

Agripreneurial Landscape in the Kumaon Region of Uttarakhand

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Abstract

By examining the socio-economic dynamics and constraints faced by agripreneurs, this study seeks to shed light on the transformative potential of agripreneurship in bolstering agricultural sustainability and rural livelihoods. While agricultural productivity thrives, marketing hurdles persist due to challenging terrains and inadequate infrastructure. Recent studies highlight the evolving landscape of agripreneurship globally, emphasizing sustainable, community-oriented agricultural practices. Furthermore, socio-economic, communication, and psychological attributes influence agripreneurs' decision-making and risk-taking abilities. Constraints such as inadequate marketing channels, price fluctuations, and technological limitations impede agripreneurs' endeavors. Agripreneurship, integral to agricultural development, fosters innovation, sustainability, and economic growth. Entrepreneurial ventures catalyze technological advancements, revolutionizing farming practices and enhancing productivity. Embracing entrepreneurship in agriculture not only boosts rural economies but also ensures food security and rural development.

Keywords: Agripreneurship, India, status, landscape, kumaon.

Introduction

Agriculture is the backbone of India, where the agro-based industry is considered an extended arm of agriculture. India manages 17.50 per cent of the world's population and 2.4 per cent of the world's total land. At the time of independence, more than half of

the national income was contributed by agriculture, and more than 70 per cent of the total population was dependent on agriculture. Agriculture contributes 18.3 per cent to GDP, 11.9 per cent of total exports, and employs 58.40 per cent of the country's workforce. About 65 per cent of the population is directly or indirectly

related to agriculture. With the development of agro-based industries, more employment opportunities can be created both at the production and marketing stages. Even though India is the second-largest producer of food in the world, it accounts for only 1.60 per cent of the total international food trade. This indicates vast potential for agribusiness. The agricultural sector plays a vital role in global economies, contributing significantly to both the livelihoods of individuals and the overall economic development of nations.

Uttarakhand is predominantly a hilly region. Its geographical area is divided into two divisions (Kumaon and Garhwal). There are a total of 13 districts. The state covers a total area of roughly 53483 square km. The state is largely hilly (86%), and only some areas lie in plains (14%). With a 23.4 percent share in the state GDP, agriculture is the main economic sector in the state. The state is characterized by its agripreneurs excelling in agricultural production, but challenges persist in the domain of marketing. The difficult geographical terrain and inadequate infrastructure present transportation challenges, elevating costs and impeding timely market delivery. There is an ample amount of potential in the farming communities that they have mastered in production. Additionally, the remote location of offending communities restricts access to mainstream markets, hindering direct connections with buyers and favorable price negotiations. Post-harvest losses and diminished product quality result from limited modern storage and

processing facilities, affecting overall marketability. The absence of developed marketing infrastructure, such as cold storage and packaging units, hampers the agribusiness's capacity to add value and access diverse markets.

Singh and Singh (2017) conducted a study highlighting the challenges in Indian agriculture, emphasizing issues related to market access, fragmented supply chains, and the need for modernization. A significant transformation has occurred globally, particularly in the realm of entrepreneurship, following the pandemic. A noticeable shift in various aspects is evident when comparing the pre-pandemic and post-pandemic eras. This change is particularly pronounced in the Indian subcontinent, which is endowed with diverse agro-climatic zones. The domain of entrepreneurial marketing in agriculture has witnessed substantial growth, extending beyond traditional agriculture and horticulture to encompass sectors such as poultry, fishery, CHC (Community Health Center) centers, seed and fertilizer licensing, as well as nursery and floriculture centers. The expanded opportunities have led to notable changes in pre-production, production, harvesting, post-harvest processes, marketing strategies, customer services, and feedback mechanisms.

Global scenario of agripreneurship

Most countries have an economy that is dependent on agriculture, either in a small or big way. From employment generation to contribution to national income, agriculture

is important. In 2010, around 25 million people were regularly engaged in agricultural work in the European Union, and 58 per cent of men were working full-time on farms. In the case of contribution towards national income, agriculture contributes more than 50 per cent in developing countries and normally a smaller percentage in developed countries. Agricultural business as a concept has grown as well. A decade ago, it was associated solely with the production of basic crops and selling them in the market. Globally, more than 66 per cent of the world's population is predicted to be urban by 2050. A serious implication of expanding urbanization will be a decline in the rural population. To ensure the sustainability of food production, rural communities, and natural resources, there is a need to slow the outmigration of rural populations by accelerating rural development.

