# Youth Participation and Challenges in Rural Agribusiness: A Study of Agripreneurs in Haryana, India


## Abstract

This study explores the participation of rural youth in agribusiness enterprises, focusing on their involvement, motivations, experience, and the challenges they encounter. However, despite its significance, rural youth often face obstacles such as limited access to resources, market linkages, and relevant skills. To address these issues, this research was conducted across four districts of Haryana—Bhiwani, Jind, Hisar, and Kurukshetra—where Agri Business Centers are located. A total of 60 agripreneurs formed the study sample and data were gathered through structured interviews based on a well-validated questionnaire. Results revealed that over half of the participants had 3 to 5 years of experience in farming and agribusiness. Key motivational factors for engaging in agribusiness included well-developed entrepreneurial skills and easy access to raw materials. Most respondents were involved in livestock management and food processing activities. However, they faced significant challenges, such as difficulties in obtaining certification, lack of access to loans, limited awareness of modern agricultural technologies, and low confidence levels. The study highlights the need for targeted interventions to overcome financial, infrastructural, and skill-related barriers faced by rural youth in agribusiness, recommending enhanced access to credit, certification support, entrepreneurial training, and public-private partnerships to foster sustainable rural development.



**Keywords:** Agreprenuers, Involvement, Rural Youth, Agribusiness, Experience, Challenges, Rural Development and Skill Development


## Introduction:

Agribusiness plays a significant role in global food security and rural development, particularly in developing countries where agriculture remains the backbone of the economy. In recent years, attention has shifted towards engaging rural youth in agribusiness as a strategy to reduce unemployment and address rural-urban migration. The involvement of youth in agribusiness is crucial for ensuring the sustainability and modernization of agricultural practices, fostering innovation, and promoting entrepreneurship in rural areas [1].

Rural youth participation in agribusiness remains relatively low due to various challenges such as limited access to land, finance, and agricultural inputs, as well as a lack of technical skills and knowledge [2]. However, there are notable opportunities for rural youth in agribusiness. With the global push for sustainable agriculture and innovation, young agripreneurs are well-positioned to embrace technologies such as digital agriculture, climate-smart practices, and value-added processing [3].

The participation of agripreneurs in agribusiness, as well as the challenges they face, is crucial for developing effective strategies to support their growth. This research paper aims to explore the factors driving agripreneurs' involvement in agribusiness ventures, identify the challenges they encounter, and provide recommendations for fostering a more conducive environment for agripreneurial success. By addressing these issues, policymakers and development organizations can implement targeted interventions that enhance the competitiveness and resilience of agripreneurs, ultimately contributing to broader rural development goals.

The strategies to support agriculture in becoming more resilient to climate change while enhancing productivity and sustainability. It outlines key areas, such as improving access to climate-resilient technologies, financing tools, and infrastructure. The plan advocates for a whole-of-economy approach, integrating climate action into agricultural investments and policy frameworks, while addressing the needs of smallholder farmers who are most vulnerable to climate-related risks [4].

## Methodology

The study was carried out in Haryana, India, with the aim of assessing the participation of agripreneurs and the challenges they face in agribusiness ventures.To achieve this, a purposive sampling approach was employed to select four districts within Haryana where Agri Business Centres (ABCs) were established: Bhiwani, Jind, Hisar, and Kurukshetra. These districts were chosen due to their active agribusiness activities and the presence of registered agripreneurs.

An equal number of agripreneurs were randomly selected from each district based on the registered individuals at the Agri Business Centres. Specifically, 15 agripreneurs were chosen per district, leading to a total sample size of 60. This sample was considered representative for evaluating the participation and challenges associated with agribusiness initiatives in the region.

Data collection was conducted through a well-structured and pre-tested interview schedule, which facilitated in-depth interactions with the agripreneurs. The interview schedule included questions designed to gather information.

## Results and discussion

**Experience in Farming:** Table 1 indicates that a significant proportion of respondents across all four districts—Bhiwani, Jind, Kurukshetra, and Hisar—had 3 to 5 years of farming experience. Specifically, 53.33% of respondents in Bhiwani, Jind, and Kurukshetra, and 60% in Hisar fell within this category. A smaller proportion of participants reported having up to 3 years of farming experience, with 40% in both Bhiwani and Kurukshetra, 33.3% in Jind, and 26.67% in Hisar. Additionally, only a few respondents had more than 5 years of experience, accounting for 13.33% in Jind and Hisar, and 6.67% in Bhiwani and Kurukshetra, respectively.

This distribution suggests that most agripreneurs in the selected districts are relatively new to agribusiness, with limited long-term exposure to farming. Previous studies highlight that such moderate levels of experience often position entrepreneurs to adopt innovative practices more readily than those with either minimal or extensive experience, given that they are familiar with basic agricultural processes while remaining open to new approaches [5] and [6]. However, the limited number of individuals with more than 5 years of experience suggests a potential gap in seasoned leadership within these agribusiness ventures, possibly impacting the sustainability of enterprises in the long run [7].

