

## EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS RESULTING FROM YOUTH CLUB ACTIVITIES IN VILLAGE SCHOOLS\*

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YOUTH is the state of readiness in which the individual's total energies and potentialities are unable to find full employment. This definition of youth obviously speaks of the importance of young people and ushers the scope of harnessing their talents for constructive ends. Since long the researches in educational psychology have pointed out that there is a rise in the ability to learn as the individual nears his maturity, reaching its highest level at about the age of twenty-five. The young individuals, no doubt, have been found to be able, ambitious and enthusiastic. They are more receptive, flexible and susceptible to change. The educators and leaders are, thus, challenged to take a note of the situation and they must direct their efforts and resources in furnishing varied educational facilities and experiences so that the young people could develop into self-driving, self-reliant and mature citizens.

Youths' vitality in building rural India can never be exaggerated particularly when over one fifth of the total rural population falls in the age group of 12 to 25 years. On the recognition of youth's latent potentialities and the need for exploiting them, several programmes for training them have been evolved since the beginning of the 20th Century. However, with the inception of Community Development movement since 1952 more attention has been given to strengthen this

programme in rural areas, in India. The recent study by Singh and Prasad<sup>1</sup> as well as other reports have shown that so far, the organization and functioning of rural youth club as an integral part of the Community Development Programme have not been very effective. The findings support that one of the main bottlenecks in enlarging the scope of youth club work has been that neither the youth club members nor the village leaders have been given proper training regarding the why and how of Youth Development work. This state of affairs places a demand on education and researchers to find out ways and means which could bring this important programme on the right track.

In conformity with the above demand, this study was designed to see if the rural schools could be of some help in training village youth clubs about the various aspects of youth club work. The basic assumption was that if schools could maintain a youth club as an integral part of their extra-curricular activities it could furnish a valuable training to the students who, after leaving the school, could serve as the effective youth club members, leaders in their villages. In other words, the main objective of the study was to determine the educational benefits which might result from the youth club activities in the school situation as a part of its extra-curricular activities. Broadly speaking, such a programme

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if successfully implemented, could be meaningful at least in three ways:

1. The students who would be the members of the club would be thoroughly ingrained in the Youth Club work and its related implications;
2. The students would carry on with agricultural projects which will ultimately train them in scientific agriculture; this would also be a practical supplement to the theoretical teaching programme in agriculture which the boys get in their school; and
3. The other students of the school who may not be members of the club, may also get induced gradually about the youth club work, agricultural projects and their impact on them and on their parents.

### Review of literature

The concept of having a nation-wide youth development programme in order to organize and mobilize our rural youth has been recently recognized in India. Nevertheless, the United States of America is pioneer in this field and has the most active and successful experience of more than sixty years in this direction. The U.S.A. rightly claims that the 'Food produced and conserved in one year by youth club members would be sufficient to feed a million men in the armed forces of our country for the same period. It is not only the agricultural or other production alone that matters. Youth achievements take on even greater significance in the development of sturdy character traits and a desire on the part of youth club members to do their full share of the world's work'.

The project work is the basis through which youth club members are involved in the process of 'learning to do by doing.' With the application of science in these small projects, millions of rural young people in the

U.S.A. have realized the status and importance of farming as an occupation. Warburton<sup>2</sup> in 1952 observed that better farming practices and farm economy could be obtained through the youth club agency. In the same year, Franklin<sup>3</sup> reported that the youth club work had improved farms and rural communities through introduction of better agricultural practices. Wilson<sup>4</sup> in 1956 noted that the rural youth work of the right kind is of very great importance for rural development, since it teaches them through the process of doing things together while they are at the formative stage.

Ensinger<sup>5</sup> in 1957 indicated that youth clubs serve as effective transmitter to their parents and village elders of new idea, thus serving as effective media for changing villager's attitude. Loomis<sup>6</sup> in 1953 and Erickson<sup>7</sup> and Wilson in 1956 reported that parents who were reluctant in the beginning, accepted new ideas and initiated change when these were presented to them through their children. Studies by Bhatt and Rajneja<sup>8</sup> in 1960 showed that (1) the age and education have a definite effect on gain in knowledge and skill of youth, (2) youths studying in higher classes could influence their parents but not those studying in lower classes, and (3) the boys of parents from large holdings influenced their parents more for over-all change in farm practices. In brief, the above studies clearly show the importance of youth club work, its induction value in educating parents and the adoption of new agricultural practices.

