Drivers to rural youth agri-preneurial engagement in specific agricultural enterprises in Bundelkhand Region of M.P

Abstract

Entrepreneurship in the agricultural sector offers significant potential for rural development and economic growth. This study aimed to assess the entrepreneurship skills among rural youth engaged in various agricultural and allied activities in Madhya Pradesh, India. The objectives were to explore and document the entrepreneurship avenues, identify the perceived reasons for selecting particular agricultural enterprises, analyze the support systems availed, and develop an attitude scale to measure entrepreneurship skills. Additionally, the study documented skill acquisition through various entrepreneurship development programs and identified key human capital factors for successful agricultural entrepreneurship.

The research focused on rural youth entrepreneurs aged 18-35 in the districts of Tikamgarh, Chhatarpur, and Sagar, with a total sample size of 210 participants (82 from Tikamgarh, 57 from Chhatarpur, and 71 from Sagar). A mixed-method approach was used, combining quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews to gather comprehensive data. Key findings revealed that access to training programs, financial support, and market linkages significantly influenced entrepreneurial readiness and opportunity identification. The study also developed an effective model for capacity building among rural youth, emphasizing the importance of human capital, including education, experience, and social networks.

The implications of this study highlight the need for targeted entrepreneurship development programs that address specific challenges faced by rural youth in agriculture. Recommendations include enhancing access to financial resources, improving market infrastructure, and fostering mentorship opportunities. These measures can empower rural youth to become successful agricultural entrepreneurs, thereby contributing to rural economic development.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship skills, rural youth, agricultural sector, Madhya Pradesh, entrepreneurship development programs, capacity building, human capital, market linkages.

Introduction

Background

The Bundelkhand region, characterized by its agrarian economy, has significant potential for agricultural entrepreneurship. Despite facing adversities, the youth in this region are showing increasing interest in agricultural ventures. This paper aims to evaluate the entrepreneurial skills of rural youth in Bundelkhand, focusing on their readiness to tackle challenges and seize opportunities in agriculture.

Objectives:

- To investigate and record the entrepreneurial opportunities available to rural youth in the agricultural sector.
- To evaluate the perceived motivations behind rural youth choosing specific agricultural enterprises.

- To examine the support systems utilized by rural youth for agricultural entrepreneurship.
- To identify and develop a scale to measure the entrepreneurial skills among rural youth.

Literature Review

Concept of Entrepreneurs

Wiklund et al. (2019) examined the evolution of entrepreneurship, focusing on its past, present, and future aspects. They described entrepreneurs as visionary individuals who possess a deep passion for their work and a strong, intrinsic connection to the products and services they offer.

Concept of Entrepreneurship

According to Mohammed Abdulnasir (2018), entrepreneurship involves a process where an entrepreneur creates incremental value and wealth by identifying investment opportunities, organizing enterprises, undertaking risks, and navigating economic uncertainties. This process significantly contributes to economic growth.

Concept of Rural Youth

Ben White (2019) defined "youth" not only by their biological age but also by their relationships with the adult world in various aspects such as society, economy, politics, and culture.

Socio-Economic Characteristics of Rural Youth Entrepreneurs

Bharath (2018) studied the entrepreneurial behavior of rural women engaged in layer poultry farming. The study revealed that over half (52.50%) of these women were in the older age group, followed by middle-aged (35.00%) and younger (12.50%) age groups.

Educational Status

Reshma et al. (2014) reported that nearly two-fifths (39.16%) of farm women involved in livestock production had attained primary school education. This was followed by those who had completed middle school (31.66%), high school (6.66%), PUC (2.50%), and degree levels (1.66%). Additionally, 11.66% were illiterate, and 6.66% had only basic reading skills.

METHODOLOGY

Selection of district

Though the Rural Youth entrepreneurs are available all over Madhya Pradesh, the districts namely Tikamgarh, Chhatarpur and Sagar were purposefully selected were for this study. Accordingly, 82 persons from Tikamgarh , 57 persons from Chhatarpur and 71 persons from Sagar districts were identified for this study programme. Totally, 210 rural youth entrepreneurs falling under the age group of 18-35 were purposefully selected from these three districts for this study.

