

Determining the involvement of rural youth in rural development activities in Jabalpur district of Madhya Pradesh

ABSTRACT

This study elicits and understands rural youth's participation in different rural development activities that are being conducted in Jabalpur district of Madhya Pradesh. Pre-tested and structured interview schedule was used to collect data from the respondents. Results revealed that majority of the youth had medium level of participation in rural development activities. Youth are seeming to be actively participate in activities like sanitization of village surroundings, agricultural activities and plantation. With that youths are involved in other rural development activities and have adopted those areas as their field of interest such as health and wellness, personality development activities, educational activities, awareness activities, providing safe water and food related activities, infrastructural and construction, education, ethical and welfare activities and skill development activities. These activities are arranged in sequence using Garrett ranking technique to identify and rank which of the following activity is performed regularly at high extent and vice-versa.

Key words- Youth, Rural development, Sanitization, Participation.

INTRODUCTION

Youth are considered as the pillars that provide support and strength to a country. The future of a country is determined to a large extent by what the youth learn in their formative years and their attitude and participation in the social system. This is because every civilized country should pay adequate attention to the needs, training, education and general upbringing of the youth. The quality of a nation can be judged by the extent of the attention it pays to its youth. The youths are called to be as "Nation Builders" and they should have prepared themselves for a really constructive citizenship. Youth power, value, vision and mission are the important to development of any nation. Their behavioral pattern, thinking process, value and perception can be utilized for constructive purpose in rural development.

Conventionally, period from adolescence to middle age is termed as youth. The National Youth Policy, 2003 formulated by the Government of India covers all the youth in the country in the age group of 13-35 years. However, National Youth Policy, 2014 modified it and defined 'youth' as persons in the age group of 15-29 years. In the present report, we have adopted 15-34 years as youth. Conventionally, period from adolescence to middle age is termed as youth.

Young people in all countries are a major human resource for development, key agents for social change and driving force for economic development and technological innovation. Their talents, dynamism, imagination, ideals, considerable energies and vision are essential for the continuing development of the societies in which they live. According to population census 2011, India has total youth population of 325.2 million, which is 35% of the total population. Out of this, about 70% were rural youth and remaining 30% were urban youth. As majority of the rural youth comes from rural areas, they are considered as the nation builders of tomorrow.

Over the years, Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan has established a network of youth clubs in villages, where Nehru Yuva Kendra have been set up. NYKS has targeted to identify areas of harnessing youth power for development by forming Youth Clubs, which are village level voluntary action groups of youth at the grassroots level to involve them in nation building activities. The core strength of NYKS lies in its network of youth clubs. Youth Clubs are village based organizations working for rural development and youth empowerment. Youth Clubs are composed of youth members ranging between the age group of 13-35 years. The basic objective for creation of youth clubs is to render community support through developmental initiatives involving activities with particular focus on youth empowerment. The implementation of programmes and activities of youth clubs is based on local needs and requirements by mobilizing resources from various government departments and other agencies, which include both national, State level and multilateral institutions. The youth clubs and its member volunteers form the base of the NYKS's vast national rural network.

Participation of youth in Rural development- The term 'participation' has several meanings; contribution, inputs, involvement, sharing, membership and partaking. There have been four main areas of participation of rural youth in development. The first is information-sharing, in this case, individuals are informed in order to facilitate collective and individual action, second is consultation, individuals are consulted, they provide ideas and suggestions, they interact with an organization and takes account of their feedback. Third is Decision Making, youth participate and get involved in decision making, which may be individual or joint with others, decision making may be on specific issues of a policy or a project and the last is initiating action, youth are involved in the commencement of any kind of accomplishment. In addition to it rural development is a dynamic process as it has several dimensions of growth. It focuses upon the upliftment and development of the rural people and their living standard. It also emphasizes the need to address various pressing issues of village that hinders the growth and improvement of these areas. Some activities viz. Public health and sanitization, Literacy, Female empowerment, infrastructural development, agriculture, social welfare, youth clubs, and infrastructural development like irrigation and electricity are need to be planned and organized through different agencies involving youths to be take effective participation will definitely work in favor of the wellbeing of the rural areas. Keeping this frame of work in view this **“Assessing the extent of participation of rural youth in rural development activities in Jabalpur district of Madhya Pradesh”** was undertaken as a part of research work.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research was carried out in Jabalpur district of Madhya Pradesh, India. Majholi block was purposively selected due to the highest number of youth clubs are active in this block and of total 197 villages in Majholi block, based on number of youth registered under Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan top most seven villages who were having maximum number of youth registered under NYK were selected. From each selected village, 10% youth were selected by using proportionate random sampling to make the sample proportionate to the population size. Thus, selected sample was comprised of 120 respondents. Ex-post facto research design was used for the purpose of the study. Primary data was collected with the help of well-structured interview

