

Vocal for Local through Krishi Vigyan Kendras

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ABSTRACT

The World Health Organization (WHO) declared corona virus outbreak a pandemic. World is fighting hard and preparing each day to face new challenge for dual situation; one is to save lives from the pandemic caused due to COVID -19 and other is its impact as a giant forthcoming situation of unemployment, hunger and depression. Saxena, 2020 reported that data from various studies show that about 1.3 billion people are affected due to ongoing lockdown and about 10 Crore Indians lost their jobs. On 13.5.2020, the Prime Minister of India, Sh. Narendra Modi Ji appealed 'vocal for local' during his corona virus lockdown address (Tripathi, 2020). Make in India has become a necessity to support and sustain the population and India's economy. The crisis situation in India may be turned into an opportunity by making need based products at local level, for the local markets. There is also an urgent need to involve women in economic activities. Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) is established all over the country by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, New Delhi. The integrated work of this team is expected to cater to the need of farmer, farm women, rural youth and school drop outs from farm to fork. KVKs system may be the mile stone to turn the slogan, "vocal for local" by generating entrepreneurs, employment and addressing the problem of malnutrition. The motto of "vocal the local" may not only initiate a mindset to change dreams into realities but also cater to people's changed choices. The KVKs system may show tremendous success rate in the development of micro and large scale entrepreneurs provided training is planned meticulously and jointly by all the subject matter specialists. It is imperative to understand the core strength and spirit of KVKs system by the subject matter specialists and coordinators and pursue it effectively and as a team. The aim of each KVKs employee should be to treat each person (farmer, farm women, youth and school dropout) as a potential entrepreneur.

Key words : Prime Minister; Krishi Vigyan Kendras; Vocal for local; Entrepreneur; Unemployment;

Corona virus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered corona virus. Corona virus is the cause of an outbreak of respiratory illness. This virus was firstly detected in Wuhan, China. Soon, this virus was spread in all over the world. Due to widespread scale of this outbreak, The World Health Organization (WHO) declared corona virus outbreak a pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic is the worst global catastrophe. Covid-19 infected approximately 3.5 million people all over the world by mid May, 2020. It claimed 2, 50,000 lives. More than 80 per cent cases are reported in Europe, United States and China. (*Hindustan Times, 16 May, 2020*).

World is fighting hard and preparing each day to

face new challenge for dual situation; one is to save lives from the pandemic caused due to COVID -19 and other is its impact as a giant forthcoming situation of unemployment, hunger and depression. In a country like India with 1.3 billion people, this pandemic may bring exceptional devastating results. World Health Organization (WHO) suggested India to take "aggressive action". Therefore, Government of India took all the essential steps to prepare to face covid-19 pandemic and decided to impose a 21 day lockdown, announced on 23 March, 2020. Nationwide lockdown and extensive social awareness about preventive measures of Covid-19 empowered Indian population and helped in facing this challenge effectively. On one side,

the lockdown decision helped in curbing the rapid rise of corona virus affected cases and on other side the extensive problem of unemployment, hunger, poverty and malnutrition is surfaced. Lockdown imposed as the preventive step to counter COVID-19 pandemic is already devastating.

Millions of poor, marginal and jobless people are rapidly heading towards hunger, malnutrition and depression. Despite government's best efforts, during the COVID-19 lock down situation, the worst hit is on poor and marginal workers. *Sharma Seth Y (2020)* in Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE), India reported that following a nationwide lockdown to prevent the spread of Covid-19 around 27 million people lost their jobs in April, 2020. No government can be efficient to afford monetary assistance to millions of jobless for sustenance while feeding its huge poor and marginal population. Thousands of more people are expected to be jobless in coming days. There is an urgent need to generate employment opportunities to cater livelihood to poor and unemployed.

In the year 2000, India's 20 per cent population was in the age group of 15-24 years and in the year 2020, the average Indian is younger as compared to China and USA. The age of an average Indian is 29 years whereas in China and USA, it is 37 and 45 years, respectively. (*UNDP, 2006*). India has larger birth rate and lower death rate. On 13.5.2020, the Prime Minister of India, Sh. Narendra Modi appealed 'vocal for local' during his corona virus lockdown address (*Tripathi, 2020*). India is densely populated country, rich in natural resources and equipped with the maximum young and productive population. The country is filled with capability and capacity both. The timely and right permutation and combinations to be self reliant, generate entrepreneurs, self-sustained micro industries, preference to the use of nationally produced products may make this situation lesser grim and take us globally.

