

RESEARCH NOTE

Perception of Farming Youth towards Farming

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ABSTRACT

India is the country of small farm holders. About 85 per cent farmers come under small and marginal farming categories. Stagnation in productivity and profitability of different enterprises are posing serious challenges. Therefore, poor income of farmers especially farming youth is a matter of national discussion, which causes luring of Farming youth to non farm sector. On this background, purposively a study was conducted in Bundelkhand region of U.P. to find out the perception of rural youth on Farming as well as grounding information regarding youth. Study reveals that participation of rural farming youth (up to 25 year age group) was decline day to day and marginal farming youth leaving farming more as compare to small and large farmers. The average annual income of small and marginal farmer was less as compare to unskilled labour. About 92 per cent farmers practicing farming due to lack of any other options, while near about 89 per cent farmers accept that Farming is not beneficial, 88 per cent farming youth accept that poor income and poor living standard responsible for luring of rural youth to non farm sector. Study also showed alarming situation that 92 per cent youth not adopt farming innovations during last five years in their field as well as educated youth not taken interest in farming.

Key words: Perception; Youth; Farming; Migration; Non farm sector;

In India, Bundelkhand region of Uttar Pradesh has been in the news for starvation suicide death, exploitation of people, mining of natural resources, land grabbing, rural migration, etc. This is one of the largest region of Uttar Pradesh consists of seven districts (Banda, Chitrakoot, Hamirpur, Mahoba, Jalaun, Jhansi and Lalitpur) considered to be 'backward'. It suffers from extreme level of poverty and environmental degradation. The unique agro-ecological situation best suited for rainfed agriculture including pulses. Hot climate, undulating topography, residual and low depth of soil and land impermeable rock on the surface characterize the region. The economy of this region is mainly based on agriculture with traditional farming pattern. Due to soil conditions and lack of adequate irrigation facilities generally mono cropping is prevalent. Cattle, buffalo, goat and sheep are common as per their purchasing capacity, needs and priority with very low productivity.

But youth power is a big opportunity for this region and also for India. If educated youth choose to live in villages and launch the new agriculture movement based

on the integrated application of science and social wisdom, our untapped demographic dividend will become our greatest strength. During his visit American President Barak Obama pointed out that India is fortunate to have a youth full population with over half of the total population of 1.2 billion being under the age of 30. Out of the 600 million young persons, over 60 per cent live in villages. Most of them are educated. Thus, major share of Indian agriculture also in the hand of rural youth involves in farming. With the shrinkage of the land holdings day by day and declining profitability in farms, large scale migration of rural youth of cities in search of employment is taking place, which is creating major concern to the policy makers and the government. Luring of farming youth to non-farm sector is a greater challenge for sustaining growth of agriculture. According to A K Singh & Sarju Narain (2012), migration of rural farming youth from U.P. Bundelkhand is the major bottleneck in adopting agricultural innovations. The National Commission on Farmers (NCF) stressed the need for attracting and retaining educated youth in

farming. On the basis of above background it is necessary that to collect the perception of rural farming youth on different farming aspects including future plan & option as well as know the present farming facts. For this purpose the study was conducted in Bundelkhand region of Uttar Pradesh (India) with following objectives.

- i. To quantify the land holding pattern, age group, educational level and income of rural youth (upto 35 year age) involve in farming.
- ii. To know the perception of farming youth on farming.

