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Status of agri-clinics and agri business centres (ACABC) scheme in promoting agripreneurship

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Abstract

Agri-clinics and agri business centres (ACABC) scheme was introduced to strengthen the transfer of technology and extension services and also to provide self-employment opportunities to technically trained persons. The study was based on secondary data. The data collected were analysed using Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) to examine the status of ACABC scheme. From the results of the study, it can be found that under the ACABC scheme, 82,673 candidates were trained and 35,716 agriventures were established in India. Among them, 4,381 trained candidates and 1,746 established agriventures were from Karnataka. This indicates that Karnataka's per cent share was 5.30 per cent for the number of trained candidates and 4.89 per cent for the number of ventures established. Hence, from the study it can be observed that Government programmes were significantly impacting the increase of agripreneurship at all India level, but in Karnataka they were found to be less effective. So, there is a need for nodal training institutes in Karnataka to take some measures in order to increase the share of Karnataka in agripreneurship.

Keywords: Agri-Clinics and Agri Business Centres (ACABC), Agripreneurship, Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR), Agriventures

Introduction

Agricultural development is a precondition of our national prosperity as it is the main source of earning livelihood of the people. Agriculture will continue to be central part to all strategies of planned socio-economic development of the country. In the years to come, the increase in agricultural production will mainly come from the growth in productivity which will invite intervention of agricultural extension activities in providing farmers information, training and support for adopting improved production technologies. Shekara *et al.*, (2011) [8] reported that there is a need for revitalization of extension system in the country to address the issues of providing value added extension services to the farmer through additional qualified man power and adequate infrastructure. The present agricultural extension system suffers from insufficient skilled man power both in terms of quality and quantity. The National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management (MANAGE) observed that around 15000 agri-graduates pass out every year from Agricultural Universities of the country and only around 2500 agri-graduates are able to find jobs in public and private sectors.

In this background, to strengthen the extension services further and at the same time to tap the potential of unemployed graduates and to provide them employment opportunities by making them entrepreneurs. Government of India constituted a steering committee on Agriculture and allied sectors under the chairmanship of Prof M.S. Swaminathan. Subsequently, Union finance minister had announced a scheme for setting up "Agriclinics and Agribusiness Centres" by agricultural graduates with the support of National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) in the budget speech on February 28, 2001. The scheme of "Agriclinics and Agribusiness Centres" was launched on 9th April, 2002 with the objectives to provide extension and other services to farmers either on payment basis or free of cost, to support agricultural development and to create self-employment opportunities to unemployed agricultural graduates.

Committed to this scheme, the Government is now providing start-up trainings to graduates in Agriculture and allied sectors like, Horticulture, Sericulture, Veterinary Sciences, Forestry, Dairy, Poultry Farming, and Fisheries, etc.

As an integral part of this nationwide initiative, specialized training will be provided to agricultural graduates who are interested in setting up an agri enterprise. Being provided free of cost, 45 days training course will be offered by nodal training institutes across the country. Initiated by Small Farmers Agribusiness Consortium (SFAC) and coordinated by MANAGE, the course comprises entrepreneurship and business management as well as skill improvement modules in their chosen areas of activity.

Those who complete the training can apply for special venture start-up loans. Depending on the type of venture loan, it will be provided with a moratorium of up to two years and can be repaid within five to ten years as per easy installment plans. The rate of interest, margin and security on loans will be decided by the respective bank, as per RBI norms. Subsidy will be provided for the total project cost up to Rs. 20 lakh for an individual project (Rs. 25 lakh in the case of an extremely successful individual project) and up to Rs. 100 lakhs for a group of five members. In this backdrop, the present study aims at examining the status of Agri-Clinics and Agri Business Centres (ACABC) scheme in promoting agripreneurship.

Materials and methods

The study was based on secondary data. The required data were collected from the published sources like Agri-Clinics and Agri Business Centres (ACABC) database and analysed using Compound Annual Growth Rate technique.

Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) analysis

The analysis of growth rate is usually used in economic studies to find out the trend of a particular variable over a period of time. It clearly indicates the performance of the variable considered and hence it can be very well used for making interpretations and to evolve policy decisions. Compound Annual Growth Rate was evaluated to see the growth of number of trained candidates and number of ventures established under Agri-Clinics and Agribusiness Centres scheme from the year 2002 to September 2022 in India. The growth model used is specified as follows.

$$Y_t = A B^t V_t \quad (1)$$

Where,

Y_t = Number of trained candidates or ventures established in the year t

A = Intercept indicating the Y in the base period (t = 0)

B = 1+g

t = time period

V_t = Random disturbance term

Equation (1) was converted into the logarithmic form as follows to make it in a linear form:

$$\ln Y_t = \ln A + t * \ln B + \ln$$

This is of the following form,

$$Q_t = a + bt + U_t \quad (2)$$

Where,

$$Q_t = \ln Y$$

$$a = \ln A$$

$$b = \ln B$$

$$U_t = \ln V_t$$

The values 'a' and 'b' were estimated by using Ordinary Least Squares estimation technique. Later, the original 'A' and 'B' parameters in equation (1) were obtained by taking antilogarithms of 'a' and 'b' values as.

$$A = \text{Antilog}(a)$$

$$B = \text{Antilog}(b)$$

Compound annual growth rate (%) was calculated as follows:

$$g = (B - 1) * 100$$

Results and Discussion

Status of Agri-Clinics and Agri Business Centres (ACABC) scheme

a) Status of ACABC scheme in India

The state-wise status of Agri-Clinics and Agri Business Centres scheme in India as on September 2022 are depicted in the Table 1. Till date, 2,614 training programmers have been conducted, resulting in the training of 82,763 agricultural graduates and the establishment of 35,716 different agriventures. In the first year of inception, mainly due to lack of awareness about the scheme and the need to put systems in place, the scheme was introduced in Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan, Karnataka, Jammu and Kashmir, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Haryana, Orissa, Uttaranchal, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Punjab and Bihar states (Anonymous, 2022) [4]. Later, based on the growth of the ACABC scheme in each state, the funds were allocated in respective states to boost the program's effectiveness and also gradually distributed in other states with token releases, where upon the scheme spread to all of the states.

Due to the high growth status of the ACABC scheme in the states of Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, a greater number of Nodal Training institutes were started and funds were allocated in the respective states. Hence, these three states stood in prime position among all other states with respect to the number of training programmers, trained candidates and ventures established. These results were in line with those of Anonymous (2010a) [2], Bairwa *et al.* (2014a) [5] and Ahire *et al.* (2008) [1] who reported that Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu were the leading states in the overall performance of ACABC scheme.

Till date, under the ACABC scheme, 2,659 projects were sanctioned by the banks, of which the majority were from Uttar Pradesh (29.33%) and Maharashtra (19.67%) states, and 22,040 projects were still in pending stage, of which the majority were from Maharashtra (41.00%) and Uttar Pradesh (20.20%) states.

b) Status of ACABC scheme in Karnataka

The information pertaining to district-wise status of Agri-Clinics and Agri Business Centres scheme in Karnataka as on September 2022 is depicted in the Table 2. Under this scheme, four Nodal Training Institutes (NTIs) were established covering different parts of Karnataka *i.e.*, in districts like Bagalkote (North central part), Belagavi (Northern part), Bengaluru Urban (South Eastern part) and Haveri (Central part). From these NTIs, 4,381 candidates were trained and 1,746 different ventures have been established in Karnataka until September 2022.

Nodal training institutes play the most important and critical role in success of the scheme as they are the mentors, trainers and

guides for the agripreneurship who take up this training in order to start a venture of their own. As a result, Belagavi and Bengaluru Urban districts led the way in the growth of ACABC scheme in Karnataka. Whereas, Vijayanagar district was formed more recently *i.e.*, on 2nd October 2021 and this could be the reason why there were no any trained candidates and ventures established.

