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Constraints associated with Youth Agripreneurship in rural Odisha

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Abstract

Rural youth which constitutes 41 per cent of total population in India, forms a major target group for policy makers for agricultural development perspective in rural areas. Agripreneurship is being promoted as a strategy to improve the employment scenario among youth. This paper investigates the constraints associated with youth agripreneurship in Odisha. The study was conducted in five agro-climatic zones of Odisha state. The purposive random sampling method was followed for the selection of respondents which includes 250 farm youths from five districts. The data was collected with the help of self-structured interview schedule and focus group discussions. Then the constraint analysis was carried out by using Garrett's ranking method. The findings of this study revealed that the farm youths face severe constraints which acts as barrier in their success of agri-enterprise. This study addresses the hurdles for farm youth who are potent force and their dissociation from farming will deprive the sector from next generation successor. These major constraints need to be rectified and a larger enabling environment in the sector is needed, to support young farmers who cannot leave the agriculture sector and rather attract more youth.

Keywords: Farm youth, agripreneurship, constraints, garret ranking

Introduction

Youth are the most potent force in the population of country. Youth being enthusiastic, vibrant, innovative and dynamic in nature is the most important section of the population. They show strong passion, motivation and will power which also make them the most valuable human resource for fostering economic, cultural and political development of a nation. A country's ability and potential for growth is determined by the size of its youth population. Youth is often understood to be the period of transition from childhood to adulthood, encompassing processes of sexual maturation and growing social and economic autonomy from parents and careers (Bennell, 2007) [4]. Conventionally, period from adolescence to middle age is termed as youth. In India, National Youth Policy (2014) defined 'youth' as persons in the age-group of 15-29 years. But specifically in case of agriculture, Prasad (2002) defined farm youth as a person in the age group of 18 to 30 years living in the village and engaged in farming. There is continuous decline in number of youth engaged in or who aspire to pursue agriculturally-related professions or careers. The demographic stability of farm sector is an important issue for sustainable engagement of human resources. In developed countries, such as the United States in 2012, the average age of a farmer was about 58.3 years (Census of Agriculture, 2014) and in case of Japan it is 70 years (Rigg, Salamanca, and Thompson, 2016) [12], compared to 50.1 years for an average farmer in a developing country like India (Down To Earth, 2016). This is worrying because the next generation of the current farmers is quitting the profession. It means, In India we are approaching a situation where one of the biggest consumers of food will be left with few farmers. This has several implications for the future of Indian agriculture and India's food security. According to Leavy and Hossain (2014) youth withdrawal from farming is emerging as a reasonably widespread norm. Young farmers play an important role in ensuring food security and if they are encouraged to involve in farming, challenges they face are need to be addressed. Over the past few years, rural youth have been shying away from agriculture and globally there is increasing interest in finding ways for engaging youth in agriculture (Anon, 2012; Paisley, 2013) [11].

The current state of global economic meltdown, economic crises or recession around the world has created the need to develop proper agripreneurial skills or training among youth for proper b opportunity utilisation in order to turn economy capacity towards more productive youth. Many youths of nowadays possess business ideas but only few have the capacity and ability to

turn it into viable businesses (Shane, Locke, & Collins, 2012)^[13]. So it is essential to understand the skill sets, capacities, abilities, aspirations and constraints of farm youth and the barriers which impede their growth with regard to agripreneurship.

Materials and Methods

Study area

The state of Odisha consisted of ten agro-climatic zones based on soil, weather and other relevant characteristics. To have a proper representative sample from different zones of Odisha, 5 districts were purposively selected from 5 different agro-climatic zones. These are Kalahandi (Western undulating zone), Mayurbhanj (North central plateau), Ganjam (North eastern ghat), Puri (East and South eastern coastal plains), Balasore (North-eastern coastal plains). Out of these selected districts, two blocks were randomly selected. Thus the present study was confined to 10 blocks in rural Odisha.

Selection of respondents

From each 10 blocks, sample of 25 youths were purposively selected for our study those who are in age group of 15 – 35 years who are involved in agripreneurship and belonging to farming family. They were selected in consultation with extension personnel of area. Agripreneurship activities includes horticulture, fishery, poultry, mushroom cultivation, Integrated farming system and all those allied activities which are carried out for secondary source of income. Hence, a total of 250 respondents were selected for the purpose of accomplishing the objective of our study. Data were collected by personal interview method at the farmers household or grazing ground or at their agribusiness units with the help of pre-tested structured interview schedule and focus group discussions.

