

## A CASE STUDY

# State of agribusiness management education in India

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### ABSTRACT

Agribusiness is a fast growing and market oriented academic discipline due to its high demand in corporate and academic sector across the world. The higher agribusiness education is the solution to problems of meeting the need of agribusiness professionals to farming community and dynamic agribusiness industry. In India, evidence shows that agribusiness faculty is lower than agricultural economics faculty in the colleges and universities. Now, the departments expect more agribusiness faculty to teach more courses for growing student's populations and to maintain research expectations in the agribusiness field. The agribusiness students should develop their strengths in practical and problem solving areas such as team building and interpersonal skills; writing skills and presentation skills. The present study focused on the past, present and future perspectives of agribusiness management education in India. It is also explore the need, importance, present status, curriculum, and challenges of agribusiness management education in India. Lack of teaching faculty, Lack of agribusiness research, Lack of dynamic curricula, and lack of relevant literature are the major obstacles in the development of agribusiness education in India. Indian authorities (ICAR and UGC) can follow the recommendations of National Food and Agribusiness Management Education Commission (NAEC, USA) to develop agribusiness curriculum for master's programme and doctoral degree programme. These recommendations helps to provide a roadmap for educators as they assess their current teaching programs and provide input for further revision of those programs in the future to insure dynamic, vibrant and relevant programs in agribusiness management education. There is a need to critically review the existing agribusiness education system and develop a relevant, flexible, and market oriented agribusiness curriculum and syllabi for master and doctoral programme in India.

**KEY WORDS :** Agribusiness, Higher education, Agribusiness curriculum, Doctoral programme, National agribusiness education commission (NAEC, USA)

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In agriculture education system, agribusiness management field is of very recent origin and gaining rapid popularity among students as profession (Bairwa *et al.*, 2014a). Agriculture students are now changing their roles as

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agribusiness managers and must understand that they should not only know their organizations requirements but must also stand in support to the farmers helping them implement new changes in their farming for better yields. Indian agriculture is rapidly changing due to globalization, competitive environment and changing role of government (Bairwa *et al.*, 2014e; Bairwa and Kushwaha, 2015). The policy of liberalization and the establishment of WTO have created more opportunities for globalizing agriculture (Bairwa *et al.*, 2014c). Agribusiness management education is nothing but the application of management principles in agriculture education (Dooley and Fulton, 1999). The term "agribusiness" used first time by John H. Davis and Ray A. Goldberg in the year 1957 in their book "A Concept of Agribusiness." In

January 1956, John H. Davis published an article on “From Agriculture to Agribusiness” in the Harvard Business Review (Davis, 1956). Agribusiness can be define as science and practice of activities with backward and forward linkage related to production, processing, marketing and trade, distribution of raw and processed food, feed, fibre including supply of inputs and service for these activities. Agribusiness is a concept of economics, which includes the sum total of all operations involved in the manufacturing and distribution of farm supplies, production operation on the farm, and the storage, processing and distribution of farm commodities and items made from them (Davis and Goldberg, 1957). The agribusiness sector encompasses the many activities of agricultural sector under one umbrella like integration of agricultural inputs, agricultural productions, agro processing, agricultural marketing, and trade, which add value to the agriculture produce (Kumar *et al.*, 2014 and Bairwa *et al.*, 2014b). Now-a-days, agribusiness has become one of the most important fields in the developing country like India to boost up its economy and taking care of globalization opportunities and challenges (Pandy and Tewari, 2010; Bairwa *et al.*, 2014d). The market for processed and packaged food products is increasing day by day and therefore there is a vital need of trained work force in agribusiness sector (Litzenberg and Parks, 1996). Thus, agribusiness management education is an emerging academic discipline, which is the blend of agriculture, business (commerce), and management discipline.

#### **Significance of agribusiness management in national economy :**

Agribusiness management education helps in enhance employment opportunities to youths, increase export of domestic products and foreign exchange in the national economy. Agribusiness provides many types of jobs related to production, finance, marketing and farm management. An individual pursue a career in agribusiness management education have employment opportunities in government, semi government, private sector along with entrepreneurship development on their own land. Agribusiness education provides job opportunities on the various post of academic like assistant professor, agribusiness experts and gives chance of scientists in ICAR institutes. Agribusiness professionals have bright future in academic field due to new emerging discipline and lack of agribusiness faculty in the country. It also provides job opportunities on managerial posts in government institutes like FCI, CWC, IFFCO, NSC, NABARD, NAFED, National Fertilizer Corporation, Tea Board and Rubber Board. Agribusiness students can get jobs on various posts such as sales executives, credit officers, agri experts, warehousing managers, financing officers, food managers and logistic managers in national and multinational corporation (Bairwa *et al.*, 2014a). The commercial agriculture and

