

# Attitude of Rural Youth towards Agricultural Sector - A Critical Analysis

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**Abstract:** Indian agriculture is facing variety of emerging challenges and the concerns have shifted from production to more complicated, subtle and multifaceted issues. A number of the contemporary problems in Indian agriculture are land fragmentation, labour shortage, depletion of natural resources, global 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. Generally youth is willing to adopt new ideas and technologies and thus they will easily transform this status of farming. The present study was carried out to measure the attitude of rural youth towards agriculture sector. The study was conducted in sivagangai district and sample constituted 328 rural youth. The findings of the study shows that farming is the only solution to limit the unemployment problems, in a country like India which still has lot of people depending on agriculture for their livelihood.

**Keywords:** Rural youth, Agriculture sector, Farming, Attitude

## 1. Introduction

In India, youth constitute a numerically dominant potential, resourceful and also adventurous segment of the population. Young people brings energy, vitality and innovation into the workforce. Most of the new innovations require a talented agricultural manpower. For example: promotion of high value agriculture, precision farming, organic cultivation etc. In this study the researcher analysed the attitude of rural youth towards agricultural sector. Attitude is the prime cause for the growth of an individual and will have great impact on the way we think, the way we perceive and the way we do things. It is the determining factor for the success or failure of any vibrant endeavour. As the farming is the most predominant avenue for the growth and development of a country, it became mandatory to strengthen the farming through potential and dynamic rural youth of the country. Rural youth are formidable force in the agricultural sector.

## 2. Review of Literature

Neeta Mahawar et. al (2021) <sup>1</sup> in their article examined the challenges in attracting and retaining rural youth in the near future in agriculture. The researcher concluded that in order to attract and retain youth in agriculture a respectable brand image is to be formed so that people's view on this sector is altered. Today agriculture needs to be perceived as an enterprise and the farmer as an agri - preneur. The youth in farming must be attentive courageous to takeup innovative farming practices which further indirectly leads to the economic development of the nation.

Gomase et. al (2020) <sup>2</sup> in their article observed that measurement of retention of rural youth in agriculture retention index was developed and standardized, on the basis

of results of retention index proposed a model on "Twenty - one - point programme on retention of rural youth in agriculture" this model consists of 21 indicators viz., skill development, family income, affiliation, intrinsic motivation, autonomy, access to market, quality education, access to digital technology, employment policy, perception, access to agricultural input, aspiration, health care services, exposure to agribusiness management, reward and recognition, social support, access to farm mechanization, access to financial services, government schemes, access to digital technology and agricultural policy. These indicators are very important in the development of a project or programme. Therefore, the researcher concluded that policymakers, development agencies and extension functionaries should consider these indicators while preparing and planning programs or projects for the development of rural youth.

Hema Tirupathi et. al (2018) <sup>3</sup> in their article stated that measuring the attitude of rural youth towards farming: An exploratory study of haryana. The study revealed that 75.19% of rural youth had moderately favourable attitude towards farming. Significant and positive relationship was observed with the age, family size, land holding, herd size, level of participation in farm activities with their attitude towards farming. It is suggested that there is a need of special efforts to attract, train and retain the rural youth in farming as a whole by developing more favourable attitude towards farming by transforming the agriculture and making it more agribusiness oriented, scientifically attractive, and economically profitable.

### 3. Objective of the study

The main objective of the study is to analyze the attitude of rural youth towards agricultural sector.

### 4. Research Methodology

Tamilnadu is one of the biggest states in India and occupying sixth place in the terms of population. The state also has many numbers of villages. The sivagangai district is one among the agriculture background villages in Tamilnadu. There are twelve taluks were located in the districts. The researcher has collected primary data from 328 respondents in the study area by using. The sampling technique used for the study is simple random sampling method through well - structured interview scheduled. The age of rural youth were covered 15 - 29 years having education up to 12<sup>th</sup> standard from each of the village among twelve taluks in Sivagangai district. The researcher has proposed to apply statistical tools such as descriptive statistics, Garret rank analysis and Factor analysis.

### 5. Data analysis and Interpretation

In order to understand the demographic profile of the respondents, percentage analysis was used to identify the personal information like Gender, Age, Marital status, Educational qualification, Monthly income and Monthly savings. The Table 1.1 shows the demographic profile of the respondents.

