

# Study on ARYA (Attracting and Retaining) Project among Tribal Community in Southern Rajasthan: Importance and Challenges

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**Abstract** -Youth are expected to play a vital role in the much-anticipated transformation of agriculture in India. Because young people bring energy, vitality and innovation into the work force and when their willingness to contribute is matched with opportunity; they can have a transformative impact on economic growth and social development. According to national youth policy, persons in the age group of 15-35 are defined as young. At present, 35 per cent of the total population is in the age group of 15-35 years, out of which 75 per cent live in Tribal areas. Migration of Tribal youth to cities is around 45per cent in the country, and it is estimated that only about 5per cent of youth are engaged in agriculture. In developed countries, skilled workforce is in the range of 60 per cent to 90 per cent of the total workforce, whereas in India, the skilled workforce is as low as 5 per cent (20-24 years age group). (Indian Council of Agricultural Research, 2019). Accessing markets for agricultural products can be particularly challenging for young people: they often lack the capacity to produce large quantities to benefit from economies of scale; they frequently lack the required knowledge of prices and market structures and have limited bargaining power. Sometimes young people's voices are not heard during the policy process, and often it fails to account for the heterogeneity and multifaceted needs of youth. To remedy this, youth need the requisite skills and capacities for collective action to ensure that their voices are heard. There many good things related to ARYA On the other hand, small land holdings are on the rise which poses challenge to food security for increasing population. Thus, it was felt to bring a comprehensive model for the development of tribal youth in general and agricultural youth in particular.

**Keywords:** Youth, Agriculture, Tribal Community, Importance and Challenges

## INTRODUCTION

India presently has the largest youth population of 356 million between age group of 10-24 years in the world and almost half of this population (nearly 200 million) live in the Tribal areas. (Indian Council of Agricultural Research, 2019). The agriculture in India is now managed significantly by Tribal women and old aged farmers as Tribal youth migrate to urban areas for employment. This brings unwarranted pressure on urban bases and depletion of potential human resource from Tribal areas. However, there is tremendous scope to make agriculture income and employment oriented. In such scenario, Tribal youth can play crucial role in augmenting agricultural growth through improving resource use efficiency and value addition across the value chain. The younger generation will be interested in taking to farming as a profession only if farming becomes both economically and intellectually attractive. The future of food security in our country will depend on both the strengthening of the ecological foundations essential for sustainable agriculture, as well as attracting the educated youth to farming and allied professions such as animal husbandry, inland and marine fisheries, agro-forestry, agro-processing and agri-business. It will therefore be useful if the State Government launches a special programme for enabling youth to remain in villages and take to scientific agriculture. The programme, which can be titled "Empowerment of Youth in Agriculture" should help young farm women and men to earn income from both farm and non-farm enterprises. There are great opportunities for strengthening the services sector in Tribal areas. A group of young farmers consisting of agricultural, veterinary, home science, engineering and commerce graduates could jointly organize

Agricultural Transformation Centres in every block to bring about a technological up gradation of farm operations and farming enterprises as well to provide demand driven services. Such centres will undertake tasks like pest-proofing of villages and value addition to primary produce. Young people ought to be trained to take up agricultural, mineral, commercial and industrial production using contemporary systems and promote benefits of modern information and communication technology to gain access to existing and new markets. Access to credit should also be facilitated to promote youth participation in agricultural and other sustainable livelihood projects. Young farmers need to be turned into agricultural entrepreneurs who undertake agricultural and allied activities such as raising and marketing of crops, fertilizers and other agricultural inputs of agriculture, dairy, plantation, horticulture etc. They are envisioned to raise agricultural production through mechanization, irrigation and application of technologies. There are challenges in empowering the youth to improve their skills and to remain in the agriculture as a source of livelihood in Tribal situation. Creation of successful economic models in the villages is crucial to catalyse and energize youth to become entrepreneurs in Tribal areas and guide others in their vicinity. The oriented youth groups may function as role model for other youth by demonstrating the potentiality of the agri-based enterprises and also by imparting training to others. Skill development of Tribal youth will help in regaining their confidence levels to pursue farming as a profession, besides generating additional employment opportunities to absorb under employed and unemployed Tribal youth in secondary agriculture and service-related activities in Tribal areas. Realizing the importance of Tribal youth in agricultural development, the Indian Council of Agricultural Research has initiated a project on "Attracting and Retaining Youth in Agriculture" (ARYA) during 2015-16 in 25 States through Krishi Vigyan Kendras and one district from each State. It is envisaged in the project that the Tribal youth can be attracted in agriculture by providing them gainful employment in Tribal areas by engaging them in different enterprises which could regularly provide income to them in a sustainable manner. Under the project, Tribal youth are identified and oriented towards entrepreneurial skill development and establishment of micro-enterprise units in the areas

