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Problems and Prospects of Agripreneurship in Kerala

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Abstract: ***Kerala has long grappled with the persistent issues of unemployment and underemployment, particularly among its rural population. Traditional strategies have proven inadequate in addressing these challenges. In this context, agripreneurship presents a promising and sustainable alternative to reinvigorate the agricultural sector. It not only contributes to economic diversification but also plays a vital role in achieving self-sufficiency in food production and fostering rural development. The trend of farmers withdrawing from agriculture due to low profitability highlights the urgent need for innovative interventions in agribusiness. This study explores the potential of agripreneurship as a catalyst for enhancing agricultural productivity and profitability. It emphasizes the importance of promoting entrepreneurial skills among farmers, youth, and women in rural areas to ensure long-term economic resilience and inclusive growth. Agripreneurship is, therefore, positioned not just as an opportunity, but as a necessity for sustainable rural transformation and economic development.***

Keywords: Agripreneurship, Rural Development, Unemployment, Agricultural Sustainability,Youth Empowerment, Women Entrepreneurs, Economic Development, Farm Profitability

I. INTRODUCTION

Agriculture is a fundamental sector in rural and country economy and the basis for its growth and development. It plays an important role in Indian economy where the half of the population in the country depends on agriculture for the livelihood. India is a global agricultural powerhouse. It is the world's largest producer of milk, pulses, and spices, and has the world's largest cattle herd (buffaloes), as well as the largest area under wheat, rice and cotton. It is the second largest producer of rice, wheat, cotton, sugarcane, farmed fish, sheep & goat meat, fruit, vegetables and tea (World Bank, 2012). The agriculture sector is still challenged by low productivity, low profitability, increase in input costs, wastage of crops due to lack of storage and supply chain management.

Considering the growing unemployment in rural areas and slow growth of agriculture sector, it is necessary to tap the oppurtunities for promoting entrepreneurship in agriculture which in turn can address the present problems related to agriculture production and profitability. Entrepreneurial development is a systematic and a controlled development of a person to an entrepreneur. The development of an entrepreneur refers to inculcate the entrepreneurial skills into a common person, providing the desirable knowledge, getting higher the technical, financial, marketing and managerial expertise, and building the entrepreneurial approach. Entrepreneurial development programme may be defined as a program designed to help an individual in strengthening his entrepreneurial motive and in acquiring skills and capabilities necessary for playing his entrepreneurial role effectively. This situation can be changed by generating employment opportunities for them in rural areas itself. Agro entrepreneurship can be used as paramount medicine for the solution of this complexity. Developing entrepreneurs in agriculture will solve the entire problem.

In agricultural businesses, planning may be even more fundamental because of the inherent ambiguity associated with agricultural production. Some significant sources of uncertainty include production risk, price risk, financial (interest rate) risk, and changes in government programs. In India, 52% of total land is cultivable as against 11% in the world. Large population of India is dependent on agriculture for their source of revenue. But Indian agriculture low in productivity with large number of disguised unemployment.

A shift from agriculture to agribusiness is an essential pathway to revitalize Indian agriculture and to make more attractive and profitable venture. Agripreneurship have the potential to contribute to a range of social and economic development such as employment generation, income generation, poverty reduction and improvements in nutrition, health and overall food security in the national economy.

During recent worldwide financial turbulence the importance of entrepreneurship has never been more obvious. Entrepreneurship has been linked to amplified growth, increased aggressiveness of countries, increased creation of wealth and increased quality of life. After economic liberalization, entrepreneurial activity is playing a major role in socioeconomic.

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In developing countries like India for raising the living standard of the vast majority of the backward regions, planning and implementation for development of entrepreneurial programmes are essential because of their over-dependence on agriculture for employment Thus entrepreneurship development in rural industries appears to be the best potential alternative to find employment avenues for the rural population. The importance of entrepreneurship development in agricultural sector and business planning for agricultural firms-from input traders to producers to processors and the steps required to prepare a thorough business plan.

During an economic crisis, when development is negative, the importance of entrepreneurship development has increased. Development of entrepreneurial culture and support for entrepreneurs and job creation in the agricultural sector seems to be important and necessary. Entrepreneurship has been named as one of the key driver for economic development. One in every two Indians relies on agriculture for live hood. Agriculture landscape has changed drastically, since this intervention that a second green revolution is going to need an entirely new approach and an entirely new set of technology. A period when the productivity of global agriculture increased drastically as a result of new advance. We believe entrepreneurs are the key drivers of tomorrow innovations and integral to creating a thriving economy

Agripreneurship plays various roles in the growth and development of national economy through entrepreneurship development which increases the income level and employment opportunities in rural as well as urban areas (Bairwa et al., 2012).

