

ROLE OF YOUTH IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

Rural development in India is extremely vital for the overall progress of the country. In rural areas, there have been many aspects that need to be focused upon, such as generation of jobs and employment for the people, construction of houses, schools and educational institutions, medical and health care facilities, agriculture, industries, nutritional requirements, focusing upon the skill development of the people and facilities such as electricity, energy, water, gas and cooking equipment. For the welfare of the rural people, these areas need to be focused upon, for the effective development of these areas the role of youth is required. In this research paper, what is the significance of the role of youth in rural development has been underscored. The main areas that are highlighted in this research paper are, identifying youth, youth participation, impediments to youth participation, the demand for the role of youth in rural areas, youth labour markets in rural areas, and an assessment of the role of youth in rural development. Thus, it can be understood that the role of youth has been imperative in the case of rural development, provided if the youth wholeheartedly contributes and works with zest and enthusiasm.

Keywords: Youth, Rural Development, Skill Development

INTRODUCTION

Youth is a critical stage in life, full of challenges, confusions and insecurities. It is a phase that acts as a bridge between childhood and adulthood. It is a change-oriented and a 'questioning' phase and includes concepts like identity, role and dynamism.

The United Nations defines 'youth' as people who fall in the age group of 15-24 years that, comprising more than a quarter of the world's population, is the largest demographic group in history [WHO 2011].

However, age is the easiest way to define this group, particularly in relation to education and employment. Therefore "youth" is often indicated as a person between the age where he/she may leave compulsory education, and the age at which he/she finds his/her first employment. This latter age limit has been increasing, as higher levels of unemployment and the cost of setting up an independent household puts many young people into a prolonged period of dependency.

Recently the employment scenario in the rural areas is undergoing lot of structural changes. The general perception is that, it is not wise for all the family members to depend on the farm for their livelihoods as agriculture and other related activities are seasonal in nature. Hence, it is difficult for all the family members to be gainfully employed on the farm throughout the year. The fact that at least one person is employed outside the farm, provides the family great sense of

economic security ensuring steady income throughout the year. That is the reason, why so many youths move to the nearby Industrial areas in search of off-farm employment.

In India cultivation and agricultural related activities are the main occupation of the people since overall enrollment to education has increased, most of the rural youths are educated up to SSLC or at the most ITI or Pre-University education. Their situation is such that they are not able to get very good jobs with good salaries in the nearby urban centres. Moreover they have small holdings and other family commitments which forces them to stay back at the village. But depending only on the small farm is not wise for them as they find it difficult to meet both the ends. Hence, they work in the nearby industrial concerns as helper or attender etc. so that they are able to manage both the factory work and also the farm work, which enhances their economic status considerably.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Mitra and Verick(2013) has mentioned in his paper “Youth employment and unemployment: An Indian perspective” a major long-term challenge in India is that many youth, because of poverty and poor human capital endowment, participate in the labour market at an early stage. They cannot afford to remain unemployed for long and, hence, pick up activities characterized by low labor productivity

Proctor and Lucchesi (2012) in his research paper entitled “Small-scale farming and youth in an era of rapid rural change” given the present and anticipated future role of agriculture in employment and the sheer number of youth in rural areas today and anticipated into the future, new models to enhance decent employment and livelihood in the agriculture sector must be developed, including support to employment opportunities along the entire agrifood market chain and the associated service sectors.

Saha and Bahal (2010) has pointed out in his article entitled “Livelihood Diversification Pursued by Farmers in West Bengal” It is evident that irrespective of the level of development, families pursue a mix of activities for income stabilization and risk mitigation. This mix is generally across sectors, farm and non-farm and also option of migration. Significant numbers of adults from the sample households diversified their livelihood in different farm, off-farm and non-farm activities.

Daniel Coppard (2001) in his research paper entitled “The Rural Non-farm Economy in India: A Review of the Literature” the rural nonfarm economy is defined in this paper to exclude primary agriculture, forestry, fisheries, but to include trend and processing of these products in addition to other goods and services, as secondary and tertiary sectorial activities.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are;

- To study the Demand of the Role of Youth in Rural Areas.
- To Assess the Role of Youth in Rural Development.

THE STUDY AREA

Karnataka has a youth population of 1.86 crore (34.6 per cent of total population, age 15-30). By 2020, a majority of the working population of Karnataka will be the Youth. Close to one-fourth of the youth, population remains illiterate two-thirds of this group being women. Almost half the youth population is not able to access education beyond the tenth standard.

Belagavi district is the headquarters for the Belagavi division. The division comprises the

districts of Bagalkot, Belagavi, Bijapur, Dharwad, Gadag, Haveri and Uttara Kannada. The Government of Karnataka has proposed making Belagavi the second capital of the state of Karnataka with the recently inaugurated (11 October 2012) second state administrative building Suvarna Vidhana Soudha.