List 1 : variableswiththeir measurementsand scoring procedures

S. No	Variable	Measurement
Independentvariables		
1.	Age	ScoringprocedurefollowedbySakiluzzaman*et al.* (2018)
2.	Gender	ScoringprocedurefollowedbyRadhakrishnan (2013)
3.	Educationalstatus	ScoringprocedurefollowedbyChegeSarah Muthoni (2013)
4.	Natureof thefamily	Scoringprocedurefollowed byVasanth (2012)
5.	Occupationofthe family	ScoringprocedurefollowedbyRadhakrishnan (2013)
6.	Occupationofthe respondent	Scoringprocedurefollowed byJanani (2015)
7.	Previouswork experience	Scoringprocedurefollowed byThilagam(2012)
8.	Business experience	Scoringprocedurefollowed byJanani(2015)
9.	Annual income	Scoringprocedurefollowed byJanani (2015)
10.	Landholdings	ScoringprocedurefollowedbyRanjithkumar (2018)
11.	Attitudeofruralyouth towards agrientrepreneurship	Scoringprocedurefollowed byShivacharan*et al.* (2017)
12.	Informationseeking behavior	ScoringprocedurefollowedbyRanjithkumar (2018)
13.	Trainingsundergone	ScoringprocedurefollowedbyRanjithkumar (2018)
14.	Massmedia exposure	Scoringprocedurefollowed byJayanthi (2016)
15.	Socialparticipation	Scoringprocedurefollowed byJanani (2015)
16.	Formofbusiness ownership	Scoringprocedurefollowed byJanani (2015)
17.	Levelofinspiration	ScoringprocedurefollowedbyStefanovic,*etal*. (2010)
18.	Decisionmaking ability	Scoringprocedurefollowed bySujina(2009)
19.	Initialcapital investment	ScoringprocedurefollowedbyAnilKumar (2007)
20.	Sourcesofrawmaterials	ScoringprocedurefollowedbyAshishKumar (2015)

21.	PlaceofMarketing	ScoringprocedurefollowedbyAshishKumar (2015)
Dependentvariable		
1.	Entrepreneurialskill	Developedforthestudy
2.	Humancapital	Developedforthestudy

Result and Discussion

Age

Age was considered one of the factors in this study, as it pertains to a period of youth life measured in years since birth. It generally signifies a certain stage or degree of mental maturity, allowing an individual to make positive decisions and undertake legal responsibilities. Age influences rural youth's engagement in entrepreneurial activities. This factor is presented in Table 1.

Table 1 : Distribution of Rural Youth Entrepreneurs according to their age

(n=210)

S. No	Category	Number	Percent
1.	Youngeryouth(18-23years)	17	8.10
2.	Middleagedyouth(24-29years)	83	39.50
3.	Elder youth(30-35years)	110	52.40
	Total	**210**	**100.00**

Table 1 shows that slightly more than half (52.40%) of rural youth entrepreneurs are in the 30-35 age group. This is followed by 39.50% in the 24-29 age group, and 8.10% in the 18-23 age group. Thus, it can be concluded that a significant majority (91.90%) of respondents engage in entrepreneurial activities only after the age of 23.

Additionally, young entrepreneurs typically start their ventures after accumulating some capital for investment. However, the 8.10% of younger respondents involved in entrepreneurship likely benefit from their families' financial support.

These findings align with studies by Janani (2015) and Shivacharan et al. (2017), which also found that most respondents were in the 30-35 age range.

Gender

Gender refers to the socially constructed differences in roles and responsibilities for women and men within a specific culture or location. In this study, gender highlights the roles and responsibilities of men and women in entrepreneurial activities. This factor was considered as a variable, and the data collected are presented in Table 2.

