

Atma Nirbhar Bharat: Rural Transformation through technology

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Abstract: *The Prime Minister of India announced the AtmaNirbharAbhiyaan initiative on May 15, 2020, with the goal of making India self-sufficient. These plans aim to encourage business ownership and growth in a variety of areas, including micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), cottage industries, aviation, healthcare, and more in rural India. As part of AtmaNirbharat Bharat Abhiyaan, the government is stepping up efforts to help the economy recover from the Corona Virus epidemic and the ongoing, if reduced, nationwide lockdown. Therefore the purpose of this paper is to examine the rural transformation caused through technology under Atmanibhar Bharat Abhiyaan. The study and debate clearly show that AtmaNirbhar Bharat Abhiyan has evolved into a movement to encourage entrepreneurship, especially in underdeveloped parts of India. The movement aims to recognize the abilities and talents of disadvantaged individuals and provide them with training to secure a means of living for themselves and their families. The Movement aims to inspire the formation of numerous businesses and instill confidence. Today, several states are pleased to observe several entrepreneurs in rural regions initiating the production of diverse local products and promoting them through different organizations. There has been an observable shift in their thinking. The Prime Minister has issued a push for a self-sufficient India. The phrase "Aatmanirbhar Bharat" encourages supporting local products. It is based on five fundamental aspects: the economy, infrastructure, systems, demographics, and demand. Aatmanirbhar Bharat aims to empower individuals and businesses to foster growth and enhance India's prosperity and strength. Many rural places in the nation are densely populated. Experiencing village life in India allows you to encounter the authentic essence of the country. It is crucial to develop the rural economy and provide employment and opportunity in rural regions for the concept of "Aatmanirbhar Bharat" to succeed.*

Keywords: Aatmanirbhar Bharat, Rural transformation, rural economy, technology

I. INTRODUCTION

Prime Minister Narendra Modi initiated the AtmaNirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan initiative in May 2020. This campaign attempts to promote entrepreneurship. Self-sufficiency is growing in importance in the current Covid age. The outbreak has greatly decreased global trade and migration, affecting most of the world's developed countries. Several nations' economy, including as China, the United States, and the United Kingdom, have been significantly impacted. To maintain a robust economy in all circumstances, our country has to achieve self-sufficiency. The administration has taken a significant step towards India's independence. Everyone is urged to actively participate in managing their own enterprises. To ensure the strength of our economy, we must cultivate an entrepreneurial mindset. We have always taken pride in the entrepreneurs inside our country. The growth of our economy is partially due to their efforts. They contribute to GDP, pay taxes, and provide capital, knowledge, and personnel when needed. The main purpose of this paper is to examine the rural transformation caused through technology under Atmanibhar Bharat Abhiyaan.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The "Make in India" initiative and its effects on the Indian economy have been attempted to be explained by Shaikh and Khan (2017). Products with zero flaws and zero environmental impacts were the focus of this effort. Unfortunately, the results show that this initiative does nothing to advance the agricultural industry. It is clear that this campaign is a bold

initiative centered on the nation's long-term prosperity. By enacting appropriate policies, India has the potential to become a leader in the manufacturing industry.

The research of Dr. Richa Srivastava (2019) examines the effects of India's Make in India initiative on a global scale. The agricultural sector was less affected by this campaign's focus on manufacturing. Jobs, relief from poverty, increased value for Indian commodities, and a reduction in the trade imbalance are all possible outcomes of a thriving manufacturing industry in India. The government's goal is to increase GDP by 25% by implementing the objectives outlined in the Make in India initiative. There will be internal and international repercussions to this effort. Employment possibilities for the country's young, reduction of poverty, attraction of investments, enhancement of Indian commodities' value, and resolution of the growing trade imbalance may all be achieved through the expansion of the manufacturing sector. The country's reputation will rise on a global scale, and investors will see India for more than just a market; they will see an opportunity. Domestic enterprises will inevitably become multinational corporations (MNCs) as a result of interactions between domestic and foreign firms. Both at home and abroad, people will feel the effects of this effort. Jobs for the country's young, reduced poverty, more investment, higher product value, and a reduction in the widening trade imbalance are all possible outcomes of a thriving manufacturing industry. Investors will see India as more than just a market—they will see an opportunity—and India's global status will grow as a result. The inevitable transformation of local enterprises into MNCs will be facilitated by the interaction between domestic and foreign firms.

