

International Journal of Agriculture Extension and Social Development

Volume 7; Issue 4; April 2024; Page No. 134-137

Received: 20-02-2024
Accepted: 24-03-2024

Indexed Journal
Peer Reviewed Journal

Barriers in agripreneurship experienced by the agricultural students in SAU's of Gujarat

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.33545/26180723.2024.v7.i4b.510>

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Abstract

Agripreneurship is combination of agriculture and business. Though the blooming opportunities available in agripreneurship sector, students are reluctant to start their venture due to some barriers. So, the study has undertaken to study the barriers in agripreneurship and obtain their suggestions. The present study was conducted among the agriculture students in four state agricultural universities in Gujarat. An *Ex-post-facto* research design was used. The total respondent size was 300. Out of the foremost barriers experienced by students under each category, majority were reported agripreneurship is considered as low socio- economic status in our society as the major socio-personal barrier, less number of visits/tours to various enterprises for exposure as the main management and technical barrier, complicated and difficult loan lending procedure as financial and infrastructural barrier and lack of market intelligence regarding price forecasting. The major suggestions offered by the students to overcome the barriers in each category such as, to government agencies and educational institutions need to support agripreneurship as a career, exposure visits/ tours should be organized to different agri-enterprises, creating awareness regarding different schemes which are promoting entrepreneurship and product certification procedures should be simplified.

Keywords: Agripreneurship, barriers, suggestions, Gujarat

Introduction

Entrepreneurship is a state of mind that allows taking calculated risks with confidence in order to attain a certain economic or industrial goal. It is a way of analysing and addressing a need while also adding value to the stakeholders (Sharma *et al.*, 2019) ^[3]. Agripreneurship is the combining the terms "entrepreneurship" and "agriculture, which refers to the application of entrepreneurial concepts and creative problem-solving to agricultural endeavors. It entails converting conventional farming methods into innovative, market-driven businesses that boost rural economic growth in addition to agricultural production (Arumugam and Manida, 2023) ^[1]. Barriers can refer to various obstacles, hindrances, or obstacles that impede progress. The suggestion refers as one's opinion which can be used as a solution or strategy to overcome the barriers. The degree in agriculture is one of the basic and first step in agriculture education which provides knowledge on application of science and technology in agriculture. Application of technology in the field of agriculture and its allied sectors is huge. Hence the scope for the students to become an agripreneur is vast and attractive. Government policies and schemes are also very well supporting and encouraging for starting an enterprise. Irrespective of all these supportive measures, the students are not coming

forwarding to start an agribusiness. In order to understand the reasons behind their hesitance, this study has been formulated with following specific objectives

1. To study the barriers experienced by the students in agripreneurship.
2. To obtain the suggestions for developing extension strategies.

Research Methodology

The present study was conducted among the agriculture students in four state agricultural universities in Gujarat such as Navsari Agricultural University, Anand Agricultural University, Junagadh Agricultural University and Sardarkrushinagar Dantiwada Agricultural University. The faculty of agriculture was selected purposively. An *Ex-post-facto* research design was used in the present study. According to Kerlinger (1976) ^[2], *ex-post-facto* research design is worthy to be applied when the independent variables have already acted upon. The respondents were the agriculture students who are studying M.Sc. (Agri.), Ph. D. (Agri.) and final year B.Sc. (Agri.). from the main campus of each SAU's. By random sampling technique, 25 students from each degree from each university was selected. So, total respondent size is 300. The data was collected by personal interview method using interview schedule. The

barriers were classified in four categories viz; socio-personal, management and technical, financial and infrastructural and marketing barriers. The responses are in three-point continuum namely more severe, severe and less severe. Then, responses were summed up, converted in weighted mean score and ranked. The suggestions are obtained from the students. The responses were summed up,

converted in to frequency, percentage and ranked.

Results and Discussion

The barriers experienced by the agricultural students in agripreneurship were presented in the Table 1 and suggestions in the Table 2.

