

International Journal of Agriculture Extension and Social Development

Volume 9; Issue 7; July 2026; Page No. 875-877

Received: 09-05-2026
Accepted: 16-06-2026

Indexed Journal
Peer Reviewed Journal

Motivational factors and support systems influencing Agripreneurial engagement among agricultural students in Sardarkrushinagar Dantiwada agricultural university

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DOI: <https://www.doi.org/10.33545/26180723.2026.v9.i7l.3966>

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Abstract

Agripreneurship is increasingly recognized as a key driver of agricultural transformation, fostering innovation, enhancing employment opportunities, and contributing to sustainable rural development. As future professionals in the agricultural sector, agricultural students play a pivotal role in advancing agripreneurship; therefore, understanding the factors that motivate them to establish agricultural enterprises and the support systems they require is essential for developing effective entrepreneurship promotion strategies. The present study was conducted at Sardarkrushinagar Dantiwada Agricultural University, Gujarat, with the objectives of identifying the motivational factors influencing agricultural students to start their own agricultural enterprises and examining the support systems needed to enhance their engagement in agripreneurship. An ex-post facto research design was adopted, and 176 undergraduate agricultural students were selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected using a structured interview schedule and analysed using appropriate statistical tools, including frequency, percentage, mean rank, and Kendall's coefficient of concordance. The findings revealed that the desire for independence (74.40%) was the most prominent motivational factor, followed by development of social status (61.93%), financial gain (47.15%), and job creation and economic contribution (46.59%). Among the support systems, entrepreneurial education emerged as the most important requirement (mean rank = 2.56), followed by support from family and friends (2.64) and credit support from various institutions (3.02). The Kendall's coefficient of concordance ($W = 0.316$) was significant at the 1 percent level, indicating a statistically significant level of agreement among respondents regarding the ranking of support systems. The findings underscore the importance of strengthening entrepreneurship-oriented education, improving access to institutional credit, fostering supportive family and institutional environments, and enhancing policy interventions to promote agripreneurship among agricultural students. Such initiatives can strengthen students' entrepreneurial motivation and facilitate the development of a vibrant agripreneurial ecosystem, thereby contributing to sustainable agricultural growth and rural development.

Keywords: Agripreneurship, agricultural students, entrepreneurial motivation, support systems

Introduction

Agripreneurship is increasingly recognized as a key driver of agricultural transformation by promoting innovation, employment generation, value addition, and sustainable rural development (FAO, 2017; World Bank, 2019). It offers agricultural graduates an opportunity to create self-employment, improve farm profitability, and contribute to economic growth. Consequently, promoting agripreneurship among agricultural students has become a priority for educational institutions and policymakers (Nabi *et al.*, 2017) ^[6].

The decision of agricultural students to pursue entrepreneurship is influenced by various motivational factors, such as the desire for independence, financial gain, social recognition, and personal growth. At the same time, the availability of an enabling support system, including entrepreneurial education, institutional credit, family support, and favourable government policies, plays a crucial role in translating entrepreneurial aspirations into successful enterprises (Shane, 2003; OECD, 2019) ^[9, 7].

Despite increasing emphasis on agripreneurship promotion, limited research has examined both the motivational factors influencing agricultural students and the support systems they require for entrepreneurial engagement. Therefore, the present study was undertaken among undergraduate agricultural students of Sardarkrushinagar Dantiwada Agricultural University, Gujarat, to identify the motivational factors encouraging them to establish agricultural enterprises and to examine the support systems needed to promote their engagement in agripreneurship. The findings are expected to provide useful insights for strengthening entrepreneurship education and developing policies that encourage agripreneurship among agricultural graduates.

Objectives

1. To study the motivational factors of agricultural students to start agricultural enterprises
2. To examine the kind of support system needed for engaging agricultural students in Agripreneurship

Methodology

The present study was conducted at Sardarkrushinagar Dantiwada Agricultural University (SDAU), Gujarat, to identify the motivational factors influencing agricultural students to start agricultural enterprises and to examine the support systems required for promoting their engagement in agripreneurship. An ex-post facto research design was adopted, as the study aimed to investigate the existing perceptions of the respondents without manipulating any variables.

The study population comprised undergraduate agricultural students enrolled at SDAU. A total of 176 undergraduate students were selected through purposive sampling, considering their exposure to agricultural education and potential involvement in agripreneurship. Data were collected using a pre-tested and structured interview schedule developed based on an extensive review of literature and

expert consultation. To assess the motivational factors, respondents were asked to indicate the factors that motivated them to establish agricultural enterprises from a list of identified motivational factors. The responses were recorded and analysed using frequency and percentage.

