

A Perceptual Study of Young Farming Community towards Agripreneurship in District Solan, Himachal Pradesh

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ABSTRACT: The proposed study has been taken mainly based on a perceptual study of young farming community towards agripreneurship in district Solan (H.P.). This study was initiated with the larger focused on existence scenario of agripreneurship in Himachal Pradesh. The study was conducted in 2021-2022. This research identified the youth interest to become agripreneurs. In this research, the attitude and perception of the rural youth towards agripreneurship has been studied which include; the socio-demographic characteristics of rural youth in the region, level of attitude of the rural youth towards agripreneurship. The sample size of present study has been 120 respondents. The study concluded that Government must initiate efforts to improve the existing facilities and infrastructure and provide proper platform to ease training programs during graduation for establishing Agri-startups and also promoting strategies for agripreneurship largely with the help of using mass media and also social media at large, as it could persuade and make aware the large group of beneficiaries. The study's findings show that young people had favourable economic opinions on the agricultural industry. These attitudes, along with the availability of secondary school agricultural education and a sizable quantity of financial support, had a beneficial impact on their intents to engage in agripreneurship. As a result, a study was done to determine how young farmers see entrepreneurship in relation to socioeconomic characteristics, to identify the major obstacles to agripreneurial growth among young farmers, and to provide policy measures.

Keywords: Agripreneurship, Agripreneurs, Agri-startups, Farming Community, group of beneficiaries.

INTRODUCTION

Agripreneur an individual, who starts organizes and manages a business operations focusing on the agricultural sector. Agripreneurship can already be engrained in Dairy, Pig rearing, arbitrating, floriculture, Fisheries, Sheep rearing, vegetable cultivation, and also farm forestry. While India has appeared as one of the top three countries globally in term of the number of business founded, the start-up ecosystem for Agri-entrepreneurship or Agripreneurship does not present a happy picture, in 2016, a sum of \$3.23b was invested in agriculture sector worldwide, out of which 53 Indian Agri-tech start-ups managed to raise \$313m. The circulated nature of investment in agripreneurship made in India should invite more debate and common focus (Mehra, 2019). The challenge's most important elements primarily concern issues with underemployment, unemployment, and job satisfaction. One of the most difficult issues that developed and developing countries alike must deal with is the

growing proportion of young people who are unemployed. The future prosperity and development of nations will be negatively impacted if young people are not integrated into the current job market and opportunities. As a result, the issue of youth employment and unemployment is a top priority for global development. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) made this issue their main point of emphasis (Narendran, 2017). For the first time, the United Nations General Assembly defined youth as people between the ages of 15 and 24 during the International Youth Year in 1985, without prejudice to other definitions by member states. The World Development Report of 2007 further expanded the range to include all people between 12 and 24 years. In the same vein, FAO for its worldwide rural youth development programs defined youth as individuals that fall within the age bracket of 10 to 25 years. In essence, youthfulness is a transition period between childhood and adulthood (Arafat, 2020). Active youth engagement

in agriculture (or more broadly the agrifood space), can contribute positively to addressing not only the issues of producing enough nutritious foods and providing decent jobs for young people, but can also have other positive outcomes: feeding and fuelling agro-processing industries, boosting the non-farm economy, and increasing national revenue generation via taxation and foreign exchange earnings among others. For instance in many African countries, graduate unemployment has become major development challenge and in Ghana, data shows that unemployment among young people in urban areas, who are relatively more educated, is higher (6.5%) than those in rural areas (4.3%) see “Almost half of the 10 million graduates” (Addo, 2018). The study recommends that programmers that aim to encourage agripreneurship target both the socio-economic and cognitive limitations of youths (Magagula and Tsvakirai 2020). Large-scale migration of rural youth from agriculture to urban regions has caused fear among the agricultural policymakers. Thus, checking the Agripreneurship refers to entrepreneurship in agriculture. Recent studies show that agricultural entrepreneurship isn't simply hyped the fantasy that encompasses a profound impact on business growth and survival. Migration and retentive youth in the agricultural sector is presently a giant challenge. Entrepreneurship for rural youth is that the vital policy calls of the many international agencies (Soundria and Prasad 2019). Agripreneurs are also impacted by external, systematic factors like societal and economic constraints, laws, and regulations. The success of agripreneurship in this country would be largely dependent on its youth. The country's sizable youth population is currently the country's greatest hope. The youth have significantly altered society. According to the national youth policy, youth are those between the ages of 15 and 29. This age group makes up 27.5% of India's population (Thomas and Zacharias 2020). Youth are frequently jobless or underemployed because they have limited access to resources, markets, finance, education, and skill development (Baishya *et al.*, 2021). Hence a study was conducted to know the perception level of young farming community towards Agripreneurship in reference to Socio-economic variables, and to know the key the key problems and challenges in Agripreneurial growth among young farming community and suggest the policy interventions.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The material used and the methods adopted in the research study are detailed under:

A. Experimental site

The research was carried out from the district Solan of the Himachal Pradesh. Solan district is one of the twelve districts of Himachal Pradesh.

The latitude of Solan 30.904486 and the longitude is 77.096733. Agriculture is the prominent feature of Solan district. It is the main occupation of the inhabitants of Solan district and about 60 percent of people are dependent on their livelihood on agriculture and its allied activities. Maize, wheat, and barley are the main crops and onion, pulses and peas are the main cash crops grown in many parts of the district. The climatic and geographical conditions of the Solan district provide the good scope for the development of the horticulture. The sample size of 120 respondents was taken for the study.

One district from the State was selected purposely after that two blocks from district were selected randomly and took three panchayats from each block further more selected two villages from each panchayat and then a complete list of young farmers in the selected villages was prepared and out of which, 30 respondents were selected randomly. At the end, sample sizes of 120 young farmers were constituted. Decisions on the survey method are focused on a variety of variables, such as sampling, population, and query content and collection time.

For the study both primary and secondary data was used and the study was conducted at Solan District of Himachal Pradesh regarding the perception of young farmers towards agripreneurship and the awareness related to it. For data collection structured questionnaire was used which included both demographic questions as well as questions related to their perception and intentions. Questionnaire is related to their attitude, perception and intentions towards agripreneurship. Solan district was visited to collect information regarding the specific objectives that is being covered in the study.

B. Analytical tools

Mathematical methods were utilized to meet the objectives in order to make the analysis of samples.

- Total Weighted Score method
- Standard deviation
- Coefficient of Variation

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The collected data from “A Perceptual study of Young Farming Community Towards Agripreneurship in District Solan, Himachal Pradesh” from 120 respondents have been presented in following tables. The findings of study are discussed as under:

Attitude and intentions and perception towards Agripreneurship program schemes

A. Attitude and intentions and perception towards State Agripreneurship program schemes

In reference to evaluate the attitude towards Agripreneurship, it was analyzed in the following illustration (Table 1 and Fig. 1). It indicated that largely

the sample respondents were affect by corporate career (Mean = 3.41 and SD = 1.19) closely followed by agripreneurial career (Mean = 3.09 and SD = 0.97) and academic career (Mean = 2.10 and SD = 1.07), civil servant (Mean = 2.14 and SD = 1.24) and others career options (Mean = 3.15 and SD = 1.07). The above

analysis shows that the respondents were satisfied from corporate career and got 1st rank, whereas others got 2nd rank, followed by agripreneurial got 3rd rank, where as civil servant got 4th rank, it was also discovered that academic got 5th rank. It was disclosed that corporative career got the highest rank and academic got least rank.

Table 1: Attitudes towards Agripreneurship.

Sr. No.	Statements	Number of respondents					TWS	Rank	Mean	SD	CV
		Not at all (1)	No (2)	May Be (3)	Yes (4)	Definitely (5)					
1.	Corporative	12	20	9	64	15	410 [#]	I	3.41	1.19	34
2.	Agripreneurial	6	30	35	45	4	371	III	3.09	0.97	31
3.	Academic	42	43	18	15	2	252	V	2.10	1.07	50
4.	Civil Servant	46	41	12	12	9	257	IV	2.14	1.24	57
5.	Others	5	36	24	45	10	379	II	3.15	1.07	33

