GENERATION Z's ATTITUDES TOWARD AGRO-ENTREPRENEURSHIP: EXAMINING MOTIVATIONS, CHALLENGES, AND FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

Milovan Mirkov [1], Dragan Bulatović[2], Danijela Parojčić[3]

**Corresponding author E-mail: srdjan@hotmail.com*

ARTICLE INFO

Original Article

Received: *15 October 2025*

Accepted: *20 November 2025*

doi:10.59267/ekoPolj25041375M

UDC 316.346.32-053.6:338.43

Keywords:

Agriculture, agro-entrepreneurship, agro-business, Generation Z, rural area

***JEL**:* Q13, M13

ABSTRACT

This paper examines Generation Z attitudes toward agro-entrepreneurship, with particular emphasis on their motivation, perceived challenges, and perspectives on the future of agro-based business ventures. A structured questionnaire was used as the primary data collection instrument, targeting both rural and urban members of Generation Z. Using a snowball sampling method, 263 respondents participated in research during October 2025. Statistical analyses, including Mann-Whitney U and Kruskal-Wallis H tests, revealed that urban members of Generation Z, those from agricultural households, and those with personal agricultural experience exhibit higher motivation, perceive fewer barriers, and express more positive attitudes, highlighting the role of contextual and experiential factors in shaping agro-entrepreneurial engagement. These findings have practical and theoretical significance, providing insights for policymakers and educators to design targeted support programs, promote youth participation in agro-business, and foster sustainable rural development through entrepreneurship initiatives.

Introduction

Sustaining agricultural growth increasingly depends on engaging young people and promoting youth-led agro-entrepreneurship initiatives and activities (Giwu et al.,

1 Milovan Mirkov, Phd candidate, University Business Academy, Faculty of Economics and Engineering Management in Novi Sad, Cvećarska street no. 2, 21000 Novi Sad, Serbia, Telephone: +381 64 805 37 14, E-mail: milovanmirkov@yahoo.com, ORCID ID (https://orcid.org/0009-0008-0568-5121)

2 Dragan Bulatović, Ph.D., Professor, Faculty of Management, University Adriatic, Zemunska 143, Meljine, 85348, Herceg Novi, Montenegro, Phone: +38267541116, E-mail: bulat.d@gmail.com, ORCID ID (https://orcid.org/0009-0008-4590-1116)

3 Danijela Parojčić, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Faculty of Economics and Engineering Management in Novi Sad, University Business Academy, Cvećarska Street no. 2, 21107 Novi Sad, Serbia, E-mail: danijelaparojcic@gmail.com, ORCID ID (https:///orcid.org/0000-0002-0923-2620)

2024). Generation Z, entering the labor market with distinct values, expectations, and behavioral traits, differs significantly from previous generations (Bencsik et al., 2016; Benítez-Márquez et al., 2022; Paspalj et al., 2024; Grow & Yang, 2018). By 2025, Generation Z is projected to comprise approximately 27% of the global workforce (Koop, 2021), posing challenges for employers seeking to attract and retain this digitally native and socially conscious generation (Lukić Nikolić & Lazarević, 2023).

Agro-entrepreneurship is becoming increasingly significant in the agribusiness sector, as small and medium-sized enterprises demonstrate high adaptability and responsiveness to market changes and technological innovations (Nikolić et al., 2025). For Generation Z, employment preferences such as competitive remuneration, meaningful work, and comprehensive benefits (Workplace Institute at Kronos Incorporated, 2019), highlight the need for agro-business models that balance financial sustainability with social relevance. While valuing job security, Generation Z tends to pursue dynamic career paths and rarely remains with a single employer long-term, making entrepreneurship particularly appealing due to its autonomy and flexibility (Lukić Nikolić & Lazarević, 2022). Moreover, this generation expects access to modern technologies and exhibits low tolerance for outdated systems, emphasizing the need for digital integration and smart business solutions (Workplace Institute at Kronos Incorporated, 2019). Their strong orientation toward achievement and professional growth suggests that mentorship, innovation opportunities, and clear career pathways can effectively support engagement (Lukić Nikolić & Lazarević, 2023; Schroth, 2019). Additionally, Generation Z prioritizes work-life balance, transparent communication, and respectful workplace culture (O'Boyle et al., 2017; Schwieger & Ladwig, 2018), dimensions that should underpin agro-entrepreneurial ventures to attract and retain talent.