The district is also known as Sugar Bowl of Karnataka, because of its enormous sugarcane cultivation and sugar production. The district lies at the border of two states, Maharashtra and Goa on the Western Ghats. The district comprises 1278 villages with an area of 13.415 sqkm with a population of around 4.8 million according to the census of 2011. Belagavi district is presently the biggest district of Karnataka.

DATA BASE AND METHODOLOGY

The study uses Both Primary and secondary data for analysis. Secondary data for the study will be collected from various sources that include published and non-published documents. The data for the present study will be collected from various governments, semi-government departments NGO's, the primary information and data will be collected by researcher through field work using questionnaires

The Demand of the Role of Youth in Rural Areas

There have been various areas that demand for the role of youth, these have been stated as follows:

1. Agriculture

Agriculture is stated to be the main occupation in the rural areas and this occupation requires extensive research, production, utilization of science and technology, cropping, irrigation and many more functions. Youth people who are well educated and possess efficient knowledge of how to implement agricultural activities assist in the development of agricultural activities. Making use of technologies in the agricultural sector, implementing extensive research is the work of the youth (Bennell, 2007).

2. Small Scale Industries

In rural areas, besides agriculture, there have been setting up of small scale industries which require workers, there has been role of youth in the development of skills of the workers, who are not educated so that they can acquire jobs in industries and make a living. Employment in industries requires skills and expertise, therefore, the skill development amongst the rural masses is essential, especially amongst the women so that they can acquire jobs.

3. Skill Development

It is stated that development of skills and expertise of the people is essential for a sector to progress and develop. Whether an individual is able to read or write but skill development is imperative for progression. Skill development is in various areas such as operation of machines, manufacturing of goods, sports, music, usage of technology, computers and so forth. Skills and talents amongst the rural masses lead to the development of the country.

4. Education

Educational institutions are essential to develop amongst the rural areas; education enables an individual to seek a living for himself, an educated person can accomplish himself. There has

been encouragement of education amongst the rural masses by establishing educational institutions, and providing education free of cost. Every individual should be granted admission, irrespective of one's age and socio-economic background so that they acquire literacy and live a meaningful life.

5. Employment Opportunities

Every individual in rural areas longs for employment, have a job, and have some kind of work so that they can sustain their living. The youth people are contributing towards generation of employment opportunities for the rural masses; whether they work in the agricultural sector, industrial sector, production, manufacturing, own small tea stalls, sell beedis and other products and so forth.

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE ROLE OF YOUTH IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Youth are taking an active part in the development of the rural areas, the poverty stricken people and the socially depressed people in rural areas are dependent upon others for their welfare. There has been classification of the following activities that should be implemented for the development of the poor (H. Ramakrishna, 2013).

1. Agricultural Programs

Copious activities can be undertaken under the agriculture sector; the jobs/works like distributing planting materials, cattle, poultry, minor irrigation, free medical care for cattle's, safe drinking water for animals etc, seeds, fertilizers, insecticides and cropping.

2. Health Programs for humans and non-humans

Housing, shelter, and pollution free environment, clean drinking water for animals, medical facilities, regular health checkups and camps will assist in improving the health conditions of the humans as well as non-humans.

3. Community Development Programs

The community development programs like adoption of villages for progress, ethical support during flood and famine period, contribution of food and drinking water during floods and famines, welfare and training programs for the rural youths, housing projects, repair and renovation of houses and so forth will gratify the basic requirements. The main program like training programs for the rural poor will hold the youths from rural migration. These types of training programs may also be extended for the rural women, so that self-sustenance among this community can be realized.

4. Human Resource Development Programs

The personality development programs, skill development programs, educational programs, and integrated development projects require the involvement of youth and these will enable the rural people to overcome the conditions of poverty and depression and earn a better livelihood.

5. Trade and Industrial Promotion

Rural masses are skilled at manufacturing and producing products such as handicrafts, fabrication works, wood works, beedi rolling, agarbathi manufacturing, printing press and so forth. They are keen to always look out for ways for the promotion of their trade and industries,

therefore, youth population do participate in assisting the rural people in promotion of their goods.

6. Government Support

The government, central, state and local support is imperative at all the levels of rural development. Micro-financing and implementation of monetary transactions are necessary for the rural masses to be aware of so that they are able to effectively manage their finances. The role of youth is imperative in making them aware, guiding them and assisting them in case of any problems or difficulties.

When trying to access financial services, youth from across the world face several common challenges:

Restrictions in the legal and regulatory environment;

- Lack of specifically tailored financial products;
- Limited financial capabilities;
- Reluctance of FSPs to work with clients who have limited trading records and security (often the case for rural youth)

Provision of financial services allows youth to improve their livelihoods and accumulate assets in the long term. Appropriate and inclusive financial services can equip youth with the resources and support to become productive and economically active members of their agricultural households and communities, and make the transition from childhood to adulthood. Non-refundable grants, incentives and start-up capital for promoting rural youth entrepreneurship are instruments of critical importance.

