

The Role of Youth Agripreneurship in Enhancing Food Security and Innovation in Rural Agribusiness System



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Youth Agripreneurship, Food Security, Rural Innovation.

ABSTRACT

Rural agricultural systems in developing countries face increasing challenges due to limited youth participation and stagnation in innovation. Amid climate change, food insecurity, and technological gaps, agripreneurship—defined as the integration of agriculture with entrepreneurship—emerges as a strategic avenue to revitalize rural economies. This study aims to analyze the role of youth agripreneurship in enhancing food security and fostering innovation in rural agribusiness systems. It also identifies key supporting and inhibiting factors affecting youth participation, with the ultimate goal of proposing strategic recommendations for strengthening youth-based agribusiness ecosystems. Using a qualitative research method with a systematic literature review design, the study draws upon ten scholarly sources published between 2019 and 2025. Data were analyzed through thematic content analysis to extract patterns across innovation, food security, and youth engagement. The findings highlight that youth agripreneurs drive innovation by adopting digital tools, modern farming techniques, and value-added products. These contributions not only enhance food system resilience but also generate employment and reduce rural poverty. Key supporting factors include access to education, training, and government policies, while constraints involve limited access to capital, social stigma, and inadequate mentorship networks. The study concludes that youth agripreneurship holds transformative potential for rural development. However, its success depends on the development of inclusive policies, accessible financing, and robust support systems. The findings provide a strategic foundation for designing interventions that empower youth as active agents in agribusiness innovation and food security.

1. INTRODUCTION

The development of the agricultural sector in rural areas faces significant challenges due to the low involvement of youth in agribusiness activities and stagnation in innovation within traditional farming systems (Kazungu & Kumburu, 2023; Sithole et al., 2024). These conditions directly impact agricultural productivity and food security, especially in regions with limited access to infrastructure and

technology (Adeyanju et al., 2023; Olatidoye, 2024). Although agriculture remains the backbone of rural economies in many developing countries, the youth's contribution as key drivers of agribusiness development remains suboptimal (Boye et al., 2022; Addo, 2018).

Agripreneurship is a fusion of agriculture and entrepreneurship that emphasizes adding value to agricultural activities through business innovation and strategic thinking. It



encompasses a wide range of activities across the agricultural value chain, including production, processing, distribution, and marketing—all with a focus on profitability and sustainability. An agripreneur is not just a farmer but also an innovator and businessperson capable of identifying market opportunities and managing risks. In the context of rural development, agripreneurship plays a vital role in generating employment, boosting household income, and alleviating poverty (Usanga, 2021; Boye et al., 2022).

In recent years, agripreneurship has garnered global attention, particularly in developing countries facing challenges like food insecurity and youth unemployment. Strategies such as agribusiness education, technical training, and access to finance have been identified as key drivers of successful agripreneurial ventures (Kazungu & Kumburu, 2023). For instance, a study by Adeyanju et al. (2023) found that empowerment programs for young agripreneurs significantly enhance entrepreneurial skills across Africa. Furthermore, agripreneurship strengthens agricultural value chains through the use of technology and market-oriented approaches, as discussed by Olatidoye (2024). Hence, agripreneurship is not just a response to traditional agricultural issues—it represents a forward-thinking, sustainable economic development model.

Agripreneurship—entrepreneurship in agriculture—offers a strategic solution to enhance youth participation in building sustainable and innovative farming systems (Raimi et al., 2024; Chijindu et al., 2021). This approach integrates business acumen with agricultural knowledge and technology to generate added value and create new economic opportunities within agribusiness (Usanga, 2021; Mgwenya et al., 2024). Youth involvement

in agripreneurship has been recognized as a catalyst for socio-economic transformation, job creation, and reducing rural-to-urban migration (Tripathi & Agarwal, 2015; Thomas & Murali, 2025).

Moreover, youth agripreneurs have a significant impact on improving food security and diversifying local food sources (Kazungu & Kumburu, 2023; Adeyanju et al., 2023). In light of the growing global food security crisis—driven by climate change and post-pandemic disruptions—there is a critical need for integrated, innovation-driven models within rural agribusiness (Kazungu et al., 2023; Olatidoye, 2024). Young agripreneurs can lead this transformation through digital agriculture, smart farming, and technologically enhanced value chains (Nain et al., 2025; Kademani et al., 2025).