To identify the support systems required for promoting agripreneurship, respondents were asked to rank seven identified support systems according to their perceived importance. The collected ranking data were analysed and determined using Kendall's Coefficient of Concordance (W). The collected data were coded, tabulated, and analysed using appropriate statistical tools, including frequency, percentage, mean rank, and Kendall's coefficient of concordance, to draw meaningful conclusions.

Results and Discussion

Motivational factors of the agricultural students

Table 1: Distribution of the agricultural students according to their motivational factors to start their own agricultural enterprise (n = 176)

Sl. No.	Motivational factors	Number	Per cent
1	Desire for independence	138	74.40
2	Development of social status	109	61.93
3	Personal growth and challenge	79	44.88
4	Better standard of living	69	39.20
5	To satisfy ego	33	18.75
6	Job creation and economic contribution	82	46.59
7	Passion and purpose	54	30.68
8	To show independent decision power	52	29.54
9	Financial gain	83	47.15
10	Job security	76	43.18

Data from table 1 indicate that (74.40%) of students had desire for independence to start their own agricultural enterprise followed by to develop the social status (61.93%). The factors viz., to earn financial gain (47.15%), job creation and economic contribution (46.59%), personal growth and challenge (44.88%), job security (43.18%), better standard of living (39.20%), passion and purpose (30.68%), to show independent decision power (29.54%) and to satisfy ego were mentioned by less than half of the students (18.75%). It can

be concluded that desire for independence and to develop the social status were the important motivational factors for the agricultural students to start their own agricultural enterprise. Similar findings have been reported by Krueger *et al.* (2000) [5], who observed that entrepreneurial intentions are strongly associated with autonomy and achievement motivation.

Kind of support system needed for getting students engaged in agricultural Entrepreneurship

Table 2: Ranking for support system needed for promoting agripreneurship (n = 176)

Sl. No.	Support system needed	Mean rank	Rank
1	Entrepreneurial education	2.56	1
2	Support from family and friends	2.64	2
3	Credit support from various institutions	3.02	3
4	Government policies and schemes	4.21	4
5	Establishment of entrepreneurship club and guidance centres	4.69	5
6	Agripreneurship awareness programmes and training programmes	5.20	6
7	Basic infrastructure facilities	5.42	7

Kendall's $w = 0.316$ Significance at 1% level

Data presented in the Table 2 indicate that entrepreneurial education was found to be the most important support system and ranked first. This finding agrees with Fayolle and Gailly (2015) [2] and Nabi *et al.* (2017) [6], who reported that entrepreneurship education significantly enhances entrepreneurial intentions and competencies among university students. Support from family and friends ranked second, followed by credit support from financial institutions, government policies and schemes, entrepreneurship clubs and guidance centres, awareness and

training programmes, and basic infrastructure facilities. The probable reason behind this prioritization is the growing recognition of the significance of entrepreneurial education among students with the necessary knowledge, skills and competencies to pursue a successful career in agripreneurship. By incorporating entrepreneurial education, students can gain a deeper understanding of the details involved in starting and managing an agricultural entrepreneurship. Additionally, the financial and moral support provided by family and friends can serve as a

catalyst, inspiring and motivating students to pursue their entrepreneurial aspirations and nurturing their entrepreneurial spirit.

Conclusion

The present study concludes that agricultural students of Sardarkrushinagar Dantiwada Agricultural University possess a positive inclination towards agripreneurship, with the desire for independence emerging as the strongest motivational factor, followed by the aspiration to enhance social status, achieve financial gain, and contribute to employment generation. The findings also indicate that an enabling support system plays a crucial role in encouraging students to pursue entrepreneurial careers. Entrepreneurial education was identified as the most important support requirement, followed by support from family and friends and access to institutional credit. The significant Kendall's coefficient of concordance indicates a strong level of agreement among respondents regarding the priority of these support systems. Therefore, strengthening entrepreneurship education, improving financial and institutional support, and creating a conducive entrepreneurial ecosystem can significantly enhance agripreneurial engagement among agricultural students. Such efforts will not only promote self-employment among agricultural graduates but also contribute to agricultural innovation, rural development, and sustainable economic growth. These findings are consistent with the recommendations of FAO (2017) and the World Bank (2019), which emphasize strengthening entrepreneurial capacity among youth to achieve sustainable agricultural development.

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