II. AGRIPRENEURSHIP

Agripreneurship defined as “generally, sustainable, community-oriented, directly-marketed agriculture. Sustainable agriculture denotes a holistic, systems oriented approach to farming that focuses on the interrelationships of social, economic, and environmental processes”(T. Nagalakshmi, 2013). An entrepreneur whose main business is agriculture or agriculture-related (Dabson and Markley, 2010 : T. Nagalakshmi, 2013).

Agripreneurship is synonym with entrepreneurship in the field of agriculture and refers to the establishment of agribusiness units in the agriculture and allied sector. Concept of Agripreneur. Agripreneur defined as “entrepreneur whose main business is agriculture or agriculture-related” Agriculture + Entrepreneur = Agripreneur

The terms, entrepreneurship and agripreneurship are frequently used in the context of education and small business formation in agriculture. Dollinger (2003) defines entrepreneurship in agriculture as the creation of innovative economic organization for the purpose of growth or gain under conditions of risk and uncertainty in agriculture.

Agripreneurship has a state specific to conditions, specific to farm and specific to product. The wider gap between rural and urban areas in developing countries and dominance of industry over agriculture and tendency of development strategies and policies toward industry, along with socio-economic characteristics of rural and agricultural societies has led agricultural entrepreneurship to grow less. In developing countries, farmer is the weakest production agent in the country. He lacks professional capabilities and supports needed by government and local and national organizations in order to act as a dynamic entrepreneur. Even though land is a rich resource in these countries and it has good potentials for entrepreneurship, but still farmers are poor and weak (Ya'qubi, 2003).

III. IMPORTANCE OF AGRIPRENEURSHIP

Traditionally, agriculture seen as a low-tech industry with limited dynamics dominated by numerous small family firms, which are mostly paying attention on doing things better rather than doing novel things. Over the last decade, this situation has changed dramatically due to economic liberalization, a reduced shelter of agricultural markets, and a fast changing, more decisive, society. Agricultural companies progressively more have to adapt to the vagaries of the market, varying consumer lifestyle, enhanced ecological regulations, new necessities for product quality, chain management, food security, sustainability, and so on. These alterations have cleared the way for new participator, innovation, and portfolio entrepreneurship

IV. ENTREPRENEUR’S QUALITIES AND ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS FOR AGRIPRENEURSHIP

Entrepreneurs are those people who exhibit common traits such as single-mindedness, drive, ambition, creative, problem solving, practical, and goal-oriented. An entrepreneur is an individual who recognizes an opportunity or unmet need and takes the risk to pursue it. He needs to develop these abilities, managing productivity and seeking out new markets (Singh, 2013). Personal qualities of an agri-entrepreneur significantly affect the agribusiness (Brockhaus and Horwitz, 1986; Nandram and Samson, 2000). Self criticism, leadership, market orientation and creativity are important for successful entrepreneurship development. Entrepreneurship skills are considered to be those competencies required to accomplish tasks and activities related to the farm business. These can be developed by learning and experience.

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Hanf and Muller (1997) suggest that in a dynamic environment with fast technical progress, open minded farm entrepreneurs will recognise more problems than they are able to rationally solve. Man et al., (2002) categorized entrepreneurial competences in six key areas which includes opportunity recognition skills, relationship building, Organizing, Strategic competences, conceptual thinking and problem solving skills. Lauweres (2002) study of weaknesses in entrepreneurship and selected seven critical success factors which are management and strategic planning, knowledge of the ecosystem, capable and professional staff, understanding of the value chain perspective, craftsmanship, ability to learn and seek opportunity and enterprising personal characteristics. Thus, management skills are the complete package of skills that a farmer would use in order to develop the farm business.

Kallio and Kola (1999) in a study of farmers in Finland attempted to determine what factors gave farmers competitive advantage over other farmers suggest that there are seven characteristics of a successful farm and farmer

1) Profitable production seemed to be associated with continuous evaluation of production, incomes and expenditures
2) Constant development of cognitive and professional skills i.e. Continual Professional Development (CPD)
3) They benefit from a positive work ethic
4) Goal-oriented operation, i.e., the ability to set goals, to reach them and to set new ones
5) Utilization of recent information that is relevant for the individual farmer's own circumstances and the needs of the farm
6) Favourable starting points for the enterprise, meaning good condition of machinery, buildings, land and an appropriate balance between pricing of product and investments in production
7) Cooperation with others in the supply chain.

