



# Relationship between Profile Characteristics and Perception of Rural Youth towards Agriculture as an Occupation

**M. A. Vihari<sup>1\*</sup>, M. S. Rao<sup>1</sup>, T. Gopi Krishna<sup>1</sup> and M. Martin Luther<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Department of Agricultural Extension, Agricultural College, Bapatla, India.

## **Authors' contributions**

*This work was carried out in collaboration among all authors. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.*

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## **ABSTRACT**

In the present study the relationship between profile characteristics of rural youth and the perception towards agriculture were discussed. The results revealed that scientific orientation was positively significant with the perception. Marital status, Land holding, Family type, Extension contact, Social participation, Mass media exposure, Economic motivation, Risk orientation Achievement motivation of rural youth were positively significant with the perception. On the other side, the variables like Annual income, Size of family, Occupation were found to be positively non-significant related with the perception of rural youth, whereas education was found to be negatively non-significant with the perception. The multiple linear regression analysis shows that marital status, land holding, size of family, family type, social participation, mass media exposure, economic motivation and risk orientation significantly contributed their perception towards agriculture as an occupation.

*Keywords: Rural youth; perception; scientific orientation.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

India is a young country and rural youth constitutes about 41% of total population of India. In the present scenario the interest of rural people especially rural youth is declining towards agriculture. This noble profession of agriculture is taking the back seat among different sources of farmer's income due to decreasing profit when compared with total cost of production. On the basis of last few years studies it has been observed that only 20% of youth rural families are directly engaged in the agriculture as a source of employment, which is an indicator of grim situation of agriculture in future. [1]. Decreasing size of land holding, increasing population, decreasing profit, want of better living standard etc. are the important factors responsible for taking away youth from agriculture profession. It is disturbing to note that youth are losing interest and confidence in agriculture and allied activities, hence they are not willingly involved in agricultural operations. According to Swaminathan, M.S. [2], Migration of young people to urban areas in search of job has reduced the availability of human resources for agriculture and allied activities.

It is urgent need to take crucial reform measures in agriculture sector at ground level to make profession of agriculture a profitable venture so that rural youth may adopt agriculture as a source of employment. This can be realized by promoting agriculture related ventures such as dairy farming, bee culture, mushroom cultivation, sericulture, fish farming etc along with crop cultivation. Keen interest and contribution of rural youths towards agriculture is necessary for the prosperity of agriculture sector in the country because youths have the energy to work, they want to excel in life. Since youth are recognized as effective "change agents", they can help in the process of dissemination and adoption of modern techniques of agriculture. The adoption of any innovation depends upon the perception and investment capacity of an individual. It has been accepted that the perception of an individual plays a pivotal role in influencing his/her behavior. Srikakulam district is the extreme North-eastern District of Andhra Pradesh. Agriculture in these district is mostly rainfall dependent. The youth in the selected mandals are large in number and moreover it is never an easy choice for them to opt agriculture as profession as they see their fathers and forefathers struggling to make both ends meet.

Based on the above facts the study has formulated the following objectives

1. To study the relationship between selected profile characteristics and perception of rural youth towards agriculture as an occupation
2. To measure the perception of rural youth towards agriculture as an occupation.

## 2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was conducted during 2017 -2018 in Srikakulam district of Andhra Pradesh. Ex-post facto research design has been adopted for the study. Srikakulam district was selected purposively for the study. Three mandals namely Etcherla, Kaviti, Mandasa were selected purposively from the district. From the selected mandals four villages were selected from each mandal purposively from each village rural youth were selected, thus a total of 120 rural youth were taken for the study by proportionate random sampling. Data was collected by using a pre tested interview schedule. The collected data was analyzed using different statistical tools like Frequency, percentage, correlation, Regression.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A glance at the Table 1 showed that majority (63.33%) of rural youth had medium level of perception followed by the rest with high (20.00%) and low (16.67%) level of perception.