**Table 1: Experience in Farming and Agribusiness**

| S. No | Experience | Agribusiness centers | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Agri Clinic& Agri Business Center | A2Z Agri BusinessCenter | Agri Business Incubation Center | Agri Clinicand Agri Business Center | Total |
| | | Bhiwani n=15(%) | Jind n=15(%) | Hisar n=15(%) | Kurukshetra n=15(%) | N=60 |
| 1 | **Experience in Farming** | | | | | |
| | Up to 3 years | 06(40.00) | 05(33.33) | 04(26.67) | 06(40.00) | 21(35.00) |
| | 3–5 years | 08(53.33) | 08(53.34) | 09(60.00) | 08(53.33) | 33(55.00) |
| | Above 5 year | 01(6.67) | 02(13.33) | 02(13.33) | 01(6.67) | 06(10.00) |
| 2 | **Experience in Agribusiness** | | | | | |
| | Up to 3 years | 09(60.00) | 07(46.67) | 05(33.33) | 04(26.67) | 25(41.67) |
| | 3–5 years | 06(40.00) | 08(53.34) | 10–(66.66) | 11(73.33) | 35(58.33) |

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

**Experience in Agribusiness:** Table 1 illustrates the distribution of agribusiness experience across the four districts. In Bhiwani, the majority of respondents (60%) reported having up to 3 years of experience, followed by 40% with 3–5 years of experience. In Jind, over half of the respondents (53.33%) had 3–5 years of experience, while the remaining 46.67% had up to 3 years of experience. Similarly, in Hisar, 66.66% of participants had been engaged in agribusiness for 3–5 years, with 33.33% reporting up to 3 years of experience. Kurukshetra showed the highest proportion of experienced respondents, with 73.33% having 3–5 years of experience and 26.67% reporting up to 3 years.

These findings align with [8], who emphasized that entrepreneurial ventures in rural areas often attract individuals with mid-level experience, reflecting both familiarity with agribusiness operations and the eagerness to explore new opportunities. [9] similarly found that 62.22% of selected pineapple growers had 3–6 years of experience, with a smaller proportion having less than 3 years (26.67%) or more than 6 years (11.11%) of experience. This pattern suggests that a moderate level of experience plays a crucial role in adopting improved agricultural practices and sustaining agribusiness ventures. Furthermore, studies indicate that those with 3 to 5 years of experience are often at a pivotal stage where they can leverage both learned skills and market insights, fostering enterprise growth [5] and [7].

**Motivational Factors to Engage in Agribusiness**

The data revealed that the primary motivational factor for 31.66% of respondents was the easy availability of raw materials. This was followed by 28.33% of participants who cited adequate entrepreneurial skills and cultural compatibility as key motivators. Additionally, 25% of the respondents indicated that access to startup funds and social acceptance influenced their involvement in agribusiness. Other factors included the prospect of a high rate of return (23.33%), continuation of a family business (18.33%), adequate farming knowledge and strong market demand (16.66%), and access to land (8.33%).

These findings align with previous studies emphasizing the importance of resource availability and entrepreneurial skills in rural business ventures. According to [10], the accessibility of raw materials significantly enhances rural youth participation in agribusiness by lowering operational costs and risks. Similarly, cultural and social acceptance, along with financial support, play crucial roles in motivating young entrepreneurs to pursue agribusiness opportunities [6]. Furthermore, [7] highlight that the perception of high returns and market demand can positively influence entrepreneurial decisions, while limited access to land and capital remains a persistent challenge for aspiring agripreneurs.

**Table 2: Motivational Factors of Agriprenuers to Engage in Agribusiness**

| **Motivational Factors** | **Agribusiness centers** | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Agri Clinic& Agri Business Center | A2Z Agri Business Center | Agri Business Incubation Center | Agri Clinic and Agri Business Center | Total |
| | Bhiwani n=15(%) | Jind n=15(%) | Hisar n=15(%) | Kurukshetra n=15(%) | N=60 |
| Access to land | 01(6.66) | – | 01(6.67) | 03(20.00) | 05(8.33) |
| Adequate enterprenuerial skill | 04(26.66) | 04(26.67) | 04(26.67) | 05(33.33) | 17(28.33) |
| Adequate farming knowledge | 02(13.33) | 02(13.33) | 02(13.33) | 04(26.66) | 10(16.66) |
| Availability of startup funds | 04(26.66) | 06(40.00) | 03(20.00) | 02(13.33) | 15(25.00) |
| High demand | 02(13.33) | 04(26.66) | 03(20.00) | 01(6.67) | 10(16.66) |
| High rate of return | 04(26.66) | 05(33.33) | 02(13.33) | 03(20.00) | 14(23.33) |
| Socially acceptable | 03(20.00) | 04(26.66) | 03(20.00) | 05(33.33) | 15(25.00) |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Culturally compatible | 02(13.33) | 05(33.33) | 04(26.66) | 06(40.00) | 17(28.33) |
| Family business | 01(6.67) | 04(26.67) | 03(20.00) | 03(20.00) | 11(18.33) |
| Easy availability of raw material | 04(26.67) | 03(20.00) | 07(46.66) | 05(33.33) | 19(31.66) |

