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Extent of rural youth involvement in different components of agri-based enterprises and its relational analysis in West Bengal

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Abstract

The study was carried out with 80 rural youth in 4 villages of Coochbehar district of West Bengal. The findings indicated that majority of respondents (42.5%) had low age, more than one-fourth of the respondents (25.75%) had post-graduation and above level of education, majority of rural youths were unmarried, 83.75%, and had nuclear family, most of the respondents (61.25%) had medium income, 71.25% and possessed marginal land holding, majority of the rural youth family (51.25%) were solely dependent on agricultural, more than one-third of respondents (43.75%) had low farming experience and majority of respondents have medium level of economic motivation, scientific orientation and innovativeness. The study further revealed that large majority (70.00%) of rural youths had low level of extension participation. The result of the study disclosed that majority of rural youths were engaged in dairy practice while, less than one fourth of the respondents were involved in goat farming and poultry farming and least were engaged in vermicompost and mushroom production enterprises. The correlation analysis of dairy practice (n=70) showed that variables such as age, farming experience, scientific orientation and innovativeness were positively correlated while; education was negatively correlated with rural youths' involvement with 99% level of significance. Thus, the research concludes that dairy sector is not lucrative among the rural youth.

Keywords: Agri-based enterprises, computer-based randomizer, dairy sector, rural youth, socio-economic analysis

Introduction

Youth is the leading court of period with significant challenges when body personality as well as intellectual vigor and social notions develop erratically. This span of youngness of life is completely full of both potentials as well as challenges. Youth generation of any country determines its future prosperity; hence the share of youth population to total population has significant meaning. World Population Prospect, 2015 revision of UNPD (United Nations Population Development) revealed that India is in its peak in population of 10-24 years of age group among the world; despite of having smaller population than China. The mean age of India's population is around 29, whereas for other countries like China and USA, it is above 37 years of age. As per the estimation by ILO (International Labor Organization), India's two-third population is below 35 years of age. The projection by World Bank showed that till 2021, India will have 479.4 million youth of 15-34 years age, which will be 34.1% of the country's total population share and rural youth is two and half time of total urban youth. But the fact is that, with the gradual increase in the rural population of the country, by whom the food requirement of the future population will be met. The concrete answer is by youth. But the youths of present generation do not prefer on the part of agriculture and agri-based enterprises regarding their occupation consequently migrating to the big cities for the job prospects (Lal *et al.*, 2017) [4].

The present trends regarding youth's unemployment, migration, crime and juvenile delinquency, drug abuse, suicidal tendencies depict about their afflicted conditions. The rate of youth unemployment in 2020 is around 23.75%, which was 23.34% in 2019 as ILO estimates. And a datum of NCRB depicts that unemployment is one of the major causes of suicidal incidence in India among the age group of 18-30 years and accordingly India ranked sixth in women suicidal rate. Besides, this age group (18-30 years) is responsible for 41% of total crimes i.e., murder, dacoity, rape, burglary, kidnapping committed in India. Crime report of juveniles of India showed that, crimes by juveniles in 2018 were 31,591 out of which 99% were boys. That's why, for safeguarding the potential of them towards upright future building

of country, it is utile to guide them properly for empowering and motivating by giving precedence to their primary needs. In this concern, youth's involvement in agriculture and agri-based enterprises can be a great deal to soothe the problem of meeting country's future food requirement as well as unemployment. But traditional system of subsistence agriculture is not so much attractive to the youth. It needs transformation to make it challenging intellectually and rewarding economically. For making agriculture retained by youth for enhancing quality and standard of living in rural areas, it needs to be recognized youth as the agent for change rather their engagement as support and assistance receiver. The involvement of youth in agri-based enterprises and agriculture is not only beneficial for youth's perspective, but also for modernization agriculture of the country by high-tech, high-risk and high-returning agripreneurship, which is a step towards sustainable agriculture and ecology. Keeping in view, the study was designed to assess the extent of rural youth involvement towards agri-based enterprises.

Materials and Methods

The study was carried out in Coochbehar district of West Bengal. Two blocks having maximum rural population was selected and two villages from each of the selected blocks was selected according to the highest rural population. Selection of respondents from respective villages had been carried out

by random sampling method with the help of computer-based randomizer and accordingly 20 rural youths (within age group of 18-35) were selected from each of the selected four villages. Thus, a total of 80 rural youths was constituted as sample respondents for the study. The data were collected in the farm and home of all the respondents; accordingly, the information was recorded on the schedule of interview. It enabled to obtain first-hand information and provided an opportunity to understand the reactions. The extent of their involvement was measured into three levels high, medium and low with score 3, 2 and 1 respectively.

Results and Discussion

Socio-economic characteristics of rural youth

The Table 1 revealed that majority of respondents (42.5%) had young age group, 25.75% had post-graduation level of education, 63.75% of rural youths were unmarried, 83.75% rural youths had nuclear family, 61.25% respondents had medium income, 71.25% respondents possessed marginal land holding, about 51.00% were solely dependent on agricultural. The study further revealed that large chunk of respondents 43.75%, 56.25%, 53.75% and 61.25% had low farming experience, medium level of economic motivation, scientific orientation and innovativeness, respectively. The study also depicts that majority (73.75%) of rural youths had low level of extension participation.