Schiebel (2002) reported that successful farmers differ from others in terms of three personality traits. They have more belief in their ability to control events, problem-solving abilities and social initiative. Agripreneurs is a dynamic business manager performing various agri based activities using different resources viz. physical resources, financial resources, human resources and information, in order to accomplish a certain goal.

V. TYPES OF ENTERPRISES IN AGRI- BUSINESS.

1) Farm Level Producers: At the individual family point, every family is to be treated as venture, to enhance the production by making best use of the technology, possessions and demand in the market.
2) Service Providers: For optimizing agriculture by every family business, there are diverse types of services requisite at the village level. These include the input borrowing and distribution, hiring of equipment like tractors, sprayers, seed drills, threshers, harvesters `dryers and scientific services such as setting up of irrigation amenities, weed curb, plant security, yielding, threshing, conveyance, warehouse, etc. related opportunities exist in the livestock husbandry sector for providing breeding, immunization, disease diagnostic and treatment services, apart from allocation of cattle feed, mineral combination, forage grains, etc.
3) Input Producers: There are many flourishing enterprises, which need critical inputs. a few such inputs which can be produced by the home entrepreneurs at the village level are biopesticides, soil amendments, biofertilizers, vermicompost, plants of diverse species of vegetables, fruits, ornamentals, root media for raising plants in pots, production of cattle feed concentrate, agricultural tools, irrigation accessories, mineral mixture and complete feed. There are good openings to support, fishery, sericulture and poultry as well, during sponsorship of critical service amenities in rural areas.
4) Processing and Marketing of Farm Produce: Well organized management of post-production processes requires higher level of knowledge as well as investment. Such venture can be handled by People's Organizations', either in the form of cooperatives, service joint stock companies or societies. The most successful instances are the dairy cooperatives sugar cooperatives, and fruit growers' cooperatives in lots of States. However, the success of such undertaking is exclusively dependent on the reliability and ability of the leaders involved. Such undertaking needs good specialized support for running the activities as a competitive trade and to contend well with other players in the market, mainly the retail traders and intermediates.

VI. ROLE OF AGRIPRENEURSHIP IN NATIONAL ECONOMY

Agripreneurship plays various roles in the growth and development of national economy through entrepreneurship development which increases the income level and employment opportunities in rural as well as urban areas (Bairwa et al., 2012). Agripreneurship also play following role in the economic system (Sah, 2009).

1) It helps in inducing productivity gains by smallholder farmers and integrating them into local, national and international markets.
2) It helps in reducing food costs, supply uncertainties and improving the diets of the rural and urban poor in the country.

3) It also generating growth, increasing and diversifying income, and providing entrepreneurial opportunities in both rural and urban areas

VII. MAJOR REASONS FOR PROMOTING AGRIPRENEURSHIP IN INDIA

In India, 52% of total land is cultivable as against 11% in the world. All 15 major climates of the world, snow bound Himalayas to hot humid southern peninsula; Thar desert to heavy rain areas all exist in India. There are 20 agro-climatic regions and nearly 46 out of 60 soil types in the country. Sunshine hours and day length are ideally suited for round the year cultivation of crops. India is the centre for biodiversity in plants, animals, insects, micro-organism and accounts for 17% animal, 12% plants and 10% fish genetic resources of the globe. In the live stock sector, India has 16% of cattle, 57% of buffalo, 17% of goats and 5 % of sheep population of the world. Agriculture contributes 13.2% to GDP, 15.2% of total exports and provides employment to 58.4% of country's work force (Mittal, 2009). Agriculture remains a key sector of the Indian economy accounting for 13.2 per cent share in the gross domestic product (GDP) and about 13 per cent of the total export earnings. India is the second largest producer of rice and wheat in the world; first in pulses and fourth in coarse grains. India is also one of the largest producers of cotton, sugar, sugarcane, peanuts, jute, tea and an assortment of spices. In terms of the real value added, the Indian agriculture sector ranks third, after China and the United States. The share of agriculture in the total value added to the economy, at around 13.2 per cent, is still quite high. This implies that agriculture is likely to remain a priority, both for policy makers as well as businesses, in the foreseeable future and any move to ramp up the sector calls for a multi-pronged strategy. In recent years, there has been a considerable emphasis on crop diversification towards horticulture (fruits, vegetables, ornamental crops, medicinal & aromatic plants and spices), plantation crops (coconut, cashew nuts and cocoa) and allied activities. Creation of critical infrastructure for cold storage, refrigerated transportation, rapid transit, grading, processing, packaging and quality control measures open major opportunities for investment. India is second highest fruit and vegetable producer in the world (134.5 million tons) with cold storage facilities available only for 10% of the produce. We are second highest producer of milk with a cold storage capacity of 70,000 tonne and sixth largest producer of fish with harvesting volumes of 5.2 million tones. India is fifth largest producer of eggs in the world. Investments in cold chain required storing 20% of surplus of meat and poultry products during 10th plan require Rs 500 Crores (Sah, 2009). Thus, Indian agriculture need to convert in agribusiness due to above mentioned reasons which only possible through agripreneurship development.

