



The Government Interventions in Strengthening Agripreneurship in India: A Comprehensive Study

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ABSTRACT

India is predominantly an agrarian economy where the population of farmers lies between 100 -150 million farmers. As the world's second-largest producer of agricultural products, farmers play a crucial role in farmlands by cultivating and growing the land for the production of crops. They supply their produce as raw materials to agro-based industries where the agripreneurs creates business through it and ultimately usher agripreneurship development in India. To facilitate more effectively in development and upliftment of agripreneurship in India, The Indian Government has launched initiatives through a number of institutions like National Dairy Development Board (NDDB), National Agricultural Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) etc and schemes like Make in India, Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) etc. The study intends to throw the light on the concept of entrepreneurship development with respect to agripreneurs, its importance in India's economy and various government interventions in uplifting the present scenarios of agripreneurship development in India.

Keywords: *entrepreneurship; agripreneurship; development; Indian Government; Indian economy; agripreneurs; growth; rural population; farmers; agribusiness*

1. INTRODUCTION

The change in years have brought a drastic change in the significance of agriculture in the agrarian economy like India, around 70% of the households in India rely on agriculture for their survival in terms of food and living. India is largest exporters of rice, spices, and beef (Suresh and Mathur, 2016) and also India is the leading producer of wheat and coarse grains (Pathak, 2023). In terms of exports; in 2021–2022, India's exports reached a record-breaking \$50.2 billion (Economic survey, 2022–23). Furthermore, according to the Second Advance Estimates of National Income (2022–23), the Gross Value Added (GVA) growth for agricultural and related industries (at 2011–12 prices) is 3.3%, and their share of the overall economy in 2022–2023 is 18.3%. Thus, the contribution of agriculture in India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is remarkable as with once being food deficit to currently the food surplus economy, India has come a long way and paved the way for constructive future ideas related to agriculture and its allied sectors.

1.1 WHAT IS ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT?

Entrepreneurship is the process wherein an individual or group of individuals owns a firm and engages in its creation and profitable operations. In other words, any person or group of people who owns the business and are involved in any type of entrepreneurial activity and extracting the profits out of that, then such entrepreneurial activity is called as “Entrepreneurship” and the person or group of people who carry out entrepreneurship are termed as “Entrepreneurs.” The successful entrepreneurs always exploit the opportunities provided to them and leads to entrepreneurship development. Therefore, opportunity exploitation is a phase in

the entrepreneurial process that is required to create a profitable firm. (Choi and Shephard, 2004). Apart from exploiting the opportunities, there are various other characteristics of entrepreneurs which helps in successful entrepreneurship development. These characteristics are as follows:

- According to Rotter (1966), entrepreneurs believe in internal rather than external locus of control.
- Schumpeter (1967) concluded that entrepreneurs are innovative in nature.
- According to Long (1983), Successful entrepreneurship is aided by managerial skills, creative opportunism, risk and uncertainties.
- Entrepreneurship comprises of uniqueness and growth in the business was discussed by Gartner (1990).
- Psychological Characteristics like risk bearing, tolerance for ambiguity, affiliation need and motivation helps in predicting the entrepreneurial orientation was emphasized by Lumpkin and Erdogan (2004).
- Nair and Pandey (2006) stressed that economically strong families posed better chances of making the entrepreneurial activity successful.
- Motivational forces help in making the entrepreneur successful was emphasized by Barrick *et al.* (2013).
- According to Viinikainen *et al.* (2017), leadership qualities in person during his early life have higher chances of becoming an entrepreneur during adulthood.

Beside these characteristics, entrepreneurs are curious, persistent, focused, team builders, decisive and comfortable with failure. Thus, entrepreneurship development is a process of developing, encouraging, uplifting and promoting the entrepreneurs by providing them the requisites like funds, capital, services, subsidies etc associated with their business ventures; so that they don't face any hindrance in order to get successful and mark their presence in the country's as well as global economy. Here, the Government and various financial institutions plays a substantial role in promoting prosperous entrepreneurship and paving the way for promising entrepreneurship development by allocating of funds, capital, services, subsidies etc.

1.2 NOTION OF AGRIPRENEURS

The notion of Agripreneurs is not new and is thus well versed that is if any person involved in entrepreneurial activities related to agriculture and its allied activities and making a profit through it; then he can be termed as an agripreneur (Uplaonkar *et al.*, 2015). Thus, an individual who engages in a diverse range of agricultural activities is known as an agripreneur as the person exhibits strong innovative qualities with great entrepreneurial wisdom and actively contribute to economy by either catering to untapped markets by introducing novel approaches to various processes (Bairwa *et al.*, 2014).

