

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN COMMERCE, ECONOMICS & MANAGEMENT

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A STUDY ON INNOVATIVE PRACTICES FOR THE TRANSFORMATION OF AGRICULTURE SECTOR AND PERCEPTION OF YOUTH TOWARDS AGRICULTURE

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ABSTRACT

India needs innovation in agriculture today with a net sown area of over 140 million hectares. Agriculture is one such area where demand is always on the rise and supply is volatile due to various factors. The reasons are like lack of modernization, insufficient storage facilities, Government incentives poor marketing channel, role of market intermediaries etc. UN body FAO has stressed on new agri technologies and has called for embracing climate-sensitive innovations and technologies. Indian agriculture has undergone rapid transformation over the past 20 years. The liberalized economy has opened up new avenues for agriculture modernization. Technology plays a very important role in the development of agriculture industry. Today it is possible to produce crops even in desert through the use of agriculture biotechnology. Further, in India, agriculture and allied sectors provide employment nearly 50 percent of the workforce and also contribute nearly 17 percent to the national income. Being one out of ten major sectors of Indian economy agriculture contributes for both in terms of employment as well as value added output. Today youth started moving towards technology based agriculture. The present paper focuses on innovative interventions for the growth as well as transformation of farm sector with special reference to perception of youth towards agriculture.

KEYWORDS

innovative practices, agriculture, perception of youth.

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INTRODUCTION

India needs innovation in agriculture today with a net sown area of over 140 million hectares. Agriculture is one such area where demand is always on the rise and supply is volatile due to various factors. The reasons are like lack of modernization, insufficient storage facilities, Government incentives poor marketing channel, role of market intermediaries etc. India is an agriculture country that basically means agriculture is an important part of livelihood. It is a primary economic activity and about two-third of total population is engaged on the same.

The liberalized economy has opened up new avenues for agriculture modernization. Technology plays a very important role in the development of agriculture industry. Today it is possible to produce crops even in desert through the use of agriculture biotechnology. Further, in India, agriculture and allied sectors provide employment nearly 50 percent of the workforce and also contribute nearly 17 percent to the national income. Being one out of ten major sectors of Indian economy agriculture contributes for both in terms of employment as well as value added output.

The majority of Indian agriculturists are small land holders who often suffer from various risks such as low-risk taking capacity, lack of awareness and access to modern technology, availability of finance and access to well organized market.

Now a day's government provides various schemes for the promotion of agriculture and also number of subsidies for them. Proper legal framework for the direct transfer of subsidy to the farmer will be of great advantage to the true owner. Agriculture production has always been risky and faces uncertainty. Climate change, natural disasters are main reasons of production risk. Further, pests, diseases add to such risks. In recent times, labour has become very costly, thus to reduce cost and improve productivity farmers are looking towards up gradation of sector through technology.

OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of the study are:

1. To identify various welfare programs introduced by the Government for the promotion of agriculture
2. To examine the need for innovation in agriculture
3. To analyse the perception of youth towards agriculture and innovative practices
4. To identify the possibilities for the innovative interventions and financial assistance by public private participation

METHODOLOGY AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study used both primary and secondary data to analyze the objectives framed and to obtain the findings. As a source of primary data a structured questionnaire was prepared. It was administered to 50 respondents in Puttur Taluk of Dakshina Kannada district. To investigate the significant perception of youth towards agriculture, respondents were selected on convenience sampling basis. For secondary data and information, books and journals, are consulted. Based on the primary data and secondary data recommendations are made.

YOUTH AND AGRICULTURE

Agriculture plays an important role in entire life of mankind in an economy. Now a days youth are more interested to go for agriculture and it provides employment to large percentage of population. When youth are encouraged to work in agriculture sector through education and by introducing technology and innovation, it is possible to maximise the management of natural resources and also to manage human resources. Agriculture is a growing industry which employs people to a large extent and hence it is vital that individuals have some knowledge about agriculture and the agriculture industry.