Socio-economic, communication, and psychological characteristics of agripreneurs

Linajoy *et al.* (2008), in their study on women-led agro-processing self-groups, reported that the majority (80.00%) of the respondents had innovativeness in powder making, followed by ready-to-eat items (15.00%) and fish processing (5.00%). George *et al.* (2012) observed that more than two-thirds (68.00%) of SHG members had medium social participation, followed by high (22.00%) and low (10.00%) social participation. Naidu (2012) concluded from his study that the majority (61.67%) of

respondents had medium decision-making ability, followed by high (20.00%) and low (18.33%) decision-making ability. Ram *et al.* (2013) studied the entrepreneurship behavior of women entrepreneurs and reported that nearly half (48.60%) of the women entrepreneurs had medium risk-bearing ability, followed by low (34.60%) and high (12.70%) risk-taking ability. Nargave (2016) revealed that the majority (55.84%) of the respondents belonged to the young age group, whereas 27.50 per cent and 16.66 per cent of respondents belonged to the middle and old age groups, respectively. Shivacharan *et al.* (2017) observed that the majority (65.84%) of rural young agripreneurs were educated up to college level and above, and the rest of them had high school education (34.16%). Maratha and Badodiya (2017), in a study on marketing behavior and other attributes of vegetable growers in the Kota block of Kota district in Rajasthan, reported that the majority (60.00%) of the respondents were middle-aged, followed by young (21.67%) and old (18.33%). Sadashive *et al.* (2017) observed that 45.83 per cent of the respondents had a high level of economic motivation, whereas 32.50 per cent of them had a medium level of economic motivation, followed by 21.67 per cent of the respondents having a low level of economic motivation. Deepthi *et al.* (2018) studied the profile characteristics of agripreneurs in Andhra Pradesh and reported that two-fourths (54.58%) of the agripreneurs had a medium level of social participation, followed by low (30.42%) and high (15.00%) levels of social participation. Sharma and Hussain (2018)

found that the majority of the respondents (40.00%) belonged to the middle age group, followed by young age (36.0%) and old age (24.00%). Haneef and Ahmad (2021), in a study of Uttarakhand and Punjab State of India, discovered that the majority of respondents (65.83%) belonged to the middle age group of 29–40 years, were married (75.83%), and had a low level of experience (0–5 years) in the agri-enterprise.

Constraints of agripreneurs: Priyatharsni (2003) concluded that the major problems faced by the members were a lack of marketing channels, followed by the delaying of loans from banks, a lack of infrastructure facilities, and insufficient credit facilities. Shekhar (2009) revealed that the major problems expressed by chilli growers in marketing were price manipulation by commission agents (94.38%), high cost of critical inputs (89.38%), inadequate availability of critical inputs (88.75%), price fluctuations (81.25%), lack of cold storage facilities (76.25%) and lack of processing units, value addition centers (75.00%), lack of transport facilities (70.00%), lack of market information from the extension personnel (65.63%), lack of remunerative prices (60.63%), malpractices in weighing of produce (56.88%), markets were located far away from the place of production (56.88%), and improper facilities in the market (56.88%). Sujaivelu and Kanagasabapathi (2013) revealed that marketing constraints were expressed as the major constraint (83.50%), followed by economic constraints (83.91%). The other

constraints reported by the respondents were extension constraints (80.99%), physical constraints (75.00%), technological constraints (70.83%), and personal constraints (67.32%). Maratha (2015) revealed that fluctuation in the market price (87.50%), followed by lack of market information and high commission charges (77.50%), lack of processing facilities (67.50%), faulty system of weighing (57.50%), delayed cash payment (51.16%), high cost of transportation (45.00%), absence of storage facilities (43.33%), followed by distance from markets (30.00%) and lack of grading facilities (21.66%) were the major problems faced by farmers in marketing their produce. Tripathi and Agarwal (2015) conducted a study on rural development through agripreneurship in Uttar Pradesh, and they found that barriers faced by agripreneurs were lack of funds, lack of infrastructure, management problems, marketing problems, and competition. Mubeena (2017) reported that the major problems perceived by women entrepreneurs were marketing constraints and a lack of retail shops for selling (33.33%), followed by a lack of local general stores for selling (29.16%).

