

A Study on the Extent of Social Participation among the Rural Youth of Andhra Pradesh

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ABSTRACT: The present study deals with the social participation of rural youth. The rural youth comprise about seventy-five percent of the total youth population in India. They were the soul of nation's development. It delivers a need to study about the characteristics of the rural youth. An Ex-post facto research design was adopted for the study. Tirupathi and Kuppam mandals from Chittoor district and Kakinada Rural and Rajahmundry Rural mandals from East Godavari district were selected as they occupy the first two places in the context of rural population of the district. The limitations of time and resources was majorly faced during the study. A sample size of 240 was selected for the study. From each district 120 respondents were selected. The limitations of time and resources were majorly faced during the study. The study revealed that nearly three-fifth (58.33 per cent) of the respondents have medium level of social participation followed 21.67 per cent of the respondents with low and 20 per cent of the respondents with high level of social participation. Thus, the study exhibited the level of social participation among the rural youth and the need to improve it.

Keywords: Social participation, rural youth, situational awareness, Andhra Pradesh.

INTRODUCTION

India is the second most populous country in the world and likely to cross China to become the first. India is one of the countries with youngest population with about more than fifty percent of the population were under 25 years of age and above sixty five percent under the age of 65 years. India relies on its young minds for the progress and development. This fact infers the need to study the characteristics of youth. Youth can be categorized into rural and urban based on their living habitat. Rural youth constitute nearly 70 per cent of the total youth in India. The present study deals with the extent of social participation among the rural youth. Social participation refers to the involvement of youth in social activities. Social participation is broadly defined as a person's involvement in activities that provide interaction with others (Levasseur *et al.*, 2010; James *et al.*, 2011). The extent of participation of rural youth in the social activities often influences various characteristics of the rural youth that impact their socio-economic development. The past studies were reviewed on the aspect to gain some insights. Patidar (2012) reported that the majority of youths found to no participation group followed by partial and high social participation group. Mbah *et al.* (2016) found that majority (87.50 per cent) of the rural youth did not

belong to any formal organization. While, 12.50 per cent belonged to formal organizations. Chachere (2018) studied the attitude of rural youth towards farming and stated that nearly two-third of the rural youth (63.75 per cent) possessed medium level of social participation followed by 25.00 per cent with low level of social participation and 11.25 per cent with high level of social participation. Vihari (2018) analyzed the perception of rural youth towards agriculture as occupation and inferred that more than two-fifth of the rural youth (40.83 per cent) possessed low social participation followed by medium (32.50 per cent) and high level of social participation (26.67 per cent). Shivaji (2019) conducted a study on participation of rural youth in agriculture and noted more than two-fifth of the rural youth (43.33 per cent) possessed low level of social participation followed by medium (39.17 per cent) and high level of social participation (17.50 per cent). Kavinila (2020) found that more than half of the rural youth entrepreneurs (53.33 per cent) possessed high level of social participation followed by more than one-third (35.71 per cent) with medium level of social participation and nearly one-tenth 10.95 per cent with low level of social participation. An attempt was made to analyze the social participation of rural youth in Andhra Pradesh. The situational awareness about

various social institutions and their advantages is to be enhanced among the rural youth by the government and private extension professionals to harness the benefit of demographic dividend.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

An Ex-post facto research design was adopted for the study. The ex-post facto research design is a systematic empirical enquiry in which the researcher does not have any direct control of independent variables and are not manipulable. Andhra Pradesh state comprises of majorly two regions namely, Coastal Andhra and Rayalaseema. Coastal Andhra is comprised of 9 districts and Rayalaseema with 4 districts. Two districts were selected for the study each from Coastal Andhra and Rayalaseema. East Godavari district was selected from Coastal Andhra and Chittoor district was selected from Rayalaseema purposively.

Two mandals from each district was purposively selected for the study based on the rural population. Tirupathi and Kuppam mandals from Chittoor district and Kakinada Rural and Rajahmundry Rural mandals from East Godavari district were selected as they occupy the first two places in the context of rural population of the district. Five villages from each mandal were purposively selected based on the same criteria followed for the mandal selection. Thus, a total of 20 villages were selected from the four mandals of the two districts. A sample size of 240 was selected for the study. From each district 120 respondents were selected. The respondents were selected using

proportionate random sampling method from the mandals and villages based on the rural population.

Social Participation of the rural youth was operationalized as the degree of participation of rural youth in various social activities and meetings. Social participation of the respondents was analysed using a well-structured and pre tested schedule through personal interview method. There are 5 items in Social Participation. They were Grama Sabha, Political Meeting, Rural Youth club meetings, Religious gatherings, SHG/ FPO / Farm meetings. The frequency of participation of the rural youth was measured as Regularly, Occasionally and Never over Grama Sabha, Political meeting, Rural Youth club meeting, religious gatherings and SHG/FPO/Farm meetings was measured and scores of 3, 2, and 1 were given respectively. Based on the overall score obtained in all the items, respondents were categorized into Low, Medium and High with regard to their Mean and S.D.

