

Original Research Article

Correlates of Rural Youth's Socioeconomic Attributes and Attitude towards Rural Development Activities

ABSTRACT

Young people in rural areas are a crucial segment of the rural society, and they contribute greatly to agriculture and rural development. The research study was conducted in Majholi block of Jabalpur district, Madhya Pradesh during the year 2019-20 to comprehend the attitude of youth towards rural development activities. The primary data were collected from 120 rural youth across seven villages by conducting personal interview. A scale constructed by Radhakrishnan and Arunachalam (2017) is used to compute the attitude of youths regarding rural development activities. The results indicated that the majority of the youth had favorable attitude towards rural development activities. The education, family type, annual income, source of information, achievement motivation, extension contact and social participation were found to be positively and significantly correlated with the attitude of rural youth towards rural development activities. Hence, there is need to promote rural-based developmental activities and create scope for enrolling and involving youth in developmental activities.

Keywords : Attitude, Empowerment, Rural Youth, Rural development activities.

INTRODUCTION

Youth have the drive, optimism, and vision to get things done and make a positive difference in the realm of rural development. Almost two-thirds of the country's population is under the age of 35. According to the 2011 Census, the country's youth population, including adolescents, is around 550 million (Draft National Youth Policy, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, 2012). This pool of young people will play a critical role in determining our country's fate. The rise in the youth population has made India the world's youngest country and one of the top in terms of human resource. It is critical to capitalize on this demographic dividend and channel the youth's potential toward country's development. After finishing their studies, rural youth in developing countries refuses to return to their villages to make an effective contribution to the development of rural areas and communities where they live, but instead migrate to urban areas. This is due to a variety of obstacles such as a lack of income and employment, poor infrastructure, limited opportunities for further professional growth, an impaired social life, an impoverished and undeveloped infrastructure. However, confronting and resolving these issues necessitates the commitment, support, and enthusiasm of youth to make a contribution their with full potential to rural development. Engaging young people in rural development should be one of the primary goals of rural development policies, and rural development strategies should be based on this goal.

According to Thurstone and Chave, (1929), "Attitude is the degree of the positive or negative effect associated with some psychological object". Psychological object means any symbol, phrase, slogan, idea, person and institution towards which people can differ with respect to positive or negative effect. As far as rural development and agricultural development are concerned, youth constitute the driving force; their attitude is cultivated in a very way that they are productive, especially

when the goal is to bring about rural development. The primary reason behind this is that youth possesses a variety of attributes that, when fostered and nourished, can be highly beneficial to agricultural and rural development. Clubs and organizations have become involved in a variety of activities such as planting, construction, contribution to the advancement and application of science and technology, resource efficiency, manufacturing and rural job creation. (Umeh & Odom, 2011).

The rural population's living standard is determined by several factors such as food and health, safety, education, homes and protection. Agriculture is significantly vital, and it is assumed to be incredibly significant for people in rural areas. Their active participation in agriculture is possible only if they have requisite skills, information and a positive attitude towards agriculture. A favorable attitude is one of the important prerequisites for the willingness to participate in agriculture and choosing agriculture as a career (GI, 2012). Youth populations are associated in the use of recommended farming techniques and systems, as well as research activities to find alternate methods and ideas that may benefit rural livelihoods (Umeh & Odom, 2011). The active participation of rural youth in developmental activity is highly dependent on their frame of mind, opinion and their willingness to bring prosperity and development in their village. As a result, understanding their attitude is an important perspective and currently, state and central governments are initiating a variety of rural development activities through various schemes in order to improve rural conditions. (Radhakrishnan and Arunachalam, 2017).

With this in mind, this study was carried out to investigate the perceptions, personal, psychological, and social economic characteristics of youths in order to achieve their development and progress, which in turn make sure the country's development. This study is useful to policymakers to make plan and implement programmes in rural areas more effectively.

METHODOLOGY

The research was carried out in Majholi block of Jabalpur district, Madhya Pradesh, with the goal of learning about the orientation of rural youth towards rural development activities. A sample of 120 respondents was selected by using proportionate random sampling from seven villages. The primary data was collected with the help of interview schedule. The scale constructed by Radhakrishnan and Arunachalam (2017) was employed to learn the attitude of rural youth towards rural development activities. Respondents were instructed to complete ten-item scale. The scores for positive items ranged from 5 to 1 and were labeled as strongly agree- 5, agree -4, undecided -3, disagree -2, and strongly disagree -1, while the scores for negative items were reversed. The score was calculated by adding the scores obtained for each item. Scores ranged from 50 to 10, with 50 being the highest and 10 being the lowest (minimum). The responses are classified as less favorable, moderately favorable, or highly favorable using the cumulative frequency method. The data was organized, tabulated, and analyzed using frequency, percentage, mean, and correlation coefficient.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 reveals that 55.83 per cent of respondents had a moderately favorable attitude, whereas 24.17 per cent of them had highly favorable attitude and 20 per cent youths expressed less favorable attitude towards rural development activities respectively. The research findings are in line with the study of Anarase et al., (2018), B. Veeramasu and Jahanara. (2018) and Verma et al., (2012) who indicated in their study that majority of the youth had moderate favorable attitude towards rural development activities.