Agripreneurs and agripreneurship

Agripreneurship is defined as "generally, sustainable, community-oriented, directly-marketed agriculture. Sustainable agriculture denotes a holistic, system-oriented approach to farming that focuses on the interrelationships of social, economic, and environmental processes.

(Nagalakshmi and Sudhakar, 2013). Agripreneur is defined as an "entrepreneur whose main business is agriculture or agriculture-related." Agriculture + Entrepreneur = Agripreneur. An agricultural entrepreneur is a person who organizes, manages, and assumes the risk of an agro-enterprise. Entrepreneurs are self-employed and income-generating people. In India, 52 per cent of the total land is cultivable, compared to 11 per cent in the world. A large population of India is dependent on agriculture as a source of revenue, but Indian agriculture is low in productivity, with a large number of disguised unemployment. There is a great scope for entrepreneurship in agriculture, and this potential can be tapped only by effective management of different components by an individual with risk-bearing capacity and a quest for the latest knowledge in the agriculture sector to prove themselves as righteous agripreneurs. An agripreneur may start a new agribusiness, change a business direction, acquire a business, or be involved in creating innovations in value addition.

Types of agri-enterprises

According to Uplaonkar and Biradar (2015), different types of enterprises in agri-entrepreneurship exist, which are as follows:

- **Farm-level producers: here, the family** is treated as an enterprise for augmenting production by utilizing the high level of technology, possessions, and demand in the
- **Service providers:** There are varied categories of services indispensable in the village. These include input borrowing and distribution and the employment of equipment such as tractors, sprayers, seed drills, threshers, and harvesters 'dryers. It also consists of scientific services, for example, the setting up of irrigation facilities, weed curbs, plant security, yielding, threshing, conveyance, warehouse, etc., and related opportunities present in the livestock husbandry region for breeding, immunization, disease diagnostic and treatment services, along with the provision of cattle feed, mineral combinations, forage grains, etc.
- **Input producers:** There are many booming enterprises that require significant contribution, and such inputs can be produced by the home entrepreneurs at the village level: biopesticides, soil amendments, biofertilizers, vermicompost, plants of diverse species of vegetables, fruits, ornamentals, root media for raising plants in pots, production of cattle feed concentrate, agricultural tools, irrigation accessories, mineral mixtures, and complete. Additionally, opportunities are available in fisheries, sericulture, and poultry as well.
- **Processing and marketing of farm produce:** Well-organized post-production management requires more investment as well as highly qualified and skilled personnel. Societies, cooperatives, and service joint stock companies are examples of people's organizations that can control such businesses. The fruit growers' cooperative, dairy

cooperative, and sugar cooperative are the most successful examples.

Conclusion

The process of spotting business opportunities, gathering the necessary means to explore them, and investing those resources to take advantage of the prospects for long-term profits is known as entrepreneurship. It entails generating income by combining resources in novel ways to launch and run a business. Being an entrepreneur is having the ability to create ideas and make them successful. Among the elements needed to build a sustainable business are creativity, adaptability to change and risk, and resource management. The ability to exploit any industry or business, create jobs, and be competitive are all products of the entrepreneurial spirit. Entrepreneurs are innovators who use the process of shattering the status quo of existing products and services to set up new products and services. An entrepreneur is a person with a high need for achievement who is energetic and a moderate risk-taker.

The role of entrepreneurship in agriculture development is most important, as it catalyzes innovation, sustainability, and economic growth within the sector. Entrepreneurial ventures in agriculture bring out new ideas, technologies, and business models that not only enhance productivity but also contribute to the overall well-being of rural communities.

Agricultural entrepreneurs are at the forefront of adopting and implementing

advanced technologies that revolutionize the way farming is conducted.

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