Table 1: Barriers experienced by the students in agripreneurship

(n=300)						
Sr. No	Barriers	Responses			WMS	Rank
		More severe (3)	Severe (2)	Less severe (1)		
A	Socio-personal barriers					
1.	Agripreneurship is considered as low socio- economic status in our society	122	130	48	2.25	I
2.	Family is pressurizing for job not for agripreneurship	129	90	81	2.16	II
3.	Relatives not considering agripreneurship as carrier option	96	113	91	2.02	III
4.	Socio-cultural rigidity do not support to establish agri-enterprise	59	159	82	1.93	IV
5.	Lack of access to sufficient raw material	66	143	91	1.92	V
B	Management and technical barriers					
1.	Less number of visits / tours to various enterprises for exposure	162	111	27	2.45	I
2.	Non availability of specialized technical support centers for agri enterprise	160	106	34	2.42	II
3.	Lack of knowledge about different aspects of agripreneurship	94	182	24	2.23	III
4.	Non availability of cold storage facilities for perishable inputs and products of agri-enterprises	103	157	40	2.21	IV
5.	Complicated legal formalities for transportation of perishable agricultural products	100	130	70	2.10	V
C	Financial and infrastructure barriers					
1.	Complicated and difficult loan lending procedure	179	97	24	2.52	I
2.	Non-availability of own money to start agri-enterprise	155	118	27	2.43	II
3.	Involves risk and uncertainty	134	149	14	2.41	III
4.	High cost of infrastructure facilities	149	119	32	2.39	IV
5.	High cost of raw materials	142	123	35	2.36	V
6.	High cost of labour	146	111	43	2.34	VI
7.	Less number of financial institutions for agri- enterprise	99	160	41	2.19	VII
8.	High cost of land for establishing agri-enterprise	105	140	55	2.17	VIII
D	Marketing barriers					
1.	Lack of market intelligence regarding price forecasting	194	92	14	2.60	I
2.	Product certification is time consuming process	154	114	32	2.41	II
3.	Difficulties in marketing seasonal agricultural products	138	138	24	2.38	III
4.	Fluctuation in demand of product	142	123	35	2.36	IV
5.	High competition	124	153	23	2.34	V
6.	Rigid rules and regulations for marketing the agricultural products	138	123	39	2.33	VI
7.	Fluctuation in supply of raw material	138	123	39	2.33	VI
8.	High cost of product promotion	111	162	27	2.28	VIII

Considering the Socio-personal barriers, agripreneurship is considered as low socio- economic status in our society was ranked first with weighted mean score of 2.25, followed by family is pressurizing for job not for agripreneurship (WMS 2.16), relatives not considering agripreneurship as carrier option (WMS 2.02), socio-cultural rigidity do not support to establish agri-enterprise (WMS 1.93) and lack of access to sufficient raw material (WMS 1.92).

Regarding management and technical barriers, less number of visits/tours to various enterprises for exposure was ranked first with the weighted mean score of 2.45, followed by non-availability of specialized technical support centers for agri- enterprise (WMS 2.42), lack of knowledge about different aspects of agripreneurship (WMS 2.23), non-availability of cold storage facilities for perishable inputs and products of agri-enterprises (WMS 2.21) and complicated legal formalities for transportation of perishable agricultural products (WMS 2.10).

In financial and infrastructural barriers, complicated and difficult loan lending procedure (WMS 2.52) was ranked first, followed by non-availability of own money to start agri-enterprise (WMS 2.43), involves risk and uncertainty (WMS 2.41), high cost of infrastructure facilities (WMS 2.39), high cost of raw materials (WMS 2.36), high cost of labour (WMS 2.34), less number of financial institutions for agri-enterprise (MS 2.19) and high cost of land for establishing agri-enterprise (WMS 2.17).

For marketing barriers, lack of market intelligence regarding price forecasting was ranked with weighted mean score of 2.60, followed by product certification is time consuming process (WMS 2.41), difficulties in marketing seasonal agricultural products (WMS 2.38), fluctuation in demand of product (WMS 2.36), high competition (WMS 2.34), rigid rules and regulations for marketing the agricultural products (WMS 2.33), fluctuation in supply of raw material (WMS 2.33) and high cost of product promotion (WMS 2.28).

Table 2: Suggestions for developing extension strategies

				(n=300)		
S	Suggestions	f	%	Rank		
A	Suggestions for Socio-personal barriers					
	Government agencies and educational institutions need to support agripreneurship as a career	167	55.67	I		
	Raising awareness about opportunities in agripreneurship	138	46.00	III		
	Family support and encouragement is much needed	141	47.00	II		
	Promote small scale community-based production systems	102	34.00	V		
	Entrepreneurship promoting centres can be established which would be helpful for assisting students	125	41.66	IV		
B	Suggestions for Management and technical barriers					
	Establishment of specialized agribusiness technical support centers	138	46.00	III		
	Exposure visits/ tours should be organized to different agri-enterprises	173	57.66	I		
	Organising different training programmes to update the knowledge of agripreneurship	169	56.34	II		
	Explore innovative solutions for efficient cold chain management to ensure the quality of perishable products	65	21.66	V		
	Simplify legal procedure for transportation of perishable agricultural products	82	27.34	IV		
C	Suggestions for Financial and infrastructure barriers					
	Formalities in sanctioning loan should be less and quick	171	57.00	II		
	Create awareness regarding different schemes which are promoting entrepreneurship	186	62.00	I		
	Motivating students to start agribusiness through interactive sessions with agripreneurs	134	44.67	III		
	Government should provide infrastructure facilities like - land, electricity, water, warehouse on subsidized rate	112	37.34	IV		
	Raw materials should be provided at subsidized rate	98	32.67	V		
	Creation of separate finance cell at financial institutes for agripreneurship	82	27.33	VI		
D	Suggestions for Marketing barriers					
	Development of unique products and product diversification to tackle high competition in the market	128	42.67	IV		
	Product certification procedures should be simplified	142	47.33	I		
	Value added products can be concentrated more to increase the shelf life of seasonal agri-products	92	30.66	V		
	Facilitate networking events or mentorship programs that connect students with professionals in the industry	131	43.67	III		
	Provide market intelligence for price forecasting	138	46.00	II		