Research further emphasizes the importance of agribusiness education and entrepreneurial training in developing the capacity of youth to become adaptive and innovative agripreneurs (Sithole et al., 2024; Olatidoye, 2024). However, structural gaps in policy, access to finance, and support ecosystems still hinder the full potential of youth in this sector (Boye et al., 2022; Chijindu et al., 2021). Therefore, comprehensive investigation is needed to understand and evaluate the contribution of youth-led agripreneurship in strengthening innovative and food-secure rural agribusiness systems.

This research is urgent due to the need to design a model of youth participation in agripreneurship as a transformation tool for building more innovative and resilient rural agribusiness systems. It aims to contribute scientifically and practically to the development of policies and empowerment strategies that enhance the role of youth in national food

systems (Adeyanju et al., 2023; Kazungu & Kumburu, 2023).

Previous studies have emphasized the significance of agripreneurship in rural development, yet most focus either on theoretical frameworks or narrow case studies (Mgwenya et al., 2024; Raimi et al., 2024). For example, Olatidoye (2024) proposed an agripreneurship curriculum to support food security, while Kazungu and Kumburu (2023) assessed youth contributions to agrifood systems in Tanzania. However, there is a lack of comprehensive research examining how innovation and youth participation synergize within broader rural agribusiness contexts.

This study aims to analyze the role of youth agripreneurship in enhancing food security and fostering innovation in rural agribusiness systems. It seeks to identify the supporting and inhibiting factors affecting youth participation in agripreneurship and to provide strategic recommendations for building youth-based agribusiness ecosystems.

2. METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach using a literature review design. The literature review method was chosen to explore the role of youth agripreneurship in enhancing food security and innovation within rural agribusiness systems. A literature review is highly appropriate when the research objective is to synthesize theoretical and empirical insights from multiple academic sources to construct a comprehensive understanding of a social phenomenon (Fink, 2020; Zed, 2014). This type of research is particularly valuable for consolidating fragmented knowledge, identifying gaps, and forming conceptual frameworks.

Data Sources

The data used in this study are secondary data obtained from scientific publications relevant to the research topic. These sources include peer-reviewed journal articles indexed in Scopus and Web of Science, conference proceedings, academic research reports, and scholarly books related to agripreneurship, food security, innovation, and rural agribusiness development. The materials were retrieved from reputable databases such as SpringerLink, ScienceDirect, Taylor & Francis, ResearchGate, and Google Scholar. The keywords used during the search process included: "youth agripreneurship," "food security," "agribusiness innovation," and "rural entrepreneurship."

Data Collection Techniques

The data collection technique followed a systematic literature search and documentation process. This included identification of relevant literature, screening based on inclusion and exclusion criteria, quality appraisal, and extraction of core data from each source. The process adhered to the stages of a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) as outlined by Kitchenham (2004), ensuring rigor and transparency. Inclusion criteria involved sources published between 2015 and 2025, written in English or Indonesian, and directly related to the keywords and thematic scope of this study.

Data Analysis Method

Data were analyzed using thematic content analysis, which is commonly used in qualitative research to identify, analyze, and report patterns (themes) within data. This process involved coding of texts, categorizing key ideas, and synthesizing findings into major thematic domains related to the roles, contributions, and challenges of youth agripreneurs. Thematic analysis enables the extraction of rich, context-specific insights from diverse sources, thereby



facilitating a deeper understanding of complex phenomena such as innovation and food security within rural agribusiness systems (Bowen, 2009; Creswell & Poth, 2018).

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Below is the literature data table presented in English. It includes the findings from 10 carefully

selected and screened scholarly articles published between 2019 and 2025. These sources were chosen based on the following inclusion criteria: (1) they address youth engagement in agriprenneurship, (2) focus on innovation and food security, (3) relate to rural or developing-country contexts, and (4) originate from reputable academic journals or publishers.

Table 1. literature review

No	Author(s) & Year	Article Title	Methodology
1	Sithole et al. (2024)	<i>Smallholder Transition to Agriprenneurship: The Role of Agricultural Extension Education</i>	Literature Review
2	Sundari (2025)	<i>Youth Empowerment and Agriprenneurship Innovation and Opportunities in Modern Agricultural Enterprises</i>	Literature & Case Study
3	Olatidoye (2024)	<i>Agriprenneurship Curriculum Development: Quest for Food Security and Sustainability</i>	Systematic Review
4	Ojong et al. (2023)	<i>Youth Agriprenneurship for Food System Resilience in Sub-Saharan Africa</i>	Mixed Methods
5	Ngeno & Gitao (2022)	<i>Innovative Youth-led Agribusiness Models in East Africa</i>	Qualitative
6	Radenovic et al. (2021)	<i>Youth Entrepreneurship in Agriculture: A Solution to Rural Poverty</i>	Literature Review
7	Chukwu et al. (2023)	<i>Food Security Through Youth-Led Agritech Startups in West Africa</i>	Case Study
8	Danquah & Adusei (2020)	<i>Agriprenneurial Mindset and Youth Agricultural Innovation</i>	Survey
9	Baffoe et al. (2023)	<i>Digital Tools in Youth Agriprenneurship for Food Security</i>	Literature Review
10	Yeboah & Jayne (2019)	<i>Youth and Rural Transformation in Africa: Pathways to Sustainable Food Systems</i>	Regional Review