METHODOLOGY

Out of 9 agro-climatic zone of Uttar Pradesh, one zone namely Bundelkhand was selected purposively for the study. All seven districts of Bundelkhand region of Uttar Pradesh was selected purposively to know the ground reality of farming youth. From each district two blocks and one village from each block were randomly selected through lottery method. Hence, block Baberu (village Pindaran) and Barokhar (village Barokhar khurd) from district Banda; block Mau (village Simra) and Manikpur (village Tikramar) from district Chitrakoot; block Sarila (village Sarila) and Rath (Saidpur) from district Hamirpur; block Dakor (village Mohana) and Kadoura (village Usarganva) from district Jaloun; block Mauranipur (village Churai) and Moth (village Paharpur) from district Jhansi; block Panwari (village Mahuwa) and Belatal (village Jaitpur) from district Mahoba; block Jakhoura (village Jijiyawan) and Talbahet (Bahmourisar) from district Lalitpur were selected for the study. From each village 25 rural farming youth belonged upto 35 year age were randomly selected as respondents for interview. The purpose of selection of 'upto 35 year age group' farming youth is that they are witnesses of globalization, liberalization & privatization and belong to potential age group who can change the face of agriculture and became a role model as future farmers. Thus from each district 50 respondents were selected from two different villages of different blocks. Hence, total sample size happened to be 350 from all fourteen blocks and fourteen villages out of seven districts of Bundelkhand region of Uttar Pradesh. The data were collected from each individual as personally with the help of pretested structured interview schedule. Land

holding wise perception of farming youth on farming was collected on 20 aspects and answer was recorded in the form of 'yes' or 'no'. On the basis of land holding categories total perception was calculated and analyzed in the light of objectives.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Quantification of Basic data regarding Farming Youth: Quantified data regarding land holding pattern, age group, educational level and income of rural youth involves in farming presented from Table 1 to 4.

Table 1. Land holding wise categorization of rural farming youth (<35 year) (N = 350)

Type of land holding	Ave. area (ha)	Farming youth	
		No.	%
Marginal (<1 ha)	0.43	103	29.42
Small (1-2 ha)	1.73	160	45.72
Medium & large (> 2 ha)	6.40	87	24.86
Total	-	350	100.00

Table 1 depicted that majority of the farming youth i.e. 75.14 per cent belong to marginal and small categories with an average area about 1 hectare, while medium and large farming youth restricted within 25 per cent with average holding 6.40 hectare.

Table 2. Age wise distribution of rural farming youth (<35 year) (N = 350)

Type of land holding	Upto 25 year		26 – 30 year		31 – 35 year	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Marginal	18	17.48	37	35.92	48	46.61
Small	34	21.26	52	32.50	74	46.25
Medium & large	19	21.84	30	34.48	38	43.68
Total / Avg.	71	20.28	119	34.00	160	45.72

Table 2 indicated that slightly growth was found from marginal towards medium & large categories respondents 'under 25 year' age group. This data showed that marginal category farming youth more diverted to non farm sector for earning compare to small and medium & large. Age wise distribution of farming youth data also pointed that higher percent of involvement from upto 25 year' age group towards '31 to 35 years' age group. It means 'upto 25 year' age group rural farming youth of all there categories of land holding reduces their participation day to day from farming and involves in non farm sector.

Table 3. Education wise categorization of rural farming youth (< 35 year) (N = 350)

Type of land holding	Illiterate		Upto 8th		9 to 12th		Graduation		>Graduation		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Marginal	24	23.30	23	22.34	44	42.72	10	9.70	2	1.94	103	100
Small	33	20.62	39	24.38	62	38.76	19	11.87	7	4.37	160	100
Medium & large	19	21.83	09	10.35	30	34.48	18	20.69	11	12.65	87	100
Total	76	21.71	71	20.28	136	38.87	47	13.43	20	5.71	350	100

Table 3 showed that highest percentage i.e. 38.87 per cent respondent belong to IX to XII class educational level followed by 21.71 per cent illiterate and 20.28 per cent upto class VIII. The data also indicated that about 19 per cent farming youth were graduate and postgraduate level show high potential regarding adaptation of agricultural innovation in their farm. Table also showed that medium & large farming youths were more achieved higher education as compare to small and marginal land holding.

