

# Agribusiness as an Essential Subject: Through the Lense of Related Literature

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.51244/IJRSI.2024.1109066>

Received: 20 September 2024; Accepted: 25 September 2024; Published: 11 October 2024

## ABSTRACT

Agribusiness, a critical sector that combines agriculture and business, plays a significant role in economic development, food security, and environmental sustainability. Despite its importance, agribusiness is often underrepresented in educational curricula. This research study argues for the inclusion of agribusiness as a core subject in schools, emphasizing the sector's potential to drive economic growth, equip students with entrepreneurial skills and preparing them for a changing agricultural landscape, addressing food security, promote sustainable practices, and enhancing career opportunities. The study highlights the need for early education in agribusiness to address the challenges of a rapidly changing agricultural landscape, both in developing and developed economies.

**Keywords:** Agribusiness, curriculum, importance

## INTRODUCTION

Agribusiness degree programs train managers to make decisions in complex business environments (Wolfskill, 2011). The agribusiness sector development is often portrayed as an essential component of economic development. Though Benin is a country with inestimable agricultural potential, the agribusiness sector appears unappealing to the local youths (Magbondé, Mignouna, Manyong, Adéoti, & Sossou, 2023).

Meanwhile, the absence of updated agribusiness subjects in many agricultural curricula has been a growing concern. While agribusiness is critical to modern economies, especially in developing nations, the curriculum in many universities remains outdated and lacks a focus on essential skills like supply chain management, marketing, and entrepreneurship. Many experts have pointed out the need for a modernized approach that integrates not just production knowledge but also commercial agricultural techniques to equip graduates for the challenges posed by globalization and climate change (Agrawal & Jaggi, 2023).

In countries like the Philippines, efforts have been made to incorporate entrepreneurship into agribusiness programs, recognizing the role of micro, small, and medium enterprises in driving growth in the agricultural sector (UPLB, 2020). However, there remains a gap in providing students with comprehensive knowledge and skills necessary to meet the demands of the evolving agribusiness landscape (Agribusiness Education and Research International, 2020). Addressing this gap is essential for fostering innovation and ensuring food security in a rapidly changing world.

With this, it is very important to strengthen Agribusiness in the basic education curriculum as it equips

students with foundational knowledge about agriculture, business principles, and their integration, which are vital for addressing global food security challenges. By introducing students early to the complexities of food production, distribution, and market dynamics, it fosters a deeper understanding of how agriculture drives economic growth and sustainability. Agribusiness education also nurtures entrepreneurial skills, encourages innovation, and promotes interest in agricultural careers, preparing future generations to contribute meaningfully to the agricultural sector and rural development. Additionally, it helps students appreciate the significance of agriculture in everyday life, encouraging responsible consumption and environmental stewardship. This study is hoped to provide clearer understanding of the significance of Agribusiness and policy makers in the education sectors will provide framework on how to make Agribusiness a subject that is equally important as emphasized like Science, Technology, and Mathematics.

## METHODOLOGY

This paper employs a review of related literature (RRL) approach, which involves systematically analyzing existing studies and scholarly works relevant to a particular research topic or question. This method plays a crucial role in research by examining past findings to identify gaps in current knowledge and provide a framework for the present study. As noted by Creswell (2014), a thorough literature review helps researchers build on prior work, avoiding duplication and fostering new insights. By synthesizing previous studies, researchers can also uncover patterns, theoretical models, and methodologies that guide the design of their own research. Additionally, an RRL helps define the scope of a study, ensuring the research problem is well-situated within the existing body of knowledge.

A critical function of the RRL is to evaluate and compare the findings of earlier research. Ridley (2012) emphasizes that this evaluation allows researchers to assess the validity, reliability, and relevance of previous studies, influencing the direction of new research endeavors. A well-organized RRL also identifies conflicting perspectives or inconsistencies in the literature, highlighting areas that may require further investigation. Moreover, it provides the theoretical framework needed to justify the significance of a study and assists in the development of research questions and hypotheses. By carefully reviewing related studies, scholars not only position their work within the broader academic conversation but also contribute to the ongoing growth of knowledge in their field.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The matrix below presents the impacts of Agribusiness as an educational discipline.

Matrix 1. Importance of Agribusiness as an Educational Discipline.