Table 2 :Distribution of Rural Youth Entrepreneurs according to their gender (n=210)

S. No	Category	Number	Percent
1.	Male	179	85.20
2.	Female	31	14.80
	Total	**210**	**100.00**

Table 2 reveals that the majority of rural youth entrepreneurs (85.20%) are male, while a little more than one-tenth (14.80%) are female. This indicates that more male youths are engaged in entrepreneurial activities, likely due to the high risk of incurring losses in entrepreneurship. Men often prefer this path as they see it as a self-employment option, while women tend to be more risk-averse and prefer stable employment to ensure a sustainable livelihood.

However, the study shows that the participation of a small percentage of women in entrepreneurship is a positive sign for promoting gender equality. It also reflects the budding focus of government entities on providing the necessary support to encourage women in entrepreneurship.

These findings are consistent with those reported by Thilagam (2012), Radhakrishnan (2013), and Odunayo Salau (2014).

Educational status

Education is a process that imparts knowledge, development, skills, and changes in human behavior. It enhances rural youth entrepreneurs' abilities to cope with various situations, fosters a societal contribution mindset, and aids in making rational business decisions. The distribution of respondents according to their educational status is presented in Table 3.

Table 3 :Distribution of Rural Youth Entrepreneurs according to their educational status

(n=210)

S. No	Category	Number	Percent
1.	Upto middleschool education	10	4.77
2.	Secondaryschooleducation	17	8.10
3.	Diploma	42	20.00
4.	Under-Graduate	116	55.23
5.	Post-Graduate	25	11.90
	Total	**210**	**100.00**

Table 3 shows that slightly more than half (55.23%) of rural youth entrepreneurs have an undergraduate level of education, followed by one-fifth (20.00%) with a diploma. One-tenth (11.90%) have a postgraduate education. A small percentage of respondents have secondary school (8.10%) and middle school (4.76%) education levels.

These results clearly indicate that education significantly influences the entrepreneurial behavior of the respondents. Furthermore, the study observed that most respondents with a collegiate level of education were professional degree holders, with many specializing in agriculture and related fields.

The curriculum of professional educational degrees is specifically designed to develop entrepreneurial skills among youth. Additionally, educated respondents are well-informed about the methods to obtain technical and financial support for converting their innovative ideas into income-generating enterprises. This likely explains the strong relationship between education and involvement in entrepreneurship.

This finding aligns with the results of Odunayo Salau (2014) and Shivacharan et al. (2017), who reported that the majority of respondents possessed high levels of education.

Nature of the family

Family is a fundamental unit of society and a primary social institution. In this study, the nature of the family is examined through two components: type and size. The results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4 :**Distribution of rural youth entrepreneurs according to their nature of the family**

(n=210)

S. No	Category	Number	Percent
I.FamilySize			
1.	Up to 3 members	29	13.80
2.	4-5members	158	75.20
3.	Above6 members	23	11.00
Total		**210**	**100.00**
II.FamilyType			
1.	Nuclear	201	95.70
2.	Joint	9	4.30
Total		**210**	**100.00**

Table 4 reveals that exactly three-fourths (75.20%) of rural youth entrepreneurs have families with 4-5 members. This is followed by 13.80% with families of three or fewer members and 11.00% with families of more than five members.

Regarding family type, a vast majority (95.70%) belong to nuclear families, while only a small percentage (4.30%) are part of joint families. In nuclear families, the financial obligations are limited, reducing the risk factor and enabling youth to pursue entrepreneurship with confidence. Thus, there appears to be an inverse relationship between family size and entrepreneurship.

These findings align with Bharath (2018), who reported that the majority of respondents had medium-sized, nuclear families.

Occupation of the family

Family occupation refers to the profession of the parents or family, which influences an individual's involvement in entrepreneurial and farming activities. To gain a basic understanding of their family background, respondents were asked about their parents' or family's occupation. The relevant data are presented in Table 5.