schedule consisting of both open-ended and closed ended questions. The participation of the youth was measured by using a schedule by enlisting the various activities that are organized in the block at regular time intervals and the extent of participation of youth in those activities was measured on three-continuum scale of “Regular”, “Sometimes” and “Never” with the scores awarded to each is 3,2 and 1.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The demographic composition revealed that the majority of youth (44.33%) were educated up to higher secondary school. A clear majority of the respondents i.e. 92.50 per cent were Hindu, 46.67 per cent of them belonged to other backward classes and 56.67 per cent were having a nuclear family. More than half of the respondents (65.00%) were unmarried and 43.33 per cent had farming as their major occupation. Majority of the youths i.e. 49.67 per cent had low level of annual income, 47.50 per cent had medium level of use of source of information, 55.33 per cent of the youth had medium level of achievement motivation and 44.17 per cent of the youth had medium level of social participation. It could be noted that more than half number of youths (54.17%) had medium level of extension contact and 55.83 per cent of the youth had moderately favorable attitude towards rural development activities. The findings of the study are supported by the findings of Kitturmath et al. (2014) and Bhanu (2006).

| Table.1. Socio-economic profile of the respondents. | | | |
|--|-------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| S. No. | Categories | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
| Education | | | |
| 1. | Primary | 9 | 7.50 |
| 2. | Middle | 26 | 21.67 |
| 3. | Higher Secondary | 52 | 43.33 |
| 4. | Graduation or More | 33 | 27.50 |
| Religion | | | |
| 1. | Hindu | 111 | 92.50 |
| 2. | Muslim | 5 | 4.17 |
| 3. | Jain | 4 | 3.33 |
| Caste | | | |
| 1. | General | 21 | 17.50 |
| 2. | OBC | 56 | 46.67 |
| 3. | SC | 26 | 21.67 |
| 4. | ST | 17 | 14.67 |
| Family type | | | |
| 1. | Nuclear family | 68 | 56.67 |
| 2. | Joint family | 52 | 43.33 |
| Marital status | | | |

| | | | |
|--|------------------------------|-----------|--------------|
| 1. | Unmarried | 78 | 65 |
| 2. | Married | 42 | 35 |
| Occupation | | | |
| 1. | Labour | 7 | 5.83 |
| 2. | Caste Occupation | 0 | 0 |
| 3. | Business | 17 | 14.17 |
| 4. | Independent profession | 0 | 0 |
| 5. | Cultivation | 52 | 43.33 |
| 6. | Service | 0 | 0 |
| 7. | Student/unemployed | 44 | 36.67 |
| Annual income | | | |
| 1. | Low (up to 80000) | 59 | 49.67 |
| 2. | Medium (Rs.80,001-1,60,000) | 42 | 35.00 |
| 3. | High (Rs.1,60,001- 2,40,001) | 19 | 15.33 |
| Use of source of information | | | |
| 1. | Low | 28 | 23.33 |
| 2. | Medium | 57 | 47.50 |
| 3. | High | 35 | 29.67 |
| Achievement motivation | | | |
| 1. | Low | 17 | 14.67 |
| 2. | Medium | 67 | 55.33 |
| 3. | High | 36 | 30.00 |
| Social participation | | | |
| 1. | Low | 64 | 53.33 |
| 2. | Medium | 53 | 44.17 |
| 3. | High | 3 | 2.50 |
| Extension contact | | | |
| 1. | Low | 49 | 40.83 |
| 2. | Medium | 65 | 54.17 |
| 3. | High | 6 | 5.00 |
| Attitude towards Rural Development Activities | | | |
| 1. | Less favorable attitude | 24 | 20.00 |
| 2. | Favorable attitude | 67 | 55.83 |
| 3. | Highly favorable attitude | 29 | 24.17 |

Participation of youths in different rural development activities-

The study further reported that village sanitization activities under “Clean Village-Green village” initiative was found as predominant activity in which youth were engaged in spreading

