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Relationship between personal and socio-economic characteristics of the rural youths and their attitude towards agriculture

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Abstract

The rural youths from Maharashtra and Karnataka had favourable attitude towards agriculture. Further, the attitude of rural youths from both the regions was more or less same. Awareness of agricultural schemes and economic motivation were found positive and significantly correlated with the attitude of rural youths towards agriculture at 0.05 per cent and 0.01 per cent level of probability. Whereas, annual income was found negative and significantly correlated with the attitude towards agriculture. While, size of the family, social participation, extension contact, mass media exposure and cosmopolitaness were found positive and non-significantly correlated and education, land holding and training received in agriculture were found to be negative and non-significantly correlated with the attitude of rural youths towards agriculture.

Keywords: Attitude, personal, socio-economic characteristics, rural youths and agriculture

Introduction

In India, it is well known that youths are the backbone of rural economy. The role of young people in the agriculture sector has been debated extensively and for good reasons. The food sector is the most important sector in any country and the questions that arise here are who are going to replace the farmers on the fields in the coming years, how to increase and encourage youths participation and interest in agriculture. Among human resources of any nation, the vital chunk happens to be its youths. As, majority of the youths comes from rural areas, they are considered the nation builders of tomorrow. With 356 million in 10-24 year-olds, India has the world's largest youth population (2014). The population in the age-group of 15-34 in India increased from 353 million in 2001 to 430 million in 2011. More than half of India's population is under the age of 25, with 65 per cent of the population under 35. The rural population is about 70%, and the indications are that the migration of rural youths to cities is around 45% in the country, which is quite alarming. The Tenth Five - Year Plan (2002- 2007) has estimated that India's labor force will increase faster than the ability of the economy to create new working opportunities. One-fifth of Maharashtra's population is in the 15-24 age groups comprising the youth. (The Economic Survey of Maharashtra for 2014-15). The youth farmer's exhibit high inclination to take up high value agricultural ventures like horticulture, therefore there is need to refocus their energies in enterprises of their interest. Rural youths now a days, have been losing their interest in agriculture. Instead of being self-employed in agriculture and allied activities, they are now turning to be "Job seekers". This picture is quite disgusting and not hopeful for future. This situation necessitates studying the attitude of rural youths towards agriculture.

Material and Methods

The research study was undertaken during the year 2016 in Sindhudurga district of Maharashtra state and Belagavi District of Karnataka state. The Sindhudurga district lies between 15°37' to 16°40' north latitude and 73°19' to 74°13' east longitude while Belagavi District lies between 15°50' to 17°28' north latitude and 74°54' to 76°28' east longitude. An exploratory research design of social research was followed. Kankavli and Sawantwadi tahasils from Sindhudurga district of and Chikkodi and Athani tahsils from Belagavi district were purposively selected for the study.

Three villages i.e. from Kankavli, (Wagheri, Kalamuli, Lore), Sawantwadi (Madakhol, Shirsinge, Verla), Chikkodi (Bhoj, Karadaga, Bedakihal) and Athani (Shiraguppi, Ainapur, Sulakud) were randomly selected from each selected tehsil. The data were collected from primary and secondary sources using questionnaire which was subjected for statistical analysis and interpretation. Door to door survey of 120 respondents was carried out to find out the personal, socio-economic characteristic and attitude of rural youth towards agriculture.

Results and Discussion

An analysis of the Relationship between personal and socio-economic characteristics of the rural youths and their attitude towards agriculture was carried out and the summary of the result is contained in Table 1 and Table 2.