Hence, Entrepreneur + Entrepreneurial Activity (in the field of agriculture) = Agripreneur.

2. GOVERNMENT INTERVENTIONS IN PROMOTING AGRIPRENEURSHIP IN INDIA

India has one of the best entrepreneurship scenarios in the world as being top third country to have large startup ecosystem after United States and China with a home to as many 75,000 startups. Also, it ranks third globally in terms of number of unicorns. Recently, The National Statistical Office shared the official data (Estimates of Gross Domestic Product for the First Quarter, 2023-24) projecting that India's GDP expanded by 7.8% in the April-June quarter of the current fiscal year 2023-24, continuing to be one of the world's fastest growing economies. Additionally, India's position in the Global Innovation Index (GII) has witnessed a significant improvement, ascending from the 81st rank in 2015 to the 46th rank in 2021 (Dutta *et al.*, 2022). This advancement places India among the top 130 economies worldwide, as evaluated by the GII. Thus, to encourage innovation and agripreneurship within the people of India, the Government plays an integral and

fundamental role in strengthening entrepreneurship and agripreneurship in India. There are various entrepreneurship initiatives started by The Government of India which are as follows and namely-

2.1 Make In India - The “Make in India” project started in 2014, implemented by the Government of India, aims to foster the development, production, and assembly of goods within the country. It also seeks to promote committed investments in the manufacturing sector, with the ultimate goal of encouraging enterprises to produce items that are created in India (Shukla *et.al*, 2022). The policy approach aimed to establish a favourable atmosphere for investments, skill enhancement and job creation.

2.2 Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) – “Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana” was started by Government of India in 2015 to provide financial assistance to non-corporate, non-farm micro and small enterprises (Shahid *et.al*, 2016). The financial institution named “Micro Units Development and Refinance Agency Ltd.” (MUDRA) provides loans to small business class sector through various financial institutions like banks, NBFC’s etc. Under Mudra, the loans are provided under the ambit of three products i.e Shishu (covers loans up to Rs. 50,000), Kishor (covers loans over Rs. 50,000 and up to Rs. 5 Lakhs), and Tarun (covers loans above Rs. 5 Lakhs and up to Rs. 10 Lakhs). The aim is to provide financial assistance and foster entrepreneurship within citizens.

2.3 Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) - One well-known initiative of the Indian government is the “Atal Innovation Mission” (AIM), which was established in 2016 with the goal of encouraging innovation and entrepreneurship across the country (Wilson, 2019). The primary goal of AIM is to formulate novel initiatives and strategies aimed at promoting innovation across various sectors of the economy. Apart from this, AIM also seeks to establish platforms and facilitate collaboration among diverse stakeholders. Hence, AIM establishes a comprehensive framework to supervise the country's ecosystem of innovation and entrepreneurship.

2.4 Start Up India Initiative - In 2016, the Indian government launched the “Start Up India Initiative”, which aims to provide a robust startup ecosystem to boost the country's economy and develop entrepreneurial activities and innovation among individuals (Rani and M.A, 2017). The Ministry of Commerce and Industry recently introduced the “Startup India Seed Fund Scheme” (SISFS) as part of the Startup India Initiative where seed funding will be provided to the budding entrepreneurs.

2.5 Stand Up India Scheme- The Prime Minister introduced the “Stand Up India Scheme” in 2016 and is one of the few schemes which focuses on developing entrepreneurship among Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribe (STs) and women by providing financial aid to them in form of loans up to Rs.1 Crore (Rani and M.A, 2017).

2.6 CHUNAUTI - CHUNAUTI stands for “Challenge Hunt Under NGIS for Advanced Uninhibited Technology Intervention”. It is an online challenge initiated by the “Next Generation Innovation Sandbox” (NGIS) in 2020 with the objective of identifying solutions that may effectively tackle the issues and challenges encountered during and after the pandemic (Nair, 2021). Hence, it aims to find and provide assistance for solutions that can assist the government, industries, and people in carrying out their activities smoothly, while also enables them to overcome the various challenges and obstacles experienced during and post pandemic.