About 300 projects were sanctioned by the banks in which, maximum were in Bengaluru Urban (20.00%) and Belagavi (8.33%) districts. Whereas, 720 projects were still in pending stage of which, maximum were in Belagavi (31.94%) and Vijayapura (9.31%) districts.

c) Share of Karnataka to India under ACABC scheme

Table 3 shows that the total number of trained candidates and ventures established from the year 2002 to September 2022 has increased in India (5.58% and 9.94% CAGR respectively) while, that in Karnataka has decreased (-2.44% and -2.67% CAGR respectively). While, Karnataka's per cent share was found to be 5.30 per cent for the number of trained candidates and 4.89 per cent for the number of ventures established. This indicates that there is a need for significant efforts to increase the position of Karnataka state under ACABC scheme through generating awareness amongst the potential agri graduates about the

scheme and its benefits and facilitating the trainees to get more practical exposure, confidence and support to start their agri enterprise.

The ventures were established under 32 different activities related to agriculture and allied activities in both India and Karnataka as shown in Table 4.4. Among them, activities like, dairy/poultry/piggery/goatary, agriclincs and agribusiness centres and agriclincs have more popularity compared to others as number of established ventures found to be highest under these activities due to greater awareness of them, increased demand for their products, financial support, a wider range of potential customers and more established successful ventures both in India and Karnataka. Karnataka is a leading state in both sericulture and floriculture in India, which shows that there is more scope and conducive opportunity for the establishment of these activities, thereby earning more income. As a result, it is found that Karnataka had highest share in ventures like tissue culture unit, floriculture and sericulture. Similar results were found in the studies of Anonymous (2010b) ^[3], Bairwa *et al.* (2014b) ^[6] and Shekara and Durga (2007) ^[7], who reported that activities like, agriclincs and agribusiness centres, dairy/poultry /piggery/goatary, crop production were most popular activities among them.

Table 1: State-wise status of Agri-Clinics and Agri Business Centres (ACABC) scheme in India as on September 2022

SL No.	State	No. of Nodal Training Institutes		No. of training programmes		No. of trained candidates		No. of ventures established		No. of sanctioned projects by bank		No. of pending projects by bank	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1	Andhra Pradesh	6	4.96	42	1.61	1625	1.97	473	1.32	31	1.17	176	0.80
2	Arunachal Pradesh	1	0.83	2	0.08	48	0.06	3	0.01	2	0.08	0	0.00
3	Assam	1	0.83	29	1.11	844	1.02	255	0.71	93	3.50	23	0.10
4	Bihar	1	0.83	129	4.93	4333	5.24	1516	4.24	102	3.84	539	2.45
5	Chandigarh	1	0.83	2	0.08	4	0.00	2	0.01	0	0.00	0	0.00
6	Chattisgarh	4	3.31	33	1.26	987	1.19	384	1.08	22	0.83	62	0.28
7	Delhi	0	0.00	0	0.00	42	0.05	6	0.02	0	0.00	8	0.04
8	Goa	0	0.00	0	0.00	14	0.02	7	0.02	2	0.08	2	0.01
9	Gujarat	4	3.31	79	3.02	2222	2.69	875	2.45	50	1.88	667	3.03
10	Haryana	2	1.65	29	1.11	737	0.89	240	0.67	38	1.43	24	0.11
11	Himachal Pradesh	1	0.83	13	0.50	429	0.52	111	0.31	42	1.58	6	0.03
12	Jammu and Kashmir	1	0.83	50	1.91	1523	1.84	191	0.53	7	0.26	0	0.00
13	Jharkhand	1	0.83	30	1.15	782	0.95	198	0.55	7	0.26	12	0.05
14	Karnataka	4	3.31	136	5.20	4381	5.30	1746	4.89	300	11.28	720	3.27
15	Kerala	3	2.48	11	0.42	273	0.33	57	0.16	18	0.68	12	0.05
16	Madhya Pradesh	10	8.26	156	5.97	4881	5.90	2175	6.09	106	3.99	2711	12.30
17	Maharashtra	26	21.49	656	25.10	21787	26.35	10950	30.66	523	19.67	9037	41.00
18	Manipur	2	1.65	18	0.69	505	0.61	135	0.38	21	0.79	22	0.10
19	Meghalaya	2	1.65	2	0.08	37	0.04	3	0.01	1	0.04	0	0.00
20	Mizoram	1	0.83	2	0.08	52	0.06	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
21	Nagaland	0	0.00	7	0.27	187	0.23	22	0.06	2	0.08	3	0.01
22	Orissa	2	1.65	25	0.96	643	0.78	116	0.32	8	0.30	0	0.00
23	Pondicherry	1	0.83	22	0.84	145	0.18	85	0.24	14	0.53	3	0.01
24	Punjab	2	1.65	23	0.88	668	0.81	224	0.63	18	0.68	20	0.09
25	Rajasthan	5	4.13	138	5.28	4481	5.42	1835	5.14	81	3.05	1294	5.87
26	Sikkim	1	0.83	1	0.04	9	0.01	1	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
27	Tamil Nadu	14	11.57	265	10.14	8867	10.73	4319	12.09	292	10.98	1615	7.33
28	Telangana	7	5.79	96	3.67	2194	2.65	607	1.70	68	2.56	610	2.77
29	Tripura	1	0.83	0	0.00	6	0.01	1	0.00	1	0.04	2	0.01
30	Uttaranchal	1	0.83	20	0.77	555	0.67	175	0.49	17	0.64	18	0.08
31	Uttar Pradesh	15	12.40	557	21.31	18196	22.01	8706	24.38	780	29.33	4453	20.20
32	West Bengal	1	0.83	41	1.57	1216	1.47	298	0.83	13	0.49	1	0.00
	Total	121	100.00	2,614	100.00	82,673	100.00	35,716	100.00	2,659	100.00	22,040	100.00