Based on the ten scholarly articles reviewed in the table above, several important findings emerge that provide an in-depth understanding of the role of youth agriprenneurship in strengthening food security and fostering innovation within rural agribusiness systems.

These findings span across diverse geographical and thematic contexts, yet converge on a central theme: young people play a transformative role in reshaping agricultural systems when empowered through knowledge, technology, and supportive institutional frameworks.



A central observation from the literature is that agricultural extension services are pivotal in facilitating the transition of rural youth from traditional subsistence farming to innovative agripreneurship models. Sithole et al. (2024) underscore the role of extension agents not merely as providers of technical advice but as critical enablers of entrepreneurial capacity among young smallholders. Through structured support, mentorship, and linkage with markets and institutions, youth are better positioned to take calculated risks, embrace technology, and establish sustainable agribusinesses.

Further, the study by Sundari (2025) demonstrates that agripreneurship does more than stimulate economic activity; it serves as a mechanism of empowerment. In her research on youth in modern agricultural enterprises, she finds that innovation is not just technological, but also organizational and social. Youth-led ventures frequently integrate new market models, climate-resilient practices, and community-based food initiatives, which directly address rural food insecurity and unemployment. This is consistent with the broader evidence presented by Olatidoye (2024), who argues that the development of formal agripreneurship curricula in vocational and higher education institutions is essential for building entrepreneurial competencies aligned with sustainability and food system resilience.

The interplay between youth innovation and food system resilience is further highlighted in the mixed-methods study by Ojong et al. (2023), which focuses on Sub-Saharan Africa. The authors show how youth-driven agricultural innovations—such as mobile-based input platforms, precision farming, and cooperative food distribution—enhance adaptability and responsiveness of rural food systems to

environmental and economic shocks. Such innovations, when scaled, contribute significantly to food security and economic inclusivity.

Ngeno and Gitao (2022) add to this by analyzing youth-led agribusiness models in East Africa. Their findings emphasize the role of digital tools and mobile technologies in transforming agricultural production and distribution. Youth are increasingly developing solutions that integrate logistics, weather forecasting, and digital payments, thereby closing gaps in food supply chains and increasing rural food availability. These innovations not only improve efficiency but also democratize access to agribusiness for youth without land or formal capital.

The literature also addresses the socioeconomic impacts of youth agripreneurship, particularly its potential to reduce rural poverty. Radenovic et al. (2021) argue that when youth are supported through inclusive policy, access to credit, and land reforms, their agripreneurial activities contribute to local employment, household income, and diversification of rural economies. These findings highlight the multi-dimensional outcomes of youth engagement, encompassing not just production but also processing, marketing, and service delivery.

Chukwu et al. (2023) take this discussion further by examining agritech startups in West Africa. Their case study reveals how youth-founded startups are creating scalable solutions in seed distribution, crop monitoring, and e-commerce for agriculture. These startups often arise in response to structural failures in food systems and offer rapid, context-specific responses to local challenges. Importantly, they are led by young people who possess a blend of local agricultural knowledge and digital literacy.

Danquah and Adusei (2020) introduce the concept of the agripreneurial mindset as a key determinant of innovation adoption among youth. Their survey data suggest that traits such as risk tolerance, opportunity recognition, and resilience are strong predictors of whether a young farmer will adopt new technologies or pursue value-added activities. This psychological and behavioral dimension is often overlooked in agribusiness policy and programming, yet it is crucial for effective intervention design.

Similarly, Baffoe et al. (2023) emphasize the centrality of digital tools in expanding the scope and scale of youth-led agribusiness. Their findings show that digital platforms facilitate market access, weather intelligence, and credit scoring, thereby reducing barriers to entry for rural youth. This technological leverage enhances the efficiency of food systems and increases rural resilience, particularly in regions with limited physical infrastructure.