As a means of gauging the program's societal and economic effects, Kumar and Pathania (2022) sought to understand the program's underlying mechanism through an examination of the tourist and hospitality industry in Himachal Pradesh. Mathematical and statistical methods such as percentages, simple averages, AM, standard deviations, and Chi-square tests were utilized to assemble the primary and secondary data. The goals of the Make in India plan, which include boosting income, creating employment, and improving infrastructural amenities for tourism and hospitality, are being achieved in Himachal Pradesh.

The government's decision to launch the Aatamanirbhar Bharat initiative was driven by two key concerns, according to Lal et al. (2020): the need to modernize MSME and to keep our reliance on local products. Secondary data, derived from sources such as websites, publications, and research papers, formed the basis of the descriptive study. Aatamanirbhar Bharat Abhiyanis expected to boost the country's gross domestic product (GDP) via facilitating the development of new employment opportunities and enhancing exports.

From a global viewpoint, Shettar (2017) has described the effect of "make in India" initiatives. This research brought attention to the primary goal of the Make in India initiative, which is to assess the impact of FDI on India's manufacturing industry. A new mindset, new processes, new infrastructure, and new sectors are the four pillars upon which the Made in India initiative rests, as explained in the research. The Indian economy may become self-sufficient if it is built on these four pillars.

Based on her research, Nandan (2020) concludes that the government's Aatamanirbhar Bharat initiative will concentrate efforts from emerging to developed economies, covering the whole dispersed economy. The plan is seen as benefiting all sectors and vulnerable parts of society. This initiative has the potential to propel India to new heights of growth, and if it is fully successful, it will serve as an example for other economies throughout the globe.

Secondary data, gathered from a variety of sources including newspapers, research papers, articles, websites, etc., was used in Agarwal's (2021) study. He found that the Aatamanirbhar Bharat and Made in India programs both use the local-to-global idea. The program's primary goals were (a) increasing the number of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSME) and encouraging their usage of local goods, and (b) reducing reliance on foreign economies by means of an import substitution strategy. If India wants to become economically independent, it should pursue a strategy of export promotion and import substitution.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study relies on secondary data obtained from many publications, periodicals, books, and websites, all of which are cited in the bibliography.

ATMANIRBHAR BHARAT ABHIYAAN

As the Honorable Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, sets his sights on 12 May 2020, the Abhiyan has a vision for a transformed India. Twenty lakh crores, or 10% of India's earnings, was offered as part of a special economic package, and the prime minister urged the country to start the Indian Independence Campaign (Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan) as again. The battle against the COVID-19 pandemic is aided by India's GDP. In achieving this goal, India and its people will become more autonomous and self-sufficient. "Economy, Infrastructure, System, Demography and Demand" were the five major tenets of this campaign. In addition, under Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan, the government announces reforms and enablers in seven key sectors. The Indian government has implemented a number of bold changes, including agriculture sector chain reforms, rational tax structures, simple and clear legislation, assistance for talented workers, and a robust economic engine.

The already-struggling rural Indian population has taken a further hit as they face more obstacles to their progress. Reportedly, India's employment rate in 2020–21 was at a record low because of the country's protracted lockdown. In May 2021, the national unemployment rate was 11.9%, significantly higher than the 6% recorded in September 2020 (Sharma, 2021). Reports indicate that over 1 crore individuals have lost their employment and that the majority of households have seen a significant decline in their income. Therefore, individuals are compelled to seek out different means of subsistence. Citizens now have the finest option when it comes to choosing a career path: self-employment.

TOWARDS RURAL TRANSFORMATION

In an effort to rehabilitate the economy hit hard by the epidemic and subsequent lockdown, the government has unveiled a plethora of projects under AtmaNirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan. The cottage industry and micro, small, and medium-sized businesses employ the vast majority of rural entrepreneurs. The majority of middle-class and lower-class jobs are likewise filled by this industry. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) across the nation would receive extra support from the Abhiyaan. Under the schemes, 20,000 crores of rupees will go toward a subordinate loan, and another 2500 crores will help businesses cut their EPF payments, and 30,000 crores will go toward making NBFCs, HFCs, MFIs, and other financial institutions more liquid (GOI, 2020). For the country's impoverished, there is the Pradhan MantriGaribKalyan Package. Farmers, construction workers, elderly people, widows, and female citizens would be supported through the distribution of rice/wheat, pulses, amenities like gas cylinders, a rise in daily salaries, and Provident Fund facilities. As part of its oversight, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has been implementing a number of policies aimed at increasing the country's liquidity. Particular programmes, like as the Kisan credit card and 86,000 crores in agricultural loans, etc., give targeted assistance to the nation's farmers. Agriculture, animal husbandry, pisciculture, etc., were means of subsistence for many rural paid professionals at this time. There has been funding available to help individuals start their own businesses in various areas.

