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Livelihood Opportunities in Agri-Allied Sector for Rural Youth: A Case of Bargarh District in Odisha

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Authors' contributions

The present work was carried out in collaboration of all the authors. Author DSR designed the study, performed the statistical analysis and prepared the first draft of the study. Author BM edited the draft and made the final corrections. Author AN analyzed the study and managed the literature review. Author SR finalized the paper, ran the statistical tools, edited and formatted the manuscript. All the authors read, finalized and approved the manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

There has been a lot of debate over employment and its opportunities in the recent times. With more number of reverse migrations occurring daily and lack of employment opportunities for the rural youth, there has been increasing concern about the entrepreneurial activities for rural youth and their involvement therein. However, for any agri-allied start-up, the opportunities and options available play a major role. Thus, a study was conducted on the livelihood opportunities available in agri-allied sector in Bargarh district of Odisha and to analyze the constraints faced by the respondents therein. The findings of the study revealed that majority of respondents (mean score=1.30) were engaged in vegetable vending business where as oil extraction unit (mean

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score=1.03) was least preferred. Dairy unit (mean score=1.19) in animal husbandry based inventories was preferred over others, engagement in forestry based inventories revealed collection of Mahua flower/fruit (mean score=1.09) was ranked first while Lac cultivation and processing ranked fourth (mean score=1.02). Major findings revealed that there was a need to overcome the constraints by access to agricultural implements and equipments at low price followed by availability of agricultural credit at proper time, correspondence of right information at right time by extension officers, conduction of extension activities viz, kisan mela, demonstration, exhibition, training, visits, training requirements on improved poultry farming, fish farming and livestock managements, facilitation of crop insurance, recommended information on seed and fertilizer at proper time, herbicides and pesticide in low price and provision of irrigation facility respectively. The study suggests that for effective participation of rural youth in native entrepreneurial activities, motivation is primarily required along with proper training and orientation about self employment programmes.

Keywords: Livelihood; agriculture; inventories; rural; youth.

ABBREVIATIONS

FGD : Focused Group Discussion
NYP : National Youth Policy
OYIF : Odisha Youth Innovation Fund

1. INTRODUCTION

The National Youth Policy (NYP-2014) launched in February 2014 proposed a holistic Vision for rural youth of India. Its aim was to “empower the youth of the country to achieve their full potential, and through them enable India to find the rightful place in the community of nations” [1]. As per the NYP-2014 definition, “youth” is the people in the age group of 15-29 years. India is a country that lives in its villages and more than 60% of the population in the country resides in the rural areas. This fact signifies that it is the rural areas where most of the youth of our country reside. India being a developing economy is constantly battling the issues of unemployment and livelihood security for its citizens [2]. As more urban migrations are causing a glitch in the distribution of resources and wages among the people, the government is trying to foster alternative activities that may bring about security in the standard of living of the youth. It is important to understand that migrations cause a burden on the economy and may have a depressing effect that could lead to losses in the GDP and strain the government as well as the citizens. The dip in the economy may only be combated by checking the migrations from the villages to the cities. One of the most potential measures to handle this would be provision of livelihood generating opportunities in rural sector [3,4]. This is more relevant in Indian context as India is an agrarian economy and there is ample scope for generation of diversified

entrepreneurial units in agriculture and allied sectors to support the growing population and under/ unemployment [5]. In this context states like Odisha play a major role where most of the people reside in villages and are involved in agri-allied sectors either directly or indirectly.

The total population of Odisha is 45,596,577 of which male and female are 23,201,678 and 22,394,899 respectively with a sex ratio of 978. The literacy rate in Odisha has seen an upward trend and is 75 per cent. Out of the total population of Odisha 16.69 per cent people live in urban regions and 83.31 per cent people live in villages of rural areas. The rural areas of Odisha are an important part of the state and mainly constitute the districts of south and western Odisha. Despite the huge potential of agri-allied opportunities, majority of the young people in rural Odisha are unaware, and/or are yet to take advantage. As demand for jobs increases, it becomes essential for the rural youth to engage themselves in entrepreneurial activities in their own villages or lands. Hence occupational aspirations of the rural youth have been taken as one of the objectives in the present study. The study focuses on the participation and interest shown by the rural youth in various agri-allied enterprises and the constraints faced by them in taking up the endeavor.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Bargarh district of Odisha is agriculturally quite rich and more than 70% of the population depends on agricultural activities for their livelihood. It also fosters other allied activities like forestry and dairy that gives ample scope to its people to engage themselves in income generating enterprise-establishment [6,7,8,9].

