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Institute For Entrepreneurship Development Amongst Farmers- Especially Small And Marginal Land Holders.

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ABSTRACT

The term entrepreneurship is gaining importance in the field of Business management. Study of this subject puts more emphasis on person rather than the business. There are several institutes and organizations like management schools, banks, government organisations and non- government organisations, imparting entrepreneurship training. These institutes target to different groups viz. Management graduates, engineers, science graduates, self- help groups, women, and students specializing in this subject. Needless to say ours is an agrarian economy with a large proportion of population dependent on this sector. Indian agriculture sector has always been a matter of concern for economists, academicians, policy makers, administrators and philanthropists. If we consider the evolution and development of Indian agriculture, we realize that there is lot of work been done on food security, production and productivity. All these activities are focused on agriculture and not agriculturist. This paper is an attempt to develop an institutional model that would work on imparting entrepreneurial skills amongst farmers.

Keywords : Entrepreneurship Development, Agri- Preneur, Small and Marginal farmers

Introduction:

Management schools are aware of the term FDP i.e. Faculty Development Programme, where a short term course is run for enrichment of management faculties. Here in this article we are trying to test the feasibility of starting FDP i.e. Farmers' Development Programme, with an objective of imparting basic managerial and entrepreneurial skills to the farm community. Can we imagine an institute that would enroll farmers as students, especially one who are small and marginal land holders? According to Shri. J.P. Naik, "The school education to be universal has to be supplemented by a multiple- entry, part- time, non- formal education which does not insist on sequentiality". It is the need of the hour to revitalize the concept of entrepreneurship development, keeping farming community at its core. Today world over there are problems related to agriculture and allied activities. Some countries have successfully developed solution to these problems while many like India are striving to develop a model of sustainable development through proper agriculture management. For India it is imperative to find a comprehensive and concrete solution to the backwardness of agriculture as more than 65% of the population is dependent on this sector directly or indirectly.

Some of the statistical data regarding Indian agriculture published by Food and Agriculture organization and report on currency and finance, is worth mentioning India ranks 3rd in production and area under cultivation in terms of Wheat whereas it ranks 32nd in terms of productivity of wheat, similarly India ranks 1st in terms of rice production but ranks 51st in terms of productivity. Same is the case with other agriculture produce like maize, sugarcane, potato, pulses etc. Compared to several other countries, India has favourable agro- climatic conditions, soil and other resources are sufficiently available to support cultivation of different cropping pattern. Green revolution has ushered the use of technology, mechanization, high yield varieties seeds,

fertilizers and pesticides. This has certainly upgraded the traditional form of agriculture; but has not resulted in up-liftment of farming community mainly the small and marginal land holders. This disparity can be attributed to the lack of proper training avenues available to the farmers. There is a need to develop a concept of farm school that would focus on identifying agri-preneurs and developing entrepreneurial skills amongst farmers coming from different socio- economic and cultural background.

Let us first understand the term entrepreneur and entrepreneurship development

The word 'Entrepreneur' is derived from French verb *entreprendre*. This concept has its origin in early 16th century, the Frenchmen who organized and led military expedition were referred to as 'entrepreneurs'. Since then this term has evolved in many countries having their own interpretation about this concept. Today New Encyclopedia Britannica considers an entrepreneur as "an individual who bears the risk of operating a business in the phase of uncertainty about the future conditions". It is interesting to know that Entrepreneurship Development do not have its own theories or principles and conventions. The entire concept is developed by borrowing theories from other social sciences viz. economics, sociology, and psychology. Renowned Economists like Joseph Schumpeter, J.B. Say, Leibenstein, and Richard Cantillon have given unparallel contribution in developing the theory for this subject... Renowned psychologist David McClelland has propounded theory of Need for Achievement that according to him is the motive behind entrepreneurial trait.

Though today this term has a very sophisticated and comprehensive definition, its origin in 16th century was given by Quesnay, a physician by profession who regarded the rich farmer as an entrepreneur. According to him farmer was the only agent in the economy who was engaged in a productivity activity and the one who manages and makes his business profitable by his intelligence, skill and wealth.

Entrepreneurship Development is a process of systematical development of entrepreneurial traits in the trainee.

