

MICRO-ENTERPRISES AND START-UPS OF THE 21ST CENTURY -A METHODOLOGY OF HANDHOLDING

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Abstract

Startups are the buzz word since the turn of this century. There have been a number of young people who are indulging in innovative ideas that are simple, rooted to the lives of the people and have been established from the learning curve of life.

This paper examines the gap between the brilliant think tank represented by the IITians and IIM qualifiers who are totally oriented to the changed global environment on consumer goods on one hand, and the dwindling rural industry on the other.

The paper also looks at startups, rural micro enterprises and examines the roadmaps to rural start-ups and entrepreneurship development.

The 21st Century has initiated two unique strains of economic phenomenon globally. Firstly, the largest proportion of the businesses of the world are going to be young people. They have been termed as Generation – Y and they have behavioral attributes that are differing across a broad spectrum from their previous two generations. The second is the dwindling life cycle of the rural artisans and the rural industry. They are constantly trying to eke out an existence in fact many of them are bordering on annihilation as they have no patrons and their skills are no longer appreciated. There are several other reasons for this.

Key Words: Startups, environment, established, rural, industry and consumer

Introduction

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1. No interest of younger generations to pursue this available line to work there is a decline in the products of the rural industry largely because of there being a wide chasm between the markets and the producers.
2. Total lack of awareness of the government policies and programs to help the rural industry, handicrafts and traditional businesses like dealing in recycled fattered.
3. Disconnect between patrons and artisans
4. Materials changed due to environment bans on products like ivory and rare essentialities of flora and fauna species
5. Changed ideology of concerns of environmental significance impacted heavily on what should and should not be used for common lifestyles.

There is a movement towards revisiting the rural crafts and examining their utility in the current times. The practices of spinning, weaving, rope making, hand woven ‘dari’ making, earthenware and pottery, basket weaving and the making of sundry products from easily available local resources is being examined once again. It is towards this end. that the current paper draws the attention of scholars, academics industrialists and policy makers. It is high time that India takes the lead in showing those who have heavy and extensive carbon footprints, how they can be recrafted. Human existence with technology and scientific thought established on firm ground and planted in inexhaustible resources. As a future analyst in the field of commerce, it is essential to understand how actively there is the scope to establish an interface between the highly qualified tech heads and the grassroots level surviving yet sustainable rural practitioners.

Obstacles in the Youth-Rural Connect

There are many hurdles that threaten those who walk the walk of socially restrictive gender biased work roles. Rural women are burdened by several responsibilities like:

- 1) Household chores
- 2) Care of children and elderly
- 3) Management of domestic animals
- 4) Agricultural and allied duties like cleaning, preserving, storage of grains etc.
- 5) Collecting fodder and firewood
- 6) Social responsibility of community service
- 7) Cultural derivatives

Despite all these they are willing to take up leisure time activities that will provide some income generation for supplementing the family income. In most villages of Punjab and Haryana there are a number of households, where women are surviving on their local talents being used to carry out common activities. They are:

