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Socio-personal profile of rural youth in relation to media use for agricultural information access in Satna District of Madhya Pradesh

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Abstract
The present study was conducted in Satna district of Madhya Pradesh to assess the socio-personal characteristics of rural youth in relation to media use for accessing agricultural information. Out of eight blocks in the district, Sohawal and Majhgawan were purposively selected for their agricultural activity and accessibility. Two villages from each block were randomly chosen, and from each village, 30 rural youth respondents were selected using simple random sampling, resulting in a total sample size of 120. Data were collected using a structured and pre-tested interview schedule and analyzed through descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. The results revealed that the majority (92.50%) of respondents belonged to the young age group (up to 35 years), 30.00% were graduates or above, and 83.33% hailed from rural areas. Most (67.50%) had 0–5 years of work experience, 70.83% had not attended any training, and 57.50% had no social participation. Regarding behavioural attributes, 38.33% had medium innovative proneness, 49.17% had medium scientific orientation, and 40.83% reported a medium perceived workload. In terms of technology management orientation, 38.33% of respondents exhibited a high level, while 35.83% had medium orientation. Information management orientation was predominantly medium (35.00%), followed by low (33.33%), and high (31.67%). Similarly, orientation towards the extension service profession was medium for 35.00% of respondents, low for 33.33%, and high for 31.67%. The findings indicate that while a considerable proportion of rural youth demonstrate moderate to high orientation towards technology and information management, gaps remain in training, social participation, and professional interest in extension services. Strengthening extension contact, enhancing digital literacy, and providing targeted training could further improve agricultural information access and utilization among rural youth.

Keywords: Rural youth, socio-personal characteristics, media use, agricultural information, technology management

1. Introduction
Agriculture continues to be the backbone of rural livelihoods in India, and timely access to accurate information plays a crucial role in improving agricultural productivity and decision-making. In recent years, the rapid expansion of digital technology and internet connectivity has significantly transformed the way agricultural information is disseminated and accessed. Among these developments, social media has emerged as a powerful platform for knowledge sharing, interaction, and awareness generation in the agricultural sector. Its interactive nature, accessibility, and real-time communication make it a promising tool for agricultural extension, particularly among the youth.

Rural youth, as future stakeholders in agriculture, are increasingly engaging with various forms of media especially social media for acquiring information related to farming practices, market prices, government schemes, weather forecasts, and innovative technologies. Their media usage patterns, however, are influenced by various socio-personal factors such as education, income, family background, and access to digital infrastructure. At the same time, rural youth often face several challenges in effectively utilizing media for agricultural purposes, including digital illiteracy, poor connectivity, lack of localized content, and credibility issues.

Understanding the profile characteristics of rural youth who use media for agricultural information, along with the constraints they encounter, is essential for designing effective strategies in agricultural communication and extension services. Moreover, exploring their perception of social media and its actual usage can help in enhancing the role of digital platforms in rural development. In this context, the present study aims to assess the socio-personal characteristics of rural youth utilizing media for agricultural purposes and to identify the key challenges they face in doing so. Previous studies have documented diverse socio-economic and demographic characteristics of rural youth across regions. Umunnakwe *et al.* (2015) [7] reported that most respondents belonged to the Other Backward Caste, were married, lived in joint and medium-sized families, and were primarily self-employed in agriculture, with the majority engaged in cereal and pulse production. Kumar *et al.* (2018) [5] found that among rural youths from Assam who migrated to Hyderabad for unorganized sector work, nearly half (49.33%) had education up to high school, 89.34% were marginal farmers, 50% migrated due to family influence, and 36.67% due to friends or relatives. In Odisha, Mounika (2023) [2] observed that most farm youth (88.60%) were aged 25–35, 37.30% had primary education, and most belonged to families of up to five members, exhibiting medium levels of innovative proneness, risk orientation, economic motivation, and farming commitment, but low extension contact, mass media exposure, and cosmopoliteness. Similarly, Bhabhor *et al.* (2025) [1] in Saurashtra reported that most respondents were aged 24–29 with secondary education, medium to large families, and annual incomes of ₹50,001–₹2,00,000, holding marginal to small land parcels and showing moderate to high social participation, extension contact, leadership ability, and medium levels of farming experience, risk orientation, market orientation, economic motivation, and migration tendency. Regarding information sources, Tripathi *et al.* (2018) [3] found that rural youth preferred progressive farmers as their main source of information, followed by veterinarians and VLDA; in agriculture, village extension workers were the key source. In terms of mass media use, 62.59% regularly watched television, 54.81% read newspapers, and 43.33% used the internet, while exhibitions and radio ranked fourth and fifth, respectively.