In an agrarian economy like that of ours where, on one hand we talk about food security and growing farm yield and on the other hand we witness growing farmers' suicide and ever bulging farm debts, there is an acute need to develop farmers along with farm for ensuring sustainable agriculture development.

"No individual or institution that did not participate directly in the process of production of survival could afford to adhere to 'truth' and autonomy for long"

- Mahatma Gandhi, India

"So long as the majority of the nation, the peasants, are sunk in poverty and ignorance, social well-being and, consequently, one's own personal well-being is impossible"

- Leo Tolstoy, U.S.A

The above quotes talk on need for appropriate form of utilitarian education for the masses especially the farmers. At present, though we have various government and non-government institutions working for up gradation of agriculture sector, yet we do not have any system devoted for the up gradation of farmers. 'Institute for Entrepreneurship Development for Farmers, especially small and marginal' is an idea of an institute that would impart customized training to farmers belonging to different segments. Following passages focuses on the model that can be used to develop farm schools for agri-preneurship development.

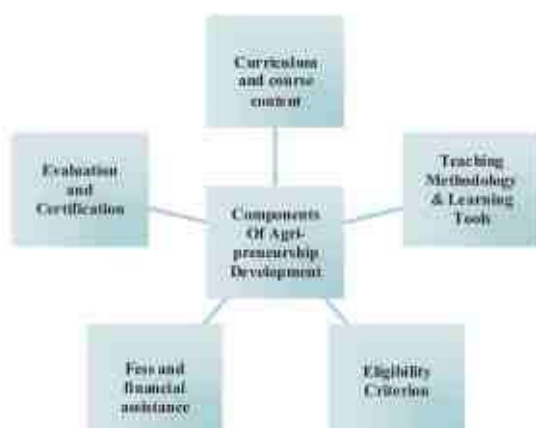
Suggestive model of an Institute

Components of Institutional training for Agri-preneurship development: The components of the institutional training for entrepreneurship development are explained on the basis of following parameters:

1. Curriculum and course contents
2. Teaching Methodology and learning tools
3. Eligibility Criterion
4. Fees and financial assistance
5. Evaluation and certification

Each of these above parameters are explained in detail

Diagram showing components of institutional training for agri-preneurship development



Curriculum and course details:

Objectives:

1. To contribute in developing sustainable and evergreen revolution by focusing more on farmers than on farms.
2. To develop entrepreneurial skills among farm community especially small and marginal farmers
3. To impart knowledge of agri- project planning
4. To improve socio-economic status of farm community by developing utilitarian education avenue.

Contents:

1. Meaning of entrepreneurship and agri-preneurship- Role of entrepreneurship in economic development-

Attributes and traits of successful entrepreneur.

2. Psychological, Sociological, Managerial and economical aspects of entrepreneurship development- Contributory theories of different social scientists viz. David McClelland, Everett Hagen, Thomas Cochran, Joseph Schumpeter.
3. Farm Management- Agriculture production economy in relation with farm management- different decisions related to farm management
4. Key factors in farm analysis and farm planning- appraisal of farm resources, capital, managerial factors, land resources and entrepreneurial resources
5. Agricultural projects- -Preparation of feasibility report after considering different functional areas of farm management
6. Institutional Aids for agriculture and rural development- Role of different government and non- government organizations- financial, technical, marketing and advisory support provided by different organization.
7. Farm Models: Contract farming, Co-operative farming, Collective farming, Organic farming, Export Oriented Farming.
8. Other Contemporary issues related to farmers- change in government policies, marketing conditions financial aspects, technology & production related aspects, local factors affecting agriculture, international changes related to agriculture.

Teaching Methodology and Teaching Aids:

Introduction: In order to serve the objective of the course and address the curriculum different conventional and non-conventional teaching methodologies and teaching aids can be used.