Table 5 :Distribution of rural youth entrepreneurs according to their occupation of the family

(n=210)

S. No	Category	Number	Percent
I.	**Occupationofthefamily**		
1.	Farming+agribusiness	13	6.19
2.	Farming+other business	4	1.90
3.	Farmingalone	69	32.86
4.	Agribusiness alone	28	13.33
5.	Otherbusinessalone	30	14.29
6.	Farming+wage earners	36	17.14
7.	Wage earners	30	14.29
Total		**210**	**100.00**

From Table 5, it is evident that nearly one-third (32.86%) of rural youth families are engaged solely in farming activities, followed by approximately one-fourth (17.14%) involved in both farming and wage earning. An equal proportion (14.29%) of respondents' families are engaged in business in sectors other than agriculture while also working as wage earners.

About one-tenth (13.33%) of rural youth family members are involved in agriculture-related businesses. A smaller percentage are engaged in farming alongside agricultural business (6.19%), and very few family members are involved in farming along with non-agricultural business activities.

These findings underscore the continued prevalence of agriculture and allied activities as the primary occupation among rural populations. This aligns with previous studies by Anamica (2013), Thilagam (2012), and Radhakrishnan (2013), which also highlighted farming as a major occupation.

Occupation of the respondent

The occupation of the respondent refers to their involvement in entrepreneurial and earning activities. Relevant data on this variable were collected and are presented in Table 6.

Table 6 :Distribution of rural youth entrepreneurs according to their occupational status

(n=210)

S. NO	Occupationof the respondent	Number	Percent
1.	Agribusiness	148	70.50
2.	Farming+agribusiness	62	29.50
Total		**210**	**100.00**

The results presented in Table 6 indicate that nearly three-quarters (70.50%) of rural youth entrepreneurs primarily engage in agri-business. Additionally, almost one-third (29.50%) of these entrepreneurs are involved in farming alongside their agri-business activities.

These findings suggest that a significant number of rural youth entrepreneurs come from agricultural backgrounds and choose self-employment in the agricultural sector. This preference may be influenced by the numerous opportunities available for income generation in various domains within agriculture. The few respondents engaged in both farming and other businesses likely do so because agriculture is their family occupation.

These results are consistent with findings from studies by Thangaraja (2012) and Janani (2015), which highlighted that a majority of entrepreneurs have business as their primary occupation and agriculture as a subsidiary occupation.

Previous work Experience

Previous work experience refers to the experience respondents had in their enterprises before starting their businesses. The categorization of rural youth entrepreneurs based on their previous work experience in business is presented in Table 7.

Table 7 :Distribution of rural youth entrepreneurs according to their previous work experience

(n=210)

S. No	Category	Number	Percent
1.	Lessthanoneyear	32	15.24
2.	Oneto fiveyears	79	37.62
3.	Morethanfiveyears	99	47.14
	Total	**210**	**100.00**

It can be inferred from Table 7 that nearly half (47.14%) of rural youth entrepreneurs have more than five years of relevant work experience, while almost two-fifths (37.62%) have up to five years of experience.

These results suggest that entrepreneurs with more years of relevant experience are likely to run their businesses more successfully compared to those with less experience. Experienced individuals can leverage their knowledge in various aspects such as sourcing inputs, applying technology, innovating, making decisions, ensuring quality production, and effectively positioning and marketing their products. They also have the autonomy to implement decisions based on their prior experiences.

These findings align with studies by Thilagam (2012) and Ashish Kumar (2015), which indicate that entrepreneurs with more years of relevant experience have higher chances of success compared to those with less experience.

Business experience

The categorization of business experience refers to the duration during which rural entrepreneurs have been engaged in their ventures or businesses, measured in years. The relevant data are presented in Table 8.

Table 8 : Distribution of rural youth entrepreneurs according to their business experience (n=210)

S. No	Category	Number	Percent
1.	Lessthan oneyear	7	3.33
2.	Oneto fiveyears	125	59.52
3.	Morethan Fiveto 10years	64	30.48
4.	Above10years	14	6.67
	Total	**210**	**100.00**

Table 8 illustrates that nearly three-fifths (59.52%) of rural youth entrepreneurs have between one to five years of business experience. This is followed by one-third (30.48%) who have more than five to 10 years of experience. A small percentage (6.67%) have over 10 years of business experience, and only 3.33% have less than one year of experience.