Table 4. Annual income of rural farming youth (<35 year) (N = 350)

Type of land holding	Ave. area (ha)	Farming youth		Av. annual income (Rs.)
		No.	%	
Marginal	0.43	103	29.42	12807
Small	1.73	160	45.72	45302
Medium & large	6.40	87	24.86	193702
Total	-	350	100.0	

* Based on crop grown/crop rotation, average productivity, local market rate, etc. of 2012-13.

Unskilled labour @ 200/day for 250 days (Rs.) 50000/-

Table 4 indicated that unskilled labour was earning more compare to marginal and small land holding farming youth.

Perception of farming youth on farming: Perception refers to consciousness of a particular objects and events by means of sense. Land holding wise perception of farming youth on farming was collected and presented in Table 5. Table reveals that 78.57 per cent total farming youth including all marginal farming youth i.e. 100 per cent accepted that agricultural income not fulfill their basic needs All marginal farmers (100%) and about 88 per cent small farmers accepted that their per capita daily farming income is less than from unskilled labour income. About 96 per cent marginal, 93 per cent small and 67 per cent medium & large farming youth with total of 88 per cent farming youth opined that they

can't do another occupation except laboury and farming. 100 per cent marginal, 87.50 per cent small with 71.43 per cent total farming youth agreed that to leave farming, if Rs. 4000/- per months job available. 80 percent as whole with 84.46 per cent marginal, 76.25 per cent small and 82.76 per cent medium & large farming youth agreed that they were not as capable to change the face of agriculture. Only 11 per cent farming youth think that agriculture is a beneficial occupation. 97.09 per cent marginal, 88.75 per cent small and 75.86 per cent medium & large farming youth with total of 88 per cent accepted that poor income & poor living standard are the main cause of rural youth luring to non-farm sector. 100 per cent marginal, 85 per cent small and 67.82 per cent medium & large farming youth with total of 85 per cent dislike to farming as occupation for their children.

About 90 per cent marginal, 89 per cent small and 90.80 per cent medium & large with total 90 per cent farming youth like to prepare their children for non-farm sector as occupation. Due to lack of any other income option 100 per cent marginal and small both, 92 per cent medium & large with total of 92 per cent farming youth practicing farming as occupation, so they can't stopped farming. About 92 per cent farming youth accept that their children not taking interest in farming. Table also reveals that only six per cent of total farming youth accepted that educated youth taking interest in adopting agricultural innovation in their farm. An alarming finding about rural farming youth showed that 57 per cent marginal, 30.62 per cent small and 19.54 per cent medium & large with total of 35.71 per cent farming youth migrated during lean period of crop season for search of job to earning. About 58 per cent of total farming youth agreed that they like to changes in farming system if facility available. Only 8 per cent farming youth adopt agricultural innovations in their farming system during last 5 years. About 74.75 per cent marginal, 79.37 per cent small and 62 per cent medium & large farming youth

Table 5. Perception of farming youth (up to 35 year age) on farming in Bundelkhand region of U.P.

