

An Analysis of Causes for Rural Youth Migrations

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ABSTRACT

Large migration of youth from rural to urban areas presents a complex challenge before the academicians, researchers and policy makers and call immediate attention. Keeping in view, the present study has been taken with the research objective to explore the interests of rural youth (15-29 yrs) of Hisar district of Haryana, their thoughts forcing them for urban migration and its after effects perceived by them. The data were collected from 270 rural youth came from 18 randomly selected villages personally through an personal interview schedule. The causes of migration were categorized into push and pull factors. About eighty per cent of the respondents wished to be migrated from rural to urban areas due to one or the another reasons. About 19 per cent still showed their desire to remain in their villages and continue to be as farmer with more scientific farming. 34.44 per cent youth preferred inter-district migration followed by intra-state. About 17 per cent youth showed their desire to be migrated within the district only for more homophilous environment. 95 per cent youth revealed that better job availability in urban areas (Rank I), better educational opportunities (Rank II) and better opportunities for more income (Rank III) were the major reasons for migration revealed by 91.74 and 87.61 per cent respectively. Respondents were also asked to reveal the after effects of migration perceived by them. 62 per cent respondents felt to go back to their villages after migration and work in agriculture related with improved techniques for better earning and ranked Ist based on its mean score (2.49). The other after effects revealed by 52.96 per cent respondents that they would earn more prestige /social recognition in the eyes of villagers as most significant and ranked IInd with 2.39 of mean score. The IIIrd major after effect revealed by youth was better socio economic status of the family and better purchasing power due to migration. Covering of crops by weather insurance revealed by 83.33 per cent youth followed by readily available entrepreneurial packages/models in the villages itself with skill development programs (77.40 %), raising agricultural productivity per unit of land (70.37 %), and support of private player to spread the extension services for better awareness and adoption of improved practices (66.30 %) as most important suggestions that ranked Ist, IInd, IIIrd and IVth, respectively for reducing the migration of youth to urban areas. The findings lead to recommendations to make the agriculture as lucrative and profitable occupation as outcome of the study for harnessing the huge potential of rural youth in farming of Hisar district and of those in similar situations.

Key words: Farming migration, rural youth.

INTRODUCTION

The rising young generation, mainly comprising of adolescents and youth, occupies a special place in the social environment. In India, youth are the primary production resource of socio economic development. The population in the age-group of 15-34 in India has increased from 353 million in 2001 to 430 million in 2011. More than half of India's population is under the age of 25 with 65 per cent of the population under 35. The fact says that India is losing more than 2,000 farmers every single day and that since 1991, the overall number of farmers has dropped by 15 million (Sainath, 2013). The rural population is about 70 per cent and the indications are that

the migration of rural youth to cities is around 45 per cent in the country, which is quite alarming (Chander, 2015). Agriculture share in Indian economy has progressively declined to less than 15 per cent due to high growth of industrial and service sector (Pradhan, 2017). The share of workforce employed in agriculture has been declined from 65 per cent in 1993-94 to about 50 per cent in 2011-12 (Nawab Ali, 2016). Although many factors have been contributing to this poor performance of agricultural sector but one of the major factors is the rural-urban migration (especially by youth) which involves the shifting of labour force from rural areas to urban centres, in search of employment, better living standard, better education and so forth. One of the factors affecting rural

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urban pattern of migration is the shortage of agricultural labour supply needed for agricultural production (White, 2012). In the past few years, rural youth have been shying away from agriculture and consider farming as unattractive and globally there is an increasing interest in finding ways of engaging youth in agriculture (IFAD, 2012; Paisley, 2013). In the last 50 years the rural population has decreased from 82.0 to 68.9 per cent. Migration from rural to urban areas is up from 27.8 to 31.1 per cent since 2001. It is estimated that approximately 2 million people are shifting from rural to urban area annually and approximately 22 million people have migrated from rural to urban areas since 2001 (Gautum, 2012) and if such rate of migration will continue, there will be big threat to our food security. Such a large migration of youth from rural to urban areas presents a complex challenge before the academicians, researchers and policy makers and call immediate attention.

Thus there is a need to encourage rural youth involving them in farming and the challenges they face are to be addressed. To address this big challenge besides the many programs, Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has initiated a scheme Attracting and Retention of Youth in Agriculture (ARYA) to encourage youth to take up farming.