agribusiness calls for specialized production, postharvest management, expansion of processing, transportation, packaging activities and positioning of products both in the domestic as well as international markets (Hambley and Marquardt, 1990). In the era of privatization and globalization, major structural reforms are taking place in the agricultural sector. India is on the threshold of green revolution. Commercialization of agriculture, horticulture, animal husbandry, dairying, fisheries and other allied sectors are taking place at a faster pace in the country (Bairwa and Kushwaha, 2014). National agriculture policy, agricultural reforms like public private partnerships, market lead extension programmes and agricultural technology management programmes envisage market centred production programmes in agriculture and allied sectors to attain sustainability (Bairwa and Kushwaha, 2015). Thus, agribusiness managers have great opportunities in agriculture production, agricultural marketing, food processing, supply chain, dairying and retailing sector in national and multinational corporation (Bairwa *et al.*, 2014a). These MNCs are very interested to investment in industries like agrochemical, organic farming, cattle feed industry, horticultural based industries, poultry, plantation, agroforestry, and ayurvedic industry in order to exploit the potentials of market access in India (Kumar *et al.*, 2014). They can also look for a career in agriculture consultancy, agri banking, hi-tech farming and agriculture engineering sectors (Sunitha, 2009 and Bairwa *et al.*, 2014a). This situation creates employment opportunities in the economy directly and indirectly. Now days, the public, private and co-operative organizations are looking for professionally competent and trained agribusiness managers for maintaining growth of the organization. The managerial skills of meritorious agricultural graduates can be developing through agribusiness management education and training. Thus, agribusiness management boost up the economy by increasing production, efficiency, and productivity of the agriculture sector.

#### **Master and doctoral degree programme in agribusiness management :**

In India, almost all the state agricultural universities (SAUs) are offering a master program, while few of them also offering doctoral degree program in agribusiness management education. Master and doctoral degree programmes (higher education) in agribusiness management play a significant role in developing the theoretical and empirical solutions to the problems faced by farming and entrepreneurial community (Bairwa and Kushwaha, 2014). Higher education is beginning to play an increasingly important role in the process of globalization, which promotes information technology development and diffusion of innovation and the ability of economics to benefit from rapid shift in production goods,

services and ideas (Belfield and Levin, 2003; Sonka and Hudson, 1989). The higher agribusiness education can solve the problem by developing the large pool of talent through training programmes in managerial skills (Harling, 1995). Agribusiness graduation, master and doctoral degree programs have experienced increasing growth in enrolment because agribusiness-teaching programs emphasize on the application of different perspectives rather than a singular disciplinary (Hambley and Marquardt, 1990; Harrison and Ng, 2011). Master programme are offering in different titles such as MABM, PGDABM, PGPABM and MBA (Agribusiness). Recently, some of institutes also started the doctoral

programme in agribusiness management. Indian Institute of Management, Ahmadabad, University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad, GBPUAT, Pantnagar, Institute of Agribusiness Management, Bikaner and Institute of Rural management anand are the leading institutes who offering the doctoral programme/fellow programme in agribusiness management education. A background in agriculture and allied sectors (Horticulture, animal husbandry, dairying, veterinary, food tech, agriculture engineering, forestry and agroforestry) is the first step towards entering agribusiness management course (Bairwa and Kushwaha, 2014). Students who have bachelor's degree in agriculture or allied sectors from any

**Table 1 : Some premier agribusiness management education institutes in India**

Sr. No.	Name and Address of Institutes	Course Name
1.	Indian Institute of Management, Ahmadabad , Gujarat	PGPABM
2.	National Institute of Agricultural Marketing (NIAM),Jaipur, Rajasthan, <a href="http://www.ccsniam.gov.in">www.ccsniam.gov.in</a>	PGPABM
3.	Indian Institute of Management, Lacknow, Uttar Pradesh, <a href="http://www.iiml.ac.in">www.iiml.ac.in</a>	PGPABM
4.	Institute of Agribusiness Management, Bikaner, Rajasthan , <a href="http://www.iambbikaner.org">www.iambbikaner.org</a>	MBA(Agribusiness)
5.	Institute of Agricultural Sciences, BHU, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, <a href="http://www.bhu.ac.in">www.bhu.ac.in</a>	MABM
6.	Maharana Pratap University of Agriculture and Technology, Udaipur, Rajasthan, <a href="http://www.mpuat.ac.in">www.mpuat.ac.in</a>	MBA(Agribusiness)
7.	College of Agribusiness Management , GBPUAT ,Pantnagar, Uttrakhand <a href="http://www.cabm.ac.in">www.cabm.ac.in</a>	MBA(Agribusiness)
8.	National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management (MANAGE), Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh <a href="http://www.manage.gov.in">www.manage.gov.in</a>	PGPABM
9.	Faculty of Management Studies, BHU ,Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, <a href="http://www.bhu.ac.in/fms">www.bhu.ac.in/fms</a>	MBA(Agribusiness)
10.	Acharya N.G. Ranga Agricultural University, Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh	MABM
11.	Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh	MEABM
12.	Allahabad Agricultural University ,Allahabad	PGDABM
13.	Dr.Y.S. Permar University of Horticulture and Forestry, Solan, Himachal Pradesh	MBA(Agribusiness)
14.	Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana, Punjab	MBA(Agribusiness)

