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Sharath HN

Department of Agricultural
Extension Education, College of
Agriculture, UAS, Raichur,
Karnataka, India

Shivanand Kammar

Department of Agricultural
Extension Education, College of
Agriculture, UAS, Raichur,
Karnataka, India

S.B Goudappa

Department of Agricultural
Extension Education, College of
Agriculture, UAS, Raichur,
Karnataka, India

Sidram B.Y

Department of Agricultural
Extension Education, College of
Agriculture, UAS, Raichur,
Karnataka, India

Prabhuling Tewari

Department of Agricultural
Economics, College of
Agriculture, UAS, Raichur,
Karnataka, India

Corresponding Author:**Sharath HN**

Department of Agricultural
Extension Education, College of
Agriculture, UAS, Raichur,
Karnataka, India

A study on self-esteem of rural youth

Sharath HN, Shivanand Kammar, S.B Goudappa, Sidram B.Y and Prabhuling Tewari

Abstract

The study was purposively conducted in Raichur and Yadgir districts of north-eastern Karnataka during 2017-2018. Because of highest number of rural youths migrating towards urban areas. Keeping the migration trend of youths in mind, a study on the self-esteem of rural youth was conducted. Diagnostic research designs were used. Two villages from eight taluks viz., 16 villages considered as a study village. From selected villages 120 rural youths were drawn as respondents for the present study. The structured interview schedule designed and administered to the respondents by use of multistage purposive sampling method. The data collected were analysed by using appropriate statistical methods. The findings of the present study reveals that 36.67 per cent of rural youth had medium level of self-esteem. Whereas, 32.50 per cent of rural youth had high level of self-esteem and 30.83 per cent of rural youth had low level of self-esteem. Seventeen independent variables were selected for the study in which education, leisure time activities, farm scientist contact, extension contact, farming commitment, achievement motivation, mass media use had positive significant relationship with self-esteem of rural youth. Age, farming experience, innovative proneness, risk orientation had negative significant relationship with self-esteem of rural youth. Annual income, family pressure, land holding, family size, economic motivation, cosmopolitaness, had no significant relationship with self-esteem of rural youth. When the extent of contribution of independent variables to self-esteem of rural youth were analysed, the result revealed that rural youth self-esteem could be increased by 3.726 and 3.738 units if one unit increases could be brought about in achievement motivation and farming commitment respectively.

Keywords: Diagnostic research design, self-esteem, migration trend

Introduction

Young people are three times more likely to be unemployed than adults and more than 75 million youth worldwide are looking for work, according to the UN International Labour Organization (ILO). Due to their limited access to assets (in particular land), markets, finance and education and skills training, youth are often unemployed or work informally – often in unpaid, very low-skilled, insecure and sometimes hazardous jobs (IFAD, 2012) ^[1].

Most of the educated youth find agriculture as an unattractive preposition, especially the way it is practiced traditionally by their parents. The society largely looks down upon farming, as also families of prospective brides do not prefer farming youth. When specific youth policies do exist in developing countries, they often do not cater for poor rural youth but tend to be biased towards non-poor males living in urban areas. Consequently, there is growing disenchantment among rural youth towards agriculture vocation which made them to develop a negative self-esteem on themselves and they find it much lucrative to migrate to cities to do even menial jobs. Hence there is a need to know the level of self-esteem of rural youth for which the present study was planned.

Materials and methods

The study was conducted in Raichur and Yadgiri district during the year 2017-18. The two districts were purposively selected for the study because of highest number of rural youth are migrating towards urban areas (several faces of rural migration; THE HINDU August 23, 2013 and A Journal of the National Institute of Urban affairs, vol-34). Diagnostic research design was employed. Multistage purposive sampling method was used for selecting respondents to elicit required data. Interview schedule was prepared specially keeping the objective of the study in mind. Variables selected for the study was measured by using standard procedure and methods. Appropriate statistical tools like mean, standard deviation, frequency and percentage were used.

Correlation between self-esteem and selected independent variables were estimated by using Karl Pearson's correlation formula and extent of contribution from independent variables towards self-esteem was also estimated using SPSS software.

Result and discussion

Self-esteem reflects a person’s overall subjective emotional evaluation of his or her own worth. It is a psychological behaviour of a person, representing one’s own self-image, which affects the person’s behaviour positively or negatively. The results presented in the Table 1 revealed that the near to equal distribution of the respondents among the three categories *i.e.*, low (30.83%), medium (36.67) and high (32.50%) levels of self-esteem. It presented a very confused picture about the rural youth. Some of the rural youth who were happy, confident, satisfied with the life and themselves had high self-esteem. Some others who were not so happy about the situations they were in, had doubts or overconfidence on their capabilities of competing with others, affected by inferiority or superiority complex had moderate to low level of self-esteem.