These findings align with studies by Hajong Deepika (2014) and FardousAlom et al. (2016), which also found that the majority of respondents have significant business experience.

Annual income

Annual income refers to the total gross earnings of an individual respondent and their family from all sources within a year. The distribution of rural youth entrepreneurs according to their annual income was studied, and the results are presented in Table 9.

Table 9 :Distribution of rural youth entrepreneurs according to their annual income

(n=210)

S. No	Category	Number	Percent
1.	Uptofivelakhs rupees	40	19.05
2.	Morethanfivelakhto10lakh rupees	138	65.71
3.	Above10 lakhrupees	32	15.24
	Total	**210**	**100.00**

It can be inferred from Table 9 that more than three-fifths (65.71%) of entrepreneurs earn an annual income of more than five lakh rupees. About one-fifth (19.05%) earn up to five lakh rupees annually, while nearly two-tenths (15.24%) have annual incomes exceeding 10 lakh rupees.

This suggests that a majority of respondents fall into the medium annual income category. As shown in Table 16, most respondents have multiple sources of income. Financial stability appears to be a significant factor motivating individuals to pursue entrepreneurship, empowering them to achieve economic progress. This likely contributes to the medium to high levels of annual income observed among the respondents.

These findings align with Sushma's (2007) study, which found that entrepreneurs tend to have higher levels of annual income.

Land holdings

Land is a fundamental source of livelihood for rural households, and farm size plays a crucial role in motivating them to pursue new enterprises. In this context, farm size refers to the area of land owned by rural youth or their family members where farming activities and businesses are conducted. The relevant data are presented in Table 10.

Table 10 :Distribution of rural youth entrepreneurs according to their land holdings

(n=210)

S.No	Category	Number	Percent
1.	Landless	47	22.38
2.	Marginalfarmer(Upto2.5 acres)	65	30.95
3.	Small farmer(From2.51 to 5.00acres)	83	39.52
4.	Bigfarmer(Above5.00acres)	15	7.14

	Total	**210**	**100.00**

From Table 10, it is evident that two-fifths (39.52%) of rural youth entrepreneurs have land holdings of up to 5.00 acres. About one-third (30.95%) are marginal farmers, while slightly less than one-fourth (22.38%) are landless. A small percentage (5.71%) of entrepreneurs have land holdings above 5.00 acres.

These findings suggest that the majority of rural youth entrepreneurs have marginal to small land holdings. This trend may be attributed to the subdivision and fragmentation of traditional land holdings over time.

However, it's worth noting that Ranjithkumar (2018) reported that farm entrepreneurs often belong to medium farmer categories, which may reflect different regional or contextual variations in land ownership and entrepreneurship.

Attitude of rural youth towards agripreneurship

The attitude of rural youth towards agripreneurship refers to their degree of positive or negative feelings regarding agricultural-related entrepreneurial activities. This psychological variable is crucial as it influences whether rural youth are motivated to start agripreneurial ventures. The data collected on the attitude of rural youth towards agripreneurship are presented in Table 11.

Table 11: Distribution of rural youth entrepreneurs according to their Attitude towards agripreneurship

(n=210)

S. No	Category	Number	Percent
1.	Low	32	15.24
2.	Medium	90	42.86
3.	High	88	41.90
	Total	**210**	**100.00**

From Table 11, it can be concluded that slightly more than two-fifths (42.86%) of entrepreneurs had a medium level of attitude towards agripreneurship, while an equal

proportion (41.90%) had a high level of attitude towards agripreneurship. One-sixth (15.24%) of the entrepreneurs had a low level of attitude towards agripreneurship.

These findings indicate that rural youth entrepreneurs generally possess a medium to high level of positive attitude towards agripreneurship. Factors such as their higher education levels, engagement in business enterprises, and active involvement likely contribute to this positive attitude towards agricultural-related entrepreneurial activities.

