



AGRI MAGAZINE

(International E-Magazine for Agricultural Articles)

Volume: 02, Issue: 07 (July, 2025)

Available online at <http://www.agrimagazine.in>

© Agri Magazine, ISSN: 3048-8656

Rural Youth: Key Role in Agricultural Development

*Virupakshi Aski¹, Harsha, C.¹, Varsha, S.C.² and Praneet, B.K.¹

¹Department of Agricultural Extension, KSNUAHS, Shivamogga, India

²Department of Agricultural Extension, UAS, Bangalore, India

*Corresponding Author's email: ysaski2018@gmail.com

In India, youth constitute a numerically dominant potential, resourceful and also adventurous segment of the population. ISSN: 2582 – 7146 Whether youth should be attracted and retained in agriculture can be a serious debate today and wishes thorough exploration. Quite 50.00 per cent of India's current population is below the age of 25 years and over 65.00 per cent below the age of 35 years. Majority of them live in rural areas. At one hand, we've over 50 per cent of population involved in agriculture that contributes to only 17.4 per cent of the GDP (Indian Economic Survey, 2015-2016), resulting in poverty and threatened livelihood of farmers and on the opposite hand we are demanding for more youth involvement in agriculture. Nearly 35 percent of the country's population falls under the 15-35 years of age limit and roughly 75 percent of them live in rural areas, disattachment with farming on such a large scale is worrisome. The rural youth could be the ideal target for skill training in these new areas of agricultural growth and to do this effectively there is a need to mobilize young farmers. Organized groups of young farmers will be useful for introducing new production technologies and organizing effective input and output markets. The responsibility of the youth is to carry forward the tradition of farming not only because it is connected with the traditions and culture of our country, but also it has the potential of keeping the economy healthy even at times of recession by all means. There is also a coffee level of policy and investment intervention that focuses explicitly on rural youth and on youth employment opportunities within the agriculture and agribusiness sectors. To explain the targeted rate of growth of farming as an entire, still there's a dire got to bring necessary evolutionary changes within the way of farming it's practiced at present. Under these circumstances, it's too superficial to market more youth involvement in agriculture without giving critical insights into the existing facts.

Importance and engagement of Youth in Agriculture

Young people bring energy, vitality and innovation into the workforce. Most of the new innovations (both technical and institutional) require a talented agricultural manpower. As an example, promotion of high value agriculture, precision farming, organic cultivation, Hi-Tech horticulture, micro propagation, Integrated Pest Disease & Nutrients Management, floriculture, medicinal and aromatic plants cultivation, high-risk and high-returns, agri-ventures like protected agriculture, Post Harvest Management etc. Development of backward and forward linkages requires well trained young farmers with enthusiasm and keenness for farming. Within the most adverse and risky situations, children have an unprecedented resilience and skill to cope.

Youth might be the perfect catalyst to vary the poor image of agriculture given their greater possibility to adapt new ideas, concepts and technologies (Akosa, 2011). Though there are risks like drought and cyclones that are completely external factors to limit the likelihood to succeed, we'd like to think about farming as a crucial industry to depend on even within the era of industrialization and urbanization. Therefore, a loss of youth means a loss of the chance to modernize and be competitive in present era of globalization. The

involvement of youth in agricultural production is critical not only due to the necessity to feed the country, but most significantly because it offers options for wealth creation and financial security. Potentially reducing the issues of accelerating youth unemployment involves securing the interest and participation of children in agriculture by deliberate shift in policy, training and promotion that specifically targets the youth. Thus, there's got to strengthen on farm, also as off farm rural employment opportunities to combat rural poverty and to secure adequate livelihood for rural youth. Connecting the enormous youth resources to exploit vast range of opportunities in farming sector can give Indian agriculture a whole new stature.