AGRICULTURE AND TECHNOLOGY

- Farming is truly a profession of passion. We support it with our technology **Mahindra Tractors**.
- Case: Students of IIT Madras have developed a smart agricopter to eliminate manual spraying of pesticides in agriculture fields and help to identify the crop health by using an imaging camera. This will help the farmer to spray pesticides 10 times faster

LITERATURE REVIEW

Ramesh Chand, member NITI Aayog (2019) has suggested reforms in agriculture for the growth and modernisation of agriculture including market reforms, contract farming, price support, minimum support prices, input subsidies, alternative mechanism of subsidy distribution, crop insurance, corporate investments in agriculture, promotion of producer organisations and through new development initiatives.

Radhika Kapoor (2013) analysed that it is essential to introduce modern and innovative techniques in the agriculture sector. Agriculture sector needs effective utilisation of technology to accelerate production and employability of an individual. Usage of technology would enhance sustaining livelihood opportunities to the farmers.

Aftab Uddin Ahmed and Kanakkanti Bagchi (2007) pointed that for sustained agriculture development, Indian agriculturist must rely upon improved agricultural technology and when technology is incorporated into farming system it will develop Indian farms in a significant way.

INDIA NEEDS INNOVATION IN AGRICULTURE TODAY

1. Agriculture with its allied sectors is the largest livelihood provider in India. It is a primary activity and about half of our population is engaged in the same.
2. Agriculture is one sector where demand keeps on increasing and supply will always be volatile due to structural factors and monsoon dependency.
3. Agriculture is effected by number of problems like lack of modernization, inefficient water management, low yield per hectare, soil erosion, insufficient storage facilities etc.
4. To reduce unemployment by encouraging youth to involve more in agriculture and allied activities

NEW DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

During last five years the government has taken several development initiatives for agriculture and allied sector. That includes

- Pradhan Mantri KrishiSinchai Yojana (PMKSY)
- Pradhan ManthriFasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY)
- PM-Kisan SammanNidhi

PMKSY is designed to develop protective irrigation to entire area under cultivation through a developed system of irrigation. This program is operating with four components namely i) Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme (AIBP), ii) HarKhetKoPani, iii) Per Drop more Crop and iv) Watershed Development.

PMFBY is a comprehensive crop insurance scheme for the agriculturists to provide needed assistance for the adverse effect of yield loss.

PM-Kisan is a new cash transfer program which has long way to go in terms of its implementation and scope of coverage. Under this scheme all small and marginal farmers will get Rs. 6,000 per annum as minimum income support for their agriculture.

ANALYSIS

The agricultural sector plays crucial role in the development of an economy. In India, being majority of the population are YOUTH, employment generation is a major concern. Studies have revealed that that there is a shift of young generation towards agriculture.

TABLE 1: SHOWING THE INTEREST OF YOUTH TOWARDS AGRICULTURE

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Interested	27	54
Not interested	23	46
Total	50	100

Of the respondents from the family of agriculturists, 54 percent are interested in agriculture. They want to continue their ancestral profession. They informed that agriculture may not reward always in positive way, but connects you to the nature.

TABLE 2: SHOWING THE LEVEL OF AWARENESS ON VARIOUS GOVERNMENT SCHEMES

Name of the Scheme	No of respondents	percentage
PMKSY	32	64%
PMFBY	42	84%
PM-KisanNidhi	50	100%

Out of 50 respondents all the respondents are aware of PM –KishanNidhiYojana and they have applied for it. But only 64 percent of the respondents are aware of PMKSY. Respondents are opinioned that they are aware of various government incentives but they found poor execution of such schemes. Many were not benefited from the scheme. They also appreciated the decision of government regarding loan waiving of the farmer.

TABLE3: ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY IN IMPROVING AGRICULTURE

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	44	88
Only to certain extent	6	12
No	0	0
Total	50	100

Of the 50 respondents, 88 percent said that technology will definitely contribute to the growth of agriculture. But 12 percent said that only to certain extent. Thus it can be concluded that farm sector can be transformed with the technological advancements and innovations.

FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

1. Indian agriculture is featured by poor state of science and technology in production and cultivation. Active involvement of corporate investment and private sector involvement will help for the development of agriculture.
2. Low yield crop varieties and traditional practices are still in use leading to low efficiency, high cost and low quality produce. The technological up gradation and research and development will promote and transform this sector.
3. The major problem of Indian agriculture sector compared to developed countries is low yield. The main reason for this is lack of appropriate technology and lack of adoption of agriculture R&D. More researches in the field of agriculture will definitely improve the crop and facilitate the growth.
4. Proper implementation of new development initiatives by Government of India in the form of various yojana can satisfy farmers and will provide them needed assistance to face the challenges such as crop failure, repayment of loan, natural disaster etc.
5. Out of 50 respondents all the respondents are aware of PM –Kishan Nidhi Yojana and they have applied for it.
6. Only 64 percent of the respondents are aware of PMKSY. Respondents are opinioned that they are aware of various government incentives but they found poor execution of such schemes. Many were not benefited from the scheme due to failure of local authorities in execution. They also appreciated the decision of government regarding loan waiving of the farmer.
7. Of the 50 respondents, 88 percent said that technology will definitely contribute to the growth of agriculture. Thus it can be concluded that farm sector can be transformed with the technological advancements and innovations.
8. According to Central Statistical Organization(CSO), corporate private investment constitutes less than 2.5% of the total investments in agriculture. Thus active involvement of private sector from seed to post harvest level, will help in the improvement of status of agriculture.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES**• EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES IN AGRICULTURE**

Incorporating latest developments in artificial intelligence, machine learning, data science, bio technology, Mobile app technology etc. to increase agriculture productivity and also to improve the quality of food.

Example: Eco-friendly fertilizers, organic pesticides, seed preservation technologies etc., Application of internet of things (IOT) to simplify farm management.

• INNOVATIVE AGRICULTURE TOOLS

To find smarter ways of farming and minimizing labour dependency through Robotics etc.

Eg: Planting trees and material propagation through Drones, Use of robots for land ploughing, crop harvesting etc. to avoid the labour problem

• SOLI AND WATER MANAGEMENT

Fresh water is a scare resource nowadays and agriculture accounts to 90% of groundwater utilization. Due to growing water crisis, novel methods not only to optimize water consumption but also to prevent soil erosion can be adopted. Studies revealed that India loses around 5 billion tons of fertile soil annually.

Eg: Soli testing, crop identification based on soil type. Precision irrigation system etc.

• USE OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY IN AGRICULTURE

Animal husbandry provides livelihood to millions of people.

Eg: Smart feeding technologies, novel mechanism to lift fallen or dead livestock, creative solution to protect agriculture lands from wild animals

• INNOVATIVE AGRICULTURE BY-PRODUCTS

Finding creative by-products by exploring commercial application, such as eco-friendly plates, chocolates, sugar cane bags, use of rice husk etc.

• AGRICULTURE R&D AND ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES

The major problem of Indian agriculture sector compared to developed countries is low yield. The main reason for this is lack of appropriate technology and lack of adoption of agriculture R&D. The capacities to produce more through productive technologies are the core factors to the long run agriculture growth.

CONCLUSION

Agriculture being one of the oldest professions, with the development and use of machineries and technology has brought increase in the number of people who can be designated as 'farmers'. Technology has proved herself to be the perfect companion for farming. Tech based agriculture will be definitely a solution to most of the problems in the field of agriculture. Indian agriculture through government initiatives has undergone rapid transformation in the past few years and has opened up new avenues for agriculture modernization. In order to achieve inclusive growth, agriculture sector needs a sustained development through the public and private sector participation. As youth of today are interested in the tech based agriculture, proper financial assistance will definitely improve the farm fields and also they can consider this field as their main profession for livelihood.

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