[#]: 12*1+20*2+9*3+64*4+15*5=410; SD-Standard Deviation; CV- Coefficient of Variance; TWS-Total weighted Score [Field Survey: 2022]

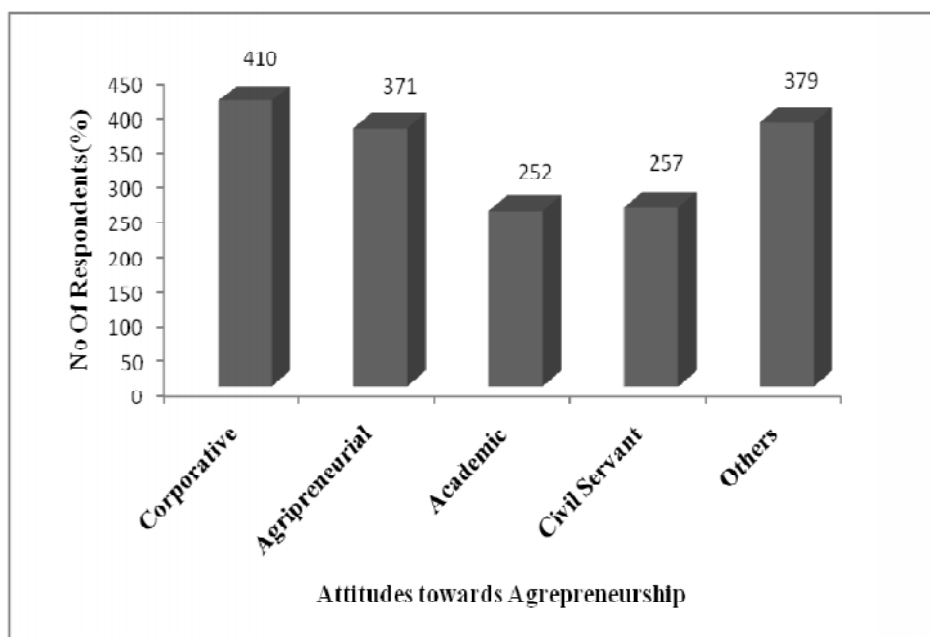


Fig. 1. Attitudes towards Agripreneurship.

Table 2: Agripreneurship Intentions.

Sr. No.	Statements	Number of respondents					TWS	Rank	Mean	SD	CV
		Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Can't Say (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)					
1.	Strong Desire	8	11	46	47	8	396 [#]	II	3.30	0.96	29
2.	Job giver not job seeker	8	36	18	46	12	378	III	3.15	1.15	36
3.	Choosing agripreneurs as a career	10	33	22	45	10	372	IV	3.10	1.14	36
4.	Effort to start my own business	4	15	27	49	25	436	I	3.63	1.05	28

[#]: 8*1+11*2+46*3+47*4+8*5 = 396; SD-Standard Deviation; CV- Coefficient of Variance; TWS-Total weighted Score [Field Survey: 2022]

As stated in the Table 1 agripreneurial has lowest coefficient of variance as its offers wider job opportunities and career development while the civil servant career has highest coefficient of variance *i.e.* 57 which indicates people has inclined up to civil servant as a last career choice, whereas the CV of corporative is 34, followed by CV of academic and others were 50 and 33. Table 2 and Fig. 2 illustrate the Agripreneurship intentions, it has been observed that mostly farmers were preferred efforts to start their own business (Mean = 3.63 and SD = 1.05), followed by I have strong desire to have a Agripreneur with mean value of 3.30 and SD is 0.96, I love to be job seeker not job giver (Mean = 3.15 and SD = 3.15) and among several opportunities, I would rather choose to have agripreneur with mean value 3.10 and SD is 1.14. The above analysis shows that the respondents put every efforts to start their own business in Agripreneurship intentions and got 1st rank, whereas respondents had strong desire to have a agripreneur got 2nd rank, followed by “I love to be job seeker not job giver” got 3rd rank and it was also discovered that among several opportunities, I would rather choose to have agripreneur got 4th rank. The statement “I put every effort to start their own business” got higher rank and the statement “Among several opportunities, I would rather choose to have agripreneur” got lowest rank. In Table 2 indicates that the lowest coefficient of variance of efforts to start their own business in agriculture has 28 while the CV of job seeker not job giver and choosing agripreneurial

as a career has same values 36.