Table 1: Distribution of rural youth based on the self-esteem in general

Category	Criteria	Frequency	Per cent
Low <(Mean - 1/2 SD)	35.90	37	30.83
Medium (Mean ± 1/2 SD)	35.91-39.74	44	36.67
High >(Mean + 1/2 SD)	39.75	39	32.50
Total		120	100.00

n=120

Mean = 37.8, SD=3.85

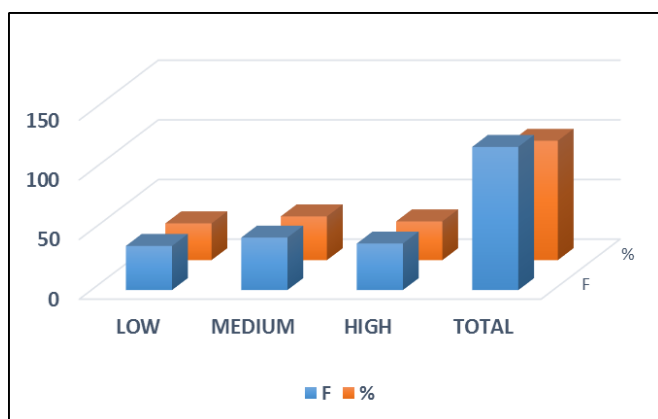


Fig 1: Distribution of respondents according to self-esteem of rural youth

When attempt was made to analyse the self-esteem scores from the point of view of individual scale statements, the

results presented a different picture. This picture can be seen in the Table 2.

The Table 2 gives the results about self-esteem of rural youths. Rural youth’s views on satisfaction that they had with themselves revealed that, majority of them were satisfied with themselves as half of the respondents (57.50%) had agreed followed by, 29.17 per cent of them strongly agreed with the statement. The rural children’s feelings of self-worth and self-assessment of scholastic competence are comparable to or higher than metropolitan norms (Yang and Robert, 2007). On asking about the statement, “At times I think I am no good at all”, majority of them (51.67%) had agreed but 41.67 per cent of them disagreed with the statement. When the rural youths were asked about the number of good qualities that they had, majority of the respondents (62.50%) agreed followed by 30.00 per cent of them strongly agreed and felt that they were having number of good qualities with them. The children is learning self-esteem maintenance by self-motivation and achievement.

On comparing the rural youth with other fellow beings about the ability of doing things, majority of the rural youth (62.33%) had agreed followed by 33.33 per cent of them strongly agreeing and felt that they had ability to do the things which the fellow beings were capable of doing things. When rural youths were asked regarding ‘whether they felt that they do not have much to be proud of’, majority of them (60.83%) had agreed but 14.17 per cent each of the respondents strongly agreed and remain undecided with the statement.

On asking the rural youths ‘whether they felt useless at sometimes’, majority of them (52.50%) had agreed but less than one third (29.17%) of the respondents disagreed with the statement. On asking the rural youths views on the statement ‘I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others’, majority of them (65.00%) had agreed followed by 13.33 per cent each of respondents agreeing and disagreeing equally. When the rural youths were enquired about their feelings on ‘I wish I could have more respect for myself’ themselves, majority of the respondents (70.83%) had agreed, followed by 21.67 per cent of them strongly agreed 21.67 with the statement When rural youths were questioned about ‘All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure’, majority of them (53.33%) disagreed followed by, 27.50 per cent of the respondents remaining undecided. On asking the rural youths about ‘I take a positive attitude toward myself’, majority of the respondents (60.00%) had agreed followed by rest of the respondents strongly agreeing with the statement.

Table 2: Statement wise analysis of self-esteem of rural youth

Sl. No	Statements	n=120									
		SA		A		UD		DA		SDA	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	On the whole, I am satisfied with myself	35	29.17	69	57.50	1	0.83	15	12.50	0	0.00
2	At times I think I am no good at all	0	0.00	62	51.67	7	5.83	50	41.67	1	0.80
3	I feel that I have a number of good qualities	36	30.00	75	62.50	7	5.83	2	1.67	0	0
4	I am able to do things as well as most other people	40	33.33	76	63.33	3	2.50	1	0.83	0	0
5	I feel I do not have much to be proud of	17	14.17	73	60.83	17	14.17	10	8.33	3	2.50
6	I certainly feel useless at times	4	3.33	63	52.50	15	12.50	35	29.17	3	2.50
7	I feel that I’m a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others	16	13.33	78	65.00	10	8.33	16	13.33	0	0
8	I wish I could have more respect for myself	26	21.67	85	70.83	5	4.17	4	3.33	0	0
9	All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure	5	4.17	6	5.00	33	27.50	64	53.33	12	10.00
10	I take a positive attitude toward myself	47	39.17	72	60.00	0	0.00	1	0.83	0	0

