

Ensuring Sustainable Development through Techno-preneurship (Technology Entrepreneurship)

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Abstract

The present system of education is unable to create employment opportunities in the rural-urban sector. Self-employment that keeps pace with the times is necessary for socio-economic development. The reorientation of formal education systems towards Sustainable Development (SD), at all levels, including higher education for the youth that gives due importance to both the content and the outcomes of SD is essential. In order to eliminate the digital divide, an 'Information Technology Revolution' is necessary in agro-based entrepreneurs. An appropriately designed model of technopreneurship can generate self-employment among the trained youths and change their lives.

Every youth must acquire the three basic skills of the technopreneurship model to start and run an enterprise. Vocational, technological and entrepreneurial skills are required for self-sustainable enterprise. 'Technopreneurship Education' is necessary to impart vocational skills with traditional inputs of entrepreneurial education. Pre-education, education/instruction (training) and post training follow-up activities are the phases that will culminate in the creation of a technopreneurial culture in society.

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Introduction

Educating the youth is necessary to make changes in the knowledge, skills, values, behavior and lifestyles required to achieve sustainability and stability in their lives. Hence it must be a high priority to reorient the educational system and curricula of our country towards these needs.

The present system of education is unable to create employment opportunities in the rural-urban sector. It needs to develop a specific entrepreneurial culture among the young generation. Most of these considerations are absent in the present educational scenario of entrepreneurial education. The formal education system needs to recognize the importance of both the content of and the results achieved by SD.

To empower the youth, it is necessary to know the barriers and the other factors that affect their careers. It is also necessary to create awareness among the youth to meet the challenges of the open market policy.

Most rural families are unaware of technopreneurial education (Technological Entrepreneurship) . . The effective use of Information Technology (IT) can empower the local inhabitants and also be helpful in the process of rurbanisation (Rural-Urbanization).

An appropriately designed model of technopreneurship can generate self-employment among 80 per cent of the trained youth and change their lives.

Methodology

Technopreneurship education is necessary to impart vocational skills with the traditional inputs of entrepreneurial education. Rurbanisation (Rural-urbanization) has created much potential for the establishment of sustainable micro-enterprises. In order to achieve the best possible results, the fundamental transformation of the knowledge-based society with the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) applications in the rural-urban sector is the topmost priority for this project.

Self-assessment, listing of the occupations, use of instructional materials, training for technopreneurship, fieldwork experience, and general entrepreneurial training are the basic soft skills provided to the youths for capacity development. The trainees' age group was 18 to 23. This project is carried out in the Satara district of Maharashtra with support from MITCON consultancy organization and the National Science and Technology Entrepreneurship Development Board of the Government of India.

This research has been conducted with the help of the sequential use of the tools designed specifically for this project i.e.

- SPIE Career Test (Personality Factors, Intelligent Quotient, Emotional Quotient),
- A market oriented database of the sectors for self employment,
- Instructional materials for the technopreneurship courses i.e. information kiosks, and repair and maintenance of electrical motors,
- Coursework of general entrepreneurship, and
- Fieldwork training manual.

Results

This model of technopreneurship and training has generated a number of entrepreneurs in areas like ICT, the service sector and even agro-based industries. This project has created an interest among the youth in technopreneurship. ICT entrepreneurs have tried to eliminate the effect of the digital divide and helped in empowerment.

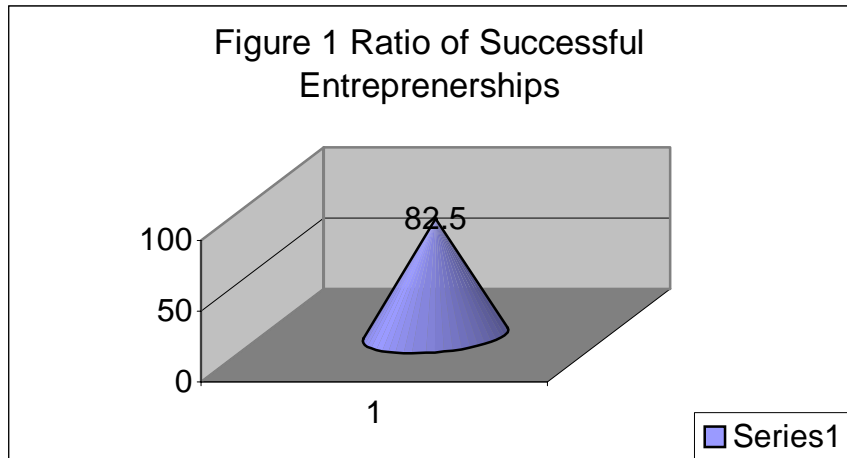


Figure 1 shows the percentage of successful candidates who started their own enterprises. Data collected one year after the training shows that the enterprises are self-sustainable and have changed their living standards. Most of the enterprises in the suburban area act as facilitators, especially in the service sector. The fact that technology assisted enterprises have been successful in creating constructive change proves the importance of this model in ensuring the ultimate success of SD.

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