**Table 1.1:** Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Demographic Profile	Options	Frequency	Percent
Age	15 - 20 years	8	2
	21 to 24 years	112	34
	25 to 29 years	208	63
	<b>Total</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>100</b>
Marital status	Married	107	33
	Unmarried	221	67
	<b>Total</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>100</b>
Educational Qualification	Degree	181	55
	Post Graduate	58	18
	Illiterate	47	14
	Others	42	13
	<b>Total</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>100</b>
Occupation	Agriculture Farming	154	46
	Business	86	25
	Livestock farming	92	28
	Others	4	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>100</b>
Operational Landholdings	Less than 1 hectare	89	20.00
	1 - 2 acres	121	20
	2 - 4 acres	42	12
	Above 4 acres	252	48
	<b>Total</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Primary Data

- **Age:** Among 328 respondents considered for the study; 8 respondents (2%) were in the age group between 15 to 20 years, 112 respondents (34%) were in the age group of 21 to 24 years, 208 respondents (63%) were in the age group of 25 to 29 years. Thus, majority of the rural youth are in the age group of 25 to 29 years.

- **Marital status:** Among 328 respondents considered for the study, 107 respondents (33%) are married and 221 respondents (67%) are not married. Hence, majority of the respondents contacted for the study are married.
- **Educational Qualification:** Among 328 respondents considered for the study, 181 respondents (55%) are qualified with Degree, 58 respondents (18%) have completed with post graduate, 47 respondents (14%) are illiterates and 42 respondents (13%) are categorized as belonging to other group. Therefore, majority of the rural youth are qualified with degree.
- **Occupation:** Among 328 respondents considered for the study, 154 respondents (46%) were occupied as agriculture farming, 86 respondents' (25%) were doing business, 92 respondents were occupied as live stock farming and remaining 4 respondents (1%) were occupied as other category. Therefore majority of the rural youth were doing agriculture farming business.
- **Operational Landholdings:** Land is the fundamental for production in an agrarian society without which no agricultural production takes place. Among 328 respondents considered for the study, 89 respondents (20%) were cultivating less than 1 acres, 121 respondents (20%) were cultivating 1 - 2 acres, 42 respondents (12%) were cultivating 2 - 4 acres and remaining 252 respondents (48%) were cultivating above 4 acres. The overall observation relating to the study provides information that out of 328 respondents, majority of the rural youth were cultivating 4 acres.

#### 5.1 Association between operational landholdings and demographic profile of the rural youth:

Chi - square analysis is used to find the association between the operational landholdings and demographic profile of rural youth.

$H_0$ : There is no significant association between the operational landholdings and demographic profile of rural youth.

**Table 1.2:** Association between the operational landholdings and demographic profile of rural youth

Demographic Factor	Chi - Square Value	Sig. Value
Age	3.281	.052
Marital status	0.754	.656
Educational Qualification	4.365	.435
Occupation	2.391	.325

Source: Primary Data

It is observed that the significant value is greater than 0.05 for the variable 'Age' with the chi - square value of 3.281, 'Marital status' with the chi - square value of 0.754, 'Educational Qualification' with the chi - square value of 4.365, and 'Occupation' with the chi square value of 2.391 which indicates that there is no association between operational landholdings and demographic profile of rural youth because the significant value is 0.000 for all the above variables. Therefore, it is concluded that there is no association between operational landholdings and demographic profile of rural youth.

**5.2 Attitude of rural youth towards agricultural sector – Garret Ranking Score**

Garret’s ranking techniques was used to found the preference of rank indicated by the respondents on different factors. In order to assess the order of importance of the various factors considered by the rural youth, the researcher has applied the Garret ranking method. It is a non - parametric test. The result of the Garret ranking method reveals the mean ranking of each variables. Based on the mean rank which one is the top position under the nine factors considered by the rural youth. The ranks are assigned based on the total scores by using SPSS packages. So, to rank the preference of attitude of rural youth towards agricultural sector, the garret’s ranking technique was used.