This finding is consistent with Ranjithkumar's (2018) report, which also indicated that entrepreneurs exhibit a medium to high level of attitude towards agripreneurship.

Information seeking behaviour

Living in the information era, rural youth have equal access to timely agribusiness-related information. The sustainability and knowledge levels of their businesses are influenced by how actively they seek information from various sources. The classification of rural youth entrepreneurs based on their information-seeking behavior is presented in Table 12.

Table 12 :**Distribution of rural youth entrepreneurs according to their information seeking behaviour**

(n=210)

S. No	Category	Number	Percent
1.	Low	30	14.29
2.	Medium	83	39.52
3.	High	97	46.19
	Total	**210**	**100.00**

It is evident from the findings in Table 12 that almost half (46.19%) of rural youth entrepreneurs exhibit a high level of information-seeking behavior, while two-fifths (39.52%) have a medium level of information-seeking behavior. A smaller proportion (14.29%) of rural youth entrepreneurs display a low level of information-seeking behavior.

These findings suggest that youth entrepreneurs actively seek up-to-date information on marketing networks, new technologies, consumer preferences, and other relevant topics. Accessing reliable and timely information is crucial for the success of their enterprises.

These results align with Bharath's (2018) findings, which also indicated that respondents exhibited a high level of information-seeking behavior.

Trainings undergone

Training plays a crucial role in enhancing the knowledge, skills, and self-confidence of rural entrepreneurs. Participation in training programs helps rural youth update their business activities. The findings on the extent of participation of rural youth entrepreneurs in training programs are presented in Table 13.

Table 13 :Distribution of rural youth entrepreneurs according to their trainings undergone

(n=210)

S. No	Category	Number	Percent
1.	Trainingnotattended	41	19.52
2.	Trainingattended	169	80.48
	Total	**210**	**100.00**

The table indicates that the vast majority of rural youth entrepreneurs (80.48%) have attended training programs, while one-fifth (19.52%) have not attended any training programs.

From these findings, it can be concluded that training programs play a crucial role in enhancing technical skills and enabling individuals to apply innovative ideas effectively. Recognizing this, government interventions often prioritize

entrepreneurship development through training initiatives, which likely explains why a large majority of respondents participate in such programs.

This conclusion is consistent with findings from Tamilselvi (2002) and Thilagam (2012), which reported that a majority of entrepreneurs attended multiple training sessions.

Mass media exposure

Mass media serves as a reliable channel for rapidly disseminating current information to a wide and dispersed audience within a short period. Exposure to mass media enhances the ability of rural youth entrepreneurs to access information about technology or innovation, thereby expanding their mental horizon and readiness to embrace new ideas. The relevant data collected on the level of mass media exposure among rural youth entrepreneurs are depicted in Table 14.

Table 14 :Distribution of rural youth entrepreneurs according to their mass media exposure

(n=210)

S. No	Category	Number	Percent
1.	Low	53	25.20
2.	Medium	104	49.50
3.	High	53	25.20
	Total	**210**	**100.00**

From Table 14, it can be concluded that half (49.50%) of rural youth entrepreneurs have a medium level of mass media exposure. An equal percentage (25.20% each) of entrepreneurs have high and low levels of mass media exposure.

Effective business operations are significantly influenced by external factors such as changes in government policies and international trade. Therefore, it is crucial for entrepreneurs to stay updated with the evolving business environment to manage their enterprises effectively. Mass media plays a vital role in disseminating reliable and updated information, which likely explains the prevalence of medium-level mass media exposure among entrepreneurs.

These findings align with those of Radhakrishnan (2013) and Giridhara (2013), which similarly reported that a majority of respondents had a medium level of mass media utilization.

Social participation

Social participation among rural youth entrepreneurs refers to their degree of involvement in community or societal activities. Participation in both formal and informal organizations facilitates interaction with a broader network of people, enabling the sharing of information and exchange of new business ideas. This interaction supports rural youth in making informed decisions and enhances their potential for success as entrepreneurs. The data collected on social participation among rural youth entrepreneurs are presented in Table 15.