Despite its potential, Generation Z engagement in agriculture remains limited due to structural barriers such as insufficient policy support, restricted access to land and finance, inadequate market infrastructure, and limited practical experience (August, 2020). Promoting participation of Generation Z in agro-entrepreneurship is particularly important, as it can harness their creativity and innovation while fostering sustainable and modern agricultural practices (Giwu et al., 2025).

This study is motivated by persistent demographic and attitudinal challenges: an aging farming population and declining youth interest in agricultural careers threaten food-system resilience and rural livelihoods. Empirical evidence highlights both structural barriers and the ambivalence many young people feel toward agricultural careers (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2014; Girdziūte et al., 2022), underscoring the need to understand Generation Z's perceptions of agro-entrepreneurship.

The paper examines Generation Z's attitudes toward agro-entrepreneurship by assessing (a) motivational drivers, (b) perceived challenges, and (c) perspectives on future agro-enterprise development, with a comparison between rural and urban areas. The study is grounded in entrepreneurial intention models, particularly the Theory of Planned Behavior, which posits that attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control shape

entrepreneurial intent (Ajzen, 1991). Applying this framework to Generation Z allows the linking of individual dispositions with broader contextual constraints and opportunities.

This research contributes both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, it situates Generation Z's agro-entrepreneurial orientations within established intention models, improving understanding of how generational traits interact with sectoral features to shape entrepreneurial intentions. Practically, insights into motivations and barriers can inform policies, curricula, and employer practices designed to make agriculture a more attractive entrepreneurial pathway for young people, aligning with their preferences for meaningful, technology-enabled, and secure livelihoods (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2014; Zupur, 2024; Francis & Hoefel, 2018; Heřmanová et al., 2024).

The paper is structured as follows. The theoretical background and hypotheses development section provides an overview of agribusiness and agro-entrepreneurship, situating Generation Z's engagement within relevant theoretical frameworks and presenting the research hypotheses. The Methodology section explains the research design, sample characteristics, data collection procedures, and analytical techniques used to test hypotheses. The Results section reports empirical findings, including statistical analyses, while the Discussion section interprets these results in the context of existing literature, highlighting both theoretical and practical implications for agro-entrepreneurship and the engagement of Generation Z.

Theoretical framework and hypotheses development

Agribusiness encompasses the comprehensive network of business activities associated with agriculture, including the production, processing, distribution, and marketing of agricultural goods (Ilić et al., 2024; Latinović et al., 2023). It can be divided into three interdependent sectors: the input sector, which provides essential resources such as seeds, fertilizers, machinery, and feed; the farm sector, responsible for crop and livestock production; and the product sector, which handles processing, storage, distribution, and retailing of agricultural products (Ikuemonisan et al., 2022).

Agro-entrepreneurship refers to the application of business principles and innovative approaches to agriculture to enhance efficiency, profitability, and sustainability. By transforming farming into a market-oriented and technology-driven activity, agro-entrepreneurs promote innovation, optimize resource use, and implement effective risk management strategies. Their activities contribute to rural employment, food security, and economic growth, while fostering sustainable practices that strengthen the competitiveness and resilience of the agricultural sector (Kademani et al., 2024).

Human capital is a crucial determinant of youth engagement in agro-entrepreneurship, as it not only embodies the knowledge, skills, and competencies within a community but also underpins the effective use of other forms of territorial capital, such as social networks, natural resources, infrastructure, and institutional support (Dejanović et al., 2024). Closely related, agricultural entrepreneurship emphasizes the integration

of entrepreneurial thinking and business innovation within farm management and agricultural production. Agricultural entrepreneurs employ strategic planning, innovation, and risk management to enhance operational efficiency and sustainability (Yoon et al., 2021). They make informed decisions regarding production choices, resource allocation, and technology adoption to improve output and profitability. Given agriculture's high exposure to environmental and market risks, including weather variability, pest outbreaks, and price fluctuations, entrepreneurial skills are critical for mitigating uncertainty through innovation, diversification, and proactive planning (Gadanakis, 2024). By optimizing resources, improving productivity, and responding to evolving consumer preferences, agricultural entrepreneurs support both sectoral modernization and sustainability. Historically perceived as a traditional, low-technology industry dominated by small family farms, agriculture has undergone profound transformation. The integration of advanced technologies and engineering innovations has revolutionized production efficiency and sustainability on a global scale (Dias et al., 2019).