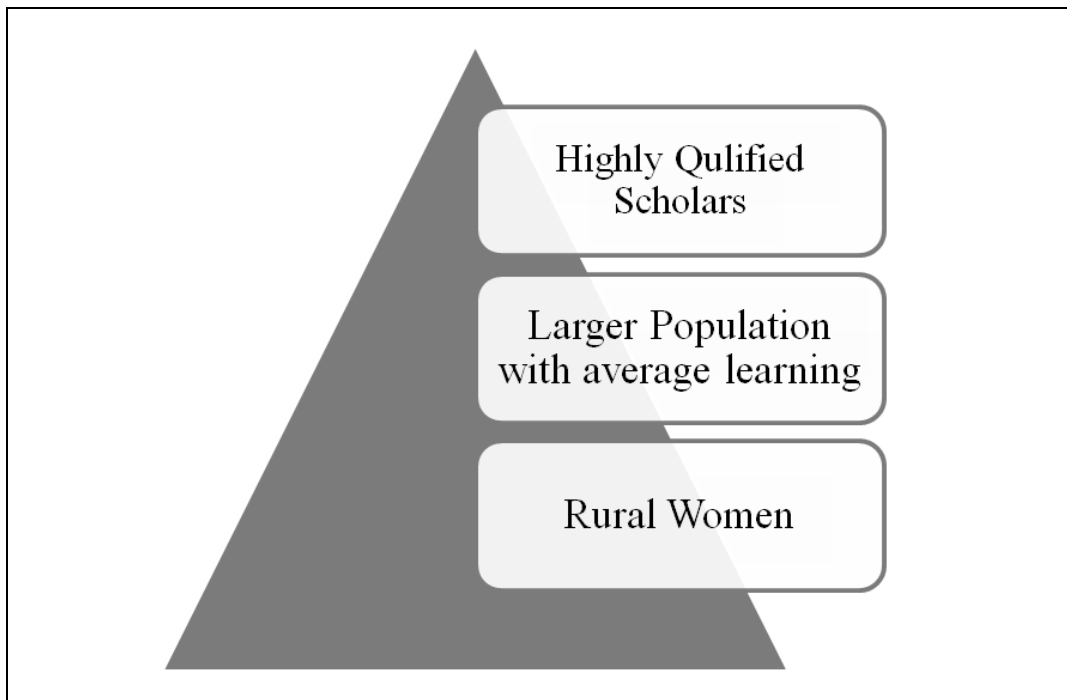
- 1) Dari Weaving on pit loom and standing looms
- 2) Embroidery usually the traditional Phulkari or 'dasooti' (cross stitch) or even the Sindhi and Kashmiri, sequins work, 'gotapatti' and several other form.
- 3) Basket making
- 4) Food craft like pickle making, preserves like sauces, chutneys and 'murabbas' as also dehydrated materials like wadi, papad, 'seviaan' and many more.
- 5) Several other rope and thread crafts like macramé, tattle lace making, crochet and knitting are also available.

Thus, there is a large range of products that can be thought to be evolved as microenterprises and enterprises. The synergy has not as yet been established because young thinkers passing out from the foremost institutions of higher learning are not turning their vision back to their roots. They have not been attuned to imbibe the tremendous potential of:

- 1) Women's enterprises in rural areas
- 2) Enterprising women in rural area
- 3) Entrepreneurship development activities in the rural areas especially among the women
- 4) Business Models and academic learning does not fit the ideals of management undergraduates and graduates in the country.
- 5) In fact, those who have studied abroad are amazed by the innovative activities being conducted in forming techniques, cropping and harvesting as well as storage and transportations.

Our country has vast resources and these need to be acknowledged deeply, studied and the concerned programs implemented with commitment and sincerity.

Figure 1: Catering to the Grassroots Levels



One case of a successful ‘Back to the roots’ start up is being presented here, that has maintained the vital connect with the rural entities and is providing a vital component of urban living that is safe and healthy.

The Case of Doozy Farms:

From the Doozy Farm Website

“The company was born out of a common vision of batch mates from IIT, IIM & XLRI to bring about a Socio-Commercial impact to society. People with more than 20 years of working with various Corporate giants came together to start this venture”.

“Our belief is providing the purest form of milk which is not only free from any form of adulteration but is also antibiotic free”.

“We ensure that we test our feed for aflatoxin so that our milk has zero amount of presence of carcinogen in our milk”.

“We understand the importance of the health and wellbeing of our Customers and hence we embarked on a journey to bring natural milk (we do not call our milk organic as one has to understand the basic of fodder we give to cow to appreciate that in Indian Context

a fully certified organic milk will be rarity) and milk products, made from this natural milk, are made using traditional methods that we use at home”.

“In addition to bringing Natural milk we also believe in sustainable development and “Swachh Bharat Mission” as articulated by our honorable Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Modi we are working closely with an NGO to collect Empty Pouches of milk and help in Recycle, Reuse and Reduce Waste”.

The Farm supplies excellent milk and milk products. The milk products are:

- 1) Curd
- 2) Cottage Cheese
- 3) Ghee (clarified butter)
- 4) Sometimes colostrum rich milk is also available.

The unique aspect of this farm is that the owners always welcome people to visit their farm to understand how they manage their operations. The following videos say it all.

Conclusion

The vital clue to total progress and a win-win situation is the tremendous visionary leap of faith that needs to be taken by the highly qualified scholars, researchers and academicians towards discovering the true potential and rich resources of the country.

The road to success, hence forth, will be paved by the vision of the institutionally learned academicians and scholars and the thoroughly experienced grass roots level workers who have learned the hard way from nature and circumstances. They can together carve the development of the country through sustained hand holding.

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