2.7 SAMRIDH - SAMRIDH stands for “Startup Accelerators of Meity for Product Innovation, Development and Growth”. In 2021, The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology launched it with the goal of providing financial support and incentives to startups in order to expand and develop their companies. (Naik and Patel, 2022).

2.8 NIDHI - NIDHI stands for “National Initiative for Development and Harnessing Innovations”. The Department of Science and Technology (DST) introduced it in 2021 with an aim to foster technology and innovation to carry out entrepreneurial activities among young minds (Sharma and Vohra, 2020). The scheme provides financial assistance in a form of seed fund up to Rs.1 Crore to encourage young minds for skill enhancement and innovation.

2.9 Digital India BHASHINI - Digital India BHASHINI where BHASHINI stands for “Bhasha Interface for India”. It was launched by The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology in 2022. It is India’s Artificial Intelligence (AI) led language translation platform which will provide data and resources to MSME (Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises). The initiative’s aim is to foster digital inclusion and encouraging participation of startups which will ultimately lead to empowering of Indian citizens (Makkar and Rajpal, 2023).

Apart from the entrepreneurial initiatives, there are various Government interventions which helps in promoting agripreneurship in India. These are as follows –

2.10 National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) – The National Dairy Development Board is the statutory body formed by the Act of Parliament in July, 1965; which is under the ownership of Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying and thus looks after the operations of the cooperative milk unions and increasing the income of the dairy farmers (Ghotekar, 2017).

2.11 National Agricultural Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) - The institutional support from the Government of India is given mainly by “National Agricultural Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development” (NABARD) formed in 1982. It is an apex institution which looks after sustainable rural development in the country.

2.12 Credit Linked Subsidy Scheme (CLCSS) - The Indian Government launched the Credit Linked Subsidy Scheme (CLCSS) in 2000 with an aim to help MSME through technological advancements which can ultimately lead to increase in profit maximization with growth and development of Indian economy (IB *et al.*, 2019). The scheme encouraged entrepreneurship in the nation's rural and suburban areas by offering a 15% subsidy on the purchase of specific machinery.

2.13 Venture Capital Assistance Scheme - The scheme was introduced by MSME in the year 2000 to help agripreneurs in setting up startups (Mohanani, 2006). Here, the interest free loans are provided by SFAC (Small Farmers Agribusiness Consortium) to small and marginal farmers and scheme was introduced with an aim to uplift the agripreneurs and the agro-based industries.

- 2.14 Dairy Entrepreneurship Development Scheme (DEDS)** – The “Dairy Entrepreneurship and Development Scheme” was started by Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries (Ministry of Agriculture) in 2006. The Scheme was initiated to uplift the dairy farmers and promote entrepreneurship in the dairy sector. (Naik and Patel, 2022).
- 2.15 ASPIRE** - ASPIRE stands for “A Scheme for Promotion of Innovation, Rural Industries and Entrepreneurship”. The scheme was launched by Government of India in 2015 with an aim to uplift and increase the employment and job opportunities in the rural areas of India (Salim *et al.*, 2022). The MSME-introduced initiative aimed to support agro-based industry startup enterprises by leveraging the network of technology centres and incubation centres.
- 2.16 Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana-** The “Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana” was introduced by Government of India in the year 2015 to encourage the nation's organic farming. Thus, the farmers were asked to form clusters or groups and carry out organic farming in the large area of agricultural land (Reddy, 2018).
- 2.17 Agri-clinics and Agribusiness Centre** – The Agri-clinics and Agribusiness centres are started by Government of India and “National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management” (MANAGE) who helps in implementing of these schemes. The goal of the scheme is to improve the current extension network in order to bolster input supply and services as well as expedite the agricultural technology transfer. (Uplaonkar *et al.*, 2015).
- 2.18 Startup Village Entrepreneurship Program (SVEP)** – The “Startup Village Entrepreneurship Program” is the flagship program of “National Institute of Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development” (NIESBUD) which extends supports to rural startups in the form of finances, incubation, and skill development.
- 2.19 National Beekeeping and Honey Bee Mission (NBHM)** - The scheme was started by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmer’s Welfare during 2019-20 in order to achieve the goal of ‘Sweet Revolution’, the scientific training was provided to the farmers or beekeepers for the overall promotion and development of scientific beekeeping and to promote agripreneurship among the beekeepers.
- 2.20 Rastriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY)** – The Indian Government launched the “Rastriya Krishi Vikas Yojana” in 2020 with the objective of boosting the farmer's income. and expand the job opportunities for rural population (Yadav *et al.*, 2022). The scheme focuses on the innovation and entrepreneurship development among farmers.
- 2.21 Livestock Insurance Scheme** - The insurance of livestock is the important risk management tool for dairy farms (Njavro and Plesko, 2007). The “Livestock Insurance Scheme” provides insurance facilities to the farmers or cattle rearers for untimely loss or accidental death of the animals. Thus, the scheme focuses on the improvement of the livestock and allied products.