Building on this conceptual foundation, the study formulates three hypotheses concerning factors influencing Generation Z's engagement with agro-entrepreneurship:

H1: Respondents from urban areas are statistically more likely to report higher motivation to start an agro-entrepreneurial venture than respondents from rural areas. In contexts where agriculture remains the primary economic activity, rural Generation Z's aspirations may critically influence whether they pursue farming or not (Giwu et al., 2025). Rural youth often possess greater familiarity with agricultural activities and direct exposure to farming practices, enhancing both interest and self-efficacy in pursuing agricultural business opportunities (Tabares et al., 2022). The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) suggests that perceived behavioral control and sectoral familiarity influence entrepreneurial intentions, supporting the notion that a rural upbringing may positively shape motivation toward agro-entrepreneurship (Ajzen, 1991). On the other hand, some studies indicate that individuals from urban areas tend to be more motivated to initiate agro-entrepreneurial ventures (Girdziūte et al., 2022).

H2: Respondents whose parents or household members are actively engaged in agribusiness perceive significantly fewer challenges in starting an agro-entrepreneurial venture than those from households without agricultural involvement. Social learning theory posits that individuals acquire knowledge, skills, and confidence through observation and interaction with experienced role models (Bandura, 1977). Exposure to family members involved in agriculture provides practical insights and informal mentoring, reducing perceived barriers related to financial constraints, resource access, and market uncertainties. Empirical evidence demonstrates that familiar involvement in farming enhances entrepreneurial confidence and lowers risk perception among youth considering agricultural ventures (Plana-Farran et al., 2023).

H3: Respondents with personal experience working in agriculture express a significantly more positive attitude toward the long-term prospects of agro-entrepreneurship than

those without such experience. Youth attitudes and aspirations toward agriculture are strongly shaped by access to resources, livelihood assets, and prior exposure to farming activities (Stojković & Kocić, 2024; Henning et al., 2022). Individuals with direct agricultural experience acquire practical skills, deepen their understanding of farming operations, and build self-efficacy, fostering favorable attitudes toward the profitability and sustainability of agro-businesses. Within the TPB framework, relevant experience enhances perceived feasibility and benefits of entrepreneurial activity (Ajzen, 1991). Empirical studies indicate that youth with hands-on agricultural experience are more optimistic about the sustainability and profitability of agro-enterprises than those without such experience (Geza et al., 2021).

Materials and methods

Research design. This study utilized a structured questionnaire as the primary data collection instrument to examine Generation Z attitudes toward agro-entrepreneurship. The questionnaire was designed to assess motivational factors, perceived challenges, and future perspectives related to starting an agro-business, with a particular focus on differences between rural and urban members of Generation Z.

Questionnaire. The questionnaire was structured into two main sections. The first section focused on profile information and included six items capturing key background variables: gender, age, level of education, place of residence (categorized as rural or urban area), parent and household involvement in agribusiness, and personal experience in agricultural work. The second section of the questionnaire consisted of 15 attitudinal statements divided into three thematic scales: Motivation toward agro-business entrepreneurship (5 items), Perceived challenges in agro-business participation (5 items), and Perspectives on agro-business development (5 items). Each item was assessed using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). This format enabled quantitative analysis of Generation Z' attitudes and facilitated comparisons across demographic subgroups.

Sample. The study employed a snowball sampling method, a non-probability approach commonly used in exploratory research involving specific populations. Initial participants that belong to Generation Z were identified and invited to complete the questionnaire, after which they were encouraged to share the questionnaire link with peers who met the inclusion criteria. This referral-based process facilitated the expansion of the sample through existing social networks, enabling broader participation among young individuals from Generation Z interested or involved in agro-entrepreneurship. Data were collected during October 2025.

Data Analysis. Collected data from 263 respondents were processed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 21.0. Reliability of the measurement scales was confirmed by Cronbach's Alpha coefficient results presented in *Table 1*, with all coefficients exceeding the 0.70 threshold (DeVellis, 2003), indicating strong internal consistency.

