Perception of Rural Youth on Agricultural Profession: Implication for Extension Programming

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Abstract The primary purpose of this study was to assess the rural youth perception on problems and challenges they face in acquiring agriculture related employment. The secondary purpose was to investigate the rural youth perception toward living in the rural area. The population of this study consisted of all members of rural youth clubs belonging to three provinces (namely, Qum, Markazi, and Fars province). By a complete randomized proportionate sampling technique, 502 members of the population were selected for the study. A questionnaire consisting of three parts was designed to collect needed data for the study. This study used a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods in analyzing and interpreting data. The result indicated more than 50% of the youth’s perception toward agricultural profession and living in rural areas, were either “highly positive” or “positive”. Despite this fact, the youth indicated that heavy farming land price in the rural area, and their lack of having personal financial resources, prevented them from being able to take up a farming profession in the rural areas. This was considered to be a major problem facing rural youth as they were seeking job alternatives, and caused many of them to migrate to cities. There was a statistically significant relationship between members’ age; their family economic status; amount of farming land owned by their family; and their perception toward agricultural profession employability. The respondents’ level of education showed to have negative and statistically significant relationship with their perception toward agricultural profession and living in the rural areas. The results also showed that the variables studied in this research played a significant role in the rural youth club members’ perception variability toward agricultural profession employability.