Source: Compiled by authors

**Table 2 : Model of master's program in agribusiness management by NAEC, USA**

Sr. No.	Curriculum	Semester hours
1.	Common body of business knowledge Concepts, processes and institutions involved in the production or marketing of goods or services or both and the financing of the business enterprise or other forms of organizations Economic and legal environment as it pertains to profit or non-profit organizations, or both, along with ethical considerations and special and political influences as they affect such organizations. Concepts and applications of accounting, quantitative methods and management information systems as they affect the overall management of agribusiness organizations	20
2.	Agribusiness management Policies and regulations affecting agriculture International businesses Risk management Strategic management Applications of theory and techniques of agribusiness-firm management to problems and issues of production, marketing, finance, information, technology and environment	12
3.	Management electives	13
	Total minimum credits requirement	45

Source : NAEC, USA

recognized university are preferred for master programme and master degree holder are eligible for doctoral programme in agribusiness management (Bairwa *et al.*, 2014a). Major institutes offered master and doctoral programme in agribusiness management listed in Table 1.

#### Curriculum of agribusiness management education :

In education system, curriculum is the complete set of taught material in a school system. It may define a complete course of study offered by an institute. Agribusiness curricula must be innovative, more practical, interactive, and market oriented. It must contain industrial visits, industrial attachments, entrepreneur's interactions, case studies, and more practical courses than theoretical in nature. Agribusiness courses need to be reflective of market orientation and industry interests (Mabaya *et al.*, 2010). Boland *et al.* (1999) describes that MBA programs in agribusiness required some core courses such as finance, management, marketing management, and human behaviour along with some additional required courses in policy, agricultural marketing, managerial economics, and quantitative methods. They consider that these programs continue to produce individuals who understand the implications of their education and training in their everyday decision-making. They also made a comparison between curriculums of MBA (Agribusiness) and Master in Agribusiness (MAB) degree programme. Most of the MBA programs in agribusiness integrate agricultural concepts into business curriculum while MAB programs integrate business concepts into agricultural economics programs. These findings are similar as obtained by Sonka Steven (1989) in their study in USA. The PGP - ABM of Indian Institute of Management, Ahmadabad has a solid managerial foundation curriculum, which focuses on food and agribusiness marketplace, and is design to build and enhance a global perspective among participants. The course comprises three components: the core management courses, compulsory food and agribusiness related courses and electives courses. The core programme consists of 33 core management courses encompassing 25.50 credits in the first year and is common with the PGP to enhance learning due to multiple perspectives and competitiveness. After the first year programme, students undergo rural immersion and summer internship with the institute's corporate partners, which provide students field and organizational experience. The compulsory as well as elective courses designed to impart specialized multi-functional knowledge and skills required by food and agri-business sector managers for excellence in planning, decision-making, organization and implementation in different sub-sectors and activities in the sector including agriculture, food, agribusiness, rural and allied sectors. The students undertake research project course that helps in gaining first-hand experience in current management practices

and philosophy ([www.iimahd.ernet.in/programmes/pgp-abm](http://www.iimahd.ernet.in/programmes/pgp-abm)). The National Agribusiness Education Commission and Downey *et al.* (1989) proposes the courses in a model of master's program in agribusiness management (Table 2).

#### Challenges of agribusiness management education in india:

Agribusiness management education is in initial stage of development in India which emerging as popular career option among agricultural graduates. A shortage of trained agribusiness professionals is the major challenge for agribusiness academic institutions (Harling, 1995 and Pandey, 2013). Agribusiness degree program mostly run by department of agricultural economics and faculty of management studies. There are not separate departments, colleges, and universities (except few) like western countries and do not have specialized teaching faculty for agribusiness courses and taught by teachers of the department of agricultural economics. Thus, the major challenges in the development of agribusiness education are no proper agribusiness research and extension, lack of Indian agribusiness literature, no separate agribusiness departments, and universities, lack of specialized agribusiness teaching faculty and lack of standardized agribusiness curriculum and syllabi.

#### Conclusion :

Agribusiness management education is a blend of agriculture, business and management discipline and now it seen as an academic discipline with tremendous potential due to its many opportunities of employment and entrepreneurship development. The agribusiness management education planned to develop management workforce to cater agricultural industry, which serves as a good option for the students willing to perform in corporate sector. It was observe that fresh agricultural graduates were facing several problems as managers in agribusiness firms. Agribusiness education helps mould the personnel into good managers having managerial expertise. Agribusiness management has wide scope in developing the trained manpower in different areas of operation *viz.*, management personnel to cater to cooperatives and agriculture industry, policy makers for financial sector, trained teaching staff to cater the academic field, technically sound team to serve research work. Thus, agribusiness management education is all about how to develop trained work force, to create business opportunities, reduce poverty through employment generation and industrial development.

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