### Methods and Procedure

This study, as previously discussed, is based on the assumption that if rural schools could have a regular youth club programme as an integral part of their extra-curricular activities, it would furnish a good training on the part of the students regarding all aspects of youth

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club work. And if they go out of the schools with this background, they could serve as effective youth members or leaders in their villages or communities. To pinpoint, this study has attempted to determine the educational impact of youth club programme when it is introduced in different types of rural schools.

The investigation was conducted in the Kanjhawla Block of Delhi territory. This block is attached to the Division of Agricultural Extension, I.A.R.I., New Delhi, for intensifying the extension activities and upgrading its agriculture. Four different types of schools were selected for organizing the youth clubs. The criteria for selection of these schools were: (1) different types of schools, (2) the available facilities with the school for establishing and maintaining a kitchen garden as the project work; and (3) the interest and co-operation of the school teachers and the students. In each of the four schools a youth club was formally organized with the students as its members and office-bearers. The type of schools, the number of school participants and their respective classes and the age groups are indicated below:

Schools	Class
1. Junior Basic School (S <sub>1</sub> )	V
2. Senior Basic School (S <sub>2</sub> )	VII
3. Higher Secondary School (S <sub>3</sub> )	IX
4. Sanskrit Palsala (S <sub>4</sub> )	Prahlana to Shastri

The youth clubs in the selected schools started functioning with the regular and systematic

in a very practical manner.

For instance, when the first meeting for organising the youth club was held, not only the purpose of holding the meeting in schools was explained to the club members but they were also told that this was the first step for organising a youth club and when they happened to organise a youth club in their respective villages, they should also proceed in the same way. They were also explained the technique of organising such meetings. After a few initial meetings, when the election of the office bearers of the club was held, the members were not only helped in election of office bearers but they were explained about the why and how of the office bearers so that they can understand the roles and leadership value of these office bearers in their totality. At the end, before starting the kitchen gardening project, and training the members and office bearers on its know how they were educated on the role of projects in youth club work, and the different kinds of projects they can undertake depending on their interests.

In order to measure the educational impact of the programme a structured schedule with score card was prepared. The schedule consisted of a number of question items each directed

No. of participants	Age, Groups in years
19	11 to 14
21	12 to 18
25	14 to 19
25	11 to 19

guidance and help of the researchers and the youth club leaders. The two objectives that the participants could get a thorough background in youth club work and also acquire knowledge about the scientific agriculture through the project work were arranged to be accomplished

to determine the educational gain which might have resulted due to youth club work. The educational achievements were measured in terms of changes brought about in their awareness, (2) interest, (2) acceptance, (2) knowledge and (5) skills regarding the

subjects—youth club work and the kitchen gardening project.

At the outset, a bench mark study was completed in all the four schools with the prepared schedule which provided data in regard to the participant background in the above two subjects. The youth club activities with kitchen gardening as the project continued for one year. At the end, again each of the participants was interviewed with the same schedule. Thus, the difference between the bench mark scores and final scores furnished the achievement scores for the individual items. The differential scores were subjected to "t" test to measure their level of significance. Further, a correlation (r) study was made to measure the inter-relationship which existed between the factors of response i.e. Awareness, Interest, Acceptance, Knowledge and Skill. The values of "r" were tested for their level of significance by working out "t" tests.

For the sake of clarity and precision, the educational attainments of the participants were analysed school, age, caste, landholdings and occupation-wise. The basis of classification of the above variables are given as follows:—

- I. Different age groups:
  - (i) 11 to 13 years .....A<sub>1</sub>
  - (ii) 14 to 16 years .....A<sub>2</sub>
  - (iii) 17 to 19 years .....A<sub>3</sub>
- II. Different caste groups:
  - (i) Brahmin .....C<sub>1</sub>
  - (ii) Jat .....C<sub>2</sub>
  - (iii) Schedule Caste .....C<sub>3</sub>
- III. Landholding groups:
  - (i) Small holding, 0 to 4 acres .....H<sub>1</sub>
  - (ii) Medium holding, 5 to 14 acres .....H<sub>2</sub>
  - (iii) Large holding, 15 acres and above .....H<sub>3</sub>
- IV. Different occupation groups:
  - (i) Farming .....O<sub>1</sub>

- (ii) Farming and service .....O<sub>2</sub>
- (iii) Service and Business .....O<sub>3</sub>

#### Analysis and Findings

**Educational benefits:** Table-1 represents the educational attainments of the school youth club participants. As is obvious from the table, the "r" values calculated on the group scores are highly favourable for having youth club work as a part of the extra-curricular activities of the schools. The "r" values throughout the table are significant at 1% level i.e., the results obtained school, age, caste, landholding and occupation-wise are highly significant in all the cases.