Hence, Bargarh district was selected for the purpose of this study. The data was collected from 120 rural youth as respondents from Bargarh district of Odisha, selected purposefully for this study. The age group of people considered for this purpose was between 15-29 years. The study was conducted during the year 2018-19. Before the actual investigation, efforts were made to conduct a detailed survey of all the related aspects regarding the rural youth in the area of research. As a part of course curriculum it was needed to complete the research project, hence the area of investigation, sample size and method of analysis of data were taken in details keeping a number of limitations in view. The sample selected was a representative sample of the entire district. The sampling was based on the accessibility to the household and convenience of the researcher. Both purposive and non probability random sampling methods were adopted for selection of the district, block, village and respondents. The respondents were interviewed using an interview schedule and FGD (Focused Group Discussion) was conducted. Descriptive statistics (mean, frequency distribution) was used to find the preferences of the respondents towards the varied livelihood enterprises and further they were ranked based on the outcome. The participation of rural youth in the various agri-allied activities was aimed at helping the policy makers predict their interest and enthusiasm in the establishment of varied agri-allied based entrepreneurial units.

The constraints faced by rural youth were first shortlisted using interview technique and then analyzed using the Garrett's ranking technique. Garrett's ranking technique is employed for ranking the preferences of respondents on different variables. This method helps to identify the most significant variable influencing the respondent. By this method the respondents are asked to rank their preference for all factors. The resultant outcomes of such rankings are converted to per cent position using the formula:

$$\text{Percent position} = 100(R_{ij} - 0.50)/N_j$$

Where, R_{ij} = Rank given for the i th variable by j th respondents and N_j = Number of variables ranked by j th respondents. From the Garrett's table, the percent position calculated is converted into scores. Then for each factor, the scores of each individual are added and then total value of scores and mean values of score is calculated. The factor having highest mean value is considered to be the most important factor.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data obtained in the study were processed and analyzed statistically using appropriate tools and presented systematically with the help of tables.

Before calculating the distribution of rural youth in concerned enterprises, data on participation and non-participation in the respective entrepreneurial units were mapped according to the respective sectors. The participation of rural youth was denoted by 2 (Yes) and non-participation was denoted by 1 (No).

The Involvement of Rural Youth in Respective Entrepreneurial Units and their ranks based on the calculated Mean is shown in Tables 1-3.

Results from Table 1 revealed that majority of respondents (mean score=1.30) were engaged in vegetable vending business which was ranked 1st followed by handloom unit and food processing unit that ranked 2nd, 3rd respectively. Rest were engaged in oil extraction unit (mean score=1.03) that ranked 4th.

Perusal of data from Table 2 revealed that majority of respondents (mean score=1.19) were engaged in dairy unit which ranked 1st followed by poultry unit that ranked 2nd and rest in goat farming (mean score=1.08) that ranked 3rd.

Table 1. Distribution of respondents according to entrepreneurial units in agriculture (n=120)

Participation	Yes		No		Mean	Rank
	f	%	F	%		
Oil extraction unit	4	3.33	116	96.67	1.03	IV
Vegetable vending unit	36	30.00	84	70.00	1.30	I
Handloom unit	8	6.67	112	93.33	1.07	II
Food processing unit	7	5.83	113	94.17	1.06	III

Table 2. Distribution of respondents according to entrepreneurial units in animal husbandry (n=120)

Participation	Yes		No		Mean	Rank
	f	%	f	%		
Goatery unit	9	7.50	111	92.50	1.08	III
Poultry unit	12	10.00	108	90.00	1.10	II
Dairy unit	23	19.17	97	80.83	1.19	I

Table 3 revealed that majority of respondents (mean score=1.09) were engaged in Mahua flower / fruit collection and selling which ranked 1st followed by Kendu leaf collection that ranked 2nd, tamarind collection, processing and selling which ranked 3rd and rest (mean score=1.02) involved in Lac collection and processing.