It is revealed from Table 1 that, majority (71.67 per cent) of the rural youths from Maharashtra and majority (73.34 per cent) of the rural youths from Karnataka had 'favorable' attitude towards agriculture, whereas only 11.67 per cent and 10.00 per cent of the rural youths from both the states, respectively had 'more favorable' attitude towards agriculture. Further, equal number of the rural youths (16.66 per cent) from both Maharashtra and Karnataka state had 'less favorable' attitude towards agriculture. The average score of attitude of the rural youths from Maharashtra and Karnataka was 69.96 and 70.08 respectively. The maximum and minimum score of the rural youths from Maharashtra was 78 and 52 respectively, whereas the maximum and minimum score of the rural youths from Karnataka was 81 and 59 respectively. The calculated 't' value (0.139) was non-significant. From the above observation it can be concluded that majority of the respondents had favorable attitude towards agriculture. The rural youths shown favorable attitude towards agriculture. However, per cent of more favorable attitude was meagre. It may be due to the fact that, they are not so much motivated from their parents and friends for choosing agriculture because they also wants his son or friend has secured by the service where guaranteed monthly salary has decided which provides security by all means as compared to any other occupations. It was evident from Table 2, that computed 'r' values at overall level awareness of agricultural schemes and economic motivation were found positive and significantly correlated with the attitude of rural youths towards agriculture at 0.05 per cent and 0.01 per cent level of probability. Whereas, annual income was found negative and significantly correlated with the attitude towards agriculture. While, size of the family, social participation, extension contact, mass media exposure and cosmopolitaness were found positive and non-significantly correlated and education, land holding and training received in agriculture were found to be negative and non-significantly correlated with the attitude of rural youths towards agriculture.

From Table 2, it can be concluded that, the attitude towards agriculture of the rural youths from Maharashtra, Karnataka as well as overall level did not depend upon their education. The association between education and attitude towards agriculture had negative and 'non-significant' relationship. Thus, it could be said that educational level of the rural youths had least impact on their attitude. It means, the rural youths from all the categories had more or less same attitude.

It is seen from Table 2 that, attitude towards agriculture of the rural youths from Maharashtra, Karnataka as well as overall level did not depend upon their family size. The association between the size of the family and attitude towards agriculture had positive and 'non-significant' relationship. Thus, it can be concluded that, family size of the rural youths from both the states had least impact on the attitude. This means that youths are more or less equally distributed in all categories of attitude and family size. The findings of the present study are similar with the findings of the [1, 2].

The data given in Table 2 illustrate that, there was negative and significant correlation ($r = -0.2931796$) between total land holding of the family of rural youths and their attitude towards agriculture in case of Karnataka region. Further, it concludes that the attitude towards agriculture of the rural youths from Maharashtra and at overall level did not depend upon total land holding of the family. Thus, it could be said that land holding of the rural youths from Maharashtra and overall level had least impact on their attitude. However, among the youths from Karnataka state, it can be said that, youths having lesser land holding had more favourable attitude and vice versa. The findings of the present study are consistent with the findings of [3] and [4].

A perusal of the Table 2 reveals that, at overall level correlation between annual income of the family and attitude of rural youths was negative and significant ($r = -0.197097958$). Whereas, attitude towards agriculture of the rural youths from Maharashtra and Karnataka did not depend upon their annual income of the family. However, at overall level significance indicates a youths having less income had favourable attitude towards agriculture than that of youths from higher income. Youths from higher income may be opened to different areas of occupation rather than agriculture. The findings in this regard, have been supported by computed X^2 value ($X^2 = 202.45$) which was again found highly significant. The findings of the present study are similar with the findings of the [3, 4].

From Table 2, it was found that, there was positive and significant correlation ($r = 0.3313791$) between social participation of rural youths and their attitude towards agriculture in case of Karnataka state. Whereas, it revealed that attitude towards agriculture of the rural youths from Maharashtra and at overall level did not depend upon social participation of the rural youths. Thus, it could be said that social participation of the rural youths from Maharashtra and overall level had least impact on their attitude. It is quite obvious that the rural youths from Karnataka state with higher social participation had more favorable attitude towards agriculture. Because of high social participation, interaction, experience sharing and exchange of ideas and information of rural youths with others might have increase which would have helped in cultivating more favorable attitude among rural youths towards agriculture. However, this assumption did not hold through at overall level.

As it is apparent from the data presented in the Table 2 that, the association between the extension contact of the rural youths from Maharashtra and their attitude towards agriculture was positive and significant ($r = 0.3255976$). This indicates that rural youths with higher extension contact were more oriented towards agriculture. The higher level of contact made by the rural youths with extension agency would enable them to broaden their mental horizon, acquire more and more information, exchange of ideas and thoughts

and these would help them to remove their doubts related to farming and make obscure points clear. Further, findings show that, there was 'non-significant' association between extension contact of the rural youths and attitude towards agriculture in case of Karnataka and at overall level. Thus, it could be said that extension contact of the rural youths from Karnataka and overall level had least impact on their attitude. The findings of the present study are similar with the findings of [1].