Source: MANAGE, ACABC database

Table 2: District-wise status of Agri-Clinics and Agri Business Centres (ACABC) scheme in Karnataka as on September 2022

SL No.	State	No. of nodal training Institutes		No. of trained candidates		No. of ventures established		No. of sanctioned projects by bank		No. of pending projects by bank	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1	Bagalkote	1	25.00	256	5.84	93	5.33	15	5.00	56	7.78
2	Belagavi	1	25.00	662	15.11	337	19.30	25	8.33	230	31.94
3	Ballari	0	0.00	127	2.90	56	3.21	10	3.33	19	2.64
4	Bengaluru Urban	1	25.00	497	11.34	221	12.66	60	20.00	7	0.97
5	Bengaluru Rural	0	0.00	115	2.62	42	2.41	11	3.67	1	0.14
6	Bidar	0	0.00	162	3.70	47	2.69	6	2.00	30	4.17
7	Chamarajanagar	0	0.00	17	0.39	6	0.34	2	0.67	2	0.28
8	Chikkaballapura	0	0.00	59	1.35	12	0.69	0	0.00	10	1.39
9	Chikkamagaluru	0	0.00	119	2.72	40	2.29	16	5.33	6	0.83
10	Chitradurga	0	0.00	188	4.29	63	3.61	12	4.00	20	2.78
11	Dakshina Kannada	0	0.00	11	0.25	5	0.29	4	1.33	0	0.00
12	Davanagere	0	0.00	213	4.86	90	5.15	16	5.33	31	4.31
13	Dharwad	0	0.00	217	4.95	89	5.10	8	2.67	42	5.83
14	Gadag	0	0.00	89	2.03	27	1.55	1	0.33	18	2.50
15	Hassan	0	0.00	72	1.64	24	1.37	7	2.33	6	0.83
16	Haveri	1	25.00	196	4.47	82	4.70	14	4.67	42	5.83
17	Kalaburagi	0	0.00	119	2.72	48	2.75	6	2.00	24	3.33
18	Kodagu	0	0.00	25	0.57	13	0.74	6	2.00	1	0.14
19	Kolar	0	0.00	145	3.31	56	3.21	17	5.67	10	1.39
20	Koppala	0	0.00	72	1.64	29	1.66	6	2.00	17	2.36
21	Mandya	0	0.00	120	2.74	30	1.72	7	2.33	7	0.97
22	Mysuru	0	0.00	63	1.44	24	1.37	7	2.33	1	0.14
23	Raichur	0	0.00	94	2.15	37	2.12	7	2.33	24	3.33
24	Ramanagar	0	0.00	18	0.41	6	0.34	0	0.00	9	1.25
25	Shivamogga	0	0.00	108	2.47	37	2.12	5	1.67	12	1.67
26	Tumakuru	0	0.00	195	4.45	69	3.95	14	4.67	11	1.53
27	Udupi	0	0.00	10	0.23	4	0.23	2	0.67	0	0.00
28	Uttara Kannada	0	0.00	24	0.55	12	0.69	2	0.67	3	0.42
29	Vijayapura	0	0.00	343	7.83	134	7.67	14	4.67	67	9.31
30	Vijayanagar	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
31	Yadgir	0	0.00	45	1.03	13	0.74	0	0.00	14	1.94
	Total	4	100.00	4,381	100.00	1,746	100.00	300	100.00	720	100.00