Under the Pradhan MantriMatsyaSampadaYojana, 20,000 crore rupees have been set aside. An sum of Rs. 15,000 crore has been allocated for this sector by the Animal Husbandry Infrastructure Development Fund. Herbal gardening, beekeeping, and other such endeavours have their own specific plans (GOI, 2020). To further legalize the employment of migrant workers and laborers, the Abhiyaan has incorporated many steps, such as sending appointment documents to the workers, providing a gratuity to employees who have worked for a year in a fixed-term position, standardizing the minimum salary, etc. In addition to a yearly health check, this program has established stringent safety protocols to ensure the well-being of employees. It is the duty of the individual state governments to ensure the safety of the migrant workers. They can use the identity cards that were given to them to access services like the Public Distribution System, which provides food, and welfare facilities that are portable. Also provided are reasonably priced housing options for the migratory workers.

The 3-month grace period for monthly instalments of all sectors' loans is another advantageous program under this Abhiyaan. Millions of people, who had been without a job or pay check for months, felt some relief from the stress thanks to this program. People don't have to worry about supporting their families when they get payments that cover their fundamental requirements. Once the economy is restored to its normal state, this will assist them in getting back on their feet. In addition, the government has changed its policies in an effort to attract more investors. If we want to make the states more competitive, we rate them by how appealing they are. A team of highly-authorized secretaries has

been formed to expedite the investment approval process. In order to entice investors, the country's infrastructure will be improved.

The nation's digitization effort was a huge success, allowing several industries to avoid closure. A lot of people have taken advantage of this chance to make some extra cash by working online. Online meetings are replacing in-person ones for everything from board meetings and sales presentations to training and education, reporting, and even cabinet discussions. With the creation of the land bank, industrial land may be made accessible on an as-needed basis. The business sector's technical growth would be greatly enhanced with the establishment of an Industrial Information system using GIS mapping in SEZs, Industrial parks, and estates. The aviation industry has received particular attention. A number of airports that meet or exceed international standards can be built through private partnerships. Investments both domestic and international, as well as investments from outside the country, will be boosted by better transit options. A number of programs aimed at helping the country's indigenous peoples have been initiated by the government. An integral aspect of our civilization is the vast and varied tribal population that makes up our nation. The development and expansion of these communities depend on laying the groundwork for entrepreneurship (Invest India, 2021).

Arjun Munda, the Union Minister of Tribal Affairs, established the Tribal Entrepreneurship Development Programme. Two prominent Indian trade groups, the Ministry of Tribal Affairs and ASSOCHAM, have launched a new three-year program to foster entrepreneurial spirit among India's indigenous communities. In order to foster the social and economic advancement of indigenous communities, the Ministry of Tribal Affairs has enlisted ASSOCHAM as one of its Centres of Excellence to carry out targeted initiatives (Ministry Of Tribal Affairs, 2021).

The program's overarching goal is the social and economic development of the tribal community via the cultivation of its members' inherent abilities over the course of three years. In order to help India achieve its goal of becoming Atmanirbhar, the initiative aims to maximize the contribution of the tribal community to our country's expanding economy. Entrepreneurship among Indian tribal tribes is also intended to be supported and promoted (PIB, 2020). It is necessary to launch initiatives to link agricultural and forest products to markets through technological means, establish self-help organizations, empower women, and establish self-sustaining businesses. In the beginning, this program would seek for one thousand tribal craftsmen in order to put the plan into action. The indigenous craftspeople will get help developing a distinct brand identity and value proposition. Additionally, it is suggested that they connect with prospective customers through virtual road shows and exhibits. As a whole, the Centres of Excellence should help the indigenous craftspeople sell their wares and raise more money for their families' well-being.

As part of its efforts to implement the AtmaNirbhar Bharat Abhiyan, India's Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) has been planning policies and initiatives to help the country's indigenous peoples become more self-sufficient. In an effort to empower indigenous communities, the SSIASST and MOTA have established a natural agricultural center of excellence. Using sustainable Natural Farming practices and introducing them to business prospects, the initiative will teach 10,000 tribal farmers.

