while less than half of them need training in spices and medicinal plant (49.52 per cent), intercropping (47.68 per cent), mechanization in agriculture (46.66 per cent), poultry/dairy (44.77 per cent), goat farming (42.86 per cent), mushroom production (40.95 per cent) and Nursery management (40.00 per cent). This indicates that rural Youth are fascinated towards mango and cashew production. The probable reason could be that as Lucknow district is Mango belt so if they get training in mango production they can earn more income. Also as cashewnut is plantation crop if they get proper training for cashewnut production and processing they can sell it at better rate and earn better income and can raise their standard of living.

Table-1: Broad agricultural areas in which rural youth needs training.

Sl. No.	Training needs areas	Respondents (N=105)	
		Number	Percentage
1	Organic vegetable production	54	51.42
2	Vermicompost / compost making	57	54.28
3	Nursery management	42	40.00
4	Poultry / dairy	47	44.77

5	Goat farming	45	42.86
6	Identification of pest and diseases and their management	61	58.09
7	Post harvest technology	59	56.19
8	Mixed farming	53	50.47
9	Mechanization in agriculture	49	46.66
10	Integrated nutrients management	55	52.38
11	Cashew and mango production	66	62.86
12	Fodder production	44	41.90
13	Mushroom production	43	40.95
14	Intercropping	50	47.68
15	Spices and medicinal plant	52	49.52

Table-2 shows that for the better farming training should be given to youth in Nursery preparation and Calculation of fertilizer dosage which ranked 1st, followed by Seed treatment with chemicals and Fertilizer application which ranked 2nd, while Water management, Identification of pests and diseases and Processing of food grains got 3rd rank, Plant protection measures and seed selection got rank 4th, Weed management 5th rank, High-tech horticulture rank 6th, Storage rank 7th and Marketing was ranked 8th. Above table shows that to change the present scenario of agriculture, there is a need to train the farming youth through training programmes related to agriculture.

Table-2: Training needs for rural youth for betterment of the farming

S. No	Training needs	T. S	M. S.	Rank
1.	Nursery preparation	102	2.55	I
2.	Calculation of fertilizer dosage	96	2.40	I
3.	Seed treatment with chemicals	99	2.47	II
4.	Fertilizer application	99	2.47	II
5.	Identification of pests and diseases	93	2.32	III
6.	Processing of food grains	93	2.32	III
7.	Water management	93	2.32	III
8.	Plant protection measures	92	2.30	IV

9.	Seed selection	92	2.30	IV
10.	Weed management	91	2.27	V
11.	High technology horticulture	83	2.12	VI
12.	Storage	81	2.07	VII
13.	Marketing	77	2.08	VIII
14.	Control of stored pests	75	1.92	IX
15.	Proper use of farm waste	74	1.89	X

T.S= Total Score, M.S. = Mean Score

It was observed from Table-3 that, majority (60.95 per cent) of the respondents suggested local market yard facility should be provided to promote participation of youth in agricultural activities followed by 58.09 per cent of the respondents suggested provision of credit facility. Whereas; 55.23 per cent each of them suggested for availability of inputs in time and awareness about subsidy and schemes. Further, more than half of the respondents suggested government should promote organic as well as group farming (51.42 per cent) and proper rate to farm produce (50.47 per cent) to promote participation of youth in agricultural activities.

Table 3: Suggestions of rural youth to promote their participation in agricultural activities.

Sl. No.	Suggestions	Respondents (N=105)	
		Number	Percentage
1	Availability of inputs in time	58	55.23
2	Provision of credit facility	61	58.09
3	Awareness about subsidy and schemes	58	55.23
4	Local market yard facility should be provided	64	60.95
5	Government should promote organicas well as group farming	54	51.42
6	Proper rate to farm produce	53	50.47

Conclusions

Study found that lack of awareness about new technologies/schemes/policies among the farming youth is a major issue. What is more important is that the absence of exposure among the farming youth to the innovative production technologies affects the production and productivity of crops indirectly. All the more, farming youth are mostly unaware of the government's policies

that have been implemented, concerning the attraction and retaining the youth in farming and the benefits thereof. So there is a need to make them aware through awareness programmes, awareness camps, and demonstration conducted by KVKs, SAUs and even NGOs. Moreover, most of the farming and non-farming youth have inadequate education to handle smart phone. Therefore, the government should promote adult education through the creation of separate platforms through KVKs. More importantly, policies with reference to agriculture should be strengthened so as to retain the youth who have been captivantly involved in farming.

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