

Importance and Analysis of Agri-business Education in India

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Abstract

India is an agrarian country and agriculture is considered as the backbone of our economy. In India, Agriculture has been practiced since ancient times, when other developmental sectors were not even in existence than farming was mostly treated as a life sustaining activity. India, the country which was a net importer of food grains in early 60s, has become an intermittent exporter of various agricultural commodities. Today, agriculture field has achieved commercial importance and has tremendous potential of being one of the powerful sectors contributing to nation's GDP. Due to the impact of globalization; production and marketing have become the buzz words in agriculture sector; biotechnology, precision farming; and various hi-tech and mechanized techniques have resulted in paradigm shift in agriculture. Besides, government's special emphasis on privatization, public private partnership, farmer organizations too have contributed to the agricultural growth. Over and above, education plays a prime role in achieving the development in any sector. Currently, agribusiness education is one of the promising qualification helps to mould the personnel into potent managers having managerial expertise. To realize the real potential in Indian agriculture and to grow it to the point of a prospective sector, it is necessity to manage the sector like a professional enterprise. The same can be expected by utilizing the agri-business managers having the qualities to serve the agriculture sector efficiently.

The purpose of this article is to make the students and farmers aware about the importance of agribusiness education so as to sustain in today's competitive world. Looking to the above facts, the present investigation found to be the most essential for the development and to enhance the GDP of India.

Keywords: *Agri-Business Education, Agriculture sector, Employment opportunities, Agricultural growth, Managerial expertise, GDP.*

1. Introduction

Agribusiness management education is a discipline of blend of economic, agriculture, business (commerce) and management principles. Agribusiness management field is of very recent origin and gaining rapid popularity among students as carrier choice. The agribusiness program is planned to develop management workforce to cater agricultural Industry which serves as a good option for the students willing to perform in corporate sector. Agribusiness management education has great opportunities of employment for agri graduates in private, governmental and cooperative sector. Agribusiness students can get jobs for various posts such as sales executives, credit officers, agri-experts, warehousing managers, financing officers, food managers and logistic managers in national and Multinational Corporation. Agribusiness professionals have bright future in academic field due to new emerging discipline and lack of agribusiness faculty in the country. Agribusiness sector also helps in fighting against the Poverty, Hunger, Malnutrition and unemployment situations in the economy. This review paper explores the potential opportunities in agribusiness management education which helps in employment generation and entrepreneurship development. Thus, Agribusiness management sector will change more in the next decade than it did in the last century.

2. Research Statement

Advancement in agriculture has resulted in increased demand for qualified managers to manage this sector. Agribusiness Management has enormous potential to address key national and global challenges of inclusive growth, and food and nutritional security. Therefore the

statement of Problem for this research would be Agribusiness Management Education can be one of the main sources of economic development in the Current Global Business Era.

3. Research Methodology

a) Objectives of the study

- To study the Agribusiness sector in India.
- To know the importance of agribusiness management programs in India
- To study the challenges faced by Agribusiness management educational institutions in India.
- To suggest measures for developing Agribusiness management education in India.
- To assess the influence of current Agribusiness management education on global business economy.

b) Research Data

- Secondary Data
- The primary source of the information in this research study is the secondary data. The available information on internet used to complete the dissertation report.
- All the available Journals, Articles, papers, Books provided necessary information to the research study.

4. Agribusiness in India

Agribusiness includes not only that productive piece of land but also the people and firms that Provide the inputs (i.e. Seed, chemicals, credit etc.), process the output (i.e. Milk, grain, meat etc.), manufacture the food products (i.e. ice cream, bread, breakfast cereals etc.), and transport and sell the food products to consumers (i.e. restaurants, supermarkets etc.). Farmers found it increasingly profitable to concentrate on production and began to purchase inputs they formerly made themselves. This trend enabled others to build business that focused on meeting the need for inputs used in production agriculture such as seed, fencing, and machinery and so on. These farms involved into the industries that make up the "agricultural inputs sector". Input farms are major part of agribusiness and produce variety of technologically based products that account for approximately 75 per cent of all the inputs used in production agriculture. At the same time the agriculture input sector was evolving, a similar evaluation was taking place a

commodity processing and food manufacturing moved off the farm. The form of most commodities (wheat, rice, milk, livestock and so on) must be changed to make them more useful and convenient for consumers. They are willing to pay extra for the convenience of buying the processed commodity instead of the raw agriculture commodity. During the same period technological advance were being made in food preservation method. Up until this time the perishable nature of most agriculture commodities meant that they were available only at harvest. Advance in food processing have made it possible to get those commodities all throughout the year. Today even most farm families' use purchased food and fibre products rather than doing the processing themselves. The farms that meet the consumers demand for greater processing and convenience also constitute a major part of agribusiness and are referred to as the processing manufacturing sector.