Launched on October 2, 2020, the 'Tribal Entrepreneurship Development Program' is a three-year endeavor by MoTA and ASSOCHAM to promote the socio-economic advancement of India's tribal communities. A study was conducted in Jharkhand by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) in collaboration with the FICCI Social, Economic, and Development Foundation (SEDF). The purpose of the study was to learn about the current ways of life of the tribal community in two specific districts, to identify the obstacles they encounter, and to propose solutions that would help them become self-sufficient (Ministry Of Tribal Affairs, 2021).

It is BAIF's intention to transform a remote community into a Model community through the Model Village Scheme. In order to ensure a sustainable living, a better quality of life, an enhanced environment, and strong human values, the organization's mission is to provide rural families, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, with chances for profitable self-employment. The development research, efficient utilization of local resources, extension of suitable technologies, and upgrading of skills and competencies with community engagement are all contributing to this success. We hope that the government's different policies would stimulate economic development and allow us to make up for the losses we had last year. In 2021, the country's economy is expected to expand by 10%, surpassing several other rapidly developing nations, including China (Sharma, 2020).

The prime minister has made a plea for India to become self-sufficient. Aatmanirbhar Bharat is an impassioned plea to stand up for domestic goods. All five of these factors—demand, demographics, infrastructure, and systems—are crucial. Aatmanirbhar Bharat is all about giving people the tools they need to succeed, so that businesses may thrive and India can become a powerful nation. Many people still call the countryside home, and it occupies a sizable portion of the nation. The "real India" may be found in rural India. Therefore, "Aatmanirbhar Bharat" cannot exist without fostering economic growth in rural regions and providing chances for employment there. Agrarian traditions, cultural artifacts, historical knowledge, and traditional crafts are all preserved in the country's rural communities. Aatmanirbhar Bharat's goal of empowering rural communities, youth, and women via the development and promotion of locally produced goods through tourism may be achieved. Reducing distress migration from rural regions, alleviating poverty, and promoting sustainable development are all areas where this will assist.

By connecting buyers all over the world, digital platforms and technology are helping the tourist industry grow and stay competitive. When it comes to travel information, digital platforms have elevated peer evaluations and other types of user-generated content (UGC) to the forefront, surpassing even the prominence of tourism boards and more conventional venues. Entrepreneurs in rural areas now have more chances than ever before to increase their financial inclusion and market access through digital technologies and platforms. Entrepreneurs in rural areas may now leverage digital technologies such as the internet, cloud computing, social media, etc. to counteract geographical limitations and the absence of other marketing channels. Nevertheless, there is a lack of education among rural residents about the safe and effective use of digital platforms. They can't take use of digital technologies to boost tourism since they either don't know how or don't have the necessary resources.

IV. CONCLUSION

All of this points to the fact that AtmaNirbhar Bharat Abhiyan is now a movement in India aimed at encouraging entrepreneurship, especially in less developed and rural areas. The movement's stated goal is to help low-income people find jobs that provide a living wage so that they and their families can escape poverty. As a whole, the Movement is planning to inspire faith and launch countless new businesses. Some states are ecstatic that, recently, numerous entrepreneurs, especially in rural regions, have begun making and selling a variety of locally sourced items through various channels. They seem to have changed their minds. The individuals around them began to experience an improvement in their quality of life. To lessen reliance on foreign sources, such as exported goods and services, they not only employ fellow humans but also supply consumers cutting-edge items at reasonable costs. People in an area benefit from better roads, hospitals, schools, shopping centers, and many other amenities when businesses in the region thrive. It is possible for a rural entrepreneur, like PremaGopalan, to elevate a backward society to national prominence. Not only does it grant us independence, but it also gives us a competitive advantage in exports, which means more money coming in from other countries.

If certain steps were taken, the goals of the Abhiyan may be achieved. It is necessary to properly distribute the produced cash and ensure that they reach the real recipients, since the government has set aside a substantial amount for the development of various sectors and initiatives. Natural disasters and pandemics disproportionately impact the poor. And hence, the nation ought to be ready to face economic and natural disasters. Having competent leadership and a suitable system in place to put a policy into action is crucial to the success of any concept or program. Increasing the quantity and quality of the commodity is crucial if we want to become a self-sufficient and global supplier and use the opportunity that has been redirected from China. It is essential to identify the real potential of different sectors in both urban and rural India and offer them enough resources for the Abhiyan plans to be implemented successfully.

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