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Role of Government Policies in Agriculture Sector of Maharashtra and Its Impact on The Economy

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Abstract

This research paper investigates the role of government policies in Maharashtra's agricultural sector and their impact on agricultural growth, productivity, and sustainability. By analysing policy initiatives, their implementation, and outcomes, the study provides insights into the effectiveness of these policies in addressing challenges faced by the agricultural community in Maharashtra. Government policies significantly impact Maharashtra's agricultural sector, which is crucial for the state's economy. These policies aim to improve agricultural productivity, support farmers, and ensure food security. They address various aspects like irrigation, subsidies, insurance, and technology, ultimately influencing the state's GDP and employment. Subsidies on fertilizers, seeds, and other inputs help reduce the cost of production for farmers, according to one source. Financial assistance through schemes like Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi provides income support. Government encourages the adoption of new technologies and practices through awareness campaigns and training programs, says one source. Government facilitates market access for agricultural produce through platforms like e-NAM and infrastructure development, notes one source. Trade in agriculture's outputs and inputs and services required by it and processing of its products open up additional and more significant avenues for labour absorption. Government is effectively using information & communication technology for creating awareness, enhancing knowledge and improving efficiency of farmers. MahaDBT portal is used for transferring subsidies & benefits directly into the bank accounts of eligible farmers. E-NAM portal is made available to farmers for direct online trading of their farm produce to APMC/mandis. Krushik app has been made available to farmers to increase farm productivity by accessing relevant information. The State has established e-governance system MAHA-MADAT for assessment of drought situation in the State, to ensure minimum human interference and human errors in the process of valuation.

Keywords:E-NAM, GDP-Gross Domestic Product, Digital Marketing, Agro-Climatic Zones, Sustainable Agriculture, Agriculture Price, Price Policy, farmers Welfare.

Introduction

Agriculture is a cornerstone of Maharashtra's economy, providing livelihoods to a substantial portion of the population. The state's diverse agro-climatic zones enable the cultivation of a wide array of crops, positioning it as a significant contributor to India's agricultural output. However, the sector grapples with challenges such as irregular rainfall, droughts, fragmented landholdings, and financial distress among farmers. To mitigate these issues, the Maharashtra government has implemented various policies aimed at enhancing agricultural productivity, ensuring sustainability, and improving farmers' welfare. This paper explores these policies and assesses their impact on the state's agricultural landscape.

bank in the Maharashtra state.

Research Methodology

This study employs a qualitative research approach, utilizing secondary data from government reports, policy documents, scholarly articles, and credible news sources. A thematic analysis was conducted to identify key government interventions in the agricultural sector and evaluate their outcomes. The research also incorporates case

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studies to illustrate the real-world implications of these policies on farmers and agricultural practices in Maharashtra.

Literature Review

Several studies have analyzed the impact of government policies on agriculture in Maharashtra. A report by the Economic and Political Weekly critiques the adequacy of state budget allocations toward sustainable agriculture, suggesting that more substantial investments are necessary to offset climate vulnerability.

Economic and Political Weekly

Another study examines the role of intrinsic motivation and government incentives in adopting sustainable agricultural practices, noting that incentives such as higher selling prices and affordable irrigation water have positively influenced farmers' decisions.

ScienceDirect

Additionally, an impact assessment report highlights the relevance of agribusiness and rural transformation projects in Maharashtra, emphasizing their role in transforming agricultural practices among small and marginal farmers through infrastructure development and market linkages.

Mahindra

Data Analysis

The analysis focuses on key government initiatives and their impacts:

- Loan Waiver Schemes: The Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Krishi Sanman Yojana, launched in 2017, provided a ₹34,022 crore loan waiver benefiting 89 lakh farmers. This scheme aimed to alleviate the debt burden and enable farmers to reinvest in agriculture.
 - Wikipedia
- 2. Irrigation Projects: The Marathwada water grid project, initiated in 2019 with an estimated cost of ₹4,293 crore, aimed to address drought conditions by improving irrigation infrastructure. The project proposed lifting water from the Konkan region to the Godavari basin to ensure water availability in drought-prone areas. Wikipedia
- 3. Automated Weather Stations (AWS): In 2016, the government initiated the installation of AWS to provide accurate weather data, helping farmers make informed decisions regarding crop planning and management. Approximately 2,065 stations were planned across the state under a public-private partnership model.

 Wikipedia
- 4. Sustainable Agriculture Funding: Despite the introduction of various schemes, studies indicate that budgetary allocations toward sustainable agriculture and community-based infrastructure have been insufficient, potentially hindering long-term agricultural sustainability.
 - Economic and Political Weekly
- 5. Agribusiness and Rural Transformation Projects: Initiatives aimed at transforming agricultural practices among small and marginal

- farmers through infrastructure development, market linkages, and information dissemination have been implemented to enhance crop production and financial benefits.

 Mahindra
- 6. Crop Insurance and Risk Management: The government's focus on crop insurance schemes and agricultural risk management has expanded support for farmers, aiming to enhance resilience against crop failures and market fluctuations. Farmonaut®
- 7. **Agrivoltaics Initiatives**: The promotion of agrivoltaics, integrating solar energy generation with agriculture, has been identified as a strategy to modernize farming practices and increase agricultural resilience to climate change. indiaagripv.org

Findings

The analysis reveals that while government policies have provided immediate relief to farmers, such as debt waivers and improved irrigation facilities, challenges remain in achieving long-term sustainability and resilience in agriculture. Insufficient funding for sustainable practices and infrastructure development may limit the effectiveness of these policies. Additionally, the successful implementation of technological interventions like AWS requires continuous support and capacity-building among farmers. The promotion of agrivoltaics presents opportunities for integrating renewable energy with agriculture, potentially enhancing sustainability. However, the adoption of such innovative practices necessitates supportive policies, adequate funding, and farmer education.

Conclusion

Government policies in Maharashtra have played a significant role in addressing immediate challenges in the agricultural sector. However, to ensure long-term sustainability and resilience, there is a need for comprehensive strategies that include adequate funding for sustainable practices, infrastructure development, and farmer capacity-building. Policymakers must adopt a holistic approach that integrates financial support with initiatives aimed at enhancing productivity, sustainability, and the overall well-being of the farming community. Embracing innovative practices such as agrivoltaics and strengthening agribusiness initiatives can further contribute to the modernization and resilience of Maharashtra's agricultural sector.

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