5. The Objectives of Agribusiness Education

To develop a competitive and sustainable private sector led agribusiness sector, particularly in high value areas of horticulture, livestock and fisheries and thereby support rural development, employment generation and poverty alleviation.

- Increase productivity / reduce yield gaps
- Promote commercially oriented agriculture activity
- Advance high potential sectors: horticulture, livestock and fisheries

The business sector in India is highly promising in the present scenario. The impact of globalization has changed the business procedure in India in terms of psychology, methodology, technology, mindset work culture etc. Newer challenges, newer opportunities are day-by-day in front of Indian industries, which are profitable and prospective. The fundamental scope of doing business in India is lying with its people. The huge population of India has created a large unsaturated market of consumers. This is one of the reasons why global companies are very much interested in doing business in India. In the post globalization era this scope has increased immensely for global multinational companies as Government of India has also played a very crucial and supportive role in this respect

through liberalized policies and legislative structure.

6. Features and Scope of Agribusiness

It is apparent that the definition of agriculture had to be expanded to include more than production. Farmers rely on the input industries to provide the products and service they need to produce agricultural commodities. They also rely on commodity processors, food manufactures, and ultimately food distributors and retailers to purchase their raw agricultural commodities and to process and deliver them to the consumer for final sale. The result is the food and fibre system. The food and fibre system is increasingly being referred to as "agribusiness". The term agribusiness was first introduced by Davis and Goldberg in 1957. Agribusiness represents three part system made up of;

- (1) The agricultural input sector
- (2) The production sector
- (3) The processing-manufacturing sector

Today the business has become very competitive and complex. This is mainly due to changing taste and fashion of the consumers on the one hand, and introduction of substitute and cheaper and better competitive goods, on the other. The old dictum "produce and sells has changed overtime into "produce only what customers want". In fact, knowing what customers want is never simple. Nevertheless, a farmer operator/farmer manager has to give proper thought to this consideration in order to make his business a successful one.

7. The Agricultural Education System in India

The Agribusiness Management Education System in India is uniquely placed in the global arena; to not only meet the domestic demand for such professionals, but also the demand for such professionals across the globe. It needs to be emphasized that the curriculum and pedagogy of management education are significantly different from traditional disciplinary education. In addition to lectures, there is greater emphasis on experiential learning through internships, case study discussions that simulate real-time decision-

making situations, seminars, group exercises, independent projects, games, role plays, and industry/field visits, etc. However, in India, agribusiness management education has evolved independently in most of the present institutions based on initiatives driven by local perceptions of need. The programmes vary in adequacy and quality across institutions because of variations in no. of student intake and quality of programme structure, resources and faculty. Keeping in view, the unique requirements of agribusiness, the agribusiness management education programmes need to be designed as both intellectual and experiential programmes. The initiative of the ICAR towards formulating the comprehensive minimum requirements and standards for establishing Colleges of Agribusiness Management in Agricultural Universities, ICAR institutes and Deemed Universities is timely. Ensuring minimum standards of curricula, pedagogy, infrastructure and faculty resources is essential not only to meet the increasing demands for agribusiness professionals in India, but also for the Indian NARS to become a key player as a supplier of manpower in this vital area of the emerging global economy.

8. Management Educational Support for Agribusiness

The agricultural development programme requires the following management support for enhancing its profitability:

Finance: Land development, irrigation systems and arrangements for marketing require huge investments. The present financial resources for agricultural development are neither adequate nor timely. Some of the activities such as water resource development and land shaping need soft loan. Additional finance with village level distribution network are needed for developing this industry.

Information Services: Information on new crops, technologies, systems and demand for the produce would help to optimise profits. The information services can also provide the latest know how and experiences with new varieties, new technologies, pest and disease outbreaks and their control.

Transfer of Technology : As a large section of the farmers are not adequately educated to make effective use of the technologies and

information services, special efforts are needed to motivate and educate the backward farmers. This is expected to be carried out by the Agricultural Extension Officers. These field officers need to study the cost-benefit analysis of various crops and help the farmers to select suitable crops. For effective transfer of technology, these officers and field workers should be oriented from time to time. To enhance profits through cost reduction and better price recovery, human resource development should be an important component of the agri-business. This should start with confidence building in small farmers.

Marketing Services: Inadequate marketing network is a major bottleneck in agriculture. The farmers should be oriented to make a swift forecast of the demand for various commodities and exploit the opportunities. There is good scope for setting up market outlets to reach the customers without involving too many middlemen. Business houses can establish a direct link with farmers' organisations for procuring raw materials. Such agencies can support farmers with seeds of improved varieties, finance and other critical inputs for optimising their crop yield.