Figure 1 represented overall comparison of inventories in agri-allied activities where youth involved in study areas. The blue and brown color represents the participation and non-participation in respective inventories.

3.1 Constraints Faced by the Rural Youth in Different Agri-allied Activities

An attempt has been made in this study to identify the constraints which were responsible for the participation of rural youth in different agri allied and off-farm activities. The constraints

reported by the respondents were grouped in two categories i.e. agri-allied constraints and off-farm constraints. The details about these constraints are given in Table 4.

The data on above table revealed that the majority of the respondents faced the problem of unavailability of agricultural labour during peak season, followed by non availability of fertilizer at proper time, lack of agricultural implements and high cost, lack of knowledge about proper land preparation, lack of land and green fodder for animal, non availability of improved seed at proper time, lack of knowledge about improved poultry farming, lack of crop insurance facility, lack of irrigation facility, lack of training facility for fish farming, lack of pond having percentage thereby being ranked 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th and 11th respectively. High cost of pond construction was not a major issue thus was ranked 12th.

Table 3. Distribution of respondents according to entrepreneurial activities in forestry (N=120)

Participation	Yes		No		Mean	Rank
	F	%	f	%		
Kendu leaves collection	5	4.17	115	95.83	1.04	II
Lac collection	2	1.67	118	98.33	1.02	IV
Mahua flower and fruit collection	11	9.17	109	90.83	1.09	I
Tamarind collection	3	2.50	117	97.50	1.03	III

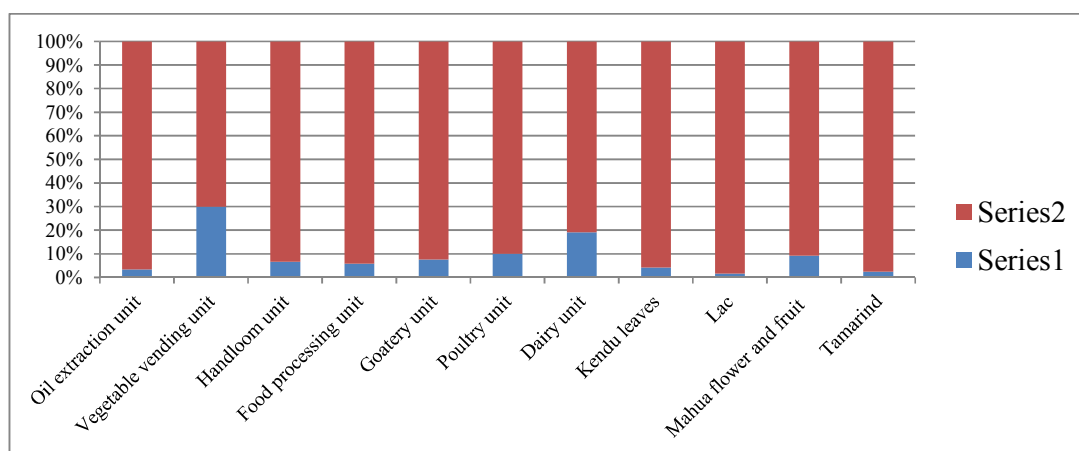
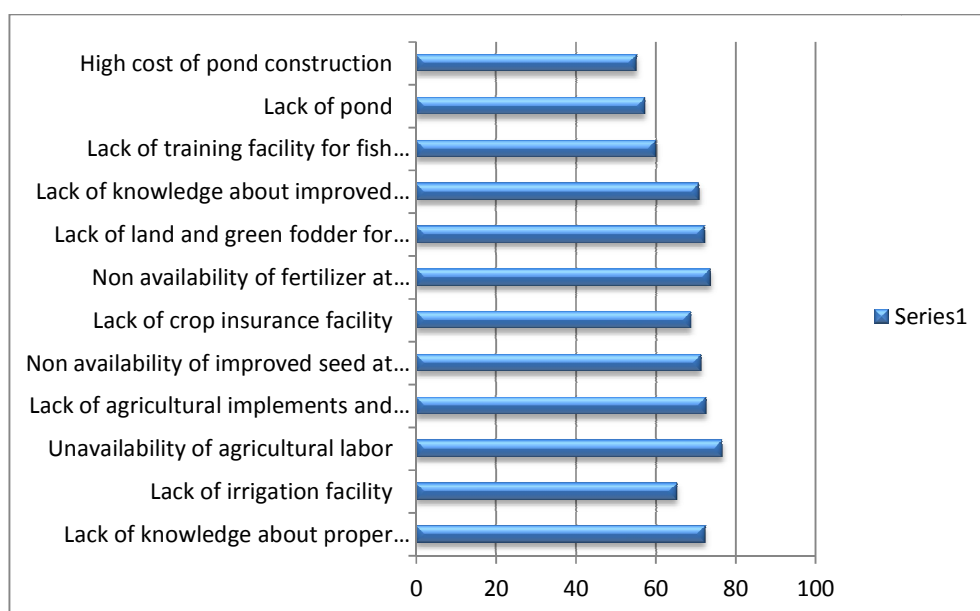
**Figure 1. Overall Comparison of Involvement of Rural Youth in Livelihood Generating Entrepreneurial Activities**

