



From Unemployment to Entrepreneur: A Success Story of Jammu & Kashmir's First Horse Riding School

Shahzada Mudasir Rashid*

*Division of Veterinary
Biochemistry, Faculty of
Veterinary Science and Animal
Husbandry, SKUAST-Kashmir,
India



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*Corresponding Author

Shahzada Mudasir Rashid*

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INTRODUCTION

Self-employment through innovative equine-based enterprises has emerged as a promising pathway for addressing unemployment among educated youth in the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir. One such inspiring success story is that of Mr. Ali Abbas Wani S/o Shawkat Ali Wani, an educated young man from Budgam district, who despite having formal education, faced prolonged unemployment and uncertainty in securing a stable livelihood.

The turning point in his life came when he came under the continuous mentorship and guidance of Dr. Shahzada Mudasir Rashid, Assistant Professor, SKUAST-Kashmir. Recognizing his passion for horses and equestrian activities, Dr. Rashid guided him to conceptualize and establish a professional horse riding school—an enterprise that was unprecedented in the region.

Under sustained technical, scientific, and motivational guidance, the idea was transformed into a viable enterprise named “Fazlullah Royal Stables”, located in Budgam, Kashmir (J&K). This establishment proudly stands today as Jammu & Kashmir's first and only organized horse-riding school.

From the planning stage to execution, Dr. Shahzada Mudasir Rashid provided step-by-step guidance in horse selection, housing and stable design, feeding and health management, training protocols, rider safety measures, course structuring, and financial planning. Special emphasis was laid on animal welfare, ethical training practices, and sustainability.

Over the last two to three years, Fazlullah Royal Stables has witnessed remarkable growth and recognition. Students from Budgam and adjoining districts enroll for structured horse riding courses ranging from basic riding skills to complete professional training. Alongside riding, trainees are educated in horse handling, grooming, stable hygiene, and basic equine health management.

The riding school has become a sustainable source of income for the owner, ensuring financial independence while creating indirect employment opportunities. Continuous advisory support in vaccination, deworming, feeding regimes, and workload management has ensured optimal health and performance of the horses.

Despite challenges such as seasonal demand and maintenance costs, the enterprise has emerged as a model of equine entrepreneurship. Fazlullah Royal Stables today stands as a living example of how educated unemployed youth can be transformed into successful entrepreneurs through continuous scientific guidance and mentorship.

This success story strongly reflects the pivotal role of Dr. Shahzada Mudasir Rashid, Assistant Professor, SKUAST-Kashmir, in converting unemployment into opportunity and passion into prosperity. The enterprise serves as an inspiration for youth across Jammu & Kashmir to explore innovative livestock and equine-based enterprises for sustainable livelihoods.