Data shown in Table 2 indicate that, there existed the positive and significant association between the awareness of agricultural schemes and attitude towards agriculture in case of the rural youths from Karnataka and at overall level. It indicates that, the higher level of awareness influences the favourable attitude towards agriculture. Further, the association between awareness of agricultural schemes and attitude towards agriculture shows 'non-significant' relationship in case of rural youths from Maharashtra. The findings on this parameter at overall level are supplemented by X^2 value ($X^2=136.03$) which was significant at 0.01 level of probability.

The association between mass media exposure of the rural youths and their attitude are presented in Table 14. It can be concluded that, the attitude towards agriculture of the rural youths from Maharashtra, Karnataka as well as overall level did not depend upon their mass media exposure. There was 'non-significant' association between the attitude and mass media exposure. Thus, it could be said that mass media exposure of the rural youths had least impact on their attitude.

From Table 2, it was observed that, the cosmopolitanism of the rural youths from Maharashtra, Karnataka as well as overall level had positive and 'non-significant' relationship. This means that, the respondents were more or less equally distributed in all the categories of attitude and cosmopolitanism.

As it is apparent from the data presented in the Table 2 that, the association between the training received in agriculture and attitude towards agriculture of the rural youths from Maharashtra, Karnataka as well as over all had negative and 'non-significant' relationship. This might be due to regular educational courses, less availability of the training

programmes and low level of awareness about training programmes among the youth's respondents.

It is obvious from the data presented in Table 2 that, there was a positive and significant relationship between economic motivation and attitude of rural youths towards agriculture from Maharashtra and overall level. It means higher the economic motivation among rural youths, more is the favorable attitude among them towards agriculture. Further, it is observed that, there is positive and non-significant association between economic motivation and attitude in case of rural youths from Karnataka. The findings in this regard are again proved by the computed X^2 value ($X^2=155.73$) which was highly significant. The probable reason might be that in the study area, agriculture was the major source of livelihood and hence, the rural youths who had higher economic motivation were more inclined to maximize the income from farming; this would have made them take more and more interest in farming and thus they would have developed more favorable attitude towards agriculture. The findings of the present study are similar with the findings of [5, 6].

Table 3 states that the value of coefficient of multiple regression (R^2) of Maharashtra was 0.3948, indicating thereby, that 39.00 per cent variation in the attitude of the rural youths from Maharashtra was explained by the set of selected eleven independent variables under study. It means, some other variables may be responsible for bringing favorable attitude in rural youths.

The value of coefficient of multiple regression (R^2) of Karnataka was 0.3431, indicating thereby, that 34.00 per cent variation in the attitude of the rural youths from Karnataka was explained by the set of selected eleven independent variables under study. It means, some other variables may be responsible for bringing favorable attitude in rural youths.

The value of coefficient of multiple regression (R^2) was 0.2674, indicating that, 27 per cent variation in the attitude of the rural youths from both the states was explained by the set of selected independent eleven variables under study. It means at overall level, the selected independent variables had contributed remarkably less in the dependent variable.

Table 1: Distribution of rural youths according to their overall attitude towards agriculture

| Sl. No. | Category (Score) | Respondents (N=120) | | | | Total(N=120) | |
|---------|-------------------------------|---------------------|------------|------------------|------------|--------------|------------|
| | | Maharashtra (N=60) | | Karnataka (N=60) | | | |
| | | Number | Percentage | Number | Percentage | Number | Percentage |
| 1 | Less favourable (up to 66) | 10 | 16.66 | 10 | 16.66 | 20 | 16.66 |
| 2 | Favourable (67 to 74) | 43 | 71.67 | 44 | 73.34 | 87 | 72.50 |
| 3 | More favourable(75 and above) | 07 | 11.67 | 06 | 10.00 | 13 | 10.84 |
| | Total | 60 | 100.00 | 60 | 100.00 | 120 | 100.00 |
| | Mean | 69.96 | | 70.08 | | 70.02 | |