Keeping in view, the present study has been taken with the research objective to capture the interests of rural youth, their thoughts forcing them for urban migration and its after effects. The main hypothesis for this study was: Youth interest in agriculture is declining due to better opportunities presented in cities.

METHODOLOGY

Universe of the study: The present study was carried out by following ex-post facto and exploratory research design in the Hisar district of Haryana. Hisar falls in the Agro Climatic Zone-VI, which is called "Trans-Gangetic Plains Region". Hisar, the west central most district of Haryana State with a total geographical area of 4050.00 sq. km is lies between the north latitudes 28° 56' 00": 29° 03' 30" and east longitudes 75° 21' 12": 76° 18' 12". The district is under control of Hisar division and administratively divided into nine community development blocks thus all the blocks were covered under study by randomly selected two villages from each of the selected block. Thus study carried out in 18 villages. Fifteen rural youth (15-29 yrs) having education upto 12th standard, engaged in farming activities and also having a live father were selected randomly from each of the selected village, making a total of 270 rural youth. From these 270 households, the eldest male youth

available at the time of data collection was interviewed. One youth from one family was considered as unit of data collection. Primary data were collected by researcher for the purpose of statistical analysis using a well structured interview schedule to elicit the information. The data so collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics; including frequency distribution, mean, percentage etc to achieve the objective of the study.

Though there is no universally accepted definition of youth, since the age ranges anywhere from 8 to 40 yrs. The Government of India (GOI) officially defines youth as persons between the ages of 13 and 35 years and it also varies depending on the programme. But in the present study, rural youth is defined as a person (male) living in the village within the age group of 15-29 years as per the guidelines of "National Youth Policy, 2014" published by Government of India. Another reason is that youth in this age group (aged 15-29 years) comprise 27.5 per cent of the population and contribute about 34 per cent of India's Gross National Income (GNI). Still there exists a huge potential to increase the contribution of this class of the nation's citizenry by increasing their labor force participation and their productivity. (NYP Government of India, 2014)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Migration behaviour

Table 1 reveals that about eighty per cent of the respondents wished to be migrated from rural to urban areas due to one or the another reasons. About 19 per cent of the respondents still showed their desire to remain in their villages and continue to be as farmer but with more scientific farming. Regarding place of liking for migration, 34.44 per cent youth preferred inter adjacent district migration followed by intra-state. About 17 per cent youth showed their desire to be migrated within the district only for more homophilous environment. Ravi (2014) found while studying the determinants of youth participation in farming in Rajasthan, Delhi. Uttar Pradesh and Assam states revealed that 49.5 per cent of the respondents wanted to migrate and the rest did not expect. Majority of them preferred interstate migration followed by inter district.

Results of a survey report 2010 based on total of 1600 samples from the state of Haryana, Punjab and Chandigarh in the age group of 18-35 both male and female population also showed similar results and revealed that a majority of 72 per cent of the youth were willing to migrate where as a significant 28 per cent of the population were unwilling to migrate. 42 per cent of the youth preferred nearby town where as 28 per cent preferred to be locally employed and 19 per cent of the

total population showed interest to migrate to smaller cities or towns. (Skill Mapping- Rural BPL Youth, Report -March 2010). NSSO (2001) data also pointed out that migration out of rural areas is rising. National Sample Survey 64th Round and report no 533 revealed self-employment has emerged as main recourse to employment after migration for rural as well urban males. Nearly 29 per cent of rural male migrants and 56 per cent of urban male migrant's have migrated due to employment related reasons. Sharma (2007) found that 35 per cent of the youth covering 14 locations in 13 states across the country migrated for work outside their villages and large number close to 30 per cent commuted to nearby towns or villages and mostly work as agricultural labor, construction workers and contractual workers at agricultural produce markets, mandis, factories, bus stops and railway stations. These jobs were low-paying and irregular in nature, offering meagre incomes. He also highlighted that lack of skills and poor education acted as important deterrents for youth in obtaining well-paying jobs in urban and semi-urban sectors.

Table1: Liking of movement of rural youth from rural areas

Yes					No
Intra district	Inter-adjacent district	Inter remote districts	Interstate	Total	
47	93	69	09	218	52
17.41	34.44	25.56	3.33	80.74	19.26

Reasons of migration and its ranking revealed by rural youth

Farming is not an appealing field of work for many reason, but what seems to be the largest by youth is a big issue to frame the policies and programs based on their needs. There are several pull and push factors that govern youth behaviour for migration and showing disinterest in farming. A detailed analysis of these is required in order to create effective policies and programmes to enable youth participation in farming.