Considering the average scores of all the different groups, a few trends are noted. Though the variations in scores are not much, the 9th class participants of Higher Secondary School (S<sub>3</sub>) appear to have scored the highest on all the factors of response whereas the fifth class participants of Junior Basic School (S<sub>1</sub>) have scored the lowest. When compared age-wise the average scores clearly show that the higher the age, the greater has been their educational attainments. The age group 17 to 19 years (A<sub>3</sub>) has scored consistently highest on all the factors of response, while the age group 11 to 13 years (A<sub>1</sub>) has scored the lowest. The caste-wise analysis shows more or less uniformly, that the youngsters coming from the Brahmin (C<sub>1</sub>) family have gained the maximum educational by this programme, the Jat (C<sub>2</sub>) and Schedule caste (C<sub>3</sub>) being next in the order, respectively.

The land-holding-wise analysis supports the fact that the youngsters coming from the families having 5 to 14 acres of land were more receptive and have more educational accomplishments than those who come from families having 0 to 4 or above 15 acres of landholdings. The participants who belonged to the farming families or the families which

TABLE 1

Educational attainment of school youth club participants

Class	Number of students	Awareness		Interest		Acceptance		Knowledge		Skill	
		Av. Score	't'	Av. Score	't'	Av. Score	't'	Av. Score	't'	Av. Score	't'
S <sub>1</sub> S <sub>2</sub> S <sub>3</sub> S <sub>4</sub> S <sub>5</sub>	19	11.68	17.97	11.21	16.98	13.21	14.84	19.23	16.92	13.21	14.68
	21	10.90	22.70	13.11	23.90	13.38	24.77	18.95	13.43	14.52	11.90
	25	12.20	30.50	13.76	23.73	14.52	50.07	21.12	8.24	15.96	10.29
	25	11.52	23.08	13.24	20.69	13.52	17.97	21.68	14.30	16.88	19.85
A <sub>1</sub> A <sub>2</sub> A <sub>3</sub>	33	11.58	26.9	12.30	26.10	13.45	23.60	20.18	22.93	14.90	17.32
	34	11.55	37.32	13.52	34.51	14.08	41.35	21.17	26.23	15.64	24.14
	22	11.68	22.90	13.05	20.39	13.50	18.49	22.00	18.18	16.41	16.24
C <sub>1</sub> C <sub>2</sub> C <sub>3</sub>	30	11.63	27.04	13.50	36.57	13.50	35.00	21.70	26.46	17.54	21.64
	47	11.64	37.55	13.00	39.39	13.82	37.35	21.15	28.30	14.85	24.37
	13	11.31	16.15	11.54	13.42	12.85	20.08	19.01	11.72	14.08	10.91
H <sub>1</sub> H <sub>2</sub> H <sub>3</sub>	33	11.45	31.81	13.00	28.26	13.76	30.40	20.52	22.30	14.79	18.72
	40	11.88	40.37	13.08	28.43	13.65	22.44	21.75	31.07	17.05	28.42
	17	12.35	21.29	12.47	25.98	13.71	19.04	19.71	13.41	13.76	11.37
O <sub>1</sub> O <sub>2</sub> O <sub>3</sub>	47	11.87	34.91	12.85	32.13	13.55	30.80	21.47	19.92	15.94	24.50
	29	11.21	32.97	13.41	35.28	14.78	35.70	20.83	27.40	16.00	76.41
	14	11.43	16.33	12.21	13.42	13.00	17.57	19.79	12.79	13.57	10.80

\*All the calculated 't' values significant at 1% level.

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have both farming and service as their occupation have scored more in comparison to those who belonged to families which are completely dependent on business.

Inter-relationship between factors :

Table 2 presents the inter-relationship between the factors of response which were used for measuring the participants' educational achievements. The results clearly demonstrate that all the factors of response, i.e. Awareness, Interest, Acceptance, Knowledge and Skill are positively correlated to each other, some being significant at 5% level and others at 1% level. As is obvious from the 't' value, the inter relationship between knowledge and skill is consistently highly significant throughout the table. It is curious to note that correlation between interest and acceptance is not significant even at 5% level in all the cases. Similar is the case with the acceptance and knowledge. This explains that an individual may be interested

in any programme, or may have knowledge about it, but that necessarily does not guarantee that he would accept the programme.