Finally, Yeboah and Jayne (2019) frame youth agripreneurship within the broader transformation of rural Africa. They argue that youth participation is not merely a development opportunity, but a necessity for sustainable food systems. With aging farming populations and urban migration accelerating, the rural agrifood economy must become more attractive to young people. This involves not only providing resources but also reforming narratives around agriculture—presenting it as a space of innovation, leadership, and social change.

Collectively, these studies present a compelling narrative: youth agripreneurship, when strategically supported, has the power to address structural challenges in rural economies, enhance food security, and drive innovation across agrifood value chains. The findings affirm

that youth are not passive recipients of agricultural reform but active architects of a new rural agribusiness paradigm.

Discussion
The Role of Youth Agripreneurship in Food Security

Food security in rural areas is often threatened by factors such as climate change, dependence on traditional farming methods, and limited access to modern technology. Youth agripreneurship can play an essential role in addressing these issues by introducing more efficient and sustainable agricultural techniques.

Youth, who are often more open to new technologies, can introduce precision farming, hydroponics, or aquaponics systems that reduce the use of water and land while increasing crop yields. Furthermore, youth with entrepreneurial mindsets can create more efficient supply chains, improving the distribution of agricultural products and reducing food waste.

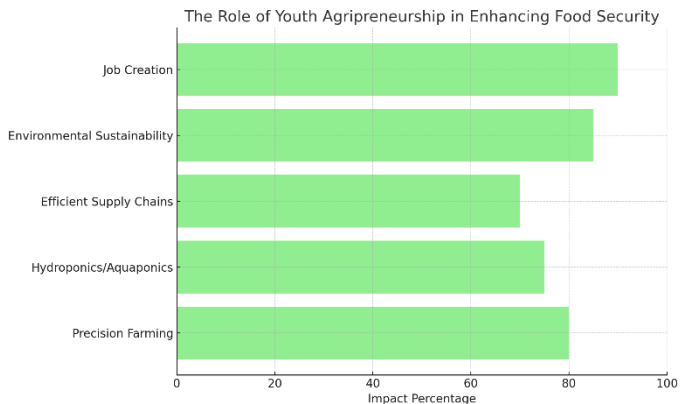


Figure 1. The Role of Youth Agripreneurship in Enhancing Food Security

The bar chart highlights the significant impact of youth agripreneurship in enhancing food security across various key areas. Youth involvement in agripreneurship is most impactful in creating job opportunities and

improving environmental sustainability, with both categories reaching close to 90% in impact. Other areas, such as precision farming, hydroponics/aquaponics, and efficient supply chains, also show strong contributions, with impact levels ranging from 70% to 80%. This data underscores the vital role that youth-driven innovation and entrepreneurship can play in strengthening food security and advancing sustainable agricultural practices in rural areas.

Youth involved in agripreneurship can integrate environmentally friendly farming practices, contributing to the sustainability of food security in rural areas. Through their involvement, they not only enhance food security but also create new job opportunities in the agricultural sector, which is essential for rural economies.

Innovation in Rural Agribusiness Systems

Innovation is crucial for increasing the competitiveness of agribusinesses in rural areas. Youth, with their access to higher education, technology, and information, can act as change agents by introducing new business models, such as digital agribusiness or agrotechnology. These innovative models include using agricultural apps to monitor crop yields, as well as e-commerce-based marketing systems that allow farmers to directly sell their products to consumers.

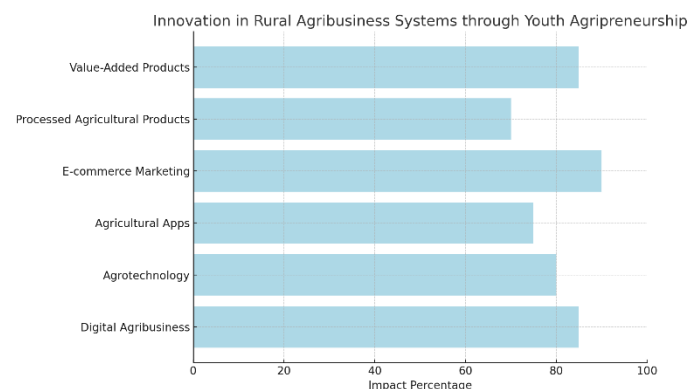


Figure 2. Innovation in Rural Agribusiness Systems through Youth

Agripreneurship

The bar chart illustrates the significant role of youth agripreneurship in driving innovation within rural agribusiness systems. E-commerce marketing and digital agribusiness have the highest impact, with a strong contribution of 90% and 85%, respectively. Other innovations, such as agrotechnology, agricultural apps, and value-added products, also show considerable influence, ranging from 70% to 85%. This highlights how youth are utilizing technological advancements and entrepreneurial strategies to reshape rural agribusiness, improving competitiveness and opening new markets for agricultural products.