*t' Value = 0.1509 Not significant d.f.= 118

Table 2: Correlation coefficients of characteristics of the rural youths with their attitude

| Sl. No. | Independent variables | Maharashtra | Karnataka | Over all |
|---------|---------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| | | Attitude ('r' values) | Attitude ('r' values) | |
| 1. | Education | -0.208 ^{NS} | -0.021 ^{NS} | -0.110 ^{NS} |
| 2. | Size of the family | 0.225 ^{NS} | 0.024 ^{NS} | 0.120 ^{NS} |
| 3. | Land holding | 0.040 ^{NS} | -0.293* | -0.088 ^{NS} |
| 4. | Annual income | -0.247 ^{NS} | -0.179 ^{NS} | -0.197* |
| 5. | Social participation | -0.214 ^{NS} | 0.331* | 0.028 ^{NS} |
| 6. | Extension contact | 0.325* | 0.038 ^{NS} | 0.188 ^{NS} |
| 7. | Mass media exposure | 0.187 ^{NS} | 0.180 ^{NS} | 0.167 ^{NS} |
| 8. | Awareness of agricultural | 0.221 ^{NS} | 0.270* | 0.248* |

| | Schemes | | | |
|-----|----------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| 9. | Cosmopolitnness | 0.017 ^{NS} | 0.002 ^{NS} | 0.007 ^{NS} |
| 10. | Training received in agriculture | -0.107 ^{NS} | -0.034 ^{NS} | -0.077 ^{NS} |
| 11. | Economic motivation | 0.416 ^{**} | 0.243 ^{NS} | 0.335 ^{**} |

** - Significant at 0.01 per cent level,

* - Significant at 0.05 per cent level,

NS – Non-significant

Table 3: Regression coefficient between personal and socio-economic characteristics of the rural youths at over all level

| Sl. No. | Independent variables | Coefficients | Standard Error | t Stat |
|--|-----------------------------------|--------------|----------------|---------|
| 1. | Education | -0.2092 | 0.1721 | -1.2157 |
| 2. | Size of the family | 0.4661 | 0.3255 | 1.4318 |
| 3. | Land holding | 0.0508 | 0.2044 | 0.2484 |
| 4. | Annual income of the family | -6.5 | 2.36 | -2.7588 |
| 5. | Social participation | -0.1396 | 0.1514 | -0.9226 |
| 6. | Extension contact | -0.0187 | 0.1251 | -0.1494 |
| 7. | Mass media exposure | 0.1803 | 0.2596 | 0.6947 |
| 8. | Awareness of agricultural Schemes | 0.5892 | 0.1821 | 3.2347 |
| 9. | Cosmopolitnness | 0.3761 | 0.4655 | 0.8079 |
| 10. | Training received in agriculture | -1.6492 | 2.3422 | -0.7041 |
| 11. | Economic motivation | 0.5829 | 0.1878 | 3.1039 |
| Coefficient of multiple regression (R^2)= 0.2674 | | | | |
| F value = 3.5840 | | | | |

Conclusion

It is revealed that more than 83 per cent of the rural youths had favorable to more favorable attitude towards agriculture. This inclination can be enhanced properly by integrated efforts to be done by Agriculture University, State Agriculture Department, Industrial Corporation and NGOsto organize technical and motivational programmes to develop agro-preneur youths and provide all support to them until success of their agri-entrepreneurship. Such programmes should be widely and intensively organized in the rural areas to seed maximum participation of rural youths in agriculture.

Alone farm production seems to be non-profitable business; hence farmers need to process, add value to produce and also market the product using market intelligence. Simply farmer should follow the production-processing-marketing to increase the profit from agriculture that ultimately would help to make favorable attitude of rural youth towards agriculture.

The investigation on relationship has clearly shown that the variables like awareness of agricultural schemes and economic motivation had influence on attitude of rural youths. Hence, these variables may be focused by the policy makers and extension workers by adopting suitable strategy to increase awareness of agricultural schemes among the youths.

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