Table 4. Constraint analysis of respondents in agri allied activities (n=120)

Constraints in agri allied activities	Mean Score (%)	Rank
Lack of knowledge about proper land preparation	72.35	IV
Lack of irrigation facility	65.26667	IX
Unavailability of agricultural labor	76.53333	I
Lack of agricultural implements and high cost	72.475	III
Non availability of improved seed at proper time	71.225	VI
Lack of crop insurance facility	68.71667	VIII
Non availability of fertilizer at proper time	73.58333	II
Lack of land and green fodder for animal	72.125	V
Lack of knowledge about improved poultry farming	70.71667	VII
Lack of training facility for fish farming	59.89167	X
Lack of pond	57.25	XI
High cost of pond construction	55.18333	XII

**Figure 2. Bar diagram showing the extent of effects of various constraints on livelihood generating entrepreneurial activities**

The study was conducted with the aim of understanding the pattern of interest of the rural youth in different livelihood generating activities and the constraints faced by them thereof in the district of Bargarh. It was found that majority of the respondents preferred to be engaged in the business of vegetable vending (with a mean score of 1.30) followed by dairy unit (with a mean score of 1.19) and Mahua flower/fruit collection (with a mean score of 1.09). However, there were certain constraints faced by the youth that potentially impacted their involvement in the above entrepreneurial activities, with unavailability of labour in the peak season being the major concern.

The results of this study may be of help to the extension workers and others associated with the beneficiaries to perform their functions effectively. However, the department of agriculture needs to promote the marginal and small farmers and the tenants with proper rules and regulations to enable them to access the credit facilities smoothly. Though the line departments have made very effective efforts and brought a visible impact by the trainings organized for the farmers, it is also necessary to organize need based training programmes with proper written materials for establishing new enterprises, to become a part of different agri-allied sector. There is need for capacity building of farmers on innovative technologies on agri-

allied activities that will lead towards better income and thus improve their standard of living.

4. CONCLUSION

It is essential to understand that the rural youth need to be motivated and trained and moreover made aware about the opportunities for their livelihood. Thus, proper training and orientation about self-employment programmes are required. Odisha Youth Innovation Fund (OYIF) may be used by the rural youth to set up new enterprises with the support from the government. Moreover, they should be encouraged to take up self-employment activities, thereby adding additional income to their family and improving their standard of living. Thus knowing the extent of participation of rural youth in the agri-allied activities and their training needs can in turn help the planners and administrators to develop/modify training programmes and strategies for the socio-economic development of rural youth who are the future of this nation.

CONSENT

As per international standard or university standard, respondents' written consent has been collected and preserved by the author(s).

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COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interest exists.

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