Key role of rural youth in agriculture in India

- Renewal of Agricultural Sector
- Increasing Labour Force
- Food Security
- Empowerment and Poverty Alleviation
- Environmental Sustainability
- Technology Adoption
- Rural Development

Major Challenges Faced by youths in Agriculture

- Non availability of labours or High cost of labours
- Low Productivity and resulting poverty
- Social status and prestige
- Never an easy choice of career
- Lack of modernization
- Inadequate support policies
- Access to land, financing, climate change, interest, market facility, policy and programmes, top down approach & low service quality

Strategies for increased participation of rural youth in agriculture

- Making agriculture attractive
- Including agriculture in school curriculum
- Making youth open minded
- Encouraging entrepreneur
- Youth innovations
- Training in agriculture and allied activities
- Digital assistance
- Link social media to agriculture
- Capacity building of rural youth
- Providing leadership and organisational skill training
- Facilitating market opportunities
- Encouraging collaboration and group activity of rural youth
- Training in entrepreneurship programme
- Set up agriculture credit schemes to help young people
- Improve agriculture's image
- Greater use of ICT
- Empower young people to speak up
- Facilitate access to land, information and credit
- Better market opportunities for farm produce
- Starting rural youth associations and Self Help Groups
- Greater public investment in agriculture

Initiatives by Govt. of India and ICAR for encouraging youth

Presently, the organizational setups like Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs), NABARD farmers' club, National Skill Development Council (NSDC) include training and capacity building and Farmers' Welfare, Govt. of India in association with MANAGE, SFAC, NABARD encourages unemployed agricultural graduates to launch their own agribusiness startups by providing appropriate training, hand-holding support and credit linkage. MANAGE is providing financial and technical support to the state Nodal agency SAMETI and ATMA/ BTT in implementation and running of the STRY "Skill Training for Rural Youth-(STRY)" in about 10 states of India. It has initiated in training rural youth of the age 18 years and above with minimum qualification of primary school education. It creates an opportunity for rural youth to take part in agriculture and allied activities development. Govt. of India has launched a number of youth oriented programmes recently, like Skill India, Pradhan Mantri Krishi Vikas Yojana, Start-up India, Stand-up India to promote youth empowerment and entrepreneurship (Singh et al., 2016). Another programme envisaged in XII th five year plan called the Student „Rural Entrepreneurship and Awareness Development Yojana“ (READY) aims solely at entrepreneurship development among the youth. Kisan Credit Card also provides farmers with subsidized rate of Interest and encouraging farmers clubs and creating bondage between ISSN: 2582 – 7146 approach systematically, definitely there will be a brighter future of Indian agriculture. stakeholders. "ARYA" (Attracting and Retaining Youth in Agriculture) a pilot project launched by ICAR, is finding out many ways to attract and retain youth in agriculture, by identifying their reasons for drawback such as giving no part in policy formation, Land & credit accessibility and mainly support from the parents and the society.

Conclusion

Agriculture sector, being the largest employer in the country holds the responsibility to provide sustainable and secure livelihoods to its practitioners. Failing to address the present challenges faced by this sector is to condemn India to food insecurity, poverty and increased reliance on costly imports. Unfortunately, farming is no more viewed as a prospective employment option for the youngsters of the country for various constraints that this sector faces today. With careful alteration in the present mechanism of this sector, it can have the potential to engross the massive youth workforce presently available in the country. This would automatically contribute to resolving the crisis of youth unemployment and migration as well. 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. Different suggestions mentioned by youth are to be keenly observed and to be put into action by all the stakeholders of farming community. The youth in farming must be attentive, courageous to take up innovative farming practices which further indirectly leads to the economic development of the nation.

References

1. Sood, J. (2014). India's deepening farm crisis: 76% farmers want to give up farming, shows ISSN: 2582 – 7146 participation in livelihood activities among rural youth in Jabalpur district of Madhya Pradesh. *International J of Agric Res Innovation and Technology*. 5(1), 28-35.
2. V. C., Pyasi, V. K., & Pande, A. K. (2014). Factors influencing involvement in agricultural livelihood activities among rural youth in Jabalpur district of Madhya Pradesh. *International J of Agric Policy and Res*. 2(8), 288-295.
3. Bennell, P. (2007). Promoting livelihood opportunities for rural youth. IFAD Governing Council Roundtable: Generating Remunerative Livelihood Opportunities for Rural Youth. UK: Knowledge and Development.
4. Naamwintome, B. A., & Bagson, E. (2013). Youth in Agriculture. Prospects and challenges in Sissala area of Ghana. *Net Journal Agricultural Sciences*, 1, 60-68.