VIII. AGRIPRENEURSHIP AND AGRI-BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES:

Most of the Agripreneurial opportunities are at the Input stage, Farming stage, Value chain, output processing, marketing stage, and related services. With Govt. incentives and financial assistance, the scope and potential of Agripreneurial opportunities are increasing. There are very promising opportunities for the Agripreneurial process in the areas like bio-pesticides, bio-fertilizers, vermicomposting, testing and amending soil, etc.

The increasing focus on organic farming has opened many opportunities. In seed development and production there is a lot of scope for research and development. The gradual shift in the usage of natural manure and pesticides offers tremendous opportunities for the producion and marketing of bio-pesticides, eco-friendly agrochemicals, and natural manures.

There is an opportunity to find innovative methods for balancing the use of fertilizers and pesticides, agrochemicals, adopting multiple cropping and crop rotation to protect and preserve and enhance the quality of soil, using the Agri -Tech machines to reduce the cost of cultivation and drudgery of labor, etc.

Post-harvest opportunities in the areas of the value chain, output processing, and marketing. The realignment of agricultural supply chain management offers new business models. There are opportunities in the area of distribution and logistics. In the areas of farming vegetables, fruits, food grains, pulses, oilseeds, etc., developing greenhouse concept, dairy and poultry development, animal husbandry, herbal plantation, packaging of agri products, establishing food processing units and cold storages, sericulture, horticulture, and many more there are tremendous opportunities in agripreneurship development.

IX. PROSPECTS OF AGRIPRENEURSHIP IN KERALA :POSSIBLE AREAS OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT IN AGRICULTURE

Nowadays, Easy access to technology, emergence of micro financing, liberalized government rules, awareness and training programmes on agri and allied sectors and finally changing mindset of the highly qualified people to go for self employment in the field of agriculture have contributed significantly in enhancing the potentiality for agripreneuership in India (Bairwa et al., 2014). Agriculture have several areas of entrepreneurship which include the activities like, Dairying, Sericulture, Goat rearing, Rabbit rearing, Floriculture, Fisheries, Shrimp Farming, Sheep rearing, vegetable cultivation, nursery farming, farm forestry(Pandey, 2013). The possible areas of entrepreneurship in agriculture are:-

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1) Agro produce processing units – There units do not manufacture any new product. They merely process the agriculture produce e.g. Rice mills, Dal mills, decorticating mills etc.
2) Agro Produce manufacturing units – These units produce entirely new products based on the agricultural produce as the main raw material. E.g.-Sugar factories, Bakery, Straw board units etc.
3) Agro-inputs manufacturing units – These units produce goods either for mechanization of agriculture on for increasing manufacturing plants, e.g.-Fertilizer production units food processing units, agricultural implements etc.
4) Agro service centres –These include the workshops and service centre for repairing and serving the agricultural implement used in agriculture.
5) Miscellaneous areas – besides the above mentioned areas, the following areas may prove to be encouraging to establish agri enterprises such as setting up of Apiaries ,feed processing units, seed processing units, mushroom production units, commercial vermin-compose units, goat rearing farmers club, organic vegetable and fruits retail outlet, bamboo plantation and jatropha cultivation.

X. KERALA AGRI UNIVERSITY TO PROMOTE AGRIPRENEURSHIP AMONG STUDENTS

In its efforts to develop agri-based entrepreneurship skills among students, Kerala Agricultural University has started offering an online training programme called Hitham Haritham.The objective of the programme to be conducted as part of Subiksha Keralam programme is to keep the students engaged during the Covid pandemic and lay the foundation for developing entrepreneurship skills among them. Homestead enterprises such as processing of fruits and vegetables, nursery management, mushroom production, and apiculture were the subjects dealt in the 5-day free online training programme.

More than 5,000 participants as students, parents and teachers attended the programme and experts from the concerned fields of KAU handled the sessions. Central Training Institute under the Directorate of Extension, Mannuthy collaborated with the VHSE NSS State unit of Kerala and conducted the online training.

According to Jiju P Alex, Director of Extension, KAU, Hitham Haritham programme was meant to kindle the culture of agripreneurship among the young minds and assured that the University was always ready to offer technical guidance to those students who venture into agripreneurship.