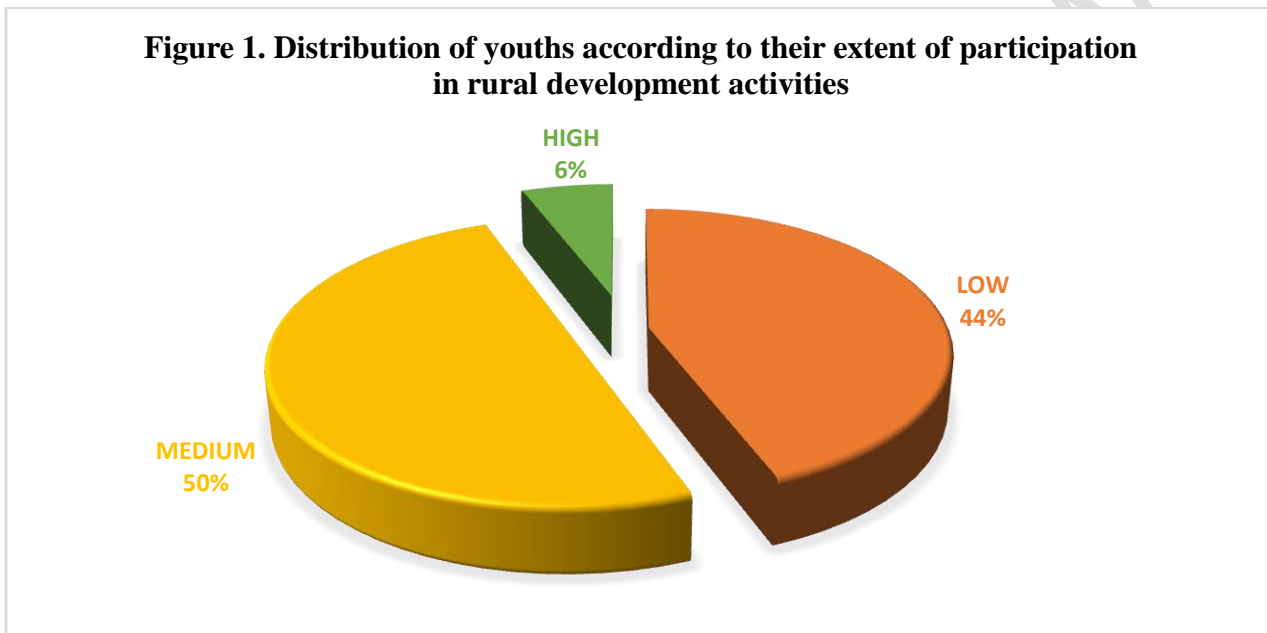
awareness and motivate people about the need and importance of cleanliness and to keep village dirt, filth and plastic free in Majholi Block. Further in Majholi block, farming and agricultural production enhancement activities was practiced by youth at greater level. Youths are helping farmers to take up the alternate and innovative methods of farming to increase the agriculture yield and production. Similar study was reported in Mizoram where NYK in Lunglei district helps farmers to take up alternate farming practices and demonstrating the possibilities of conserving environment and improving profitability in the agriculture sector.

Results further revealed that activities like plantation, health and wellness, personality development programmes, educational activities, co-operatives activities, awareness activities, water and food related activities, infrastructural and recreational, skill development and ethical and welfare activities were also taken also majorly practiced by the youth. Similar study revealed had been reported by Roy (2021) who reported in his study that many regular programmes have been done under NSS and more needs to be done. The NSS volunteers host blood donation camps, tree plantation programme, pulse polio immunization campaign, rainwater harvesting work, preservation and cleaning of historical monuments. The dedicated volunteers engage in the formation and renovation of playground, construction of water tank, parks, new drain ways, low-cost toilet, digging up sock pits, repeating of kuccha road, house, cleaning of hospital premises, drain, road, water body, park, temples etc. The volunteers also arrange different health camps, environmental awareness camps, Women sensitization programme, stop women trafficking campaign, digester rescue operation. Besides that, national integration camp, youth motivational camp, save girl child camp, child labour protection camp, digital India camp also organize here. Even, NSS volunteers have done well amid the covid-19 situation. They sent food and medicine to the doorstep of people even in full lockdown period. Adetiya et al. (2020) also concluded that there is a role of youth as agents of change. Youth as agents of change provide agricultural education to farmers with the aim of increasing knowledge, forming attitudes and skills. In addition, youth also provide training to farmers on how to manage agricultural waste into compost. Youth become the activator by showing the pioneering attitude standing in front of the farmers in building a better farming spirit.

| S.no | Activities | Mean Garrett ranking | Rank |
|-------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------|
| 1. | Village Sanitization | 65.36 | I |
| 2. | Health and wellness | 59.18 | IV |
| 3. | Plantation | 61.88 | III |
| 4. | Educational activities | 57.76 | VI |
| 5. | Awareness activities | 54.12 | VIII |
| 6. | Farming/ agricultural activities | 62.51 | II |
| 7. | Water and food related activities | 50.79 | IX |
| 8. | Personality development activities | 58.28 | V |
| 9. | Skill development programmes | 45.73 | XI |
| 10. | Co-operative activities | 57.60 | VII |

| | | | |
|------------|---|-------|------------|
| 11. | Ethical and welfare activities | 44.93 | XII |
| 12. | Infrastructural and recreational activities | 46.68 | X |

The data presented in figure 1 shows the distribution of the rural youth according to their participation in rural development activities. It is observed that out of the total respondents, 50.00 per cent of the respondents had medium level of participation, 44.17 per cent had low level and 5.83 per cent had high level of participation in rural development activities.



CONCLUSION

In the present study it could be clearly seen that majority of the youth had actively participated in different activities. The socio-economic development and living status of people in village depends on the type of youth living in rural areas, because they have abilities and can orient themselves to prevail developmental process. The emphasis should be laid more on youth development because they have been playing significant role in almost every sector and possess zeal and vigour, which is necessary to create more opportunities for self and community development.

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