2. Objective

1. To study the socio-personal characteristics of rural youth who use media for accessing agricultural information.

3. Materials and Methods

The study was conducted in Satna district of Madhya Pradesh, a predominantly agrarian region witnessing growing digital penetration among rural youth. Out of the district's eight blocks, Sohawal and Majhgawan were purposively chosen based on their high agricultural activity and accessibility. From each block, two villages were randomly selected, resulting in a total of four villages. In each village, 30 rural youth respondents were chosen using simple random sampling, giving a total sample size of 120.

A descriptive research design was adopted to evaluate and classify the perceptions of rural youth regarding the use of social media in agricultural extension services. Data were collected through a structured interview schedule, which was pre-tested and refined for clarity and contextual appropriateness. Face-to-face interviews were conducted to ensure better comprehension and more accurate responses from the participants.

To analyze the collected data systematically, various descriptive statistical tools such as frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation were employed. These tools helped in summarizing and interpreting the responses obtained from the rural youth respondents.

Frequency

It was calculated to find out the number of respondents in a particular cell.

Percentage

The percentage values were determined to facilitate straightforward comparisons. This was done by dividing the frequency of a specific category by the total number of respondents and then multiplying the result by 100.

$$P = (n/N) \times 100$$

Where,

n = Frequency of a particular cell.

N = Total number of respondents in that particular cell.

P = Percentage

Frequency and percentage were used to assess the distribution pattern of respondents for each specified variable. Simple comparisons were then made based on these values.

Standard Deviation

Standard Deviation (SD) is a measure of the dispersion or spread of a set of values. It indicates how much the values in a dataset deviate from the mean (average). A low SD means the data points are close to the mean, while a high SD indicates they are spread out over a wider range.

Formula for Standard Deviation:

Population Standard Deviation (σ): $\sigma = \sqrt{[\ \Sigma\ (x_i - \mu)^2 / N\ ]}$

σ = Population standard deviation.

x_i = Each individual data value in the population.

μ = Population mean.

N = Total number of values in the population.

Σ = "Sum of" (add up everything that follows).

4. Results and Discussion

Socio-Personal Characteristics of Respondents

The socio-personal details of the respondents are shown in Table 1. Most of the respondents (92.50%) belonged to the young age group (up to 35 years), while 5.83% were in the middle age group (35–50 years), and only 1.67% were above 50 years of age. In terms of education, 30.00% of the respondents had completed graduation or higher studies. About 26.67% had studied up to intermediate level, followed by 15.83% with high school education. The proportion of respondents who studied up to middle school, primary school, and those who were illiterate was 10.00%, 9.17%, and 8.33% respectively.

Regarding nativity, a large majority (83.33%) were from rural areas, while the remaining 16.67% were from urban locations. In relation to work experience, most respondents (67.50%) had 0–5 years of experience, followed by 5.80% with 5–10 years, and only 1.67% had more than 10 years of experience. When asked about training of the respondents, 70.83% of respondents reported not attending any training, whereas 29.17% had attended some form of training. Concerning social participation, 57.50% of the respondents were not part of any organisation, while 42.50% had some level of participation.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents according to their socio-personal characteristics.