Teaching Methodology

1. Classroom teaching: Conventional classroom teaching can be used to motivate trainee farmers on lessons like meaning of entrepreneurship, importance of agri-preneur for economic development and characteristics of successful entrepreneur. The theories on entrepreneurship development can also be taught through classroom teachings.
2. Group discussion and Group task: working in team can be taught by assigning various group tasks viz. appraising the farm resources, preparing farm projects, exploring alternatives for taking major farm related decisions. Group discussions are helpful in brainstorming exercise and different contemporary issues can be focused effectively.
3. Role play and Team work: Role play is effective methodology to communicate agriculture and agriculturist related issues. Role play, street play, folk dance, folk songs and bhajans can be used to tackle issues of social importance, and issues related to farmers. Characteristics of successful entrepreneurs, cases of successful farmers etc can be effectively taught through role play. Any business activity needs spirit of co-operation and team work. The importance of working in group can be taught through different tasks to be accomplished by the team.
4. Story Telling: According to David McClelland, stories can be a strong tool for communicating behavioural and psychological message more effectively. Stories with hidden message of need for achievement can make teaching learning process more effective.
1. Simulation Games: This methodology can be used to work on the concepts related with different farm projects. The team can be assigned equal sized plots with different real life complexities. The task will be to maximize the farm returns in relation with resources provided. Simulation games are close replicate of practical situation and therefore solutions worked out through these games can be implemented in real life situation.

6. Seminars, Guest lectures and work shops: Seminars, guest lectures and workshops can be organized in case of lessons requiring expert guidance viz. workshop on institutional support system, project planning and management, post harvest management, cases of successful farmers etc. Topics for guest lecture can be designed according to the need to the trainee farmers, i.e. tailor- made information can be served through this methodology.
7. Case Studies: Case study methodology is effective in teaching profile of successful farmers. Different farm models can be taught with help of this method. Regional, state, national and international cases can be considered under this session.
8. Field visits: Live projects, research and development projects, experimental projects, can be exposed to trainees through field visit.

Teaching Aids and infrastructure

1. Mobile Class- room/ Multi-facility Van/ Temple/ Village schools: In order to take education to the door step of the trainees, mobile van with multi facility can be used along with village infrastructure like temple, Panchayat office and school buildings. The van can carry all the teaching aids like blackboard, LCD projector, Camera, internet connectivity, computer etc.
2. Audio- Visual Aids: A & V aids like TV, Computer, and Projector etc. are effective teaching aids to communicate effectively with farm community. A & V presentations, power- point presentation, website presentation, internet chatting and web conferencing can be used for disseminating information accurately, timely and effectively.
3. Library: access to university library, college and institute library and be a strong complementary tool to transfer knowledge from lab to land. Books, magazines, journals and e- books in different regional languages should be made available.

Eligibility Criterion:

"The school education to be universal has to be supplemented by a multiple- entry, part- time, non- formal education which does not insist on sequentiality"

- J. P. Naik, India

The course can be designed separately for following group of trainees:

1. Moderately literate farmers (Standard 6-10)
2. Farmers with higher education (XIth - Graduation)
3. Farmers with professional education background (Agriculture graduates and Post- Graduates)

Course Duration:

The entire course can be divided into different sessions to be conducted on part- time basis i.e. two hours daily or twice in a week or during lean period of farm activities. The course can be covered in 6 to 7 sessions each of 5-10 hours. In other words the entire programme can be covered within thirty to seventy hours.

Fees and Financial assistance:

The institute providing this training programme should work with public- private partnership. The funds necessary for executing this programme should be raised through government funding agencies and the operating cost can be covered by charging subsidized fees from trainee farmers. The fees can be charged on the basis of duration of course, course contents, expertise involved and paying capacity of the farmers.

Evaluation and certification: The performance evaluation for this programme should be a proper blend of formal and informal method. It can be conducted on the basis of following parameters:

- Change in behavioural and psychological aspects with the help of psycho- behavioural and motivational tests
- Evaluation of projects prepared through team- work, simulation games and case studies
- Examining the development of entrepreneurial skills by evaluating the performance of the trainee farmers on job and comparing it with the past performance.

The institute running this programme should be affiliated to research and development institutes, universities or any form of government body. This affiliation will not only help in awarding certificates to the trainee farmers, but also bring authentication and value to the course. This type of course can be run by management institutes, technical institutes or Agriculture universities and Agriculture departments. Even the banks like NABARD and DCC can promote their officers to impart such training sessions to their associated farm community.

If we take care of farmers, they would eventually take care of farm and this could be a right path towards evergreen revolution. This quote would be appropriate to conclude this article

"They live, for they cannot die at will. Our Salvation can only come through the farmers"

-M.K. Gandhi

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