While analyzing the purpose or aim of respondents towards Agri-startup indicating the analytical substructure with the help of total score method followed by ranking and also using mean standard deviation and coefficient of variance. It was noted that largely respondents have tendency for Agri-startup on account of their liking to put every effort to start their own business. Table 3 and Fig. 3 illustrate the perception towards Agripreneurship, it has been observed that mostly farmers were Agree with Schemes and programmes favorable to agripreneurs with mean value of 3.66 and SD = 1.09, Schemes and programmes are available for agripreneurship with (Mean = 3.68 and SD = 0.89), followed by having benefit from available schemes and programmes is easy task (Mean = 2.28 and SD = 1.47) and Obtaining information about schemes and programs is difficult with mean value 2.26 and SD = 0.97. The above analysis shows that the respondents were agreed with the schemes and programmes are beneficial for agripreneurship and got 1st rank with the help of total score and suggest that beneficial of schemes and programmes is important for Agri start-up and their CV has 29, whereas respondents were disagree with having advantage from available schemes and programmes is easy task and got lowest rank among them and their coefficient of variance has 64 which shows that the responds are not agreed with this statement and they did not got any advantage from favourable schemes and programmes.

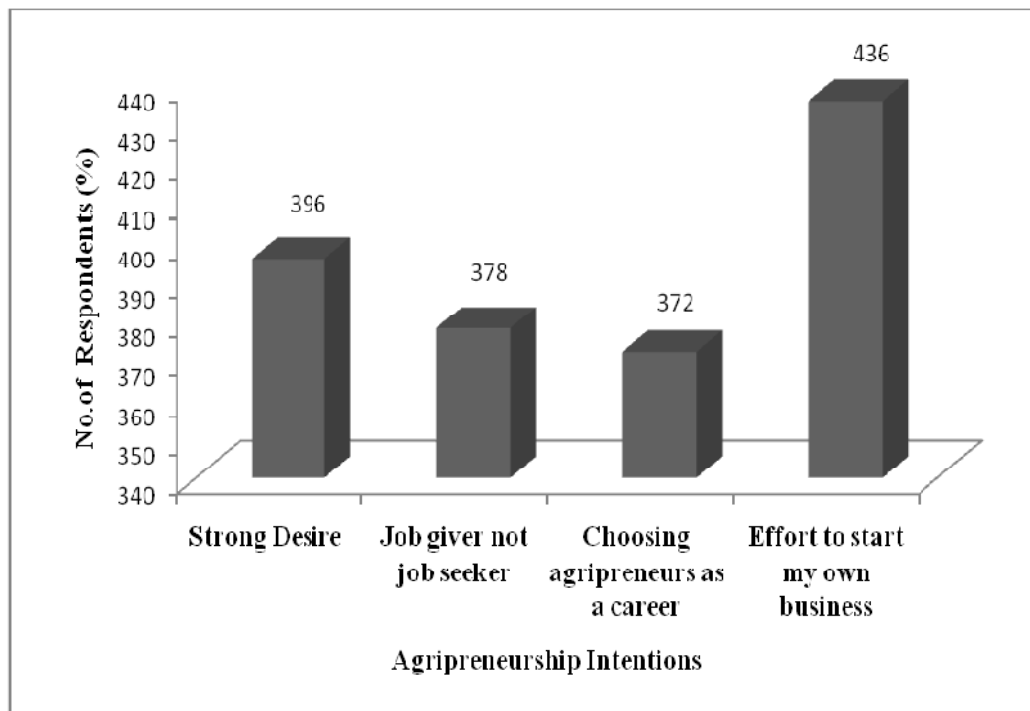


Fig. 2. Agripreneurship Intentions.

Table 3: Perception towards Agripreneurship.