XI. AGRI-BUSINESS CENTERS SCHEME – TRAINING PROGRAMME

The National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management (MANAGE), Hyderabad is implementing the Scheme of Agri-clinics and Agri-Business centers initiated by the Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India. The Scheme aims at supplementing existing extension network to accelerate process of technology transfer in agriculture and strengthening input supply and services. Agri-graduates and Post graduates. Diploma holders in agriculture and allied fields can set up their Agri-Clinics and Agri-Business Centers and offer professional/consultancy extension services to farmers. The scheme enumerates availability of better methods of farming to farmers and better opportunities for self-employment to the Agricultural Graduates. As an integral part of the Scheme, specialized training is provided free of cost to the eligible agricultural graduates. The course comprises of various aspects of entrepreneurship and business management. Centre for Entrepreneurship Development, (CED) Hyderabad is one of the recognized Nodal Training Institutes to provide two months Training Programme.

XII. INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT FOR AGRI-BUSINESS

RBI started in July 1982 NABARD to give full attention to the rural sector in areas of agriculture, small –scale and cottage industries and agro-based industries. Since its formation NABARD hold the responsibility of managing all the activates of the RBI pertaining to rural development and agro based activities

A. Panchayatmandi (Agri-Mandi)

The concept of self-governance has gone to the level of marketing of village produce through village markets and fairs. The concept of Panchayat mandi is to reduce the influence of middlemen and traders. This is possible only if functioning functioning of the zilli Panchayat is effective in coordination with state marketing boards and APMC (Agriculture produce market committee)

B. State Agricultural marketing banks (SAMB)

State agricultural marketing banks are set up to actively regulate markets for food crops and oilseed in bigger markets of towns and cities

C. *NCOSAMB (The national council for state marketing board)*

An agro based country like India needs training centers with modern facilities throughout the country. The government of India provides grants in aid to state to set up such training facilities. NCOSAMB is the body to coordinate the programmes of such training

D. State Trading Corporation (STC)

The state trading corporation of India ltd is premier international trading house owned by the government of India having been set up in 1956; the corporation has developed vast expertise in handling bulk international trade international trade.

XIII. SCHEMES AND PROGRAMMES FOR AGRIPRENEURS IN KERALA

A. Soft Loan Scheme for Women entrepreneurs

Kerala Startup Mission (KSUM) supports women startups with a soft loan scheme for an amount limited to RS 15 lakh as working capital for implementing works and projects received from the Govt. departments and the Public Sector Undertakings in Kerala. The amount of loan is limited to 80% of the Purchase order and disbursement is as an advance against the milestone payment agreed by the client. The soft loan will have 6% simple interest and must be repaid in 1 year or on completion of the project with full settlement, whichever is earlier. The repayment period of the loan is 1 year or completion of the project with full settlement, whichever is earlier. The Startup shall ensure the proper delivery of the product service specified in the purchase order and the disbursement from the second instalment will be based on satisfactory completion of a milestone as certified by the client. The maximum amount of loan outstanding will be Rs. 15 lakhs.

B. Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Centre (IEDC)

Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Centre (IEDC) is a flagship initiative of Kerala Startup Mission to promote innovation and entrepreneurship among the student and academic fraternity in the educational institutions in the State of Kerala and is considered as an umbrella programme that would play an instrumental role in fostering innovation culture in Academic institutions. The concept of Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Centre (IEDC) is formulated to promote innovation and entrepreneurial culture in educational institutions and to develop institutional mechanisms to foster techno-entrepreneurship for generation of wealth and employment. The IEDCs are established in academic institutions across Kerala having requisite expertise and infrastructure.

C. Vision

To create an innovation culture among Innovators by introducing them the State-of-the-art technologies and positioning the Institution as a Learning and Innovation Platform by delivering technically competent and skilled Entrepreneurs.

D. Purpose

The purpose of the IEDCs will be to act as an aspirational platform, for the l student entrepreneurs and tech savvy innovators, in skilling and sharpening their entrepreneurial skill sets. The selected innovators will be exposed to Innovation culture, emerging technologies and Business aspects with the implicit assumption that the delta will become an entrepreneur and all the other skilled talents will get high end jobs with the kind of exposure and skills they acquire.

E. Startup Communities Development and Partnership Programmes

KSUM has invited proposals from startup communities who have been engaged in promoting entrepreneurs, pursuing startup evangelization activities and value adding to the startup fraternity by any means. The new community programme aims for identifying and pooling in more potential startups for KSUM, who are outside the radar of KSUM and to identify value-adding stakeholders to this startup ecosystem. It is primarily an out bounding activity.