Table 1. Distribution of Rural Youth based on their attitude towards rural development activities-

S. No	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Less favorable attitude	24	20
2.	Moderately Favorable attitude	67	55.83
3.	Highly favorable attitude	29	24.17

Respondents Attitude towards rural development activities-

Data in table 2 reveals that among the ten items majority of youth agreed with “Participation of rural youth in rural development activities will bring rural prosperity” with the highest mean score of 4.14 followed by “Agriculture is the best venture for rural youth so as to make them self-employed” “Promotion of youth clubs paves ways for the systematic execution of rural development”, “Any development activities for rural youth must have its base on their social and economic needs”, “Rural youths are to be trained properly to use the available rural resources for the development activities” with mean score of 4.05, 4.00, 3.88 and 3.84, respectively Furthermore, maximum respondent disagreed with the negative statements like “Youth participation is not required for the rural development activities” with mean score of 3.76 followed by “Vocational training programmes for youth are simply a means of wastage of time”, “Youth cannot get profitable income from the village/agriculture based activities”, “We have not seen any self-employment programmes for rural youth now days”, “Support from the rural development programmes is not available in time for rural youth” with mean score 3.74, 3.67, 3.21 and 2.58 respectively. The findings indicate that youth had favorable attitude toward rural development activities and understand the need for development, and that their role is critical and they must contribute wholeheartedly and works with zest and enthusiasm for developing rural areas. The result is in agreement with Chander (2015), who stated that youth seem to be inclined to adopt ideas and technologies, so agricultural extension services should target youth in order to transform agriculture and rural development. It could be concluded that youth had a favorable attitude toward rural development activities, but they still require some encouragement from the government or an organization to prepare favorable and supportive policies, plans and projects to involve youth in developmental activities as well as to strengthen and revitalize the existing extension system, responsible for technical know-how and other relevant details to youth regarding interventions of rural development in their respective area.

Table 2. Attitude of rural youth towards rural development activities-

Statements	SA	A	UN	D	SDA	Mean score
Rural youths are to be trained properly to use the available rural resources for the development activities.	28	61	21	4	6	3.84
Participation of rural youths in rural development activities will bring rural prosperity.	42	42	30	4	2	4.14
Any development activities for rural youths must have its base on their social and economic needs.	45	37	24	6	8	3.88
Agriculture is the best venture for rural youth so as to make them self-employed.	42	45	20	8	4	4.05
Promotion of youth clubs paves ways for the systematic execution of rural development.	44	45	19	12	0	4.00
Youth participation is not required for the rural development activities .	0	5	4	70	16	3.76
Youth cannot get profitable income from the village/agriculture based activities.	4	4	25	58	31	3.67

Vocational training programmes for youths are simply a means of wastage of time.	5	5	23	60	25	3.74
We have not seen any self-employment programmes for rural youths now days.	5	10	22	55	25	3.21
Support from the rural development programmes is not available in time for rural youth.	30	45	10	15	20	2.58

Correlates of socio-economic attributes of youth and their attitude towards rural development activities-

Table 3. Correlation analysis of selected socio-economic attributes of youth with attitude they possess towards rural development activities.

S.No.	Variables	Correlation coefficient (r)
1	Education	0.342**
2	Religion	0.127 ^{NS}
3	Caste	0.037 ^{NS}
4	Family Type	0.212*
5	Marital status	0.091 ^{NS}
6	Occupation	0.032 ^{NS}
7	Annual income	0.219*
8	Source of information	0.288**
9	Achievement motivation	0.577**
10	Extension Contact	0.357**
11	Social participation	0.327**

* - 0.05 level of significance

** - 0.01 level of significance

NS = No significant

Table 3 depicts the relationships among various socioeconomic characteristics of youth and their attitude toward rural development activities. It indicates that the independent variables viz, education, source of information, achievement motivation, extension contact, social participation (at 0.01 level of significance) and family type, annual income (at 0.05 level of significance) were significant and positively correlated while religion, caste, marital status and occupation had no significant relationship with the attitude of youth towards rural development activities. This could be due to the fact that as level of education, source of information, achievement motivation, extension contact and social participation increases youth become more aware of the benefits of rural development and build a favorable perception towards rural developmental activities. The findings are partially supported Kitturmth et al., (2014) where education, extension contact and achievement motivation had significant and positive correlation with attitude while family type, source of information and social participation had no significant relationship with attitude they possess with regards to rural development. Similarly Anarase et al (2018) inferred that education, religion, family type and size, annual income, source of information, extension contact and achievement motivation of youths were positively and significantly correlated with attitude towards village development activities.

CONCLUSION

It could be concluded that 55.83 per cent youth had favorable attitude towards rural development activities. The variables like education, family type, annual income, source of information, achievement motivation, extension contact and social participation were found to be significantly correlated with rural youth attitude for rural development activities. Rural development in India is extremely crucial for the country's overall progress. Young people are equipped with skills and competencies they work hard and are avid to accomplish something, involvement of youth can bring improvement in rural communities in different areas to bring sustainable rural development. Youth participation in rural developmental

projects would therefore end up making a very empirical contribution to socio - economic development of rural areas , increase economic opportunities at the village level, and improve the living condition of rural communities as by bringing overall prosperity and welfare in rural areas.

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