Sr. No.	Statements	Number of respondents					TWS	Rank	Mean	SD	CV
		Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Can't Say (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)					
1.	Availability	0	11	40	45	24	442 [#]	II	3.68	0.89	24
2.	Beneficial	7	8	25	55	25	443	I	3.66	1.09	29
3.	Information	24	58	23	12	3	272	III	2.26	0.97	42
4.	Advantage	55	20	19	8	18	274	IV	2.28	1.47	64

[#]: $0*1+11*2+40*3+45*4+24*5=442$; SD-Standard Deviation; CV- Coefficient of Variance; TWS-Total weighted Score [Field Survey: 2022]

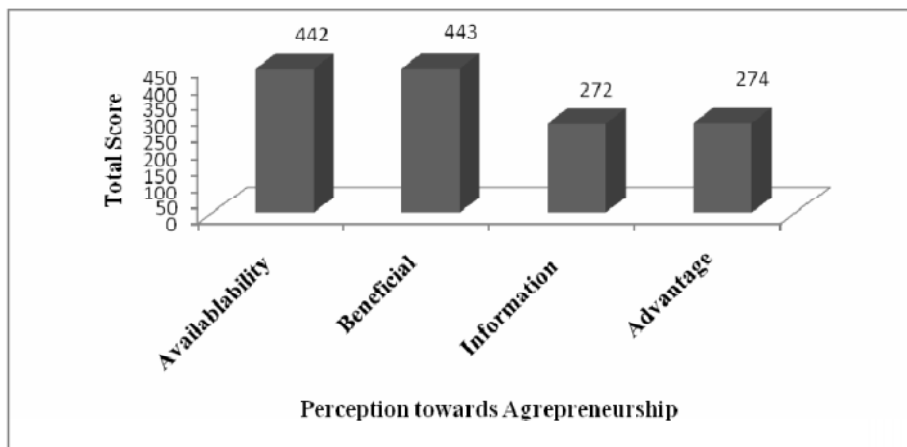


Fig. 3. Perception towards Agripreneurship.

Table 4: Constraints and Challenges.

Sr. No.	Statements	Number of respondents					TWS	Rank	Mean	SD	CV
		Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Can't Say (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)					
1.	Financial Source	4	32	14	41	29	419 [#]	I	3.49	1.21	34
2.	Family Support	14	50	26	24	6	318	VIII	2.65	1.08	40
3.	Information	7	49	7	39	18	372	III	3.10	1.25	40
4.	Failure	5	26	23	51	15	405	II	3.37	1.08	32
5.	Knowledge	10	40	22	31	17	365	IV	3.04	1.22	40
6.	Ease of not doing Business	8	42	25	36	9	356	VII	2.96	1.10	36
7.	Laws	3	42	33	37	5	359	V	2.99	0.96	32
8.	Business Plan	6	31	47	32	4	357	VI	2.97	0.93	31

[#]: $4*1+32*2+14*3+41*4+29*5=419$; SD-Standard Deviation; CV- Coefficient of Variance; TWS-Total weighted Score [Field Survey: 2022]

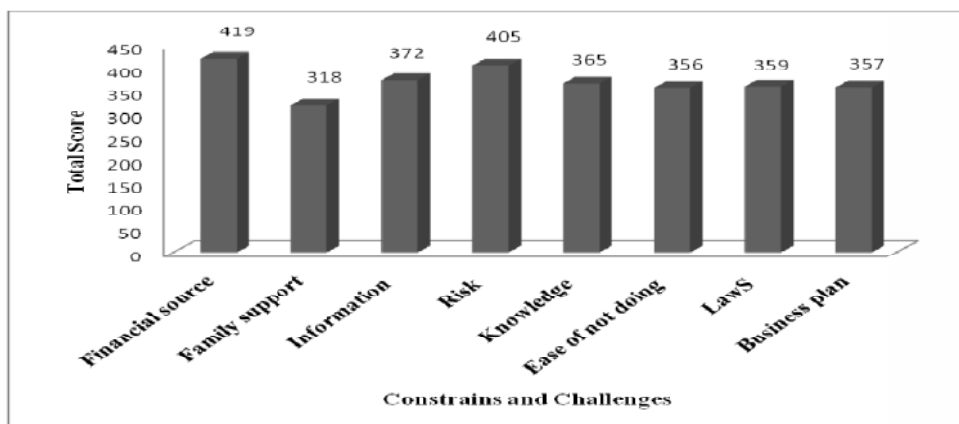


Fig. 4. Constraints and Challenges.