There is enormous potential for growth in the creation of new green jobs and for upgrading of existing jobs to become greener, contributing to sustainable development, poverty reduction and better inclusion of young people in society. It is increasingly clear that investments must be made in training and education opportunities so that young people can acquire new skills or upgrade their existing skills in order to have access to “green” jobs.

Environmental policies – with regard to, for example, reforestation and conservation – are increasingly prioritized by governments, but labor market regulations and vocational training systems are not necessarily being linked and strengthened. Nevertheless, some governments with adequate fiscal capacities have successfully implemented programmes targeting vulnerable groups, including youth, through green jobs initiatives. Countries such as Australia, China and the Republic of Korea have actively promoted green job creation; in Denmark, Ireland and Switzerland, this was connected with training and retraining activities. Australia went one step further, including the development of education, training and skills for sustainability, creating a culture of innovation and building capacity in order to make the transition to a greener economy.

Providing youth with opportunities to gain access to training and education, whether formal or informal, helps them move one step closer to a green job. If youth are not included in TVET programmes to build their skills, they will find it difficult to access green jobs, as they may lack the necessary skills.

- The sociodemographic variables, particularly the relationship of older youth being more active, provide opportunities for community involvement. This may reflect that older youth are more in need of community service credit, skill attainment, and experience. Implications of this finding can include the development of efforts to encourage older

youth to become/remain active. Alternately, this finding indicates that younger adolescents might be an untapped audience from which volunteers and future community activists could be recruited. Specialized efforts to reach younger audiences would be useful in this context.

- Influences were also important, but particularly the influence of setting an example for others. To capitalize on this finding, Extension and community development professionals could focus more on building the kinds of opportunities that would allow youth to set an example for other youth. This may result in increased youth involvement, leading to positive effects on other domains of youth and community development (Scales & Leffert, 1999). By promoting example setting, for instance, youth take on leadership roles with other youth, thereby enhancing their social and civic development.
- Motivations for community involvement are also important. Future efforts could stress to youth that their involvement will make a difference in changing the local conditions they are not pleased with. Specifically, it could be stressed that they can fill the void in meeting the need for new ideas and services.
- Two significant obstacles to community involvement were also identified, which present direct implications for applied program and policy development. Youth not being allowed to vote was negatively related to community involvement. Uses of this finding in program/policy development could take a variety of forms. If youth were provided with voting privileges, they would be more likely to be active participants in community development efforts. Such ability sends the message that they are welcome in the decision-making process, that their opinions are valuable, that they are capable of good decision making, and that they have the knowledge and understanding of issues to significantly contribute to debates. Providing voting power to youth also is likely to foster a sense of ownership and contribute to youth being long-term players in community development efforts.
- The obstacle of youth lacking recognition was also negatively related to community involvement. To overcome this obstacle, active and routine efforts could be made to promote and recognize the contributions of youth. Included would be marketing, promotions, media coverage, and other public recognitions. Also more formal activities such as awards, official acknowledgement, and commemoration events (banquets, award dinners) would further promote youth contributions. All of these would clearly recognize the role of youth in community activities. These actions would send the message that youth participation is important and valued, as well as an activity that is recognized as valuable by the community.
- Finally, efficacy was directly related to involvement. Youth were more active when their community was receptive to their contributions and viewed them as worthwhile to the community. Similar to the suggestions for recognition presented above, applied efforts could take the form of public acknowledgement of youth contributions, formal announcements by local leaders that youth are making important differences, and formal invitations for youth of all ages to become involved in a variety of community building efforts. Any actions that could be taken would send the message that the community is responsive and aware of youth contributions would further help encourage youth involvement.

CONCLUSION

Youth are the young people that are skilled, possess efficient knowledge and capabilities and overall they possess the enthusiasm to work and accomplish something good. The youth who are involved in rural development, have adopted this area as their field and all the areas in rural development such as construction, education, employment generation, industries, agriculture, skill development, electricity, energy, water, require development and youth have been effectively involved. The youth are involved in various activities, but there are certain impediments on the way of their participation such as insufficient knowledge and information, weak infrastructure, cost and inequality and exclusion. The points of high and low factors may prove to be discriminatory and these verify the occurrence of barriers and impediments in the task of the youth. The participation of the youth intends to help build and control young people as assets. It has been extended through an inventive process led by young people, which itself has strengthened their aptitude to participate and lead. The challenges and the negative stereotypes of youth and reveals how young people can absolutely give to development in four operational areas: organizational development, policy and planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation.

This subject aims to increase the understanding of the growing significance of, and better potential for the youth participation in development observation and to discover key issues and approaches. But it goes beyond the expression and style of many document advocacy research areas; which simply argue for a focus on youth participation. Rather, this research provides information on how to actually work with youth at a practical operational level in respect of policy and programming. It does this through the provision of capable and hopeful practice case studies and their associated resources, and a number of quality standards that will help organizations get started. When youth are involved in a practical and an operational level, rural development within the country would certainly take place in an effective manner and prove to be advantageous for the entire nation.

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