Majority of the rural youths were satisfied with themselves but sometimes they think they are not good at all. Majority of them have a number of good qualities with them and they

were able to do things as well as most other people but sometimes they feel that they do not have much to be proud of. Majority of the rural youths were certainly felt useless at

times. Two third of the respondents were having a feeling that they were a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others. Majority of the rural youths were having a wish of more respect for themselves. Half of the rural youths were not inclined to feel that they were a failure. Three fifth of the respondents were ready to take a positive attitude towards themselves.

The rural youth were satisfied with themselves on the whole as farming does not make them to depend on others for basic needs. Even with less profit or low rate of return from agriculture, they were leading independent and happy life. But, on the question whether they were good at all, equally half each of them agreed and disagreed. Almost of them agreed upon that individually, they had a number of good qualities like helping / co-operating with others, motivating oneself and others at the time of difficulties, living a simple life with nature, etc. Again, on the capabilities of doing things as good as others, most of them had agreed which shows their self-belief and confidence. It was ironical to find majority of rural youth agreeing on feeling useless sometimes and not to be proud of themselves. Those reporting more unemployment were more likely to experience a decline in self-esteem between age 18 and 32 (Krahn and Chow, 2016) [3]. Further, they also exude confidence that they were person of worth, at

least on an equal plane with others. On the front of social esteem, they felt the need to have more respect for themselves compared to fellow rural youth and youth engaged in other professions.

Relationship between independent variables and self-esteem of rural youth

The relationship between independent variables with self-esteem of rural youth is described in the Table 3.

It could be observed from the results that 12 out of 17 variables had found to have significant relationship with self-esteem. The independent variables such as education ($r=0.574$), leisure time activities ($r=0.411$), farm scientist contact ($r=0.447$), extension contact ($r=0.346$), farming commitment ($r=0.481$), achievement motivation ($r=0.268$), mass media use ($r=0.394$) had positive and significant relationship with self-esteem at one per cent level. Age ($r=-0.218$), innovative proneness ($r=-0.229$), farming experience ($r=-0.200$), had negative relationship with self-esteem at five per cent level. And risk orientation ($r=-0.299$) had negative relationship with self-esteem at one per cent level. Annual income ($r=0.079$), economic motivation ($r=0.057$), family size ($r=0.019$), cosmopolitanness ($r=0.137$) had no significant relationship with self-esteem of respondent rural youth.

Table 3: Relationship of personal, socio-economic, psychological and communication factors with self-esteem of rural youth

n = 120

Sl. No.	Independent Variables	Correlation coefficient (r)
X ₁	Age	-0.218*
X ₂	Education	0.574**
X ₃	Annual income	0.079 ^{NS}
X ₄	Leisure Time activities	0.411**
X ₅	Innovative Proneness	-0.229*
X ₆	Farm scientist contact	0.447**
X ₇	Off season employment	-0.445**
X ₈	Farming experience	-0.200**
X ₉	Size of land holding	-0.16 ^{NS}
X ₁₀	Extension contact	0.346**
X ₁₁	Farming commitment	0.481**
X ₁₂	Achievement motivation	0.268**
X ₁₃	Economic motivation	0.057 ^{NS}
X ₁₄	Family size	0.019 ^{NS}
X ₁₅	Cosmopolitanness	0.137 ^{NS}
X ₁₆	Risk orientation	-0.299**
X ₁₇	Mass media use	0.394**

(NS = Non-Significant, * = Significant at 5 per cent level, ** = Significant at 1 per cent level)

The possible reasons for the independent variables having significant relationship with self-esteem are given in ensuing paragraphs.

Age and self-esteem of rural youth had negatively significant relationship. Because, with increase in age, the problem of disguised employment, less income, more family pressure and frequent losses in farming would make them to have negative self-esteem about themselves. Education and self-esteem were significantly correlated. As education opens the mind for rational thinking and educated youth have high innovative proneness, farm scientist contact, extension contact, risk orientation and achievement motivation. Hence, the education impacts good self-esteem on an individual. Annual income and self-esteem were non-significantly correlated. As majority of the respondents had fallen under low level of annual income category, investment into and returns from farming is equally or negatively balanced. Hence, annual income had no significant relationship with self-esteem. Leisure time activities are found to be significantly correlated

with self-esteem. Rural youth were found to be utilizing their leisure time for acquiring greater knowledge on agriculture through reading, meeting experts, visiting progressive farmers' fields.