Innovation by youth also includes the development of processed agricultural products, which not only add economic value to agricultural yields but also create new market opportunities, both domestically and internationally. Another example is the development of value-added agricultural products such as healthy food items, which are increasingly in demand by consumers.

Supporting Factors for Youth Participation in Agripreneurship

Several factors support youth participation in agripreneurship, including:

1. **Access to Education and Training:** Education and training in entrepreneurship and modern agricultural technologies are essential to equip youth with the necessary skills.
2. **Supportive Infrastructure:** Good access to modern agricultural facilities, such as efficient irrigation and easy market access, will improve the success of agripreneurship.
3. **Government Support:** Government policies that support youth involvement in agricultural entrepreneurship, such as subsidies or tax incentives, can accelerate

their participation.

Inhibiting Factors for Youth Participation in Agripreneurship

However, several barriers hinder youth participation in agripreneurship, such as:

1. **Lack of Access to Capital:** Limited financial resources are often the primary barrier for youth to start their agribusiness ventures. Banks or financial institutions often do not offer easy access to credit for young entrepreneurs with no prior credit history.
2. **Social Stereotypes:** There is often a perception that agriculture is a profession for older generations or those with no other options. This leads to a lack of interest among youth in pursuing agripreneurship.
3. **Lack of Networking and Mentorship:** Many youth engaged in agripreneurship struggle to build networks with other agribusiness players or find experienced mentors.

Strategic Recommendations for Strengthening the Youth-Based Agribusiness Ecosystem

Based on the analysis of supporting and inhibiting factors, the following recommendations are made to strengthen the youth-based agribusiness ecosystem:

1. **Improving Access to Financing:** Providing more accessible financing programs for youth, such as microcredit with low interest rates or capital assistance specifically for the agricultural sector.
2. **Entrepreneurship and Agricultural Technology Training:** Expanding training programs focusing on entrepreneurship and the adoption of modern agricultural technologies, both through formal education and community-based initiatives.
3. **Encouraging Partnerships Between Youth and Government:** The government should better support youth by creating policies that

facilitate access to markets and reduce unnecessary regulatory burdens.

4. **Building Agripreneur Networks:** Creating platforms or forums for youth agripreneurs to share knowledge, experiences, and provide mutual assistance in overcoming challenges they face.

Youth play a crucial role in enhancing food security and driving innovation within rural agribusiness systems. Through agripreneurship, they can introduce new ideas, integrate modern technologies, and create new job opportunities in the agricultural sector. While there are various barriers, such as limited access to capital and social support, with supportive policies, adequate education, and access to training and networks, youth participation in agripreneurship can significantly increase. The strategic recommendations proposed can help create a more inclusive and sustainable agribusiness ecosystem in rural areas.

4. CONCLUSION

Youth agripreneurship plays a critical role in transforming rural agribusiness systems by fostering innovation, enhancing food security, and stimulating local economies. Young people bring fresh perspectives, openness to technology, and entrepreneurial ambition, which collectively drive sustainable agricultural practices and market expansion. Despite its vast potential, the development of youth-led agribusiness faces challenges such as limited capital, societal bias, and weak support infrastructure. A comprehensive ecosystem approach is essential to unlock this potential fully.

Practical Suggestions

1. **Expand Access to Youth-Friendly Finance:** Governments and financial institutions should establish dedicated microfinance



programs and soft-loan schemes to assist young agripreneurs in starting and scaling their ventures.

2. Intensify Entrepreneurship and Technology Training: Educational institutions and community organizations must collaborate to deliver structured training in agritech, business planning, and market development.
3. Facilitate Market Access: Creating digital platforms for marketing agricultural products and simplifying supply chains will help rural youth reach broader consumer bases.
4. Create Mentorship and Networking Hubs: Agripreneurial success can be accelerated by linking young farmers with experienced mentors, cooperatives, and innovation incubators.

Research Recommendations

Future research should:

1. Employ longitudinal studies to assess the long-term impact of youth agripreneurship on household food security and rural development.
2. Explore gender-specific challenges and opportunities for female agripreneurs.
3. Develop comparative cross-country studies to benchmark successful models of youth-inclusive agribusiness ecosystems.
4. Investigate the role of digital transformation and AI tools in improving productivity and market connectivity for youth in agriculture.

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