Impact	Proponent
<b>Economic Growth Driver</b>	Bingen, Bush & Meijerink (2020)
	Kassie, Shiferaw, & Muricho, (2021)
	World Bank (2022)
<b>Equip Students with Entrepreneurial Skills</b>	Kahan (2021)
	Man (2022)
	Mars, Slaughter, & Slocum (2020)
<b>Food Security</b>	FAO (2021)
	Smith, Bustamante, Ahammad, Clark, & Dong (2020)
<b>Sustainable Practices and Opportunities</b>	Krause & Schlegel (2021)
	Lal, Reicosky & Hanson (2020)
	Peters & Lang (2022)

**Economic Growth Driver.** Economic growth drivers play a pivotal role in the context of agribusiness by catalyzing various sectors of the economy through increased productivity and innovation. The agribusiness sector significantly contributes to economic development by enhancing food security, generating employment, and fostering rural development. According to Bingen et al. (2020), agribusinesses stimulate economic growth by creating value chains that integrate agricultural production with processing and marketing, thus improving efficiency and profitability. Moreover, agricultural innovations and technological advancements have been shown to boost productivity and sustain growth in rural economies (Kassie et al., 2021). Furthermore, the sector's contribution to economic stability and poverty reduction underscores its essential role in overall economic growth (World Bank, 2022). The integration of modern technologies and practices in agribusiness is critical for achieving sustainable economic progress and resilience.

Agribusiness serves as a vital economic growth driver by promoting employment, increasing food security, and fostering rural development. The integration of smallholder farmers and small and medium enterprises (SMEs) into agribusiness value chains is essential for improving market access, generating employment, and enhancing nutrition (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations [FAO], 2023). Sustainable agribusiness practices, such as regenerative farming and digital innovations, can enhance productivity and resilience, which are crucial for meeting the increasing global food demand (World Economic Forum, 2023). In developing economies, policies that support agribusiness development and create enabling environments for sustainable food value chains can significantly reduce poverty and ensure food security (FAO, 2023). By leveraging innovations and inclusive policies, agribusiness not only boosts economic growth but also contributes to achieving global goals like zero hunger and sustainable development.

**Equip Students with Entrepreneurial Skills.** Equipping students with entrepreneurial skills is a fundamental role of the agribusiness subject, as it prepares them to navigate and innovate within the dynamic agricultural sector. Agribusiness education fosters critical thinking, problem-solving, and the ability to identify market opportunities, which are essential for successful entrepreneurship. According to Mars, Slaughter, and Slocum (2020), students exposed to agribusiness curricula develop skills in business planning, resource management, and value creation, enabling them to launch and sustain agricultural ventures. Furthermore, agribusiness programs often incorporate real-world case studies and experiential learning, which enhance students' ability to apply entrepreneurial concepts in practical settings (Kahan, 2021). The integration of entrepreneurial training within agribusiness education helps bridge the gap between agricultural production and market demands, positioning students to become innovators and leaders in the field (Man, 2022).

Agribusiness courses are increasingly seen as vital for equipping students with entrepreneurial skills, enabling them to navigate and succeed in the agricultural sector. These courses cover various aspects of starting and managing agribusinesses, such as identifying business opportunities, developing business plans, and understanding financial management. For example, the FAO e-learning course "Agripreneurship 101" teaches students to identify and assess unmet needs within the agrifood value chain and develop a comprehensive understanding of their target market (FAO e-learning Academy, 2023). Similarly, the CABI Academy's course on entrepreneurship in agribusiness focuses on best practices and strategic planning tailored to specific needs, ensuring that students can build and sustain successful agribusinesses (CABI Academy, 2023).

Moreover, specialized courses like the Agricultural Business Foundations (ABF) offered by the Curriculum for Agricultural Science Education (CASE) provide a structured approach to teaching business management in agriculture. These courses include practical activities and projects that help students develop viable business plans and solve local problems, fostering skills that are transferable to various pathways in the agricultural sector (CASE, 2023). By incorporating such comprehensive training, agribusiness courses play

a crucial role in preparing students to become effective agripreneurs.

