



Rural Youth and Agripreneurship in India with Special Reference to Odisha

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As agriculture is still a crucial part of India's rural economy, young people living in rural areas find it less appealing due to its falling profitability, unpredictable environment, and lack of job prospects. As a result, young people are becoming less involved in agriculture and migrating from rural to urban areas (Singh & Singh, 2018; Chand & Kumar, 2023). By combining entrepreneurial abilities, creativity, and market orientation, agripreneurship has become a viable strategy to turn agriculture into a successful and long-lasting business (Rao & Kumar, 2019). With a comparative analysis of the Indian situation and an emphasis on Odisha, the current popular article explores how rural youth regard agripreneurship. Studies show that rural youth in India are becoming more aware of agripreneurship as a feasible way to generate income and work for themselves, albeit their opinion is impacted by their access to markets, capital, training, and institutional support (FAO, 2020; Sharma & Bhaduri, 2020). Rural youth in Odisha face obstacles like low farm income, seasonal work, and limited exposure to agribusiness opportunities, which influence their attitudes towards agripreneurship despite the state's favourable agroclimatic conditions and heavy reliance on agriculture (Government of Odisha, 2022; Ray et al., 2021). The paper also emphasises how digital tools and mobile applications—such as advisory, weather, market pricing, and scheme-based platforms—are becoming increasingly important in enhancing information availability and boosting young people's confidence in agribusiness endeavours. The paper suggests that improving digital inclusion, institutional support, and skill development can have a favourable impact on rural youth's perceptions of agribusiness. In order to foster agripreneurship and guarantee sustained rural development in Odisha, it is crucial to support youth-friendly policies, extension services, and agri-digital platforms.

Key words: Agripreneurship, Rural youth, Agricultural entrepreneurship, Digital tools, Rural development

India's Agrarian Context and Youth Engagement

One of India's most vital economic sectors, agriculture employs a sizable portion of the country's rural workforce and makes a substantial contribution to both rural livelihoods and national food security. Despite this crucial role, the industry has been dealing with structural issues like low profitability, unstable climates, and dispersed landholdings, which have reduced the appeal of conventional farming to younger generations (Haldhar et al., 2025). In contrast to urban options, rural adolescents frequently view agriculture as a low-paying and risky career, which contributes to a falling agricultural workforce and an increase in rural-to-urban migration (Chandr et al., 2023). As a result, agripreneurship—which is defined as applying innovation and entrepreneurial abilities to agricultural and related activities—has

become a viable tactic to boost rural economies and give young people a more fulfilling career option in agriculture (Chand & Kumar, 2023). Agripreneurship encompasses value-added services such as agri-processing, farm-to-market linkage services, input supply, and agri-tech services in addition to traditional farm output.

Why Agripreneurship Matters for Rural Youth

The idea of agripreneurship allows young people in rural areas to innovate, add value to farm products, and generate new revenue streams by fusing traditional agricultural methods with commercial principles. In India, initiatives like the Attracting and Retaining Youth in Agriculture (ARYA) program have been effective in getting young people involved in rural business ventures like raising chickens, growing mushrooms, and running an apiary, which improves income and sustainability of livelihood (Sahoo et al., 2023). These programs demonstrate how rural kids may positively impact agricultural growth and local economies when given training, resources, and market access. Research from many Indian states shows that awareness, exposure to entrepreneurial opportunities, and skill development, rather than only personal or demographic factors, influence young people's perceptions of agripreneurship (Chungkham et al., 2025). This implies that exposure and increased understanding are essential for improving young people's perceptions of agribusiness. However, by providing real-time information, market connections, and advisory services—which are becoming more widely available even in rural areas—digital technology and mobile applications are drastically altering the scene.

Perception of Rural Youth in Odisha

In contrast to some more developed states, Odisha is still primarily an agrarian state, with a sizable section of its people living in rural villages and making their living from agriculture and related industries. Even though Odisha has a variety of agroclimatic zones that are ideal for a variety of crops and businesses, rural youth still have to deal with issues including poor farm incomes, seasonal employment, and little exposure to market-oriented entrepreneurial options. According to research done in Odisha, a sizable percentage of rural youth participate in agribusiness activities and have medium-level agribusiness abilities, but there are still gaps in their capacity for risk-taking, business management, and information-seeking behaviour (Ray, Panigrahi & Bhuyan, 2021). Youths' skill levels and perceptions have been demonstrated to be positively impacted by social media involvement, exposure to extension services, and agripreneurial training (Ray et al., 2022). However, limitations including insufficient training, financial obstacles, and restricted access to contemporary technologies still have an impact on how young people view and engage in agribusiness (Das et al., 2024). Insufficient expert supervision, complicated financing procedures, and knowledge and skill gaps were identified as major obstacles for agripreneurs in a case study from southern Odisha (Ray et al., 2024).

Digital Tools and Apps: Bridging Knowledge and Market Gaps

Mobile apps and digital platforms are becoming more and more crucial in changing farming methods and encouraging young people in rural areas to pursue agribusiness. Young people engaged in agribusiness can also benefit from a number of apps that provide farmers and young agripreneurs in India with access to advisories, weather forecasts, market pricing, scheme data, and professional guidance directly from their mobile phones (AgroTech Space, 2025).

Examples of useful digital tools include:

- **Ama Krushi** – A localized advisory app in Odia and Hindi that provides voice-based advisories on crop management and pest control, making it accessible to semi-literate youth and farmers (Prusty, 2025).
- **IFFCO Kisan App** – Delivers real-time mandi prices, weather forecasts, and expert advisories in regional languages, helping youth make data-driven decisions.

- **Mobile Seva AppStore** – Offers a centralized catalogue of government-approved agricultural apps including those linked to financial services, advisories, and weather updates.
- **SmartGaon App** – Provides information on government schemes, rural development initiatives, and an online Gram Mart marketplace for trading agricultural produce.
- **AgriApp / Krishi Apps** – Widely used platforms that combine advisory services, market price information, and crop management tools in a single interface.
- **Specialised Apps in Odisha:** Local initiatives like the **Crab Farming App** developed by the Ganjam KVK offer enterprise-specific guidance to support youth in non-traditional agribusiness ventures.

These apps not only deliver actionable information but also help youth connect with markets, find buyers, and access inputs — essential aspects for successful agripreneurship.

Policy and Institutional Support

Rural youth view is further influenced by institutional ecosystems and supportive policies. Young people are encouraged to develop agripreneurial concepts through national initiatives like the MANAGE Agri-Eureka company Plan Competition, which offers cash incentives and mentorship for creative company strategies (MANAGE, 2025). Furthermore, mobile apps and information services are used by Odisha's state extension services, KVKs, and climate-resilient farming initiatives to provide training and advisories, increasing young people's access to scientific knowledge. To foster favourable attitudes and promote young people's involvement in agripreneurship, it is imperative to maintain the focus on digital inclusion, financial literacy, and agri-enterprise mentoring.

Conclusion

In India, and particularly in Odisha, rural youth's attitudes towards agribusiness are changing. Although traditional agriculture is frequently viewed as less appealing, agripreneurship presents a viable route to sustainable rural living when it is backed by institutional frameworks, digital technologies, and training. By giving young people access to markets, real-time information, and advisory services, digital apps and mobile platforms offer vital assistance in navigating the challenges of agribusiness. In rural Odisha, enhancing these resources in conjunction with focused policy and skill-building programs can change young people's perspectives and encourage agribusiness as a feasible and fulfilling career option.

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