**Table 1.3:** Attitude of rural youth towards agricultural sector – Garret Ranking

Factors	Garrett Mean Score	Garrett Ranking
Farming is the most laborious profession	3.854	5
Educated youth should come to farming sector	3.724	6
Farmer require high intelligence	3.654	7
Farming is the only solution to limit the unemployment	4.752	1
Youth involved in farming sector can lived unattractive life style	3.214	8
There is no quick return of money in agriculture	2.894	9
Income generating activities in agriculture sector	4.014	5
Agriculture leads to increase their standard of living.	4.562	2
Enjoying the relationship with the nature through farming	4.364	3
Advanced technologies encourage youth to flourish in farming	4.263	4

Source: Primary Data

Table 1.3 shows the ranks assigned by the attitude of rural youth towards agriculture sector from the estimated garret mean score and rank, it is revealed that among nine variables ‘Farming is the only solution to limit the unemployment’ shows the first rank with the mean value of 4.752; ‘Agriculture leads to increase their standard of living’ shows the second rank with the mean value of 4.562; ‘Enjoying the relationship with the nature through farming’ shows the third rank with the mean value of 4.364; ‘Advanced technologies encourage youth to flourish in farming’ shows the fourth rank with the mean value of 4.263; ‘Income generating activities’ shows the fifth rank with the mean value of 4.014.

Among the nine variables, the above five variables have greater than 4.00. Hence it is observed that rural youth are having a positive perception about agriculture as an alternative for employment.

**5.3 Attitude of rural youth towards agricultural sector – Factor analysis:**

Factor analysis is a technique that is used to reduce a large number of variables into fewer numbers factors. It extracts maximum common variance from all variables and puts

them into a common score. Factor analysis is employed in any research study on social science and management not only for factor reduction but also for identifying the important variables. In this study, the factor analysis is used to group the attitude of rural youth towards agricultural sector. It is a multivariate statistical technique used to compress and simplify the set of large parameters into a small number of parameters called factors. This analysis is carried out for each variable using an extraction method of principal component analysis with the Varimax Kaiser Normalization Rotation Method.

**5.4 Attitude of rural youth towards agricultural sector - KMO and Bartlett's Test:**

The use of KMO and Bartlett’s test of sphericity is primarily essential to measure sample adequacy of using factor analysis. The small value of KMO statistics indicates that the correlation between pair of variables cannot be explained by other variables and the factor analysis may not be appropriate. The KMO measure of sampling adequacy has been calculated by using the correlation test, to check whether the variables in the sample are adequate to correlate. The general rule of thumb is that a KMO value should be greater than 0.5 for a satisfactory analysis to proceed.

**Table 1.4:** Attitude of rural youth towards agricultural sector - KMO and Bartlett's Test

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser- Meyer- Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.831
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi - Square	532.641
	Df	.24
	Sig.	.000

Source: Primary data

The high value of KMO (0.831 >.05) indicates that factor analysis is useful for the present data. The significant value for Bartlett’s test of Sphericity is 0.000 and is less than.05 which indicates that there exist significant relationships among the variables. The resultant value of the KMO test and Bartlett’s test indicate that the present data are useful for factor analysis.

**Table 1.5:** Attitude of rural youth towards agricultural sector – Reliability test

Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items	No. of variables
.831	328	9

Source: Primary data

The reliability of the Scales used in this study has been calculated by Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha and normally it ranges between 0 and 1. All constructs obtained an acceptable level of a Coefficient Alpha *above.7* indicates that the scales used in this study have been reliable.

**5.5 Attitude of rural youth towards agricultural sector – Principal Component Analysis**

The principal component analysis was administered for grouping the factors for attitude of rural youth towards agricultural sector. It is a method of data reduction. The proportion of the variance of a particular item due to common factor is called communality. The initial value of

the communality in a principal component analysis is ‘1’. Attitude of rural youth towards agricultural sector is involved in the component column. The extraction communalities estimate the variance in each variable accounted for the factors in the factor solution. If the value is less than 0.5 it indicates that the variables do not fit well with the factor solution and it should possibly be dropped from the analysis. The **Table 1.6** shows the extraction value of the attitude of rural youth towards agricultural sector.