Table 1. Cronbach Alpha coefficients

Scale	N	Cronbach's Alpha
Motivation toward agro-business entrepreneurship	5	0.831
Perceived challenges in agro-business participation	5	0.862
Perspectives on agro-business development	5	0.921

To assess the distribution characteristics of the dataset, several statistical techniques were utilized, including the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, visual inspection of histograms, evaluation of skewness and kurtosis coefficients, analysis of normal Q-Q plots, and boxplot interpretation. The findings revealed notable departures from normality ($p = 0.000$), which warranted the use of non-parametric statistical procedures. For group comparisons, the Mann-Whitney U test was applied when analyzing two independent samples, whereas the Kruskal-Wallis H test was used for comparisons involving three or more groups, maintaining a 95% confidence threshold. Furthermore, Levene's test indicated that the assumption of equal variances across groups was met ($p > 0.05$).

Research results

Table 2 presents the basic information about the respondents who participated in this research. The sample consists of a relatively balanced gender distribution, with slightly more males (54%) than females (46%), and is predominantly composed of young adults aged 18 to 28 (96%). Most respondents have attained higher levels of education, with 41% holding a university degree and smaller proportions having college, high school, primary, or doctoral-level education. In terms of residence, the majority live in urban areas (62%), while the remaining respondents come from rural areas. The respondents also have varied agricultural backgrounds: about 29% come from households where a family member is actively engaged in agriculture, 36% report occasional family involvement, and 35% have no family connection to the agriculture. Similarly, personal experience in agriculture ranges from regular participation (30%) to occasional help (38%), with nearly one-third (32%) having no experience at all.

Table 2. Basic information about respondents

	Answers	N	%
Gender	Male	142	53.99
	Female	121	46.01
Age	Up to 18	10	3.80
	From 18 to 28	253	96.20
Education	Primary School	10	3.80
	High School	76	28.90
	College	51	19.39
	University (bachelor and master studies)	107	40.68
	University (doctoral studies)	19	7.23
Place	Rural area (village, smaller settlements)	99	37.64
	Urban area (cities, larger settlements)	164	62.36

	Answers	N	%
Parents or household members involved in agrobusiness	Yes, they are actively engaged in agriculture as their main occupation	76	28.90
	Yes, they occasionally engage in agriculture (additional activity)	94	35.74
	No, no one in the household is engaged in agriculture	93	35.36
Personal experience working in agriculture	Yes, I regularly participate in agro-business	78	29.66
	Yes, I help occasionally	101	38.40
	No, I have no experience	84	31.94

Source: Authors' calculations

The results from *Table 3* indicate that overall motivation toward agro-business entrepreneurship among Generation Z is relatively low. This is reflected in the mean values, which range from 2.34 for motivation to establish an agro-business to 3.06 for perceived profitability, suggesting only moderate acknowledgment of the agriculture sector's potential. Similarly, agreement levels are generally limited: for example, only 14.83% of respondents agree that they are motivated to start their own agro-business, while 61.22% disagree. Other statements, such as viewing agriculture as a platform for creativity or being inspired by environmental and sustainability aspects, also show low mean values (2.88 and 2.65, respectively) and relatively higher disagreement percentages. Even perceptions of agriculture's societal contribution, although slightly higher (mean 3.05), reflect a cautious rather than strong positive attitude. These findings indicate that while members of Generation Z recognize some benefits of agro-entrepreneurship, their personal motivation and engagement remain limited.

Table 3. Results regarding the scale "Motivation toward agro-business entrepreneurship"

Statements	Answer	N	%	M	SD
I believe agro-entrepreneurship offers strong potential for profitability.	Disagree	99	37.64	3.06	1.196
	Neutral	79	30.04		
	Agree	85	32.32		
I am motivated to establish my own business within the agricultural sector.	Disagree	161	61.22	2.34	1.141
	Neutral	63	23.95		
	Agree	39	14.83		
I perceive agricultural work as contributing positively to society.	Disagree	95	36.12	3.05	1.327
	Neutral	71	27.00		
	Agree	97	36.88		
I perceive agro-entrepreneurship as a platform for creative expression and innovation.	Disagree	114	43.35	2.88	1.340
	Neutral	65	24.71		
	Agree	84	31.94		
The environmental and sustainability aspects of agriculture inspire my interest in this field.	Disagree	138	52.47	2.65	1.322
	Neutral	51	19.39		
	Agree	74	28.14		