The data was collected through personal interview method using a well-structured and pre-tested schedule.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data collected was tabulated, analysed using statistical techniques and inferences were drawn. The results of the study were presented here in Table 1.

The extent of participation of the rural youth was measured as Regularly, Occasionally and Never and scores of 3, 2, and 1 were allotted respectively. Mean score of each item was calculated and the items were ranked based on their mean score and presented in the Table 2.

Table 1: Extent of participation of respondents over different social activities (n=240)

Sr. No.	Social Activity	Extent of Participation							
		Regular		Occasional		Never		Total	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1.	Grama Sabha	96	40.00	76	31.67	68	28.33	240	100.00
2.	Political Meeting	30	12.50	115	47.92	95	39.58	240	100.00
3.	Rural Youth club meetings	30	12.50	141	58.75	69	28.75	240	100.00
4.	Religious gatherings	78	32.50	133	55.42	29	12.08	240	100.00
5.	SHG/ FPO / Farm meetings	99	41.25	57	23.75	84	35.00	240	100.00

n - Frequency; % - percentage

Table 2: Participation of respondents over different social activities.

Sr. No.	Particulars	Mean Score	Rank
1.	Grama Sabha	2.117	Second
2.	Political Meeting	1.729	Fifth
3.	Rural Youth club meetings	1.838	Fourth
4.	Religious gatherings	2.204	First
5.	SHG/ FPO / Farm meetings	2.063	Third

An over view of the Table 1 and 2 depicts that the respondents majorly involved in the Religious Gatherings followed by Grama Sabha with a mean score of 2.204 and 2.117 respectively. Being the villages situated in East Godavari and Chittoor districts having religious importance and cultural heritage, the rural youth involved themselves in devotional activities and religious meetings. In all the selected villages Grama Sabha was frequently conducted by the Village President and other Panchayat officials in which all the

villagers including rural youth participate actively to discuss about the needs and problems of their village.

Based on the overall score obtained by a respondent in social participation the respondents were categorized into low, medium and high categories according to their mean and standard deviation. The results were furnished in Table 3 and graphically represented in Fig. 1.

It was evident from the Table 3 that nearly three-fifth (58.33 per cent) of the respondents have medium level of social participation followed by little above one-fifth

(21.67 per cent) and one-fifth (20 per cent) of the respondents with low and high level of social participation respectively.

A critical view of the table revealed that above three-fourth (78.33 per cent) of the respondents had medium to high level of social participation. The probable reason for this trend might be that being born and grew up in joint type of families with more than 4 family members, the rural youth naturally developed the habit to mingle with other people in the society, attend

meetings and gatherings and participate in the social activities. Thus, majority of the respondents had moderate to high level of social participation.

The salient findings of the study were in line with results of Harra (2015); Chouhan (2018); Gedam (2019) who also revealed that majority of the respondents possessed medium level of social participation followed by low and high levels.

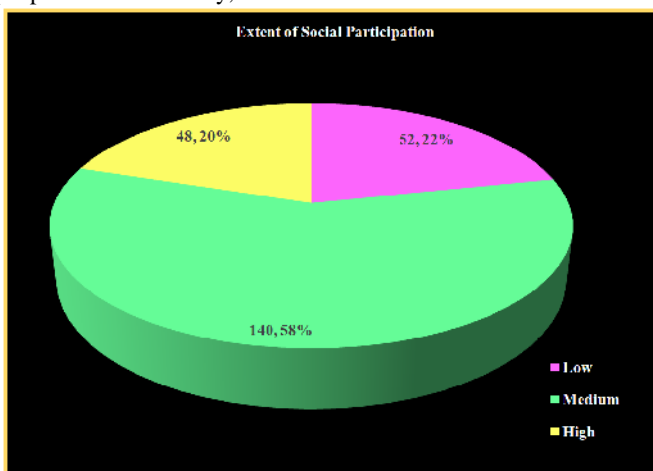


Fig. 1. Distribution of respondents according to their Social Participation.

Table 3: Distribution of respondents according to their Social Participation (n=240).

Sr. No.	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Low	52	21.67
2.	Medium	140	58.33
3.	High	48	20.00
Total		240	100.00

CONCLUSION

From the above results it is evident that nearly three-fifth (58.33 per cent) of the respondents have medium level of social participation followed by little above one-fifth (21.67 per cent) and one-fifth (20 per cent) of the respondents with low and high level of social participation respectively. The social participation of the rural youth needs to be enhanced. The situational awareness about various social institutions and their advantages needs to be boosted among the rural youth by the government and private extension professionals to harness the benefit of demographic dividend. They should be frequently encouraged to engage themselves in social activities. Active participation in all the social activities conducted in the village is needed by the rural youth rather than mere passive presence.

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Conflict of Interest. None.

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