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages Multiple responses*

**Involvement of Agriprenuers in Agri based Enterprises**

The perusal of Table 3 indicated that most of the respondents (41.66%) were engaged in livestock enterprises while, more than approximately one–third of the respondents (33.33%) were involved in food processing enterprises followed by 6.67 per cent involved in vermi composting and organic farming. In case of floriculture and apiculture enterprises 5.00 per cent of respondents were involved respectively. Only one respondent was involved with equipment manufacturing and distribution.

**Table: 3 Involvement of Agriprenuers in Agri based Enterprises n=60**

| S.No. | Agri–based Enterprises | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Food Processing | 20 | 33.33 |
| 2. | Floriculture | 03 | 5.00 |
| 3. | Livestock | 25 | 41.66 |
| 4. | Vermi composting | 04 | 6.67 |
| 5. | Equipment Manufacturing and Distribution | 01 | 1.67 |
| 6. | Apiculture (Beekeeping) | 03 | 5.00 |
| 7. | Organic farming | 04 | 6.67 |
| Total | | **60** | |

Sarkar et al. [11] disclosed that majority of rural youths were engaged in dairy practice while, less than one fourth of the respondents were involved in goat farming and poultry farming and least were engaged in vermicomposting and mushroom production enterprises. [12] also concluded that rural youths were involved in poultry production with broiler being the major birds reared.

**Involvement of Agriprenuers in different components of Agri–based Enterprises**

The findings in Table 4 highlight the involvement of rural youth in various agribusiness components, with significant participation in food processing and livestock-based enterprises. In the food processing sector, 26.67% of respondents were engaged in fruit and vegetable-related enterprises, while 6.67% were involved in producing sugarcane-based products. Additionally, 3.33% of participants operated marigold flower decoration enterprises under floriculture, and only one respondent managed a sunflower oil manufacturing center.

In livestock-based enterprises, 41.66% of respondents reported involvement. Specifically, 15% were engaged in poultry farming, followed by 13.33% in dairy farming, 10% in fish farming, and 3.33% in goat farming. Furthermore, 6.67% of respondents were involved in both vermicomposting and organic farming. In contrast, only 5% participated in apiculture, while just 1% were engaged in equipment manufacturing and distribution.

These results align with previous studies, suggesting that rural youth prefer agribusiness ventures that offer quick returns or align with local agricultural practices. [10] found that food processing and livestock enterprises are popular among young agripreneurs due to relatively lower entry barriers and higher market demand. Similarly, [6] noted that poultry and dairy farming provide steady income streams, attracting youth seeking economic stability. However, participation in specialized activities such as apiculture and organic farming remains limited, likely due to challenges in acquiring technical knowledge and market linkages [7]. Expanding access to training and infrastructure could enhance involvement in these niche areas.

**Table 4: Involvement of Agriprenuers in different Components of Agri–basedEnterprises**

| S. No. | Agribusiness activities | Agribusiness centers | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Agri Clinic Agri-Business Center | A2ZAgri Business Center | Agri-Business Incubation Center | Agri Clinic and Agri Business Center | Total |
| | | Bhiwani n=15(%) | Jind n=15(%) | Hisar n=15(%) | Kurukshetra n=15(%) | N=60 |
| **1.** | **Food Processing** | | | | | |
| | Sugarcane Products | **–** | 01(6.67) | 01(6.66) | 02(13.33) | 04(6.66) |
| | Fruits & Vegetables | 05(33.33) | 03(20.00) | 03(20.00) | 05(33.33) | 16(26..67) |
| | **Total** | | | | | **20 (33.33)** |
| **3.** | **Floriculture** | | | | | |
| | Sunflower Oil Manufacturing Center | – | – | – | 01(6.67) | 01(1.67) |
| | Marigold Flower Decorator | 01(6.67) | – | 01(6.66) | – | 02(3.33) |
| | **Total** | | | | | **03( 5.00)** |
| **4.** | **Livestock** | | | | | |
| | Dairy farming | 01(6.67) | 04(26.66) | 02(13.33) | 01(6.67) | 08(13.33) |
| | Fish farming | 01(6.67) | 02(13.33) | 01(6.67) | 02(13.33) | 06(10.00) |
| | Goat farming | | 01(6.67) | 01(6.67) | – | 02(3.33) |
| | Poultry | 02(13.33) | 02(13.33) | 03(20.00) | 02(13.33) | 09(15.00) |
| | **Total** | | | | | 25 (41.66) |
| **5**. | Vermicomposting | 02(13.33) | – | 01(6.67) | 01(6.67) | 04(6.67) |
| **6.** | Equipment Manufacturing and Distribution | – | 01(6.67) | – | – | 01(1.67) |
| **7.** | Apiculture (Beekeeping) | 01(6.67) | 01(6.67) | 01(6.67) | – | 03(5.00) |
| **8.** | Organic farming | 02(13.33) | – | 01(6.67) | 01(6.67) | 04(6.67) |
| **Total** | | 15 | 15 | 15 | 15 | **60** |