F. Support to Rural Innovations through Innovation Grants

The Govt. of Kerala has introduced the Innovation Grant scheme to provide financial assistance to startups and entrepreneurs to help them convert their innovative ideas into full-fledged ventures. This scheme is implemented through Kerala Startup Mission, which is the nodal agency of Govt. of Kerala for startup-related activities and schemes.Innovation grants are not prize money for having an idea. The purpose of the grant is to help innovators develop the prototype or product and set up startups.

This scheme is made available to ideas belonging to the Grassroot Innovations and Rural Innovations. Support to Rural Innovations through Green Innovation Fund Program.Green Innovation Fund (GIF) is a one of it's kind program exclusively for Impact startups working inline with Sustainable Development Goals and looking to pilot and scale up their product with expertise from UNDP and KSUM. GIF is a joint initiative by KSUM, Haritha Keralam Mission and UNDP India under the GoI-GEF-UNDP India High Range Mountain Landscape project (IHRML), aimed at developing technology based products addressing the gaps in the High Range areas.

XIV. MAJOR PROBLEMS OF AGRIPRENEURSHIP IN KERALA

Developing entrepreneurship in agri-business is as much useful is not so easy and simple. In fact, there are several problems faced by agripreneurs in kerala, it includes:

A. Lack of Skilled and Managerial Manpower

Rural areas also suffer from rural-urban migration mainly male migration. This results in denudation of educated and skilled manpower in rural areas. Lack of skilled and managerial manpower in rural areas is mainly due to the absence of suitable educational institutions in rural areas. Moreover, people even otherwise belonging to rural areas do not want to go back to rural areas to work due to various problems the rural areas suffer from.

B. Lack of Infrastructural Facilities

Infrastructure facilitates performing any activity. There is a need for the availability of a minimum level of prior-built up infrastructural facilities to undertake any economic activity including starting an enterprise. However, especially rural areas suffer from the lack of or weak infrastructural facilities in terms of road, rail, telecommunication, electricity, market information network, etc. This, in turn, adversely affects the effective use of agri-resources available, on the one hand, and efficiency and mobility of labour, on the other.

C. Problem of Marketing

If proof of pudding lies in eating, the proof of production lies in consumption. Production has no value unless it is sold / consumed. The major marketing problems faced by agri-entrepreneurship are lack of marketing channels and networks, promotional facilities, support system, poor quality of products, and competition with medium and large-scale enterprises.The enterprises run by agri-preneurs often do not possess any marketing organization. In consequence, their products compare unfavourably with the quality of the products manufactured by medium and large-scale organizations.

Lack of Awareness about Career in Agri-preneurship

Assuming entrepreneurial career has not been considered respectable in the society for one reason or other. Though the impression about entrepreneur / business as inferior has gradually been declining, yet it is still prevalent in the society. Most of the people are still not aware of entrepreneurial opportunities, advantages, and its significance for the entrepreneur and the society as a whole.

D. Inefficient or Lack of Equipments and Technologies

Today is the era of information technology and information is considered as power. Technology gives competitive advantages in various forms to compete with competitors. For example, exemplifies how technology empowers the rural farmers in marketing their products. But, either inefficient or lack of required equipments and technology has been one of the major challenges faced by agri-preneurs especially in rural areas.Technology such as satellite based geographic information system (GIS) promises more efficient use of available resources and more effective management efforts but these technologies are lacking in most of the agri-business industries especially in rural areas. While this affects the quality of products, it also makes the products more costly.

E. High Infrastructural and Distribution Costs

Transportation facilities are pre-requites to make the inputs available at enterprise location and outputs at the location of consumers scattered over vast territory. As most of the agri-enterprises are located far from urban areas, these suffer from transport problems for both inputs and outputs.As such, either there is non- availability of required inputs and outputs at the right time at the right place or whatsoever is available is possible at a higher cost making the product ultimately costlier as compared to the products offered by enterprises located at urban areas.

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F. Unresponsive Government Policies

That policy facilitates doing things in a desired and more effective manner is evidenced by various industrial policies declared in our country over the period. There are evidences available to believe that the various industrial policies have facilitated to set the right tone and tempo of industrial development in our country.Realizing this, industrial policies both at micro and macro levels have been declared from time to time in the country. Small-scale sector has experienced impressive growth after the declaration of a separate industrial policy for this sector titled "Promoting and Strengthening Small, Tiny and Village enterprises, 1991".Very recently, the Government of India has again declared a separate industrial policy titled "Micro Small and Medium Enterprises Development (MSMED) Act, 2006. However, there has so far not been any separate policy for agri-business in the country and in the absence of specific policy; the desired development of agri-business sector has been hampered.