Management Personnel: A critical input for successful agri-business is dedicated personnel with managerial skills. The managers should be familiar with the local agricultural laws and socio-economic conditions of the region. The real challenge is to bring small farmers into the network of efficient producers, for ensuring their share in the success. India has no doubt provided opportunities for multinationals to participate in industrial development with new technologies and resources. However, we cannot neglect agriculture and expect economic progress sans rural development. The opportunities in agri-business are enormous and can be easily enmeshed with locally available technologies. Now is the time for young managers to accept this challenge for mutual benefits.

9. Eligibility Agribusiness Management Programmes

The eligibility to get admitted in agribusiness management courses in top institutes remains more or less identical. It is a two-year program. The candidate must hold a bachelor or master degree in agriculture sciences or in agriculture-related disciplines with at least 50% marks or

equivalent CGPA. The candidate will have to clear AICTE-approved MBA entrance exams or institute-specific entrances, to be followed by group discussion and personal interview. The course fee varies for various institutes. In IIM-A, the course fee for the 2012-14 batch was around Rs 7,40,000. In Indian Institute of Plantation Management Bangalore, the tuition fee is around Rs 2,50,000, while in IRMA, the fee stands at Rs 4,00,000. National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management charges a course fee of Rs 3,00,000 for the two-year course. So, barring IIM-A, the upper limit of fees in most other institutions are around Rs 4,00,000 and Symbiosis Institute of International Business (siib), pune and In all the institutes, extra charges will have to be paid for mess, library, laptops, personal expenses on travel, clothes and laundry. A student in agribusiness will learn to manage companies which process, market, and merchandise agricultural products to consumers. He must explore business concepts and economic principles, and should have knowledge and skill in management, marketing, and finance with an emphasis on specialized requirements of the agribusiness sector. Courses leading to a degree/diploma in agribusiness include accounting, agribusiness management, agricultural marketing, price analysis, finance, farm & ranch management, and quantitative analysis tools, along with courses in production agriculture.

10. Employment Opportunities in Agribusiness Management

Privatization and globalization major structural reforms are taking place in the agricultural sector. National agriculture policy, agricultural reforms like public private partnerships, market lead extension programmes and agricultural technology management programmes envisage market centered production programmes in agriculture and allied sectors to attain sustainability. To achieving the above envisaged objectives, technocrats endowed with relevant management skills and experience are essential which paved the way for starting the Agribusiness Management programmes for critical management and entrepreneurial competencies to agricultural graduates for enabling them to own and manage Agribusiness enterprises of global standards. Thus, agribusiness managers have great opportunities in agriculture production, agricultural marketing, food processing, supply chain,

dairying and retailing sector in national and Multinational Corporation. These MNCs are very interested to investment in industries like agrochemical, organic farming, cattle feed industry, horticultural based industries, poultry, plantation, agro forestry, and ayurvedic industry in order to exploit the potentials of market access in India. Agribusiness is a field where economics, business, and agriculture merge, and individuals often study and gain experience in all three in

The agribusiness education gives an option of joining the agricultural corporate sector as one of the good career alternatives. The corporate sectors involved in production and distribution of pesticides, fertilizers, seeds, farm equipments are some of the usual options available. Agribusiness students can join in the warehousing, retail, seeds companies, fertilizers and pesticides companies, banks and insurance sectors. They also can join as agribusiness experts, as management professor, as policy maker, agribusiness researcher and agribusiness consultant in any concerned institutions. They can also look for a career in agriculture consultancy, agri banking, hi-tech farming and agriculture engineering sectors. There is a continuing strong demand by agribusiness firms, ranging from large multinational corporations to emerging food manufacturing firms for better trained employees in both management and the agriculture field. These firms are looking for employees who have the skills to make sense of the world around them, especially in a rapidly changing, global agriculture industry

11. Conclusion

Agribusiness is a growing discipline as well as industry sector emerging as promising career options for agribusiness students and has bright scope in both academic and industrial development. Agribusiness management education is necessary for developing trained manpower, to create business opportunities, reduce poverty through employment generation and industrial growth for the true development of Indian agriculture. Now days, the public, private and cooperative organizations are looking for professionally competent and

trained agribusiness managers for maintaining growth of the organization. The managerial skills of meritorious agricultural graduates can be developed through agribusiness management education by academic institutions so that they can prove as effective agribusiness managers in the national and international corporate organizations. Thus agribusiness management professionals have good and ample opportunities of employment or jobs in private, public and cooperative sector. They have opportunities in academic field as agribusiness faculty along with an alternative of entrepreneurship development. The liberalisation policies of the Government and the establishment of WTO have created more opportunities for globalising our agriculture and this will create an ample opportunity for the agribusiness in the global market.

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