Source: Authors' calculations

The results in *Table 4* suggest that respondents perceive moderate challenges in engaging with agro-business, with mean values indicating neither strong agreement nor strong disagreement. For instance, securing initial capital and the physically demanding nature

of agricultural work show relatively low mean scores (2.81 each), with disagreement percentages higher than agreement, indicating that many members of Generation Z do not view these as considerable barriers. In contrast, limited knowledge and skills (M = 3.02) and the perception that young agro-entrepreneurs are undervalued by society (M = 3.07) show slightly higher means, reflecting a more prominent concern among respondents. Agreement levels for these statements are substantial: 35.74% for skills and 41.45% for social undervaluation, highlighting areas where members of Generation Z feel more constrained. Overall, while some structural and social challenges are recognized, the findings indicate that perceived obstacles are moderate and vary across different dimensions of agro-entrepreneurship.

Table 4. Results regarding the scale "Perceived challenges in agro-business participation"

Statements	Answer	N	%	M	SD
Securing initial capital for agribusiness ventures is challenging.	Disagree	110	41.83	2.81	1.175
	Neutral	87	33.08		
	Agree	66	25.09		
The limited availability of modern agricultural technologies discourages my interest in the sector.	Disagree	140	37.26	2.59	1.139
	Neutral	70	27.00		
	Agree	53	35.74		
I lack sufficient knowledge and skills to successfully run an agro-based business.	Disagree	98	37.26	3.02	1.336
	Neutral	71	27.00		
	Agree	94	35.74		
I perceive agricultural work as physically demanding and less appealing.	Disagree	110	41.82	2.81	1.276
	Neutral	73	27.76		
	Agree	80	30.42		
I feel that young agro-entrepreneurs are undervalued by society.	Disagree	100	38.02	3.07	1.380
	Neutral	54	20.53		
	Agree	109	41.45		

Source: Authors' calculations

The results in *Table 5* indicate that respondents hold moderately cautious perspectives on agro-business development. Mean values for all statements are relatively low, ranging from 2.52 for openness to collaborate with peers to 2.91 for perceived need for government support, reflecting a generally restrained optimism. Disagreement generally exceeds agreement, particularly for collaboration with other young individuals (56.65% disagree) and the potential of digital technologies to enhance agriculture (46.77% disagree). While a slightly higher proportion agree that government support is needed (34.60%) or that agro-entrepreneurship can positively impact local communities (33.08%), disagreement remains the dominant response. Overall, these findings suggest that members of Generation Z recognize the potential of agro-entrepreneurship and policy support but remain cautious about its feasibility and collaborative opportunities, highlighting the need for targeted interventions to strengthen confidence and engagement.

Table 5. Results regarding the scale "Perspectives on agro-business development"

Statements	Answer	N	%	M	SD
I believe that digital technologies can enhance the agricultural sector.	Disagree	123	46.77	2.77	1.290
	Neutral	68	25.86		
	Agree	72	27.37		
I think the government should provide greater support for young agro-entrepreneurs.	Disagree	122	46.39	2.91	1.384
	Neutral	50	19.01		
	Agree	91	34.60		
I perceive agro-entrepreneurship as a field with strong long-term potential.	Disagree	126	47.91	2.81	1.434
	Neutral	50	19.01		
	Agree	87	33.08		
I am open to collaborating with other young individuals to launch an agro-based business.	Disagree	149	56.65	2.52	1.361
	Neutral	50	19.01		
	Agree	64	24.34		
I believe agro-entrepreneurship can positively impact the development of local communities.	Disagree	128	48.67	2.77	1.439
	Neutral	48	18.25		
	Agree	87	33.08		

Source: Authors' calculations

The Mann-Whitney U test was conducted to examine differences in respondents' motivation to start an agro-entrepreneurial venture between those from urban and rural areas. The result in *Table 6* shows a statistically significant difference between the two groups (U = 6,521.000, Z = -2.678, p = 0.007). This indicates that place of residence plays a significant role in shaping respondents' motivation toward agro-entrepreneurship. The mean and median scores reveal that respondents from urban areas (M = 2.91; Md = 2.80) reported higher levels of motivation compared to those from rural areas (M = 2.61; Md = 2.60). This finding suggests that urban members of Generation Z may view agro-entrepreneurship as a novel and promising opportunity, potentially linked to innovation, sustainability, or self-employment prospects. In contrast, rural respondents, who are more familiar with the traditional challenges of agricultural work, may perceive it as less attractive or less profitable.