Source: Manage, ACABC database

Table 3: Year-wise number of trained candidates and ventures established under the ACABC programme from 2002 to September 2022

SL No.	Year	Number of trained candidates			Number of ventures established		
		India	Karnataka	Percentage of Karnataka (%)	India	Karnataka	Percentage of Karnataka (%)
1	2002	1204	153	12.71	138	42	30.43
2	2003	2912	278	9.55	675	115	17.04
3	2004	1946	132	6.78	448	61	13.62
4	2005	3399	505	14.86	1412	256	18.13
5	2006	2209	266	12.04	1101	99	8.99
6	2007	3309	241	7.28	1215	65	5.35
7	2008	2393	156	6.52	823	57	6.93
8	2009	2575	199	7.73	1176	72	6.12
9	2010	3184	148	4.65	1269	94	7.41
10	2011	4432	177	3.99	1498	59	3.94
11	2012	3146	77	2.45	1792	62	3.46
12	2013	5387	378	7.02	2399	88	3.67
13	2014	5669	192	3.39	2730	91	3.33
14	2015	4072	171	4.20	2713	109	4.02
15	2016	5611	134	2.39	1676	27	1.61
16	2017	5096	370	7.26	2451	123	5.02
17	2018	5478	231	4.22	2656	142	5.35
18	2019	7878	269	3.41	2339	56	2.39
19	2020	3331	75	2.25	2073	58	2.80
20	2021	5032	77	1.53	2051	21	1.02
21	2022	4410	152	3.45	3081	49	1.59
	Total	82,673	4,381	5.30	35,716	1,746	4.89
	CAGR (%)	5.58***	-2.44		9.94***	-2.67	

Source: Manage, ACABC database

***, ** & * indicates 1 per cent, 5 per cent and 10 per cent level of significance

Table 3: Year-wise number of trained candidates and ventures established under the ACABC programme from 2002 to September 2022

SL No.	Year	India			Karnataka		
		Number of trained candidates	Number of ventures established	Percentage of ventures established (%)	Number of trained candidates	Number of ventures established	Percentage of ventures established (%)
1	2002	1204	138	11.46	153	42	27.45
2	2003	2912	675	23.18	278	115	41.37
3	2004	1946	448	23.02	132	61	46.21
4	2005	3399	1412	41.54	505	256	50.69
5	2006	2209	1101	49.84	266	99	37.22
6	2007	3309	1215	36.72	241	65	26.97
7	2008	2393	823	34.39	156	57	36.54
8	2009	2575	1176	45.67	199	72	36.18
9	2010	3184	1269	39.86	148	94	63.51
10	2011	4432	1498	33.80	177	59	33.33
	Total	27563.00	9755.00	35.39	2255.00	920.00	40.80
	Decadal growth rate (%)	268.11	985.51	194.89	15.69	40.48	21.43
	CAGR (%)	8.26**	19.35**	10.24***	-2.79*	-1.47	1.36**
11	2012	3146	1792	56.96	77	62	80.52
12	2013	5387	2399	44.53	378	88	23.28
13	2014	5669	2730	48.16	192	91	47.40
14	2015	4072	2713	66.63	171	109	63.74
15	2016	5611	1676	29.87	134	27	20.15
16	2017	5096	2451	48.10	370	123	33.24
17	2018	5478	2656	48.48	231	142	61.47
18	2019	7878	2339	29.69	269	56	20.82
19	2020	3331	2073	62.23	75	58	77.33
20	2021	5032	2051	40.76	77	21	27.27
21	2022	4410	3081	69.86	152	49	32.24
	Total	55110.00	25961.00	47.11	2126.00	826.00	38.85
	Decadal growth rate (%)	40.18	71.93	22.65	97.40	-20.97	-59.96
	CAGR (%)	1.02*	1.3**	0.2*	-3.9	-7.0*	-3.2*
	Grand total	82673.00	35716.00	43.20	4381.00	1746.00	39.85
	Overall growth rate (%)	5.58***	9.94***	4.13***	-2.44	-2.67	-0.23