G. Some of the other Challenges Include

1) Most of the farmers, agriculture is largely a means of livelihood. In the lack of adequate information, capital, technology and connectivity with the market, it is difficult for the uneducated small owner to turn their farming into an enterprise.

2) Before promoting diverse services by self-employed people, there is a need to create consciousness among the farmers, who are the customers, about the benefits of these services.

3) For promotion of services, the present performance of providing free service by the Government organizations should be discontinued. In fact, lots of farmers, mainly the politically associated leaders are of the feeling that the government is accountable for providing extension and technical advisory services to the farmers. Though, over the years, the trustworthiness has eroded and the services of these organizations are not on hand to small farmers, particularly those living in distant areas. However, the concept of free service makes the farmers unwilling to avail of compensated services, offered by the local self-employed technicians.

4) The self-employed technicians need regular back up services in the form of technical and business information, contact with the marketing agencies, suppliers of critical inputs and equipment and research stations who are involved in the development of modern technologies.

5) There are several legal restrictions and obstacles, which come in the progress of agri-business, promoted by the People's Organizations and Cooperatives. Private traders engaged in such business tend to ignore these rules and disturb the fair trade environment.

6) People's Organizations often hesitate in taking the risk of making heavy investments and adoption of modern technologies, which in turn affect the profitability. With low profitability and outdated technologies, farmer members lose interest in their own enterprises as well as in that of their leaders.

XV. OBSTACLES TO ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT IN AGRICULTURE SECTOR

The issue that must be taken seriously about importance of entrepreneurship and its direct link to national excellence of a society is an issue has unfortunately been neglected and has not received needed attention, and it is nothing but giving importance to the role of rural entrepreneurship and entrepreneurs residing in rural environments. If we consider rural areas as strategic axes of agriculture and food productions for the community that the need for it is increasing, we will understand its unparalleled role in development, growth and prosperity and will realize that ignoring the share of village and villagers will lead to unpleasant costs and consequences. What today exists in the society under the title of socioeconomic problems and causes social disorders and anxieties in various forms, especially insecurity, behavioral abnormalities, social immoralities, bad tempers, and emergence of ominous phenomena such as excessive growth of migration, increased rate of marginalization around metropolises and many other problems are examples of these consequences (Ghambar Ali and Zarafshani, 2008). Despite the benefits and advantages that entrepreneurial activities and entrepreneurship have in various production sectors as well as in the agricultural sector of the country, but there are some obstacles that can create friction in the development of entrepreneurial activities and to a large extent hinder prosperity of agricultural sector. Thus, barriers to entrepreneurship development in agricultural sector are named briefly below: Policy and planning barrier, economic barrier, support barrier, educational and informational barrier, infrastructure barrier, cultural barrier (Nasiri Qeydari, 2002).

XVI. MEASURES TO UPLIFT THE ECONOMY OF THE STATE

There is a dire requirement for advancing enterprising society among the individuals in provincial regions what's more, to make a lively situation for the provincial advancement Identifying promising horticultural and partnered territories of business to advance enterprising movement Providing zone explicit specialized preparing projects to build up the required specialized competency

among the potential business people Promoting the foundation of gathering and stage where association worried about enterprising improvement in agribusiness. Establishing formative reserve to help the fire up procedure of agripreneurship to set up rural brooding focuses Extending support regarding giving budgetary what's more, showcasing support – Entrepreneurial instruction and preparing to the potential rustic youth Improving infrastructural arrangement in rustic zones Identification of significant and explicit zones of agripreneurship advancement over the phases of significant worth chain of the agrarian procedure and planning fitting systems for the advancement. Agripreneurship assumes different jobs in the development and improvement of national economy through business enterprise improvement which builds the salary level and work openings in country just as urban zones.

Agripreneurship advancement is going to give amazing outcomes at both country and state level. In this unique situation, it is generally accepted that manageable agribusiness adventures can advance occupation drove monetary development in provincial zones through outfitting science and innovation for earth supportable and financial suitable monetary chances. Agri-preneurship in manageable horticulture like common cultivating, natural cultivating, eco-accommodating farming and so forth has - the possibility to change the essence of rustic India, the prime driver of our economy. Farming can a superior situated as a more gainful financial movement by coordinating the equivalent with handling, bundling and capacity exercises. In this way, there is a desperate need of making reasonable strategies and systems with activity plans for accomplishing the objective of agripreneurship improvement with foundation of a few emotionally supportive networks to hatch the agripreneurs in rustic India.