This need was thought to understand the youth perceptions in order to create effective strategies to combat any negative perceptions. Therefore youth were asked to reveal the reasons of migration amongst 35 statements that were collected after an exhaustive review and discussion with experts. 95% youth revealed that better job availability in urban areas (Rank I), better educational opportunities (Rank II) and better opportunities for more income (Rank III) were the major pull reasons for migration revealed by 91.74 and 87.61 per cent respectively (Table 2). Studies conducted in the sphere of migration in India - found that poverty, job searching and family influence have been the main push factors for out-migration, while availability of better

employment opportunity, prior migrants and availability of better educational facilities have been identified as the key pull factors behind migration. About 96% youth revealed occupation as the main purpose of expecting migration followed by 2.5% for the educational purposes (Ravi , 2014). According to World Youth Report (2013), the reasons for youth migration vary from person to person and region to region. Often, a combination of several major factors leads to the decision to migrate. Personal considerations, socio-economic circumstances, and the political situation in the country of origin may be important contributing factors. Some young people migrate to escape conflict, persecution, or environmental threats. The decision to migrate is often related to important life transitions, such as pursuing higher education, securing employment or getting married. Achanfuo-Yeboah (1993) mentioned that migration is one of the factors that cause a setback to agricultural production in the rural areas as is influenced by social factors such as education, economic factors such as employment and demographic factors such as population growth. The absence of reliable fertile land need for employment and steady income are the factors that have contributed to migration have been revealed by Akanbe et al. in 2006. Educational and occupational aspirations were the major reasons for the youth to move from rural to urban areas (Seyfirt et al., 1998; Hektner, 1995). Similarly perception of the occupational opportunities was the strongest predictor of the migration (Bjarnason and Thorlindsson, 2006). According to Aphumu and Atoma (2010), the unattractiveness of agriculture was found to be another reason for higher migration expectation.

Limited recreational opportunities and less freedom to explore individual identities aggravate the cause. Besides role of parents in migration, technology , globalization and other advances in technologies of communication and mass media made youth aware of the plethora of facilities available in the outside world which has significantly increased their migration aspiration (Bjarnason and Thorlindsson, 2006; Nyoni, 2012). According to a survey conducted by NSSO during July 2007 to June 2008, the migration of the population can be short term or long term. The causes of internal migration are variable and it is attributed to the migration for education or migration for employment. Maximum migration among the youth is observed in the age group of 25-29 years, the trend is similar for both males and females. Though the driving factors may differ, in case of male population the migration is derived by the need of employment opportunities or economic factors while in case of females the same is caused due to marriage or family movement from one location to the other (Gov of India, 2010).