Source: Manage, ACABC database

***, ** & * indicates 1 per cent, 5 per cent and 10 per cent level of significance

Table 4: Activity-wise number of ventures established under the ACABC programme from 2002 to September 2022

SL No.	Name of the Agriventures	No. of ventures established		
		India	Karnataka	% of Karnataka
1	Agri clinics	7066	287	4.06
2	Agri clinics and Agribusiness Centre	8387	510	6.08
3	Agro-Eco Tourism	21	1	4.76
4	Animal feed Unit	60	6	10.00
5	Bio fertilizer Production and Marketing	183	23	12.57
6	Contract Farming	115	13	11.30
7	Cultivation of Medicinal Plant	116	14	12.07
8	Direct Marketing	175	16	9.14
9	Farm Machinery Unit	842	29	3.44
10	Fisheries development	439	12	2.73
11	Floriculture	123	21	17.07
12	Horticulture clinic	183	23	12.57
13	Landscaping+ Nursery	114	15	13.16
14	Nursery	689	50	7.26
15	Organic Production/ Food chain	246	22	8.94
16	Pesticides Production and Marketing	72	10	13.89
17	Value Addition	499	11	2.20
18	Fishery Clinic	24	0	0.00
19	Seed Processing and Marketing	389	57	14.65
20	Soil Testing Laboratory	117	13	11.11
21	Tissue culture Unit	28	11	39.29
22	Vegetable Production and Marketing	522	8	1.53
23	Vermicomposting/ Organic manure	577	42	7.28
24	Veterinary Clinics	948	11	1.16
25	Crop Production	437	28	6.41
26	Dairy/ Poultry/Piggery/Goatary	12872	490	3.81
27	Rural Godown	58	2	3.45

28	Production & Marketing of Bio-Control Agents	37	4	10.81
29	Agricultural Journalism	23	3	13.04
30	Sericulture	65	10	15.38
31	Mushroom cultivation	185	2	1.08
32	Apiary	104	2	1.92
	Total	35,716	1,746	4.89

Source: Manage, ACABC database

Conclusion

Agri-Clinics and Agri Business Centres scheme was introduced to strengthen the transfer of technology and extension services and also to provide self-employment opportunities to technically trained persons. The present study has revealed that under the ACABC scheme, 82,673 candidates were trained and 35,716 agriventures were established in India. Among them, 4,381 trained candidates and 1,746 established agriventures were from Karnataka. This indicated that Karnataka's per cent share was 5.30 per cent for the number of trained candidates and 4.89 per cent for the number of ventures established. The number of established agriventures has increased by 9.94 per cent per year in a country as a whole whereas, it has decreased in Karnataka state (2.67% per year) over a period from the year 2002-03 to 2021-22 and also it can be found that about 720 projects are still pending. Hence, from the study it can be suggested that Government programmes were significantly impacting the increase of agriprenurship at all India level, but in Karnataka they were found to be less effective. So, there is a need for nodal training institutes in Karnataka to take some measures to increase the share of Karnataka in agriprenurship. Hence, it can be suggested that the Government of Karnataka to create awareness among youth about agriprenurship and to provide the incentive in support of establishing agriprenurship.

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