**Food Security.** Food security is a critical focus of the agribusiness subject, as it addresses the growing global challenge of ensuring access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food for all. Agribusiness education equips students with the knowledge and skills needed to improve agricultural productivity, supply chain management, and sustainability, all of which are essential for achieving food security. According to FAO (2021), agribusiness plays a vital role in enhancing food systems by promoting innovations that increase crop yields, reduce post-harvest losses, and improve food distribution networks. Additionally, agribusiness initiatives focused on sustainable practices and resource-efficient technologies help mitigate the impacts of climate change and land degradation, which are major threats to global food security (Smith et al., 2020). By integrating food security concepts into agribusiness education, students become key contributors to solving one of the world's most pressing issues.

Agribusiness courses are crucial in addressing food security by equipping students with the skills needed to enhance agricultural productivity and sustainability. As global demand for food is expected to increase by 56% from 2010 to 2050, it is essential to train individuals in innovative agricultural practices and sustainable resource management (World Economic Forum, 2023). Courses like the FAO's "Agripreneurship 101" provide essential knowledge on identifying agribusiness opportunities, understanding market needs, and improving financial management in agriculture, all of which are critical for boosting food production without compromising environmental health (FAO, 2023). Such educational programs are pivotal in preparing a new generation of agripreneurs capable of contributing to food security by developing resilient and sustainable food systems.

**Sustainable Practices and Opportunities.** Sustainable practices and opportunities are integral to the agribusiness subject, as they ensure the long-term viability of agricultural systems while addressing environmental challenges. Agribusiness education emphasizes the adoption of sustainable farming techniques, resource-efficient technologies, and eco-friendly supply chain strategies, which are essential for balancing economic growth with environmental stewardship. According to Lal et al. (2020), sustainable practices in agribusiness reduce environmental degradation, promote biodiversity, and conserve critical resources such as water and soil. Furthermore, the growing demand for sustainable products opens new market opportunities for agribusiness entrepreneurs, as consumers increasingly prioritize eco-friendly and ethically sourced goods (Krause & Schlegel, 2021). By integrating sustainability into the agribusiness curriculum, students are prepared to innovate within the agricultural sector, contributing to both profitability and environmental conservation (Peters & Lang, 2022).

Agribusiness, when practiced sustainably, offers numerous opportunities for economic development, environmental conservation, and social equity. Sustainable agribusiness practices focus on improving productivity while minimizing environmental impact, thus supporting long-term food security and rural development. By integrating smallholder farmers and SMEs into value chains, agribusinesses can enhance market access and income for rural communities, contributing to poverty reduction and improved nutrition (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2024). Moreover, sustainable agricultural productivity growth, as highlighted by the USDA, is crucial for reducing the use of natural resources while maintaining or increasing food production, thereby contributing to climate resilience and economic stability (USDA, 2023). Overall, sustainable agribusiness practices not only offer economic benefits but also ensure the viability of food systems for future generations.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

Integrating agribusiness into educational curricula is essential for preparing students to meet the demands of a rapidly evolving agricultural sector. As the global population grows and food security becomes a pressing

concern, there is a need for skilled professionals who can innovate and manage agricultural enterprises efficiently. Strengthening agribusiness education equips students with a blend of technical knowledge and business acumen, enabling them to tackle challenges such as market volatility, resource management, and sustainable production practices. By fostering a deeper understanding of both the agricultural and business aspects, students are better prepared to contribute to the sector's growth and sustainability.

Moreover, agribusiness education promotes entrepreneurship among young people, encouraging them to explore opportunities within the agricultural value chain. With a comprehensive curriculum that covers topics like business planning, marketing, financial management, and the use of technology in agriculture, students are empowered to create and manage their own agribusiness ventures. This not only enhances their career prospects but also stimulates rural development and economic growth by creating job opportunities and fostering innovation in local communities.

Incorporating agribusiness into the curriculum also helps bridge the gap between traditional farming practices and modern agricultural technologies. By exposing students to the latest developments in agricultural science, such as precision farming, digital agriculture, and sustainable practices, educational programs can help future professionals implement more efficient and environmentally friendly farming methods. This knowledge is crucial for ensuring that agriculture remains viable and productive in the face of challenges like climate change and resource depletion.

In conclusion, strengthening agribusiness education is a strategic investment in the future of agriculture and food security. It not only equips students with essential skills but also encourages them to become leaders and innovators in a field that is vital to global well-being. Educational institutions, policymakers, and industry stakeholders must collaborate to design robust agribusiness programs that respond to current and future challenges, ultimately ensuring that the agricultural sector thrives and adapts to meet the world's needs.

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