**Table 1. Perception of Rural youth towards agriculture as an occupation**

(n=120)

| Perception | Frequency | Percentage |
|------------|-----------|------------|
| Low        | 20        | 16.67      |
| Medium     | 76        | 63.33      |
| High       | 24        | 20.00      |
| Total      | 120       | 100.00     |

The reason might be due to their habitual inclination to the pattern of cultivation over the years using indigenous varieties without any change. The other reason for this could be the small to medium holdings, medium innovativeness, scientific orientation, economic motivation, medium mass media exposure, and extension contact. These findings are in agreement with Preethi [3], Oyediran et al. [4].

### 3.1 Marital Status vs Perception

From the Table 2 it is evident that computed correlation coefficient value (0.424\*\*) was found

positive and significant between marital status and perception of rural youth towards agriculture as an occupation. Married youth have the potentials to participate more in agricultural activities because they have more family responsibilities than unmarried ones.

The present finding of the study is in line with the findings of Umunnakwe [5] and Umunnakwe et al. [6].

**Table 2. Relationship between profile characteristics of rural youth with their perception towards agriculture as an occupation**

(n=120)

| Profile characteristics | Correlation – coefficient ( r values) |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Marital status          | 0.424**                               |
| Education               | -0.103NS                              |
| Land holdings           | 0.279**                               |
| Annual income           | 0.063NS                               |
| Size of family          | 0.045NS                               |
| Family type             | 0.358**                               |
| Occupation              | 0.010NS                               |
| Extension contact       | 0.306**                               |
| Social participation    | 0.263**                               |
| Mass media exposure     | 0.355**                               |
| Economic motivation     | 0.467**                               |
| Risk orientation        | 0.376**                               |
| Scientific orientation  | 0.207*                                |
| Innovativeness          | 0.270**                               |
| Achievement motivation  | 0.311**                               |

NS = Non significant \*\* Significant at 0.01 level of probability

\* Significant at 0.05 level of probability

### 3.2 Education vs Perception

From the Table 2 it is evident that computed correlation coefficient value (-0.103) was found negative and non- significant between education and perception of rural youth towards agriculture as an occupation. The rural youth, irrespective of the educational level, must have realized the significance of agriculture as the major resource for their livelihood. The study was in agreement to the findings of Umunnakwe et al. [6] and Gangwar and Kameswari [7].

### 3.3 Land Holding vs Perception

From the Table 2 it is evident that computed correlation coefficient value (0.279\*\*) was found positive and significant between land holding and perception of rural youth towards agriculture as an occupation. The probable reason behind such

result might be that the rural youth having high land holding with a wider scope to go for crop diversification and grow other remunerative crops along with traditional crops so that they could earn more. This would have implied more favourable perception towards agriculture as an occupation.

The present finding of the study was in accordance with the findings of Preethi [3], Douglas et al. [8] and Pakhmode et al. [9].

### 3.4 Annual Income vs Perception

From the Table 2 it is evident that computed correlation coefficient value (0.063) was found positive and non- significant between annual income and perception of rural youth towards agriculture as an occupation. Youth in farming who are getting more income from farming might be in the opinion that farming is the best option to lead their life.

The present finding of the study was in line with the findings of Vasava et al. [10] and Shireesha et al. [11].

### 3.5 Size of Family vs Perception

From the Table 2 it is evident that computed correlation coefficient value (0.045) was found positive and non-significant between size of family and perception of rural youth towards agriculture as an occupation. Larger families will have a drive to engage in farming activities in order to produce enough food for the family. Therefore, all members of the family will be positive about agricultural production. Members of a larger family are likely to have positive perception towards farming because of greater dependence on farm for food production and income.

The present finding of the study was in consonance to the finding of Kitturmath et al. [12] and Vasava et al. [10].

### 3.6 Family Type vs Perception

From the Table 2 it is evident that computed correlation coefficient value (0.358\*\*) was found positive and significant between family type and perception of rural youth towards agriculture as an occupation. This implies that rural youth from joint family are more involved in income generating activities. Usually, joint families have large family size and more members than

nuclear families. As a result, the responsibility of family upkeep and welfare is been shared among all the members. In independent family, members who participate in livelihood activities live up to their responsibilities.