Regarding the suggestions offered by the students in context to their social-personal barriers were, majority (55.67%) of the respondents were given first rank to government agencies and educational institutions need to support agripreneurship as a career, followed by family support and encouragement is much needed (47.00%) ranked second, raising awareness about opportunities in agripreneurship (46.00%) ranked third, entrepreneurship promoting centers can be established which would be helpful for assisting students (41.66%) ranked fourth and promote small scale community-based production systems (34.00%) ranked fifth.

Regarding the suggestions provided for management and technical barriers, the majority (57.66%) of the students were given first rank to exposure visits/ tours should be organized to different agri-enterprises, followed by organising different training programmes to update the knowledge of agripreneurship (56.34%) ranked second, establishment of specialized agribusiness technical support centers (46.00%) ranked third, simplify legal procedure for transportation of perishable agricultural products (27.34%) ranked fourth and explore innovative solutions for efficient cold chain management to ensure the quality of perishable products (21.66%) ranked fifth.

Moreover, according to the suggestions offered about financial and infrastructure barriers, the majority (62.00%) of students were given first rank to create awareness regarding different schemes which are promoting entrepreneurship, followed by formalities in sanctioning loan should be less and quick (57.00%) ranked second, motivating students to start agribusiness through interactive sessions with agripreneurs (44.67%) ranked third, government should provide infrastructure facilities like - land, electricity, water, warehouse on subsidized rate

(37.34%) ranked fourth, raw materials should be provided at subsidized rate (32.67%) ranked fifth and creation of separate finance cell at financial institutes for agripreneurship (27.33%) ranked sixth.

In regard to suggestion offered for marketing barriers, majority (47.33%) of the students were given first rank to product certification procedures should be simplified, followed by provide market intelligence for price forecasting (46.00%) ranked second, facilitate networking events or mentorship programs that connect students with professionals in the industry (43.67%) ranked third, development of unique products and product diversification to tackle high competition in the market (42.67%) ranked fourth and value added products can be concentrated more to increase the shelf life of seasonal agri-products (30.66%) ranked fifth.

Conclusion

Based on the suggestions, the extension strategies formulated are, Agribusiness incubation forum can be established in state agricultural universities for technology commercialization, market and financial linkages, other business services, capacity building programs and outreach activities which might be helpful for encouraging the students to start agriculture-based startups. In social-personal aspects, perceptions associating agripreneurship with a lower socio-economic status might be overcome by creating awareness about agripreneurship through education and skill development and training. To accept agripreneurship as career, the essential qualities of entrepreneur such as risk taking, self confidence, problem solving, critical thinking could be encouraged among the students. In management and technical aspects, regarding exposure visit, it could be not only visiting the big

enterprises, it might be in the form of making the students to visit the normal vendor shops related to agriculture and observe the practical aspects of business, to identify the need of the customers and marketing strategy can be learned through the practical classes. As per quote “To be successful, you don't have to do extraordinary things. Just do ordinary things extraordinarily well”. So, make the students to identify the opportunities even in small things and do SWOT analysis of it. For financial aspects, awareness regarding making project proposal in a clearcut way which make them to get easier loan access and awareness about government schemes which are promoting entrepreneurship and financial institutions such as lead bank and NABARD *etc*, might be helpful for the students to know the opportunities in getting loan. For marketing aspects, encouraging the students to use of agriculture-based ICT apps and website for access of market information. Make the students to aware about the demand and supply of raw materials, multiple sources of raw material procurement, market dynamics, logistic support for starting the business. To sustain in the competition, the innovative products or technology development and advertising strategies for the products could be given through trainings.

Acknowledgement

I would like to express my gratitude and heartfelt to Indian Council of Social Science Research, for funding the research work.

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