Table 2: Reasons of migration and its ranking revealed by rural youth

Reasons/ Purposes for migration	Pull/ Push factor	Yes		No		Mean Score	Rank
		f	%	f	%		
Better education opportunities	Pull	200	91.74	18	8.26	1.55	II
Better job/career opportunities	Pull	208	95.41	10	4.59	1.58	I
To gain social prestige	Pull	139	63.76	79	36.24	1.32	XI
Better income	Pull	191	87.61	27	12.39	1.51	III
Better infrastructure	Pull	117	53.67	101	46.33	1.24	XIV
Village politics	Push	80	36.70	138	63.30	1.10	XXI
No interest in farming	Push	93	42.66	125	57.34	1.15	XIX
Parents want	Push	152	69.72	66	30.28	1.37	VIII
Easy life in urban areas	Pull	134	61.47	84	38.53	1.30	XII
To be independent	Push	117	53.67	101	46.33	1.24	XIV
Better climate	Pull	118	54.13	100	45.87	1.24	XIV
More entertainment/ recreational facilities	Pull	111	50.92	107	49.08	1.22	XV
Better medical facilities	Pull	168	77.06	50	22.94	1.43	IV
Better communication facilities	Pull	148	67.89	70	32.11	1.36	IX
Better transport facilities	Pull	164	75.23	54	24.77	1.41	VI
Friends also migrated to city	Push	99	45.41	119	54.59	1.16	XVIII
Better marriage opportunities	Pull	103	47.25	115	52.75	1.19	XVI
Relatives have been migrated	Push	90	41.28	128	58.72	1.13	XX
To pay off debt/loan	Push	109	50.00	109	50.00	1.21	XIV
Better energy utilization	Pull	131	60.09	87	39.91	1.29	XIII
Better time management	Pull	152	69.72	66	30.28	1.37	IX
Village life is full of boredom	Push	104	47.71	114	52.29	1.19	XVI
To get rid from traditional value system	Push	95	43.58	123	56.42	1.16	XVIII
More opportunities to implement my business ideas with fresh approach in cities	Push	155	71.10	63	28.90	1.38	VIII
More secure self-employment in cities	Push	139	63.76	79	36.24	1.32	XI
Own bad experience in farming	Push	90	41.28	128	58.72	1.14	
Lack of Information about new farming practices in villages	Push	151	69.27	67	30.73	1.37	VIII
Less social acceptance/recognition in villages due to farming	Push	122	55.96	96	44.04	1.26	XIII
Lack of remunerative price for farm produce due to unorganized market	Push	147	67.43	71	32.57	1.35	X
Lack of storage facilities	Push	161	73.85	57	26.15	1.40	VII
Highly dependent on weather in farming	Push	159	72.94	59	27.06	1.38	VIII
Land is too less	Push	170	77.98	48	22.02	1.43	V
Lack of social amenities	Push	150	68.81	68	31.19	1.36	IX
To become civilized	Push	138	63.30	80	36.70	1.32	XI
Preference for urban life over rural one	Pull	98	44.95	120	55.05	1.17	XVII

After effects of rural urban migration perceived by rural youth

Respondents were also asked to reveal the after effects of migration perceived by them. A list of 15 after effects was prepared and respondents mentioned their perception on three point continuum scale from most significant to least significant with respective scores of 3, 2 and 1 on each statement (Table 3). A large no of respondents (62%) felt to go back to their villages after migration and work in agriculture related tasks with improved techniques for better earning and ranked Ist

based on its mean score (2.49). The other after effects revealed by respondents (52.96%) that they would earn more prestige /social recognition in the eyes of villagers as most significant and ranked IInd with 2.39 of mean score. The IIIrd major after effect revealed by youth for better socio economic status of the family and better purchasing power due to migration. It clearly indicates that the younger generation are also interested in taking farming as a profession only if farming becomes economically and intellectually attractive and of course with more advance techniques suiting to village conditions for better earning. Youth also showed their concern that the number of female headed households would increase and again it would hike the women's burden of work and also more aged people would then be left to accomplish the tasks associated with farming, especially the tasks which are reserved for the youths, once more youth migrate into urban areas to earn a living. Therefore, there is no doubt that the added responsibilities will reduce the agricultural production, (Ekwu and Eje, 2004). Akanbe et al. (2006) also mentioned lack of family labor availability in family due to migration can reduce agriculture production. According to Ravi (2014) while analyzing the perceived effect on migration in on rural society found lack of availability of labor for farming and decline in family labor as the most perceived effects perceived by youth of Rajasthan, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and Assam.

Table 3: After effects of rural urban migration perceived by rural youth

Perceived after effects of migration	Highly significant		Significant		Not significant		Mean score	Rank
	f	%	f	%	f	%		
Lack of labour availability	125	46.30	75	27.78	70	25.93	2.20	VIII
Workload of females workers increases	94	34.81	101	37.41	75	27.78	2.07	XIII
Increase in the elderly population	100	37.04	74	27.41	96	35.56	2.01	XIV
Increase in female headed households	117	43.33	102	37.78	51	18.89	2.24	IV
Loss of land asset	117	43.33	79	29.26	74	27.41	2.16	XIII
Decrease in farm productivity due to lack of adoption of newer practices /technologies	117	43.33	82	30.37	71	26.30	2.17	XI
Increase in disparity between migratory and non migratory family	115	42.59	105	38.89	50	18.52	2.24	V
Loss of young and most able young population in village	125	46.30	77	28.52	68	25.19	2.21	VIII
Increase in population in urban areas can put pressure on public services	127	47.04	73	27.04	68	25.19	2.22	VI
Increase in slums in metro cities that may lower living and working standards	107	39.63	108	40.00	55	20.37	2.19	IX
Move out from villages is the only way of village development	87	32.22	88	32.59	95	35.19	1.97	XV
Better socio economic status of the family and better purchasing power	134	49.63	90	33.33	46	17.04	2.33	III