The present finding of the study was in accordance to the findings of Mohan and Reddy [13] and Umunnakwe et al. [6].

### **3.7 Occupation vs Perception**

From the Table 2 it is evident that computed correlation coefficient value (0.010) was found positive and non-significant between occupation and perception of rural youth towards agriculture as an occupation. The non-significant association is the resultant effect of much homogeneity among the rural youth in terms of their occupation.

The present finding of the study was ratifying the findings of Vasava et al. [10] and Douglas et al. [8].

### **3.8 Social Participation vs Perception**

From the Table 2 it is evident that computed correlation coefficient value (0.263\*\*) was found positive and significant between social participation and perception of rural youth towards agriculture as an occupation. This means the rural youth with higher social participation had more favorable perception towards agriculture. This clearly inferred that who actively participate in social activities through social organizations come across different types of people, exchange their views, experiences, discuss about problems and solutions and thereby gain more knowledge.

The present finding of the study was in supportive of the findings of Vasava et al. [10] and Preethi [3].

### **3.9 Extension Contact vs Perception**

From the Table 2 it is evident that computed correlation coefficient value (0.306\*\*) was found positive and significant between extension contact and perception of rural youth towards agriculture as an occupation. This clearly implies that the level of perception increases with the increase in extension contact. The higher level of contact made by the rural youth with extension agency would enable rural youth to broaden their mental horizon, acquire more and more

information, exchange ideas and thoughts and these would help rural youth to remove their doubts related to agriculture. The present finding of the study was in line with the findings of Preethi, [3].

### **3.10 Mass Media Exposure vs Perception**

From the Table 2 it is evident that computed correlation coefficient value (0.355\*\*) was found positive and significant between mass media exposure and perception of rural youth towards agriculture as an occupation. The present scenario of agricultural development is depending more on information and communication technology, which is the best means to reach the farming community. The youth in farming who are efficient in utilizing such media tools might be receiving the information from the scientists or extension functionaries, which might have helped youth to take up timely operations.

The present finding of the study was in accordance of the findings of Angaitkar et al. [14], and Kitturmath et al. [12].

### **3.11 Economic Motivation vs Perception**

From the Table 2 it is evident that computed correlation coefficient value (0.467\*\*) was found positive and significant between economic motivation and perception of rural youth towards agriculture as an occupation. It could be inferred that, rural youth who possessed more economic motivation had more perception. Youth having high economic motivation were willing to take calculated risk for their field operations. During the course of time, one might be in search of designing cost effective combinations with highest possible outputs. The rural youth who had higher economic motivation were more inclined to maximize the income from farming, so this would have made them to take more interest in farming.

The present finding of the study was in agreement with to the findings of Shireesha et al. [11] and Pakhmode et al. [9]

### **3.12 Risk Orientation vs Perception**

From the Table 2 it is evident that computed correlation coefficient value (0.376\*\*) was found positive and significant between risk orientation and perception of rural youth towards agriculture as an occupation. The probable reason might be

that the rural youth with higher risk orientation are more likely to take calculated risk in farming which may bring success to rural youth and when success is been achieved, the perception will be more favourable. The risk- taking people would go out all the way to get the information from different sources, so it implies the positive perception level of rural youth towards risk orientation. The amount of risk encountered by youth might have helped them to secure a many fold increase of income in farming and in turn developed positive relationship towards agriculture.

The present finding of the study was supplementary to the findings of Shireesha et al. [11] and Pakhmode et al. [9].

### 3.13 Scientific Orientation vs Perception

From the Table 2 it is evident that computed correlation coefficient value (0.207\*) was found positive and significant between scientific orientation and perception of rural youth towards agriculture as an occupation. Hence, it could be inferred that the higher the scientific orientation, the more will be the perception. The reason may be that rural youth with progressive and systematic ideas are more receptive to scientific innovations. Educated and dynamic youth in farming might be rigorously analyzed their activities for achieving success in their farming. The youth in farming with more scientific orientation might be more logical, reasonable and optimistic in adopting new technologies which have resulted in high success percentage.