like apiary, mushroom, seed processing, poultry, dairy, goatry, carp-hatchery, vermi-compost, etc. India has one of the largest concentrations of tribal population in the world. As per the Census2011, the schedule tribe population in India is 8.43 crores, constituting 8.6 per cent of the total population. Tribal communities live in about 15 per cent of the country's areas and government has identified more than 697 tribal communities in various ecological and geo climatic condition ranging from plains, forests, hills and inaccessible area. There are a few tribal groups that have adopted a mainstream way of life, while at the other end, there are others, who are still primitive. Highest tribal population is living in some major states viz Madhya Pradesh (14.7%), Maharashtra (10.1%), Odisha (9.2%), Rajasthan (8.9%), Gujarat (8.6), Jharkhand (8.3%), Chhattisgarh (7.5%), Andhra Pradesh (5.7%), West Bengal (5.1%), Karnataka (4.1%), Assam (3.7%), Meghalaya (2.5%) and rest states (11.6%) (Ministry of Tribal Welfares, Census 2011). Rajasthan has been home to numerous tribal and nomadic communities, the tribes of Rajasthan constitute approximately 13.5 per cent of state population. Each of these tribes can be identified by their own culture, customs, trades, fairs & festivals. Bhils & Minas constitute the majority of population of the tribes of Rajasthan. (Tribal population in Rajasthan, Census 2011).

Agricultural policies should be shaped for Tribal youth in terms of direct access to markets and finance as well as green jobs and land. Financial services specifically designed for youth are rare and an enabling regulatory environment is required to facilitate youth's access to financial services. Promoting financial products catered to youth, mentoring programmes and start-up funding opportunities can all help remedy this issue.

#### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Baindha *et.al.* (2012) in a study on entrepreneurial behaviour of milk processor in Karnal district of Haryana revealed that highest entrepreneurial Behaviour Index (EBI) (84.87%) was found in achievement motivation followed by planning ability, risk orientation, coordinating ability, self-confidence and decision-making ability. The lowest EBI (49.65%) was recorded in case of information seeking behaviour. The EBI for overall entrepreneurial behaviour was found to be 77.51 percent.

Kumar, T. and Naresh, (2013) focused on studying the factors influencing women entrepreneurship and the constraints faced by them in small and medium enterprises in India. They identified that the factors such as economic independence, risk taking ability, achievement of excellence, and self-confidence significantly influenced the women entrepreneurs in the establishment of their units.

Nisha (2013) reported that nearly three-fifth (59.17%) of tribal women were engaged in farming + wage earners followed by those with farming alone (27.50%) and farming + business (13.33%).

Ajani and Onwubuya (2013) revealed the constraints faced by the respondents at the stage of production, marketing and finance i.e. high cost of fertilizers (Mean score=3.9), high cost of agro-chemicals such as herbicides (Mean score=3.8), poor market network (Mean score = 3.5), lack of funds (Mean score =3.8), lack of modern processing facilities (Mean score = 3.0), inadequate provision of farmland (Mean score =2.8), poor rural infrastructure such as roads (Mean score = 2.7), changes in climate resulting in flooding (Mean score = 2.6), inadequate planting techniques (Mean score = 2.0) and poor storage facilities (Mean score = 2.0).

Shivacharan (2014) presented the major problems faced by the rural youth in running an enterprise viz. shortage of labour (52.50%), procurement of raw material is difficult (45.83%), lack of skill oriented training programmes (40.83%), lack of working capital for running the enterprise (30.00%), seasonal supply of raw materials (27.50%) and interruption in power supply (27.50%).

Emerole *et al.* (2014) found that respondents identified the constraints which resisted them to invest in agricultural enterprises i.e. inadequate start-up capital (76.67%), identified possible market for agricultural product (60.0%) and land procurement issue (60.0%). Gour *et al.* (2015) in a study on assessing knowledge of tribal farmers regarding scientific animal husbandry practices revealed that the majority (64.37%) of the respondents had low level of knowledge followed by medium level of knowledge (35.63%). None of respondents had high level of knowledge regarding management, breeding, feeding and health care practices of animal husbandry.

Janani (2015) revealed that more than half (64.29%) of the Tribal youth entrepreneurs had less than 10 years of experience in their ventures followed by 11-

20 years (22.86%) and more than 21 years (12.85%) categories., respectively. Two-third (66.19%) of the Tribal youth entrepreneurs possessed a moderately favourable attitude towards entrepreneurial ventures followed by highly favourable attitude (18.10%). More than one-fourth (15.71%) of the respondents were found to possess less favourable attitude towards the entrepreneurial ventures.

A study conducted on marketing behaviour of Tribal youth entrepreneurs among seven different ventures by Janani *et al.* (2016) reported that majority of the Tribal youth entrepreneurs (66.19%) were seen in medium level category followed by low (18.57%) and high (15.24%) level categories of marketing behaviour.

Knowledge of tribal beneficiaries about employment generation activities of KVK studied by Kumar and Bairathi (2016) concluded that majority of tribal beneficiaries of KVK Dungarpur possessed maximum knowledge about poultry and nursery management. These are the area where they not only acquired training from KVK, Dungarpur but also they were engaged in poultry and nursery management activities to a high extent. Hence, they possessed high knowledge about these aspects while their poor knowledge about artificial insemination, propagation of plants and stitching indicates that that they have less involvement in these areas of employment activities.