The constraint analysis was carried out using Garrett's ranking method. As per this method, respondents have been asked to assign the rank for all the major constraints identified from review of literature and expert consultation followed by pretesting in the field and the outcomes

of such ranking have been converted into score value with the help of the following formula:

$$\text{Percent position} = 100 (R_{ij} - 0.5) / N_j$$

Where,

R_{ij} = Rank given for the i^{th} variable by j^{th} respondents

N_j = Number of variable ranked by j^{th} respondents

With the help of Garrett's Table, the percent position estimated is converted into Garrett scores.

Later, for each factor, the scores of each individual were added, total value of scores and mean values of score were calculated. Then, the constraints were ranked on the basis of highest average score value.

Results and Discussion

Thirteen major constraints associated with agri-preneurial skill promotion among farm youth were identified from review of literature and expert consultation followed by pretesting. The data pertaining to constraints associated with agri-preneurial skill promotion was analysed and results are presented in Table 1.

Limited or no access to land is the top-most ranked constraint for the farm youth act as major barrier for agripreneurship promotion. Land inheritance issue is also a major problem and

it sometimes gets difficult to acquire land. Gendered differences with unequal access to men and women in terms of ownership rights is also a great barrier for female youth. Likewise non-availability of collateral security for getting loans also act as major hurdle for farm youth and hinder their growth of agri-enterprise.

Limited involvement of youth in policy formulation was ranked third among the major constraints as farm youth feel they have very limited say in programme planning and policy formulation at village level. This is followed by poor access to formal credit institutions. This another major constraints as farm youth cannot improve their creditworthiness and without financial support it is very difficult in the part of farm youth to succeed in their agri-enterprise. Most of the farm youth also consider there is high amount of risk in agri-enterprises which is major obstacles for the farm youth in their success. Risks in agricultural enterprises include natural disasters, weather disturbances, market prices, Disease-pest infestations etc.

Inadequate financial guidance and unavailability of proper training in agri-enterprises were ranked sixth and seventh major constraints as the farm youth lack proper specific guidance in terms of financial advice and modern technical know how which may improve their technical competence. Farm youth who generally lack experience must be properly trained in specific skills for success of enterprise.

Multiple role conflicts was ranked eighth followed by inadequate decision making ability and inability to spare time to farm activity both ranked ninth by the farm youth. As the farm youth are the most productive human capital, they get involve with various activities which creates problem of role conflict and inadequate decision making. Sometimes youth get too much engulfed by various other activities and they could not able to spare time for this blue collar job.

Inadequate knowledge about the emerging techniques about specific enterprise, unavailability of personalized advisory services and low level of self-confidence were ranked the tenth, eleventh and twelfth major constraints by farm youth. Although the youth have higher knowledge about techniques generally but they lack knowledge and skill about specific enterprises for higher profitability. Personalized advisory services are mostly unavailable among farm youth are most of these are broadcasted in top to bottom manner without due importance to specific enterprise. Farm youth also lack self-confidence to great extent because of lacuna in experience and it is ranked least most important among thirteen major constraints pertaining to agripreneurial skill promotion.

Conclusion

In present scenario only 20% youth of rural families are engaged in agriculture as source of employment which is an indicator of grim situation of agriculture in future. Most of the educated youth find agriculture as an unattractive preposition; especially the way it is practiced traditionally by their parents and being a blue collar job. This study examines the major constraints associated with youth agripreneurship in rural Odisha. The study was carried out by self-structured interview schedule and focus group discussion. Garret ranking approach shows the farm youth face severe constraints in terms of limited access to land ownership rights, lack of collateral for loans and limited involvement in policy related aspects which were ranked top three hurdles for youth agripreneurship. A promising factor is that many young men and women realize the importance of agriculture and aspire to become successful in the sector.

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Table 1: Ranking of constraints associated with agri-preneurial skill promotion according to farm youth

Sl. No.	Constraints associated with agri-preneurial skill promotion	Percent positions	Table value	Average Score	Rank
1	Low level of self confidence	3.84	50	22.896	XII
2	Inability to spare time to farm activity	11.53	74	47.408	IX
3	Inadequate decision making ability	19.23	67	47.408	IX
4	Multiple Role Conflicts	26.92	62	48.208	VIII
5	Poor access to formal credit institutions	34.61	58	57.636	IV
6	Inadequate training on agri – enterprises	42.30	54	48.348	VII
7	Non availability of collateral security for getting loans	50	50	59.236	II
8	Limited or no access to land (including inheritance issues)	57.69	46	59.888	I
9	Inadequate knowledge about emerging techniques in various enterprises	65.38	42	43.144	X
10	Inadequate financial guidance and assistance	73.07	38	52.736	VI
11	Unavailability of personalized advisory services.	80.76	33	27.228	XI
12	There is high risk in agriculture enterprises	88.46	26	54.832	V
13	There is limited involvement of youth in agricultural policy formulation	96.15	18	58.084	III

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