Statement about farming	Land holding wise perception of farming youth					
	Marginal (N = 103)		Small (N = 160)		Medium & Large (N = 87)	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Do you having more than five years farming experience ?	92 (89.32)	11 (10.68)	153 (95.62)	07 (4.38)	82 (94.25)	05 (5.75)
Agriculture income is sufficient for your basic family needs.	00 (00)	103 (100)	42 (26.25)	118 (73.75)	33 (37.93)	54 (62.07)
Your per capita average daily farming income is more compare to labour income, i.e. Rs. 200 (Market rate at rural areas) (00)	00 (100)	103 (11.87)	19 (88.13)	141 (90.80)	79 (9.20)	08
Instead of farming you can do another occupation (except laboury)	04 (3.88)	99 (96.12)	10 (6.25)	150 (93.75)	28 (32.18)	59 (67.82)
If job offer to you @ Rs. 4000 / month, then do you like to leave farming ?	103 (100)	00 (00)	140 (87.50)	20 (12.50)	07 (08.00)	80 (92)
Do you feel that farming youths can change the face of agriculture ?	16 (15.54)	87 (84.46)	38 (23.75)	122 (76.25)	15 (17.24)	72 (82.76)
Do you think that agriculture is beneficial occupation ?	05 (4.85)	98 (95.15)	13 (8.12)	147 (91.88)	21 (24.14)	66 (75.86)
Poor income & poor living standard are the main causes of rural youth luring to non-farm sector	100 (97.09)	03 (2.91)	142 (88.75)	18 (11.25)	66 (75.86)	21 (24.14)
Would you like that your children to continue farming as occupation.	00 (00)	103 (100)	24 (15.0)	136 (85.0)	28 (32.18)	59 (67.82)
Would you like to prepare your children for non-farm sector occupation	93 (90.29)	10 (9.71)	143 (89.37)	17 (10.63)	79 (90.80)	08 (9.20)
Due to lack of any other income option, you practicing farming as occupation, so you can not stopped farming.	103 (100)	00 (00)	160 (100)	00 (00)	80 (92)	07 (8)
Do your children/sons taking interest in farming ?	8 (7.77)	95 (92.23)	12 (7.50)	148 (92.50)	6 (6.90)	81 (93.10)
Educated farming youth taking interest in adopting agricultural Innovation.	04 (3.88)	99 (96.12)	11 (6.87)	149 (93.13)	07 (8.05)	80 (91.95)
Do you migrated during lean period of crop season for search of job to earning ?	59 (57.28)	44 (42.72)	49 (30.62)	111 (69.38)	17 (19.54)	70 (80.46)
Would you like changes in farming system, if facilitated to you ?	35 (33.98)	68 (66.02)	97 (60.62)	63 (39.38)	71 (81.61)	16 (18.39)
So many changes occurs in farming system during last 5 years do you accept & adopt these innovations in your farming system ?	6 (5.82)	97 (94.18)	12 (7.50)	148 (92.50)	10 (11.49)	77 (88.51)
Poor technology transfer regarding agricultural Innovation are the main cause of non adoption.	77 (74.75)	26 (25.25)	127 (79.37)	33 (20.63)	54 (62.07)	33 (37.93)
Farming is not only gamble of monsoon but also a gamble of market	100 (97.09)	03 (2.91)	129 (80.62)	31 (19.38)	72 (82.75)	15 (17.25)
Educated farming youths of this pocket/tract generally run behind the subsidies & loan, do you agree ?	3 (2.91)	100 (97.09)	49 (30.62)	111 (69.38)	50 (57.47)	37 (42.53)
Bad habits (<i>Nakarapan</i> , gambling, liquoring, smoking, chewing, etc.) of farming youth also a cause of poor crop productivity in this tract.	27 (26.21)	76 (73.79)	39 (24.37)	121 (75.63)	29 (33.34)	58 (66.66)

with total of 73.71 per cent agreed that poor technology transfer regarding agricultural innovations are the main cause of non adoption. Only 14 percent of total farming youth not accepted that farming is the gamble of *monsoon* & market. About 29 per cent of total farming youth accept that educated farming youth of this pocket generally run behind the subsidies & loan with greater percentage (97%) marginal category farming youth. 26.21 per cent marginal, 24.37 per cent small and 33.34 per cent medium & large farming youth with 27.14 per cent of total accepted that bad habits of farming youth also a cause of poor crop productivity in this tract

CONCLUSION

From the study it can be concluded that rural youth

of this tract found difficult to support themselves and their family due to poor income from farming, Such youths having been brought up in rural agricultural settings have learnt farming from their childhood and their whole learning goes unutilized because of their migration to other work, Poor income from farming and poor living standard also lure to next generation fore away from farming. Therefore, children & youth either dislike farming or not pay attention in adopting agricultural innovation in their farm, Poor farming income and poor technology transfer system leads to not adoption of innovation in farm. Therefore, youth losses their faith that they can change the face of agriculture.

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