2.22 One District One Product (ODOP) - Initially “One District One Product” was started by The State Government of Uttar Pradesh which was later implemented by Central Government (Ministry of Food Processing Industries) when successful in 2018 (Yadav *et al.*, 2022). The aim of the initiative was to reach to the districts of the various states where districts cater their capabilities in the form of products. It provides job opportunities to the local farmers to showcase their product. In the year 2022, the “One District One Product” was amalgamated with “District as Export Hub” (DEH) Initiative.

2.23 National Edible Oil Mission- Oil Palm (NMEO-OP) – The Prime Minister introduced the “National Edible Oil Mission- Oil Palm” during the year 2021. The initiative focuses on fostering the increase in domestic oil production so that dependence over oil imports is reduced (Mathur *et al.*, 2023). Under the scheme, the oil farmers will be given financial aids and remunerations.

2.24 Farmers Producer Organisation (FPOs)- The Government of India has promoted “Farmers Producer Organisation” since 2011 with the goal of doubling farmer’s income by 2022. It is a voluntary organisation which consist of small, marginal, and landless farmers as members which facilitate various decision making, education, training, and development for them (Prasad and C.S, 2019).

2.25 Digital India Genesis – “Digital India Genesis” where Genesis stands for “Gen- next Support for Innovative Startups” is an initiative of Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology started in the year 2022 where the Government is looking to create job opportunities in the tier 2 and tier 3 areas of the country by promoting more than 10,000 startups in the next five to six years (Kadaba *et al.*, 2023).

2.26 Agriculture Accelerator Fund – The FM Nirmala Sitharaman announced during Budget 2023 to create “Agriculture Accelerator Fund” to encourage young agripreneurs to start the business (Mahesh *et al.*, 2023). The startup fund will provide financial assistance to young agripreneurs and introduce new technologies to transform agripreneurship in India.

3. DISCUSSION

India is the land of agriculture and diverse climatic conditions and landscape which acts as a boon for the economy to carry out any type of agripreneurial activity for the development of the rural population and their individual income with the increase in the GDP of the country which facilitates in the increase in the national income and national economy. Thus, agripreneurship can do wonders if implemented properly in the country for upliftment of the rural economy as well as national economy. There are some suggestions given below which can help the agripreneurship to grow smoothly with in the economy. These are as follows-

- Inefficient supply chain should be checked and immediate measures should be taken.
- Proper training of the rural people should be facilitated so that large number of rural people gets indulged in agripreneurship.
- The focus should be led on skill development among rural population so that they can realise their potential and contribute in national growth and economy

- The government should also focus on bringing new schemes related to idea creation, creativity, and innovation to facilitate agripreneurship in India.
- The execution of various schemes implemented for the promotion of rural agripreneurship should be checked timely.
- The Government should be more inclined towards technological advancement like Big Data and Internet of Things (IOT) for the promotion of rural entrepreneurship in India.

4. CONCLUSION

The Indian Government's varied interventions, which take the shape of initiatives and schemes, are aimed at improving and uplifting the agripreneurs and rural population by providing financial assistance, collateral free loans, and tax exemptions. Furthermore, they help in development of skills, innovation, creation, and entrepreneurship among them. They provide employment opportunities and check on migration of rural population; therefore, leading to balanced regional development. The efficient use of local resources can be seen with the improve in standard of living in the rural area. The challenges like inefficient supply chain, control of Middlemen and Agents, lack of financing, training and skill development should be looked timely. Thus, with the promotion of the agripreneurship; the Government of India should also focus on promotion of Big Data, Market Linkage Models, Fintech and IOT for farmers too, in order to pave the successful road for agripreneurship in India. Furthermore, this also creates an ecosystem for small and marginal farmers to thrive as an agripreneur which helps them to increase their income with national income and assist in the expansion and development of the national economy. Hence, the various Government interventions is strengthening the agripreneurship development in India and effectively contributing to socio-culture and economic growth of the country.

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