An investigation conducted by Sakiluzzaman *et al.* (2018) on determinants of Tribal youth's participation in commercial agriculture: A case study from Southern Bangladesh stated that 51.2 per cent of the young Tribal youth had medium extent of participation in commercial agriculture while less than half (43.8 %) of them had low extent of participation and only 5 percent had high extent of participation in commercial agriculture.

Bhumra *et al.* (2018) in a study on knowledge of dairy farm women regarding scientific management of dairy animals in Udaipur district highlighted that a fair majority of the respondents were acquainted with types of dairy animals but they did not know the improved breeds of cattle and buffalo. Relatively high knowledge has been reported by the respondents in length of gestation period, method of breeding and length of dry period. It was encouraging the note that a fair majority of respondents had knowledge about supplementation of ration with mineral mixture and vitamins. Similarly the knowledge of respondents

about significance of clean and safe drinking water was reported high by the respondent.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research methodology is partly descriptive and exploratory. For this study data and information has been collected with the help of secondary sources like academic journals, government publications, research journals, e-journals, various reports, books, bulletins online repositories.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Challenges to empowering and retaining youth in agriculture

Major challenges faced by youth seeking involvement in the agricultural sector are as follows

1. Education: In India, agricultural education has been disappeared from primary and secondary schools or curricula are not relevant to agriculture. Moreover, agriculture is seen as a less worthwhile subject.
2. Access to knowledge and agricultural information: Youth's access to knowledge and information is crucial for addressing the main challenges they face in agriculture. Indian youth is lacking in knowledge and access to agricultural information, markets and marketing of agro produces and finance as well as land for cultivation.
3. Limited access to land: Land is fundamental requirement to start the farming and agro industries. Youngsters have greater challenge to obtain the necessary capital or invest the higher capital to buy land. In addition, loans to buy land are not easily accessible for youth. Large-scale land deals are particularly unfair towards young people, given that they are often not even consulted on agreements which may bar their and the next generations' access to land. Furthermore, youth often lack in knowledge on the existing land tenure systems in their area, which is not surprising as these systems can be a highly complex set of overlapping rules, laws, customs and traditions. Youth are not always aware of acquisition, registration and taxation measures, and so are disproportionately affected by

corruption and the fraudulent activities of land dealers (UN-HABITAT, 2011).

4. Financial investment: Even if young brigade accessed the land, they have limited financial capability to start farming activities and agri-enterprise. In addition, they require high capital investments in inputs of farm management resources.
5. Limited knowledge & information of markets and marketing strategies : Young people face a number of challenges while trying to access markets. Young farmers and entrepreneurs have limited knowledge and experience of how markets work; they often lack business, management and entrepreneurial skills, and like many other smallholder farmers, lack information about prices. Young farmers are new in the market and have only limited networks and contacts with buyers, which restrict their access to market information.
6. Lack of national youth policies: India is still lacking coherent youth policies with various government agencies responsible for covering different youth issues in agriculture sector.
7. Limited role of youth in policy making: In Indian agriculture, inclusion of youth in agricultural policy-making is still in an exploratory stage and the full impact is yet to be felt. Policies often fail to reflect the heterogeneity of youth and tend to target non-poor men living in urban areas (Bennell, 2007). Seniority is frequently associated with authority, and youth are not expected or allowed to speak out or voice their concerns, let alone have a role in policy development processes (Lintelo, 2011).

Other factors affecting youth involvement in agriculture:

1. Low regards and low profit from farming
2. Small landholdings or landlessness
3. Effects of climate change
4. Farming is laborious work & risky profession
5. Trend of going to cities to look for jobs
6. Limited agricultural land
7. Lack of capital
8. Urbanization
8. Small number of livestock
9. Information and knowledge lacking new sectors of agriculture

Factors that hinder tackling youth issues.

According to UN ESCAP (2012), several factors hinder tackling youth issues in India:

- Lack of reliable data concerning youth
- Insufficient political will and earmarked resources
- Lack of coordination among government ministries and involvement with NGOs, the private sector and academia

#### CONCLUSION

Based on the findings it can be concluded that in the present scenario most of the educated youth find agriculture as an unattractive proposition; 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. Generally, youth are willing to adopt new ideas and technologies and therefore agricultural extension services should target youth to transform agriculture. The youth could be the ideal catalyst to change the poor image of persons involved in agriculture, especially in the Tribal communities given their greater possibility to adapt new ideas, concept and technology which are all important to changing the way agriculture is practiced and perceived. Agricultural extension services can effectively address these issues by encouraging and supporting youth participation in agriculture. Improving their capacities and increasing their involvement will also help in changing the negative perception about farming. Looking to the present scenario of Indian agriculture, wherein, regardless of existing agro favourable climatic and soil conditions in the country, youth fails to find it as a lucrative sector as compared to other industrial sector owing to various challenges. Agri-based sector for youth encounter numerous challenges viz. education, access to knowledge and agricultural information, limited access to land, financial investment, market status and strategies and national youth policies etc. when starting agricultural activities. Strategically approaches comprising by improving access to education, training and market information can all facilitate youth's access to markets, with niche markets offering particularly significant opportunities for young farmers, integrated response for policymaking and development is needed for making agriculture sector as youth oriented.

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