Table 15 :Distribution of rural youth entrepreneurs according to their social participation

(n=210)

S. No	Category	Number	Percent
1.	Low	23	10.95
2.	Medium	75	35.72
3.	High	112	53.33
	Total	**210**	**100.00**

The data presented in Table 15 reveal that more than half (53.33%) of rural youth entrepreneurs exhibit a high level of social participation. Additionally, one-third (35.71%) of youth entrepreneurs demonstrate a medium level of social participation.

These results indicate that a large majority of rural youth entrepreneurs actively participate at high to medium levels. From a business perspective, there are formal and registered associations at district and state levels. Many youth entrepreneurs also register their organizations with the State Department of Agribusiness and Agricultural Development, Government of Tamil Nadu, and regularly attend meetings with these organizations. This active engagement likely contributes to the observed medium to high levels of social participation among rural youth entrepreneurs.

Form of business ownership

The forms of business ownership were categorized, and the data are presented in Table 16

Table 16 :Distribution of rural youth entrepreneurs according to their form of business ownership

(n=210)

S. No	Categories	Number	Percent
1.	Solo proprietorship	202	96.19
2.	Partnership	8	3.81
	Total	**210**	**100.00**

The results from Table 16 indicate that a significant majority of rural youth entrepreneurs (96.19%) operate their businesses as sole proprietorships, while a small fraction (3.81%) opt for partnerships. This underscores that sole proprietorship is the predominant form of business ownership among rural youth entrepreneurs in agricultural ventures.

This observation is consistent with findings by Janani (2015), which similarly noted a preference among youth entrepreneurs for sole ownership structures.

Level of inspiration

Inspiration is a vital motivational factor for rural youth entrepreneurs, helping them succeed in the agricultural sector. Therefore, the levels of inspiration to become entrepreneurs were studied, and the results are presented in the Table 17

Table 17 :Distribution of rural youth entrepreneurs according to their level of inspiration

(n=210)

S. No	Category	Number	Percent
1.	Low	23	10.95
2.	Medium	84	40.00
3.	High	103	49.05
	Total	**210**	**100.00**

It was observed that nearly half of the rural youth entrepreneurs (49.05%) possessed a high level of inspiration to become entrepreneurs. This was followed by two-fifths (40.00%) who had a medium level of inspiration, and only one-tenth (10.95%) who had a low level of inspiration. Most rural youth expressed a desire to become their own boss, gain respect in society, earn a good income, and serve as role models for others.

Decision making ability

Decision-making ability in entrepreneurship is a crucial skill for achieving success. The data on the decision-making abilities of rural youth entrepreneurs were gathered, categorized, and presented in the table18 below.

Table 18 :Distribution of rural youth entrepreneurs according to their decision- making ability (n=210)

S. No	Category	Number	Percent
1.	Independentdecision	144	68.57
2.	JointDecisionwithfamilymembers	35	16.68
3.	Jointdecisionwithco-workers/friends/others	31	14.75
	Total	**210**	**100.00**

From the table, it can be concluded that more than three-fifths of rural youth entrepreneurs (68.57 percent) make decisions independently. This is followed by nearly one-fifth (16.68 percent) who make decisions after discussing with family members, and less than one-sixth (14.75 percent) who consult with co-workers, friends, and other relatives.

Most rural youth entrepreneurs independently decide on product purchases, marketing, labor allocation, and investments. However, when it comes to business expansion and product diversification, the opinions of family and friends are considered. Additionally, respondents often consult with employees, friends, and business partners for decisions related to business activities such as market planning, product promotion strategies, and procurement activities. This tendency to consult might explain their independent decision-making abilities.

This finding aligns with Ashish Kumar (2015), who reported that the majority of youth entrepreneurs make decisions independently.