Table 4 and Fig. 4 various constraints and challenges faced by Agri-graduates, with the help of Total Weighted Score (TWS) analysis results that lack of financial sources is major constraints and creating initial investment is major challenge that come in the path of respondents to establish Agri-startup their mean and SD were 3.49, 1.21 and also the coefficient of variance is 34. With total weighted score 405 risk of non-success about Agri-startup stood second (Mean = 3.37 and SD = 1.08), while lack of family support (Mean = 2.65, SD = 1.08) and the CV has 40, followed by lack of information mean were 3.10 and SD were 1.25 their CV has same as the lack of family support, whereas lack of knowledge got 4th rank and the mean = 3.04, SD = 1.22. The mean and SD of ease of not doing business in own country has 2.96 and 1.10. Laws in starting business (Mean = 2.99 and SD = 0.96, CCV = 32), whereas they did not have a proper business plan for starting their business (Mean = 2.97, SD = 0.93, CV = 31). Table 4 and Fig. 4 shows respondents were agreed with they had lack of details to start their own business and they have not proper startup plan but initially investment stops them to start an Agri-startup. Respondents were also agreed with lack of knowledge about agriculture and there is need to build up our financial system by which Agri-graduates get finance in easily.

CONCLUSIONS

The findings of the study on the basis of respondent's intention observed that there are fewer intentions to start their own business in agriculture and there are more farmers agreed from the job giver, not job seeker. Moreover, choosing agripreneur as a career has less intention, furthermore largely respondents put every efforts to start their own business in agripreneurship. While analyzing the intentions of respondents towards Agri-startup it was noted that largely respondents have inclination for Agri-startup on account of their liking to put every effort to start their own business. As far as the perception towards agripreneurship it was observed that largely respondents were agreed with schemes and programmes are beneficial for them, furthermore the availability of schemes and programmed also useful, moreover there should be proper platforms where they get information regarding the schemes and programmes and this is easy way to conduct information. Having advantage from the available schemes and programmes is not easy task for the farmers as there is no any proper guidance for them regarding the schemes and programmed related agripreneurship. While measuring the various constraints and challenges faced by young farmers, the analytical results clearly states that lack of financial sources is major constraints and creating initial investment is major challenge that come in the path of respondents to establish agri-startup,

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furthermore risk of failure as they have lack of funding, retaining and inadequate management system, a faulty infrastructure and unsuccessful marketing initiatives, there should be need of family support, they have lack of information regarding their business as there should be need of training programmes and give them proper knowledge. It was clearly indicated that they had lack of information to start their own business and they have not proper startup plan but initially investment stops them to start an Agri-startup. Respondents also agreed with lack of knowledge about agriculture and there is need to strengthen financial system through which young farmers would get finance in easily.

While measuring the numerous facilities and infrastructure improvisation, analytical results clearly indicated that there should be training program for agripreneurship during graduation and there should be constant efforts to be initiated for increasing awareness program for agripreneurs. Moreover, there should be the establishment of proper centre for guidance related to Agri-startups while subsidy schemes for raw material and inputs may also be rationalized for its maximum reach. Furthermore, Government must initiate efforts to improve the existing facilities and infrastructure and provide proper platform for providing ease to provide training programs during graduation for establishing startups.

FUTURE SCOPE

The study investigated the levels of awareness and practices adopted in organic farming. The study revealed farmers have lack of trust regarding organic farming practices and lack of organic marketing networks. There is a need to organize training, provide technical knowledge of organic farming, practices of pursuing organic farming on field and need of extension workers which will provide knowledge on certification programs for organic farming. Based on the problems identified in the study on organic farming and suggestion offered by respondents, strategies were developed for popularizing and promoting organic farming in Una Himachal Pradesh and were consist of eight (8) steps starting from Establishment of State Organic Mission Cell, Government policy on organic farming, Identification of service providers, Identification of organic technologies in different farming area and Research backup, Awareness creation, Training and Capacity building, Promotional Strategy and Market Development.

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Conflict of Interest. None.

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