Table 6. Mann-Whitney U test results for H1 hypothesis examination

	Answers	N	M	Md	U	Z	p
Place	Urban areas	164	2.91	2.80	6,521.000	-2.678	0.007*
	Rural areas	99	2.61	2.60			

Source: Authors' calculations

The Kruskal-Wallis H test was used to examine whether there are statistically significant differences in attitudes toward agro-entrepreneurship depending on family involvement in agriculture (H2) and personal experience working in agriculture (H3).

For H2, the test revealed a significant difference among groups ($\chi^2 = 31.746$, df = 2, p = 0.000). This indicates that respondents' attitudes significantly differ depending on whether their parents or household members are engaged in agricultural activities.

Descriptive results show that respondents whose family members are not engaged in agriculture reported the highest mean attitude scores (M = 3.20), while those whose family is actively engaged in agriculture reported the lowest mean scores (M = 2.48). This suggests that direct family involvement in farming is associated with less favorable attitudes toward pursuing agro-entrepreneurship. It is possible that those with close exposure to agricultural challenges have more realistic or critical views of the sector.

For H3, a significant difference was also found (χ^2 = 39.701, df = 2, p = 0.000), confirming that respondents' attitudes vary according to their personal agricultural experience. Specifically, participants with no personal experience had the highest mean attitude score (M = 3.37), whereas those who regularly participate in agro-business expressed the lowest (M = 2.27). This pattern is in line with the previous finding: greater direct involvement in agriculture corresponds to less positive perceptions or motivations toward agro-entrepreneurship.

Table 7. Results of the Kruskal-Wallis H-test for H2 and H3 hypotheses examination

	Answers	N	M	Md	χ2	df	p
Parents or household members involved in agrobusiness	Yes, they are actively engaged in agriculture as their main occupation	76	2.48	2.40	31.746	2	0.000*
	Yes, they occasionally engage in agriculture (additional activity)	94	2.59	2.40			
	No, no one in the household is engaged in agriculture	93	3.20	3.20			
Personal experience working in agriculture	Yes, I regularly participate in agro-business	78	2.27	1.60	39.701	2	0.000*
	Yes, I help occasionally	101	2.62	2.40			
	No, I have no experience	84	3.37	3.40			

Source: Authors' calculations

Discussion of research findings

The results obtained in this research reveal a discrepancy between cognitive appreciation and behavioral intention: members of Generation Z recognize the broader importance of agro-entrepreneurship but remain hesitant to engage personally, possibly due to perceived risks, low attractiveness of agricultural work, or limited institutional support for agro-startups.

Furthermore, the results suggest that social undervaluation and lack of entrepreneurial skills are perceived as the most pressing challenges, while financial and technological limitations remain secondary but still notable challenges. These findings point to the need for policies that not only provide material support but also reframe the social image of agro-entrepreneurship as a modern and respected career path for Generation Z.

Finally, the results suggest that while respondents acknowledge the developmental and technological potential of agro-business, they emphasize the need for stronger institutional support and demonstrate limited personal engagement readiness.

Strengthening youth networks, improving access to financial and technical resources, and enhancing governmental backing could therefore be key strategies for fostering sustainable agro-entrepreneurial development.

Table 8 presents the summary of the proposed hypotheses and decision based on conducted statistical tests.

Table 8. Summary of hypotheses testing

Hypothesis	Applied test	Result	Decision
H1: Respondents from urban areas are statistically more likely to report higher motivation to start an agro-entrepreneurial venture than respondents from rural areas.	Mann-Whitney U test	U = 6,521.000 Z = -2.678 p = 0.007	Supported
H2: Respondents whose parents or household members are actively engaged in agribusiness perceive significantly fewer challenges in starting an agro-entrepreneurial venture than those from households without agricultural involvement.	Kruskal-Wallis H-test	χ^2 = 31.746 df = 2 p = 0.000	Supported
H3: Respondents with personal experience working in agriculture express a significantly more positive attitude toward the long-term prospects of agro-entrepreneurship than those without such experience.	Kruskal-Wallis H-test	χ^2 = 39.701 df = 2 p = 0.000	Supported

Source: Authors' calculations

These results collectively suggest that place of residence, family background in agriculture, and personal experience in the sector are key determinants of motivation, perceived challenges, and perspectives toward agro-entrepreneurship.