S. No	Variable	Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
1	Age	Young age (up to 35)	111	92.50
		Middle age (35 to 50)	**7**	5.83
		Old age (>50)	2	1.67
2	Education Level	Literate	10	8.33
		Primary school	11	9.17
		Middle school	12	10.00
		High school	19	15.83
		Intermediate	32	26.67
		Graduation & above	36	30.00
3	Nativity	Rural	100	83.33
		Urban	20	16.67
4	Work Experience	0-5 years	81	67.50
		5-10 years	29	5.80
		10 years and above	10	1.67
5	Training	Not attended Training	85	70.83
		Attending Training	35	29.17
6	Social Participation	No participation	69	57.50
		Member of any organization	51	42.50
7	Innovative Proneness	Low (<14.77)	30	25.00
		Medium (14.77–16.92)	46	38.33
		High (>16.92)	44	36.67
8	Scientific orientation	Low (<16)	31	25.83
		Medium (16–19.33)	59	49.17
		High (>19.33)	30	25.00
9	Perceived Workload	Low (<10.96)	28	23.33
		Medium (10.96-13.59)	49	40.83
		High (>13.59)	43	35.83

With regard to innovative behaviour, 38.33% of respondents showed medium level of innovativeness, followed by 36.67% with high and 25.00% with low levels. In terms of scientific orientation, 49.17% of respondents had a medium level, whereas 25.83% had low and 25.00% had high scientific orientation. Lastly, when looking at perceived workload, 40.83% of respondents reported a medium level of workload, 35.83% reported high, and 23.33% reported low workload.

Table 2: Distribution of rural youth based on technology management orientation.

S.no	Criteria	Frequency	Percentage
1	Low (<34.78)	31	25.83
2	Medium (34.78-39.52)	43	35.83
3	High (>39.52)	46	38.33
Total		120	100.00

The distribution of rural youth based on their technology management orientation is presented in Table 2. The data reveals that a significant proportion of the respondents (38.33%) exhibited a high level of technology management orientation. This was followed by 35.83% of respondents who fell under the medium category, while 25.83% showed a low level of orientation towards technology management These findings suggest that a considerable portion of rural youth are positively inclined towards managing and adopting technology in their work or livelihood activities. The presence of a higher percentage in the high and medium categories indicates a growing awareness and readiness among the youth to utilize modern technological tools and practices.

Table 3: Information management orientation of rural youth.

S.no	Criteria	Frequency	Percentage
1	Low (<33.08)	40	33.33
2	Medium (33.08-38.82)	42	35.00
3	High (>38.82)	38	31.67
Total		120	100.00

The findings presented in Table 3 reveal that the majority of rural youth (35.00%) exhibited a medium level of information management orientation, indicating a moderate ability to access, process, and utilize information effectively. A considerable portion (33.33%) showed low orientation, suggesting limited engagement with information sources, possibly due to constraints such as inadequate digital infrastructure, low awareness, or limited educational exposure. Meanwhile, 31.67% of the respondents demonstrated a high orientation, reflecting a proactive approach toward information handling and greater familiarity with information and communication technologies. The distribution highlights a positive trend among rural youth, with a significant number showing at least moderate orientation; however, it also underscores the need for targeted efforts to improve information literacy and access, especially among those in the low orientation category, to ensure inclusive and informed rural development.

Table 4: Distributions of rural youth based on orientation towards extension service profession:

S. no	Criteria	Frequency	Percentage
1	Low (<22.44)	40	33.33
2	Medium (22.44-26.58)	42	35.00
3	High (>26.58)	38	31.67
Total		120	100.00

Table 4 shows that 35.00% of rural youth had a medium level of orientation towards the extension service profession, while 33.33% fell in the low category and 31.67% in the high category. This indicates that most respondents held a moderate view of extension as a potential career, with a significant portion still showing low interest. The presence of a fairly large group in the high category suggests that there is potential to motivate more youth through proper awareness, training, and exposure to opportunities within the extension field.

5. Conclusion

The study highlighted that the rural youth of Satna district are predominantly young, educated, and primarily from rural backgrounds, with moderate orientation towards technology management, information management, and the extension service profession. While many respondents showed positive tendencies towards innovation and scientific approaches, a significant proportion lacked formal training and active social participation, which could limit their capacity to fully utilize media for agricultural development. The findings underscore the need for targeted interventions such as skill-based training programs, enhanced extension contact, and digital literacy initiatives to bridge the existing gaps. Encouraging active engagement in social and professional networks, coupled with improved access to credible and localized agricultural information, can empower rural youth to make informed decisions, adopt modern practices, and contribute effectively to agricultural growth and rural development.

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