The present finding of the study was complimentary to the findings of Mahesh et al. [15], and Shireesha et al. [11]).

### 3.14 Innovativeness vs Perception

From the Table 2 it is evident that computed correlation coefficient value (0.270\*\*) was found positive and significant between innovativeness and perception of rural youth towards agriculture as an occupation. Hence, it could be inferred that the higher the innovativeness, the more will be the perception. This might be due to the fact that rural youth with high innovativeness desire to seek changes in farming techniques and introduce changes in his own operation. The quality of innovativeness will encourage the youth in farming towards adoption of modern technologies which replace age old technologies. This change might have reflected on the evolutionary impact in farm productivity.

The present finding of the study was in further proof of the findings of Preethi [3] and Shireesha et al. [11].

### 3.15 Achievement Motivation vs Perception

From the Table 2 it is evident that computed correlation coefficient value (0.311\*\*) was found positive and significant between achievement motivation and perception of rural youth towards agriculture as an occupation. The greater the rural youth desire for excellence and accomplishment, the higher is their involvement

**Table 3. Multiple linear regression analysis of profile characteristics of rural youth with perception**

| Profile characteristics | Regression coefficient | Standard error | 't' Value |
|-------------------------|------------------------|----------------|-----------|
| Marital status          | 4.812                  | 0.918          | 5.239*    |
| Education               | -0.126                 | 0.360          | -0.349NS  |
| Land holdings           | 3.438                  | 0.522          | 6.588*    |
| Annual income           | -2.577                 | 0.000          | -1.499NS  |
| Size of family          | -9.750                 | 1.813          | -5.377*   |
| Family type             | 15.415                 | 1.784          | 8.640*    |
| Extension contact       | 0.263                  | 0.147          | 1.789NS   |
| Occupation              | 0.291                  | 0.321          | 0.909NS   |
| Social participation    | 1.814                  | 0.446          | 4.066*    |
| Mass media exposure     | 0.596                  | 0.196          | 3.033*    |
| Economic motivation     | 0.818                  | 0.197          | 4.154*    |
| Risk orientation        | 0.459                  | 0.181          | 2.533*    |
| Scientific orientation  | 0.147                  | 0.162          | 0.903NS   |
| Innovativeness          | 0.045                  | 0.167          | 0.268NS   |
| Achievement motivation  | 0.294                  | 0.234          | 1.257NS   |

$a = 117.37; R^2 = 0.766$

NS= Non- Significant; \* = significant at 0.05 level of probability

in agricultural income generating activities. Youth in farming with high achievement motivation might be courageous and had a high desire to set and achieve optimistic targets in their farming through committed and sincere efforts. They might have achieved their dreams which made rural youth to develop more affinity towards farming.

The present finding of the study was complementary to the findings of Shireesha et al. [11] and Pakhmode et al. [9].

It is evident from the Table 3 that all the 15 selected profile characteristics of rural youth contributed to the total variation. In particular, marital status, land holding, size of family, family type, social participation, mass media exposure, economic motivation and risk orientation significantly contributed their perception towards agriculture as an occupation.

It could be inferred that the multiple linear regression equation with fifteen selected profile characteristics put together contributed 76.60 percent to the total variance in the perception of rural youth towards agriculture as occupation; remaining 23.40 percent may be due to the extraneous characteristics effect.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The findings of the study clearly indicated that youth are prone to desire and ready to carry out their desires into action. Young people, who have urge to be an important part of village community life, are eager to learn new ideas. They have open minds and further they have advantage of education and better capacity of understanding new techniques and skills. The youth is thus the best medium of our community-life on the technological as well as human plane by carrying new ideas and messages to their families.

Keeping in view of the above efforts should be made for arrangement of required resources, capacity-building programmes by extension agencies, policy makers and administrators towards change in perception of rural youth towards agriculture as an occupation

#### CONSENT

As per international standard or university standard, respondents' written consent has been collected and preserved by the authors.

#### COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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