Enjoying the relationship with the nature through farming	1.000	.854
Advanced technologies encourage youth to flourish in farming	1.000	.711

Source: Primary Data

**Table 1.6:** Attitude of rural youth towards agricultural sector – Principal Component Analysis

Communalities		
Variables	Initial	Extraction
Farming is the most laborious profession	1.000	.631
Educated youth should come to farming sector	1.000	.754
Farmer require high intelligence	1.000	.625
Farming is the only solution to limit the unemployment	1.000	.874
Youth involved in farming sector can lived unattractive life style	1.000	.764
There is no quick return of money in agriculture	1.000	.621
Income generating activities in agriculture sector	1.000	.789
Agriculture leads to increase their standard of living.	1.000	.686

The Table 1.6 shows the variance of the variables ranging from .600 to 0.898. It shows that the ten variables exhibit the considerable variance from 50 percent to 80 percent. Hence it is concluded that all these variables are capable of segmenting themselves with respect to the attitude of rural youth towards agricultural sector.

**5.6 Attitude of rural youth towards agricultural sector – Total Variance Explained:**

The total variance analysis is important to know the rotated sum of square value. The rotated nine variables are determined based on the total Eigen value and the Eigen value should be greater than one. The total cumulative variance is explained by the total percentage of variance by each retained into three factors. The Table 1.7 gives the individual variance of the predominant factors which emerged out of nine variables.

**Table 1.7:** Attitude of rural youth towards agricultural sector –Total Variance Explained:

Component	Total Variance Explained								
	Initial Eigen values			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	4.561	53.758	21.561	3.763	53.758	24.284	2.782	76.045	12.481
2	2.089	15.516	32.564	1.086	15.516	36.857	1.582	36.234	48.715
3	.871	12.386	53.758	2.045	43.641	51.274	3.245	41.211	89.926
4	.789	9.841	69.274						
5	.632	4.620	81.659						
6	.451	2.264	91.501						
7	.841	1.616	96.121						
8	.336	3.172	98.384						
9	.321	2.142	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Source: Primary Data

**5.7 Attitude of rural youth towards agricultural sector – Rotated Component Matrix**

The rotated sum of square value indicates that the cumulative percentage of variances is 89.926. So the

factorization is much suitable for the attitude of rural youth towards agricultural sector. The Table 1.8 explains the value of rotated component matrix for the attitude of rural youth towards agricultural sector.

**Table 1.7.7:** Attitude of rural youth towards agricultural sector – Rotated Component Matrix

Schemes	Rotated Component Matrix		
	1	2	3
Farming is the only solution to limit the unemployment	0.798		
Youth involved in farming sector can lived unattractive life style	0.734		
Agriculture leads to increase their standard of living.	0.696		
There is no quick return of money in agriculture		0.785	
Income generating activities in agriculture sector		0.653	
Educated youth should come to farming sector		0.721	
Farming is the most laborious profession		0.634	
Advanced technologies encourage youth to flourish in farming			0.891
Farmer require high intelligence			0.654

Source: Primary Data

**1) Employment Creation:**

The Table 1.7 represents the factor classification. Out of nine factors the first factor consists of three variables namely farming is the only solution to limit the unemployment (0.798), Youth involved in farming sector can live unattractive life style (0.734) and Agriculture leads to increase their standard of living. (0.696) all these factors are termed as employment creation.

**2) Income generation:**

The second factor consists of four variables namely there is no quick return of money in agriculture (0.785), Income generating activities in agriculture sector (0.653) Educated youth should come to farming sector (0.721) and Farming is the most laborious profession (0.634) all these factors are termed as Income generation.

**3) Technology Development:**

The third factor consists of two variables namely advanced technologies encourage youth to flourish in farming (0.891) and Farmer require high intelligence (0.654) all these factors are termed as technology development.

**6. Conclusion**

Youth power has been a buzz word that has captivated the minds of the intelligentsia since a long time. The Government of India officially defines youth as persons between the ages of 15 and 35 years and it also varies depending on the programme. (Draft National Youth Policy, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, 2012). Youth are the primary productive human resource of socio - economic development. It is therefore, essential to locate the role of youth in mainstream development. This pool of youth population is a decisive factor in determining our nation's destiny. The phenomenal rise in the youth population has made India the youngest nation and one of the top human resource metrics in the world. It is vital to utilize this demographic dividend and channelize the youth and their creative energies for nation - building. India should capitalize to invest on this young pool of India and divert their involvement towards farming.

Therefore, the researcher concluded that the farming is the only solution to limit the unemployment problems, as the above variable has the highest mean score value as perceived by rural youth in sivagangai district. Hence it can be concluded that rural youth have a fascination for agriculture as an occupation and their zeal and enthusiasm will strengthen the Indian agriculture sector in the long run.

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