Table 1: Distribution of Socio-economic characteristics of rural youth (N=80)

Profile	f	%
Age		
18-23	34	42.50
24-29	22	27.50
30-35	24	30.00
Education		
Primary (Up to VII)	12	15
Madhyamik (VIII-X)	20	25
Uchcha-madhyamik (XI and XII)	15	18.75
Graduation	19	23.75
Post-graduation	14	17.50
Marital Status		
Married	29	36.20
Unmarried	51	63.75
Family Type		
Nuclear	67	83.75
Joint	13	16.25
Family Size		
Small (Up to 4)	55	68.75
Medium (5-8)	18	22.50
Large (>8)	7	8.75
Annual Income		
Low (<68,632)	21	26.25
Medium (68,632-1,01,718)	49	61.25
High (>1,01,718)	10	12.50
Size of Land Holdings		
Marginal (Up to 1 Ha.)	57	71.25
Small (1.01- 2 Ha.)	21	26.25
Medium (2.01- 4 Ha.)	2	2.50
Family Occupation		
Sole Agriculture	41	51.25
Agriculture + Labour Work	18	22.50
Agriculture + Service	11	13.75
Agriculture + Business	6	7.50
Business	2	2.50
Service	1	1.25
Labour Work	1	1.25
Farming Experience		

Low (<4 Years)	35	43.75
Medium (4-10 Years)	31	38.75
High (>10 Years)	14	17.50
Economic Motivation		
Low	17	21.25
Medium	45	26.25
High	18	22.50
Scientific Orientation		
Low	17	21.25
Medium	43	53.75
High	20	25.00
Innovativeness		
Low	22	27.50
Medium	49	61.25
High	9	11.25
Extension Participation		
Low	59	73.75
Medium	20	25.00
High	1	1.25

Rural youth involvement towards agri-based enterprises:

The perusal of Table 2 indicated that lion share of rural youths (87.50%) were engaged in dairy practice while, less than approximately one-fourth of the respondents (23.75%) and (21.25%) were involved in goat farming and poultry farming, respectively. In case of vermicompost and mushroom enterprises production 15.00% and 10.00% of respondents were involved respectively.

Table 2: Extent of rural youth involvement towards agri-based enterprises

Agri-based enterprises	f	%
Dairy	70	87.50
Goat farming	19	23.75
Poultry farming	17	21.25
Vermicompost production	12	15.00
Mushroom production	8	10.00

% is >100 because of multiple response

Table 3: Extent of rural youth involvement in different components of agri-based enterprises

Extent of involvement	f	%
Dairy enterprises (N=70 out of 80)		
Low	32	45.71
Medium	15	21.83
High	23	32.85
Goat farming (N=19out of 80)		
Low	6	31.58
Medium	6	31.58
High	7	36.84
Poultry farming (N=17 out of 80)		
Low	7	41.17
Medium	5	29.41
High	5	29.41
Vermicompost production (N=12out of 80)		
Low	5	41.67
Medium	4	33.33
High	3	25.00
Mushroom production (N=08 out of 80)		
Low	2	25.00
Medium	3	37.50
High	3	37.50

Rural youth involvement in dairy enterprises

In the context of rural youth involvement in dairy enterprises, most of the rural youth were low (45.71%) level of

involvement in dairy practice followed by 32.85% and 21.83% rural youth were high and medium level of involvement under dairy practice, respectively.

Rural youth involvement in Goat farming

As concern to rural youth involvement in Goat farming the findings revealed that most of the rural youth were high (36.84%) level of involvement in goat farming enterprise followed by equal percentage (31.58%) of rural youth were low and medium level of involvement under goat farming practice, respectively.

Rural youth involvement in poultry farming

With regards to involvement in poultry farming the findings indicated that most of the rural youth respondents were low (41.17%) level of involvement in poultry enterprise followed by 29.41% and 29.41% medium and high level of involvement group under poultry farming respectively.

Rural youth involvement in Vermicompost production

The perusal of Table 3 indicated that majority of the rural youth's respondent of vermicompost production enterprise were fell under low (41.67%) level of involvement followed by medium and high with their share of 33.33 % and 25.00 % of level of involvement towards vermicomposting production.

Rural youth involvement in mushroom production

With regards to mushroom production findings shows that equal percentage (37.50%) of the rural youth respondents of mushroom production enterprise fell under medium and high level of involvement and 25.00% respondents were low level of involvement towards mushroom enterprise.

Relationship between socio-economic variables and involvement of rural youth in dairy enterprise

Table 3 showed that the relationship between socio-economic variables and involvement of rural youth in dairy enterprises showed that variables, age, farming experience, scientific orientation and innovativeness were positively correlated with rural youth involvement in dairy practice with 99 per cent level of significance while, education was negatively correlated with 99 per cent level of significance and annual income was negatively correlated with 95 per cent level of significance. The result is in congruity with Parameswaranaik *et al.* (2020)^[7] whose study revealed that aspiration of youths

toward agripreneurship that the majority of the youths had a just medium level of aspiration. The correlation coefficient of the variables such as family type, family size and extension participation were non-significantly positive and for the variables like size of landholding, family occupation and economic motivation were non-significantly negative.

Table 4: Relationship between independent variables and involvement in Dairy enterprise (N=70)

Independent Variables	Correlation coefficient (r)
Age	0.58**
Education	-0.39**
Farming experience	0.48**
Scientific orientation	0.52**
Innovativeness	0.42**
Annual income	-0.22*

** : 99% level of significance * : 95% level of significance

Conclusion

The study finally concludes that majority of the respondents were young age group, higher level of education, nuclear and small size of family, medium income annually, marginal landholding, unmarried, solely dependent on agriculture for family occupation, had low farming experience and also medium level of economic motivation, scientific orientation and innovativeness. The majority of the respondents were involved in dairy enterprise, followed by goat farming, poultry farming, vermicomposting and mushroom production enterprise. The relationship of socio-economic variables and involvement of rural youth in dairy enterprise showed that age, farming experience, scientific orientation and innovativeness were positively correlated with rural youth involvement in dairy practice while, education and annual income was negatively correlated.

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