Implications of the Study

Based on the findings and observations made during the personal interviews with respondents, the following implications and recommendations are suggested:

1. **Educational Inclusion of Entrepreneurial Skills**:
    - **Finding**: Majority of respondents possessed secondary to collegiate levels of education.
    - **Implication**: Education plays a crucial role in determining the inclination of rural youth towards agripreneurship.
    - **Recommendation**: Include entrepreneurial skill-oriented courses in rural educational curricula to encourage agripreneurship.
2. **Youth Involvement in Development Activities**:
    - **Finding**: Young people can be vital in designing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating rural development activities.
    - **Recommendation**: Encourage youth participation in these activities to ensure their involvement and the success of development programs.
3. **Preference for Specific Enterprises**:

- **Finding**: Rural youth entrepreneurs preferred avenues like organic farming, poultry farming, fishery hatcheries, livestock production, and mushroom production.
- **Recommendation**: Increase participation in these preferred enterprises through targeted Entrepreneurship Development Programs.

4. **Knowledge and Infrastructure Needs**:
   - **Finding**: Respondents lacked sufficient knowledge of operational guidelines and infrastructure facilities.
   - **Recommendation**: Create required infrastructure in rural areas and provide detailed operational guidelines to boost involvement in business activities.
5. **Optimistic Attitude and Skill-Oriented Training**:
   - **Finding**: There is a need to instill an optimistic attitude towards agribusiness and its career opportunities.
   - **Recommendation**: Provide need-based, skill-oriented training on agricultural activities alongside regular education to foster a positive mindset.
6. **Economic Benefits and Incentives**:
   - **Finding**: Rural youth entrepreneurs aspired for agricultural enterprises that offered economic benefits and incentives.
   - **Recommendation**: Planners should mold youth aspirations towards diverse agro-based enterprises like agro-farm chemicals, dairy, poultry, sericulture, beekeeping, nurseries, and small-scale industries to ensure stable financial status.
7. **Integrated Agricultural Training**:
   - **Finding**: Regular agricultural training can motivate and develop skills among rural youth.
   - **Recommendation**: Implement integrated training programs targeting rural youth to enhance their skills and mindset for agricultural business.
8. **Access to Financial Services**:
   - **Finding**: Rural youth need separate guidelines to avail financial services from institutions.
   - **Recommendation**: Encourage rural youth entrepreneurs to utilize credit facilities and provide proper training to ensure timely reimbursement, promoting profitable agricultural practices and preventing discontinuance.
9. **Access to Information Technology**:
   - **Finding**: Rural youth expressed the need for better access to information.
   - **Recommendation**: Establish special cells with internet facilities in villages to provide access to information regarding price forecasts, pest and disease forecasts, weather forecasts, and crop management.

Suggestions for Future Research

1. **Expanded Sample and Coverage**:
   - **Current Limitation**: The study was confined to three districts with 210 samples.
   - **Suggestion**: Replicate the study on a larger sample covering all areas of the Bundelkhand region of Madhya Pradesh to generalize the findings.
2. **Comparative Analysis**:
   - **Current Limitation**: The study did not compare various sections of successful entrepreneurs.
   - **Suggestion**: Undertake a comparative analysis of entrepreneurs from different socio-economic status categories to derive broader implications about entrepreneurial skills.
3. **Case Studies of Successful Entrepreneurs**:
   - **Current Limitation**: The study lacks in-depth case studies.
   - **Suggestion**: Conduct case studies of successful entrepreneurs to gain deeper insights and draw detailed implications from their experiences.

Conclusion

The study underscores the importance of entrepreneurship development programs in enhancing the skills and capacities of rural youth in the agricultural sector. The findings emphasize the need for targeted interventions to address specific challenges faced by rural youth. Recommendations include enhancing access to financial resources, improving market infrastructure, and fostering mentorship opportunities. These measures can empower rural youth to become successful agricultural entrepreneurs, thereby contributing to rural economic development.

Disclaimer (Artificial intelligence)

Option 1:

Author(s) hereby declare that NO generative AI technologies such as Large Language Models (ChatGPT, COPILOT, etc) and text-to-image generators have been used during writing or editing of manuscripts.

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Details of the AI usage are given below:

1.

2.

3.

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