

9. Role of Incubation Centres in Promoting Entrepreneurship: Case Studies in Goa

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Abstract

Entrepreneurship is a dynamic capability to innovatively act in order to create incremental gain. The company must master the ability to market its new product. Entrepreneurial spirit and risk taking ability is a key to the growth of any nation. Potential entrepreneurs are too precious to be missed out. They need to be identified, supported, nurtured and leveraged to success for the benefit of all in the society. Since they are the only sources of new value creation, innovation, new wealth creation and most importantly new jobs generation, their role as agents of economic growth, can never be overstated. Business incubators aim to assist new entrepreneurs with business start-up. Business incubators are being used by policy makers around the world as a tool to encourage early entrepreneurial activities and to promote business start-ups and regional economic development. The growth of incubation centres and the better quality of life that Goa offers has put Goa on the map for entrepreneurs and startups. Incubation centres have come as a sliver of hope for Goa, which was staring at a migraine-inducing unemployment number coupled with a declining economy. At present, four full-fledged incubation centres across the state provide the handholding experience that young startups require initially. The present paper is based on a case studies which highlights the role of the incubation centre in promoting entrepreneurship in Goa.

Key words: Entrepreneurship, incubation centre, role.

Introduction

Entrepreneurship is the driving force behind economic development. Without it, labour, capital, technology and resources remain practically useless. Indeed, it is often not the shortage of resources but lack of ability and determination to put **them** to effective use that has retarded economic progress in the developing countries. Economic development in any form is the outcome of human activity. Incubation Centres have been receiving increasing attention as a tool

to promote entrepreneurship, both in the developed and developing countries. They have become an integral part of the business assistance framework to offer critical support to newly formed enterprises. The main goal of this paper is to examine the role of business incubators in encouraging entrepreneurship in Goa.

Entrepreneurship in Goa

Goa, India's smallest state is located on the west coast of India in the region known as Konkan. Goa, according to experts, has all the advantages and potential to become an outstanding First-World-State within the next ten years, provided a transparent, corruption free, proactive, corporate governance is in place. Goa needs to look beyond mining and tourism and develop sustainable, environment friendly industries with a human-face. Mining and tourism have provided a good Launch pad for economic growth of Goa, but the two industries also put an immense stress on the sensitive biodiversity of Goa. In order to make Goa into a truly world-class state, emphasis needs to be laid on enhancing the knowledge base of the people. With the advancements of technology and the penetration of internet in people's personal lives, sharing quality information among selected groups of people is truly an achievable task. Access to right kind of information is the primary step towards accomplishing relevant tasks.

Goa has a vast educated work-force and steps need to be taken to focus on the knowledge economy. Short-term problem solving plans should be replaced by encouraging the creation of long-term employment opportunity. Most of the smartest talents produced in Goa are either serving some organizations in other parts of India or have taken the long route of helping other countries around the world develop into world-class hubs. People blame the Government. I would personally blame society. In my lifetime of growing up, I never received words of encouragement with conviction to 'start' something on my own. Every attempt would be backed up with a cloud of discouraging suggestions from people from all walks of life. The Government in this regard has the power to influence and inculcate certain values in society with its wide reach and staggered network. It should assist in developing a culture of entrepreneurship, encourage collaboration and have a strict system in place for accountability.

Role of Incubation Centres

The concept of incubators began in the late 60s in the US. It wasn't until the early 80s that the full scale of its potential was realised. Just years before the US manufacturing engine faced a slump due to foreclosures on many of its sick units. One of the key reasons cited was a

‘safe fail ground’ – an area to practice if you will. Incubation centres are such places. A safe place to fail. A place where you can focus on your business and have amenities taken care of, marketing assisted with, and finances facilitated. How about a mentor to guide you, whose sole purpose is to help you avoid the pitfalls that they went through first hand!

Incubation Centres in Goa: Case Studies

Incubation centres have come as a sliver of hope for Goa, which was staring at a migraine-inducing unemployment number coupled with a declining economy. Incubation centres are key to driving entrepreneurship. At present, three full-fledged incubation centres across the state provide the handholding experience that young startups require initially. GITIC, the first incubation centre in Goa, was followed by the government-backed CIBA which began in 2012. In October 2014, CIBA opened another centre in Assagao. The latest entrant is the Centre for Science, Technology and Innovation (CSTI) backed by the Manovikas Public Charitable Trust. The Incubation Centres operating in Goa in promoting entrepreneurship are as follows:

1. Goa It Innovation Centre

Goa IT innovation Centre (GITIC), is an entity established by the Goa Chamber of Commerce & industry and the Department of Industry, Trade & Commerce, Government of Goa. Goa IT innovation Centre's main aim is to foster an environment that will render successful businesses and will leave the IT entity financially viable.

Successful “graduates” who have passed out from the incubator will have the potential to create jobs, revitalize the community, market new products & services and strengthen the state and national economy.

Since 2011 Goa IT Innovation Centre (GITIC) has incubated 16 companies, creating about 150 jobs in the process. Started with the vision of Goa Chamber of Commerce & Industry (GCCCI) and (Directorate of Industries, Trade & Commerce) DITC, GITIC was the first IT incubator in Goa. Recognizing the need to foster the IT industry in Goa, an incubator was a step in the right direction.

2. Centre For Incubation And Business Acceleration

CIBA is a technology business incubator based in Goa and Mumbai supporting and nurturing startup companies by providing services such as incubation, modern office spaces, mentoring, networking opportunities, seed funding and rapid prototyping. Agnel Entrepreneurship Development Institute, founded in 2000, an organization with an integral role

in catalysing the entrepreneurial movement in Goa. By supporting over 5000+ entrepreneurs, CIBA has highlighted Goa's reputation as a destination for Entrepreneurship and Innovation. CIBA will be India's most sought after Technology Business Incubator committed to growing a collaborative entrepreneurial network by providing a one stop support system for start-ups and transforming Goa as a hub for innovation. CIBA is an incubation centre in Goa which helps entrepreneurship in Goa turn ideas into viable business.

CIBA does not serve any and all companies. Entrepreneurs who wish to enter a CIBA's business incubation program must apply for admission. Acceptance criteria vary from start-up to start-up, but in general only those with feasible business ideas and a workable business plan are admitted.

3. Centre for Science and Technology

Making sure that the children of today and the future of tomorrow are trained for the days to come, Manovikas School, Gogol has gone a step further by introducing its recently launched Centre for Science, Technology and Innovation (CSTI). The centre was inaugurated in March 2015 by the vice-chancellor of Goa University, Satish Shetye, and unlike other incubation centres that are usually attached to higher institutes of learning; this is the first to be attached to a school. The centre is equipped with five independent office spaces with Wi-Fi connectivity, a conference room, a bootstrap area, a robotics laboratory and a 3D printer for its students so that they are exposed to new technologies. Students from the third standard to the tenth and higher secondary pupils have access to the facilities.

Conclusion

It can be seen from the above explanation, that once the idea is formed/recognized and the entrepreneur decides to proceed with that idea, incubators could play a significant role from the point of assembling the resources to harvesting the rewards. The role of the incubator in the entrepreneurial process has changed from being just a business center with office facilities to one offering training, networking and consulting in all areas of expertise to startup firms.

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