Members of Generation Z from urban areas tend to perceive agro-entrepreneurship as novel, innovative, and potentially linked to social status or personal identity, extending beyond traditional subsistence farming. Their greater exposure to ideas, media, professional networks, and alternative livelihood models may elevate their expectations and aspirations. In contrast, members of Generation Z from rural areas typically have more direct experience with agricultural risks and constraints, such as adverse weather, low profitability, and physically demanding labor, which may temper motivational optimism. This pattern aligns with previous research indicating that rural youth often shift toward nonfarm sectors due to dissatisfaction with agrarian risks and income volatility (Girdziūte et al., 2022).

Family involvement in agriculture appears to mitigate perceived risks and uncertainties. Members of Generation Z from households actively engaged in agriculture benefit from generational knowledge, access to resources, established social networks, and tacit support. The role-model effect of parents in entrepreneurial or agricultural activities is well-documented: children are more likely to adopt entrepreneurial intentions when parents act as examples and provide guidance (Cardella et al., 2020). In practical terms, family

involvement may also reduce perceived barriers related to land access, credit availability, or mentorship, as these resources or support systems are already partially available.

Finally, personal experience in agricultural work contributes to more positive attitudes toward agro-entrepreneurship by offering practical insight, confidence, and a realistic sense of control. Direct engagement helps bridge the gap between idea generation and action while reinforcing emotional attachment, identity, and belief in the viability of agro-business ventures. In line with agro-entrepreneurship literature, youth motivation is often tied to a sense of "calling" or personal affinity derived from firsthand experience (Thephavanh et al., 2022). Although these positive attitudes may coexist with recognition of structural challenges, such as capital constraints, they are generally stronger among those with direct agricultural experience.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that youth motivation, attitudes, and perceived challenges toward agro-entrepreneurship are strongly influenced by place of residence, family involvement in agriculture, and personal experience in the sector. Urban members of Generation Z exhibit higher motivation, likely due to greater exposure to innovative ideas and alternative livelihood models, while rural Generation Z attitudes are tempered by direct awareness of agricultural risks. Similarly, having family members engaged in agriculture or personal experience in the sector enhances positive perceptions and reduces perceived barriers, highlighting the importance of socialization and experiential learning.

This study has important implications for both theory and practice. From a theoretical perspective, the findings contribute to the growing literature on youth agro-entrepreneurship motivation by showing that motivational differences are strongly shaped by contextual and experiential factors, particularly place of residence, agricultural family background, and personal experience. These results support the notion that entrepreneurial intention in agriculture is not solely determined by individual attitudes or personality traits, but rather represents a situated construct influenced by socio-environmental exposure and perceived opportunity structures.

From a practical standpoint, the findings highlight the need to enhance the social and institutional attractiveness of agro-entrepreneurship as part of rural development strategies. Policymakers are encouraged to reframe agricultural work as a modern, technology-driven, and socially valued profession, for example by promoting digital agriculture and sustainability-oriented business models. Additionally, strengthening local innovation ecosystems, through improved access to finance, market linkages, and digital tools, can empower rural youth to view agribusiness not only as economically viable but also as prestigious and professionally rewarding.

This study is not without limitations, which should be acknowledged to provide a transparent interpretation of the findings and to guide future research efforts. *First*, the use of a snowball sampling method, while suitable for exploratory research and hard-to-reach populations such as Generation Z, limits the generalizability of the results.

The sample may not accurately represent the broader Generation Z population, as recruitment through peer networks often leads to homogeneity in demographic and attitudinal characteristics. Future studies could employ probability-based sampling techniques, such as stratified or cluster sampling, to ensure more representative coverage across different regions, educational backgrounds, and socio-economic contexts. *Second*, the research relied exclusively on self-reported data collected through a structured questionnaire, which introduces potential response and social desirability biases. Participants may have provided answers they perceived as favorable rather than reflecting their true opinions or intentions. Future research could benefit from incorporating mixed-method approaches, combining quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews or focus groups to gain deeper insights into the underlying motivations and barriers influencing agro-entrepreneurial intentions among members of Generation Z.

Conflict of interests

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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