Summary and conclusion

The investigation was undertaken in four village schools of Kanjhawala Block. This block is attached with the Division of Extension, I.A.R.I., New Delhi for intensifying extension activities in it. The study was planned and designed with the assumption that if rural schools could have youth club programme as a part of their extra-curricular activities, it would be helpful, broadly speaking, in at least three ways:-

1. The student members of the club would identify themselves with youth work.
2. They would carry on with projects which would not only lead to their being trained in scientific agriculture, but would also be a practical supplement to the theoretical knowledge which they obtain in school.

TABLE 2. Inter-relationship between the five factors of response used for measuring the educational achievements of the participants in the four schools.

Class	S <sub>1</sub>	S <sub>2</sub>	S <sub>3</sub>	S <sub>4</sub>	S <sub>5</sub>			
1. Awareness x Interest	0.56	3.83**	0.46	2.64*	0.40	2.44*	0.89	1.29
2. Awareness x Acceptance	0.30	3.29**	0.48	2.86*	0.33	1.92	0.43	2.79*
3. Awareness x Knowledge	0.51	2.96**	0.54	3.42**	0.34	1.96	0.70	2.59*
4. Awareness x Skill	0.55	3.32**	0.42	2.38*	0.19	1.00	0.43	2.79
5. Interest x Acceptance	0.32	1.60	0.30	1.51	0.31	1.77	0.65	0.54
6. Interest x Knowledge	0.51	2.96**	0.39	2.17*	0.43	2.68*	0.69	0.59
7. Interest x Skill	0.60	3.91**	0.28	1.38	0.39	2.06	0.73	0.12
8. Acceptance x Knowledge	0.22	1.03	0.42	1.38	0.47	2.07	0.39	0.24
9. Acceptance x Skill	0.42	2.26*	0.40	2.21*	0.29	1.58	0.49	3.39**
10. Knowledge x Skill	0.71	5.35**	0.92	13.88**	0.98	13.96**	0.82	9.48**

\*Significant at 5% level. \*\*Significant at 1% level.

3. Non-members of the club and their parents may also get inducted in youth club work and its implications.

With these objectives in view, this study was conducted to measure the educational attainments which the participants could have acquired after a year of association with the school youth club programme.

Four youth clubs were organized in different types of schools involving 90 school students as the participants. To start with, each participant was interviewed on a schedule designed for measuring their educational attainments. The first interview of the students before starting the youth club activities served as the benchmark for the study. After a year of youth club activities in these schools, the final interview was taken again with each of the 90 participants. The difference between the benchmark scores and the final interview scores provided the educational accomplishments of the participants which were further subjected to statistical analysis. In brief, the findings of the study are enumerated below:

1. The educational impact of the school youth club activities as a part of the school extra-curricular activities has been very encouraging. In each of the four schools the participants have significantly gained educationally in awareness, interest, acceptance, knowledge and skills with respect to youth club work and kitchen gardening project. In each case the result is significant at 1% level.
2. The participants of the Higher Secondary (IX class) have scored relatively higher than the participants of the rest three schools. The Junior Basic School (V class) has scored the lowest. This variation may be due to their differences in age and maturity.
3. The participants with higher age have relatively more educational attainments than those of lower age.
4. The participants coming from Brahmin families appear to have gained more educationally, the Jat and Schedule caste groups being next in the order respectively.
5. The participants coming from middle class families (landholding 5 to 14 acres) have scored more than those who came from families having either 0 to 4 or above 15 acres of land.
6. The participants who belonged to either farming families or the families who depended partly on business have scored higher than those who belonged to families who were engaged in service and business.
7. All the factors of response, i.e., Awareness, Interest, Acceptance, Knowledge and Skill are positively correlated to each other and in many cases the results are significant at 5% or 1% level.
8. The relationship between interest and acceptance and the acceptance and knowledge are not significant even at 5% level consistently in all the four cases. That implies that individual may be interested in any programme or may have knowledge about it, but the necessity does not guarantee that he would accept the programme.

The most important conclusion that can be drawn from this study is that rural schools provide very good opportunity for youth club work as a part of extra-curricular activities and rural youth can be educated effectively regarding the benefits of youth club and Scientific Agriculture through such projects as kitchen-gardening.

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“Every country depends on a great deal on its young men and women.....It is helpful to have good young men coming forward, for it is they alone who can venture experiments..... The members of organizations will be able to achieve many things if they work with sincerity and with the sole intention of doing the right thing for their country.”

‘GANDHI’