After migration I would like to be back and work in agriculture related with improved techniques for better earning	170	62.96	61	22.59	39	14.44	2.49	I
I shall earn more prestige /social recognition in the eyes of villagers	143	52.96	88	32.59	39	14.44	2.39	II
I shall be politically more stronger in village	111	41.11	96	35.56	63	23.33	2.18	X

CONCLUSION

The findings led to recommendations to make the agriculture as lucrative and profitable occupation as outcome of the study for harnessing the huge potential of rural youth in farming of Hisar district and of those in similar situations. The study concluded that profitable agriculture is crucial for attracting and retaining youth in agriculture. For that, there is a need to generate entrepreneurship models that would help to retain youth in rural areas to get them attracted in agriculture and to improve the overall rural situation.

Suggestions and ranking revealed by rural youth in reducing the migration

A list of 11 suggestions was also prepared based on literature and discussion with the experts to get the response from youth to reduce the migration from rural to urban areas. Again responses were taken on three point continuum viz; Most important, Important and Least important with respective score of 3, 2 and Mean scores were also calculated and ranks were assigned. Table 4 shows that if crop are covered by weather insurance (83.33%) followed by readily available entrepreneurial packages/models in the villages itself with skill development programs (77.40%), raising agricultural productivity per unit of land (70.37%) and support of private player to spread the extension services for better awareness and adoption of improved practices (66.30%) as most important suggestions that ranked Ist, IInd, IIIrd and IVth ,respectively for reducing the migration of youth to urban areas. Another suggestions revealed by the respondents that if transparency between the farmers and government functionaries is reduced, marketing risks is reduced , input prices are controlled , mechanism for direct cash transfer to farmers family etc are implemented , the migration of youth may be reduced. Swaminathan (2011) emphasized that farming must be both intellectually satisfying and economically rewarding for young people to take to agriculture.

Youth having an aptitude for agriculture can be encourage to undertake commercial farming on their own or leased land and/or to establish animal based units, agro processing units, small scale industries and agri-services from which they can earn far higher income than in private salaried employment. Before that, opportunities for need based skill development program should be created at grass root level for ease in attending by youth. Such programs will not only improve their confidence levels but also will encourage them to pursue farming as profession. It again can generate additional employment opportunities to absorb under employed and unemployed rural youth in secondary agriculture. Here state Government Extension functionaries and KVKs may play a pivotal role not only for their skill development in entrepreneurial activities but also in establishing of related micro-enterprise units in the area of bee keeping, mushroom production, seed processing, poultry, dairy, goatry, carp-hatchery, vermi-compost, floriculture etc., Social media and use of mobile phones can encourage and support rural youth to play meaningful roles in checking migration. Provision of incentives and reward system for undertaking innovative farming and associated ventures may encourage the youth to remain in villages.

Table 4: Suggestions revealed by rural youth in reducing the migration

Suggestions	Most Important		Important		Least Important		Mean Score	Rank
	f	%	f	%	f	%		
Crop covered by weather insurance	225	83.33	30	11.11	15	5.56	2.78	I
Reduction in farmers marketing risks	114	42.22	105	38.89	51	18.89	2.23	IX
Control the input prices like pesticide, fertilizer etc	181	67.04	67	24.81	22	8.15	2.59	VI
Direct cash transfer for farmer’s family	158	58.52	64	23.70	48	17.78	2.41	VII
Connecting rivers	132	48.89	83	30.74	55	20.37	2.29	VII
Watershed management	112	41.48	93	34.44	65	24.07	2.17	X
Accurate weather forecasting	84	31.11	90	33.33	96	35.56	1.96	XI
Raising agricultural productivity per unit of land	190	70.37	73	27.04	7	2.59	2.69	III
Making the transparency between the farmers and government functionaries	181	67.04	69	25.56	20	7.41	2.60	V
Availability/avenues of entrepreneurial packages/models in the villages itself including skill development	209	77.40	55	20.38	06	2.22	2.73	II
Support the private player to spread the extension services for better awareness and adoption of improved practices	179	66.30	90	33.33	1	0.37	2.65	IV

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