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

**Constraints Faced by Agripreneurs**

Majority of the agriprenuers (78.33%) faced the problems of certification as a major constraint venturing in agribusiness activities followed by non–availability of loans (73.33%),lack of confidence (71.66%), existing competition (66.66%), transportation (58.33%) and halfof the respondents faced lack of knowledge about marketing strategies, lack of family support and high rate of interest respectively.

**Table - 5 Constraints faced by Agripreneurs** **N=60**

| S .No. | Constraints | Frequency | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Problem of middleman | 25 | 41.66 |
| 2. | Storage Problems | 32 | 53.33 |
| 3. | Existing competition | 40 | 66.66 |
| 4. | Transportation | 35 | 58.33 |
| 5. | Low risk bearing capacity | 19 | 31.66 |
| 6. | Lack of confidence | 43 | 71.66 |
| 7. | Lack of awareness regarding new technology | 31 | 51.66 |
| 8. | Lack of family support | 30 | 50.00 |
| 9. | Lack of subsidy | 25 | 41.66 |
| 10. | Non availability of loans | 44 | 73.33 |
| 11. | High rate of interest | 30 | 50.00 |
| 12. | Problem in certification | 47 | 78.33 |
| 13. | Problem in licensing | 32 | 53.33 |
| 14. | Lack of handling support | 25 | 41.66 |

* Multiple responses

These findings are consistent with recent literature emphasizing the systemic barriers that rural entrepreneurs face. For instance, research indicates that certification processes can be complex and resource-intensive, often deterring potential agripreneurs [13]. Additionally, studies have highlighted that limited access to financial resources significantly constrains young entrepreneurs, making it difficult for them to launch and sustain agribusiness ventures [14] and [15]. The impact of competition and logistical challenges further complicates the landscape for aspiring agripreneurs, underscoring the need for supportive policies and targeted interventions. Digital technologies are reshaping agricultural practices, especially for smallholder farmers. The key tools like digital platforms, blockchain, and e-commerce that enable small farmers to access markets more efficiently, reduce transaction costs, and foster financial inclusion. The report emphasizes that digital tools can increase transparency in food value chains and allow for more sustainable farming through better decision-making [16].

## Conclusion

The analysis indicates that over half of the respondents possess 3–5 years of experience in both farming and agribusiness, with adequate entrepreneurial skills and the easy availability of raw materials identified as primary motivating factors for their engagement in agribusiness. This trend may be attributed to the youthful demographic of the respondents, many of whom began their careers in agricultural entrepreneurship later in life. Additionally, a significant portion of the respondents focused on livestock and food processing enterprises.

However, the agripreneurs face notable challenges, with 78.33% reporting certification issues as a major constraint. This is followed by non-availability of loans (73.33%), lack of confidence (71.66%), and a lack of awareness regarding the latest agricultural technologies (51.66%). These barriers reflect the broader systemic challenges identified in the literature, which highlight the need for enhanced

support systems, including financial resources, training programs, and access to technology for aspiring agripreneurs.

The importance of creating decent work opportunities within this sector and emphasizes the need for targeted interventions to enhance skills development, access to resources, and employment conditions. The report suggests that by focusing on youth-specific policies, improving infrastructure, and promoting social dialogue among stakeholders, significant advancements can be made in harnessing the potential of young individuals in agribusiness [17].

**Author's contribution's**

This work was carried out in collaboration among all authors. Author Jyoti designed the study, performed the statistical analysis, wrote the protocol, and drafted the initial manuscript. Author Seema Rani provided advisory support and guidance throughout the study. Authors Khushbu and Anju managed the literature searches. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

**DISCLAIMER (ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE)**

Authors 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 this manuscript.

**ETHICAL APPROVAL AND CONSENT**

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study. Participants were provided with detailed information about the study's purpose, procedures, and potential risks before consenting to participate. Their participation was voluntary, and they were assured of confidentiality and the right to withdraw from the study at any time without consequence. The study was conducted in accordance with ethical guidelines and received approval from the relevant institutional review board.

**COMPETING INTERESTS**

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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