It was found that farm scientist contact had significantly correlated with self-esteem. The contact with scientist will enhance the knowledge among the rural youth and impacts them positively in developing cosmopolitanness, risk orientation, achievement motivation etc. among the rural youth. Off season employment was negatively significantly relationship with self-esteem. Lack of employment opportunities during offseason forced few of them to go for business, factory work, MGNREGA etc., but majority of them had gone for labour work. Hence, both the variables are negatively correlated. Farming experience had negative significant relationship with self-esteem. In spite of short time experience i.e. hardly over 10-15 years of experience in farming of rural youth, the low income, low productivity, low

market price and frequent losses have impacted them negatively.

Extension contact was positively significantly correlated with self-esteem. High extension contact increases the knowledge among the rural youths which was further useful in practicing farming in scientific way. Farming commitment had positive significant correlation with self-esteem. As farming commitment is an intrinsic motivation that increases the achievement motivation and risk orientation among the rural youth so that they can achieve high in farming. It was found that achievement motivation was also significantly correlated with self-esteem. As achievement motivation is energised state of mind which moves a person resulting in enhancement of farming commitment, economic motivation and risk orientation.

Risk orientation was found to be negatively significant relationship with self-esteem. 'Higher the risk, higher the profit' is general rule in economics. But, farming which become more of risky business demands a caution from farmers. As rural youth reported low income levels from farming, there was a negative correlation between risk

orientation and self-esteem. Mass media use was positively and significantly correlated with the self-esteem. The easy availability of mass media and its extensive use has opened the mental horizons of rural youth which can be utilized positively in farming.

Extent of contribution of independent variables to self-esteem of rural youth

Table 4 explained the contribution of independent variables to level of rural youth self-esteem. The results revealed that four out of 19 independent variables viz., risk orientation, achievement motivation, farming commitment and size of land holding have significantly contributed to the aspiration of rural youth. A critical view of the results inferred that rural youth self-esteem could be increased by 3.726 and 3.738 units if one-unit increase could be brought about in achievement motivation and farming commitment respectively, if other variables kept constant. The calculated R^2 value was 0.527 which means that selected variables had contributed to the tune of 52.70 per cent of variation in self-esteem level of farm youth.

Table 4: Multiple Regression Analysis of personal, socio-economic, psychological and communication factors with self-esteem of rural youth

n = 120

Sl. No.	Selected factors	Regression co-efficient	SE of regression co-efficient	't' Value
X ₁	Age	0.088	0.092	0.964 ^{NS}
X ₂	Education	0.363	0.189	1.921 ^{NS}
X ₃	Annual income	0.794	0.545	1.457 ^{NS}
X ₄	Leisure time activities	-0.025	0.116	-0.216 ^{NS}
X ₅	Innovative proneness	-0.076	0.229	-0.333 ^{NS}
X ₆	Farm scientist contact	0.130	0.207	0.627 ^{NS}
X ₇	Off season employment	-0.607	0.471	-1.287 ^{NS}
X ₈	Farming experience	-0.027	0.073	-0.367 ^{NS}
X ₉	Size of landholding	-0.100	0.044	-2.259*
X ₁₀	Extension contact	-0.072	0.138	-0.526 ^{NS}
X ₁₁	Farming commitment	0.391	0.104	3.738**
X ₁₂	Achievement motivation	0.435	0.117	3.726**
X ₁₃	Economic motivation	0.276	0.592	0.466 ^{NS}
X ₁₄	Family size	0.175	0.452	0.387 ^{NS}
X ₁₅	Cosmopolitaness	-0.007	0.257	-0.026 ^{NS}
X ₁₆	Risk orientation	-0.674	0.318	-2.115*
X ₁₇	Mass media use	0.344	0.222	1.549 ^{NS}

(* = Significant at 5 per cent level, ** = Significant at 1 per cent level, NS = Non-Significant, SE = Standard Error, $R^2 = 0.527$, $F = 6.681$)

Conclusion

In conclusion, the difference in self-esteem reflects the varied confidence and motivation levels of rural youth as they face frequent crop failures, cut throat competition and want of higher skill levels in the changed and dynamic agriculture scenario. The modern day rural youth is faced by dilemma. Though their basic needs were met from farming but other aspirations were not fulfilled. As youth, they were confident of their strength but at the same time fear for lack of specialized skills in the highly competitive world. Though, it was found to be gloomy situation, but, everything is not lost, as majority of rural youth did not incline to feel as failure and hopeful of future when they agreed to take positive attitude towards self and the situations

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