XVII. CONCLUSION

From the last numerous years our state is continually battling with the issues of joblessness, underemployment, particularly among the rustic people also, sadly we have bombed in tending to these issues. It is accepted that agripreneurship advancement will support the economy to use the distinguished qualities and to accomplish enormous development in essential division and to contribute for provincial improvement. It encourages the economy to accomplish self - supportability in sustenance.

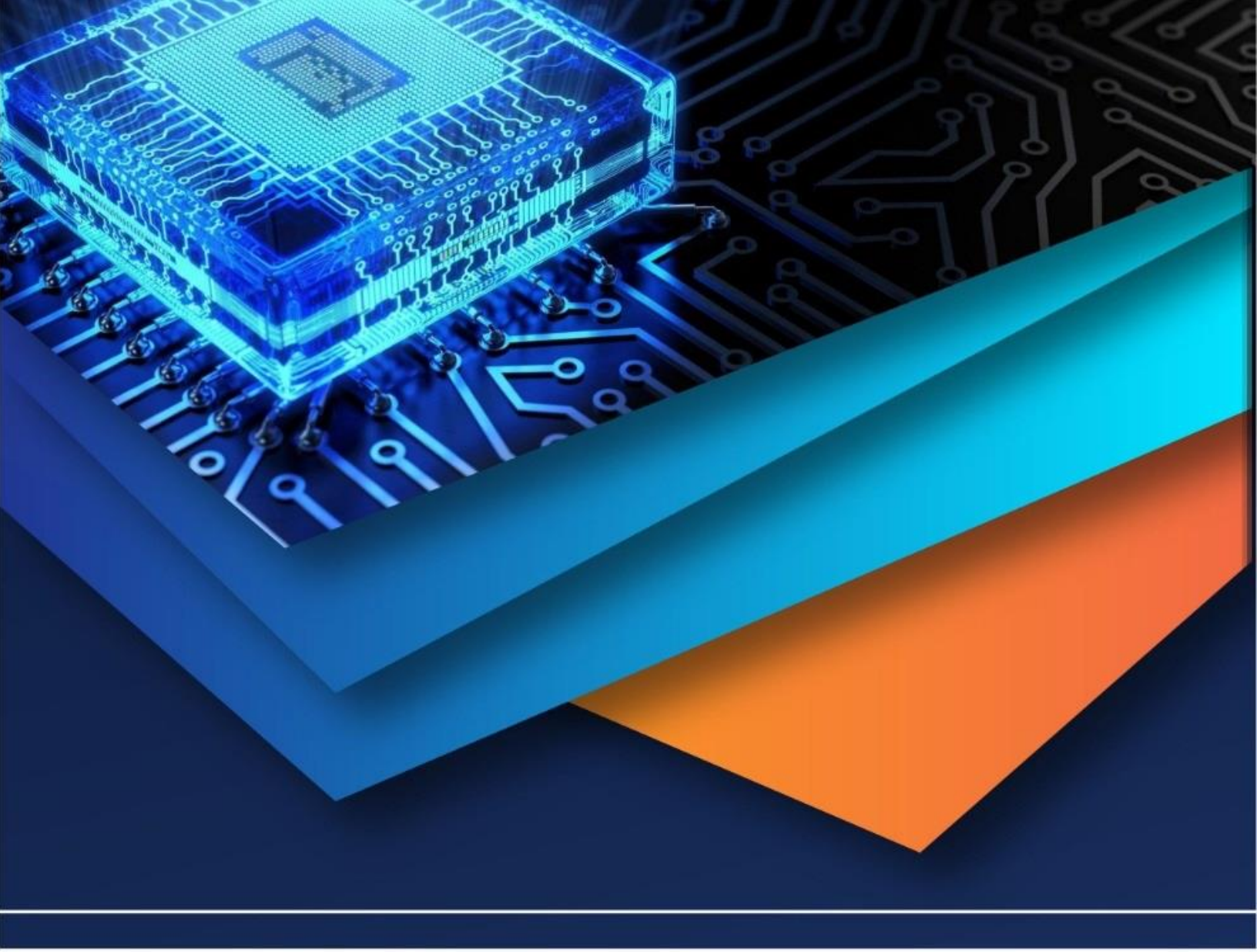
In Kerala, farmers are withdrawing from their occupation since they consider farming as non-profitable to earn a living. Thus, there is a need for revolutionary changes in agricultural sector, especially in the field of agribusiness. Thereby, acceleration of rural development and economic development is possible. Harnessing the entrepreneurial skill of farmers, young people and women in the rural economy helps in promotion of agripreneurship. Agripreneurship is not only an opportunity but also a necessity for improving the production and profitability in agriculture and allied sector.

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