On August 7, 1905, during Indian independence movement, *Swadeshi* movement also known as, 'Make in India' was started. The main aim of this movement was to improve economic conditions by using the goods produced in India along with removing British Empire from power. The movement emphasised on self sufficiency, inter-dependency and use of goods produced nationally.

Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) are established

all over the country by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, New Delhi. KVKs are like small laboratories in each district catering for extension services for agricultural research and learning by doing trainings for rural population. KVKs are already working extensively all over the country to cater to technical, research, advisory and learning requirements of rural India. KVKs system works with a team of scientists from agronomy, soil, plant pathology, entomology, horticulture, animal science, community science and agricultural engineering. The integrated work of this team is expected to cater to the need of farmer, farm women, rural youth and school drop outs from farm to fork. The farmers/farm women coming in contact is motivated, guided and supported not only for his query but also for entrepreneurship development. KVKs system may be the mile stone to turn the slogan, "vocal for local" by generating entrepreneurs, employment and addressing the problem of malnutrition. Present study was planned with a hypothesis, how KVKs may endorse and contribute effectively towards "vocal the local"

METHODOLOGY

A careful study was performed during Covid-19 lockdown through online data available regarding population, unemployment, job roles, wages and strategies to combat them. KVKs system was carefully and deeply studied through online research articles. Data was planned and presented to discuss how KVKs may play an important role in endorsing and effectively executing, "vocal the local".

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

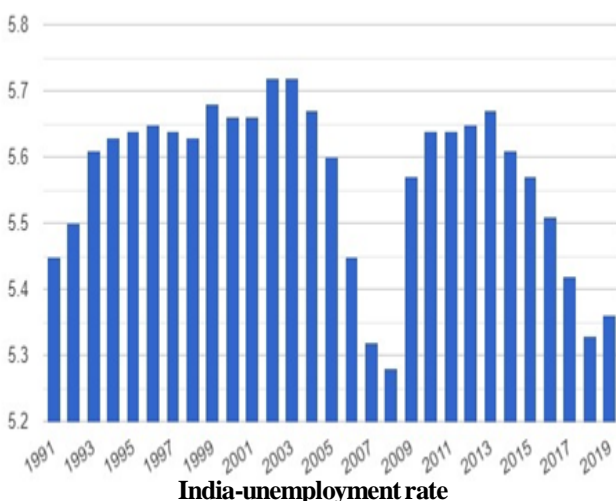
In the scenario of joblessness, poverty, hunger, malnutrition generated due to lockdown as a preventive measure of COVID-19, self reliance is the most important and essential step. By accelerating the growth of local manufacturing and start of new micro and macro scale industry may not only generate employment but also boost economy. The situation arose due to lockdown has changed many definitions and mindsets of people. Human values like compassion, help, sacrifice and self discipline etc. have taken higher place. Further, food choices, realization for the need of self realization, respecting nature etc. might have affected consumer's demand. The motto of "vocal the local" may not only initiate a mindset to change dreams into realities but also cater to people's changed choices.

Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE), India reported that the main age group who lost jobs was in the age group of 20-30 years. Further, the CMIE weekly report stated that 33 million men and women lost their jobs in April, 2020. Out of these 33 million, 86 per cent were men. The millions of people who lost their jobs in 20s will have grave long term consequences. (Sharma, 2020) In the year 2019-20, among the total employed people in the country 8.5 per cent were in the age group of 20-24 years. During COVID-19, 11 per cent of them lost jobs (Jebaraj, 2020).

The unemployment rate is defined as the number of unemployed people as per cent of the labor force. All the employed and unemployed (who are looking for job) people are included in the labor force. The unemployment rate recorded in India in Feb, 2020 was 7.8 per cent. The unemployment rate in rural areas was 7.2 per cent. (The World Bank). The unemployment rate is depicted in the Fig 1.

Kaushik (2020) in the analysis of a survey conducted on 5800 families across reported that the spread of corona virus is low in rural areas but the livelihood has the worst effect. The worst impact of the lockdown is observed in five states namely Haryana, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Tripura. The results showed that there is a decrease in the income of high-paid people and 34 per cent families showed inability to sustain without financial help within a week time. Saxena, 2020 reported that data from various studies show that about 1.3 billion people are affected due to ongoing lockdown and about 10 crore Indians lost their jobs.

According to a joint report by Bain & Company



Source : The World Bank (the global economy.com),

and Google, the labour force participation rate (LFPR) among women in India is lowest in the World. Immediate and urgent actions are required to fill the economic and employment gap between men and women. (Sharma N, 2020). Automated jobs may intensify pressure on women and they may experience higher employment rates. At this hour of peak challenge to economy, unemployment, health and uncertainty due to Covid-19 by creating jobs for women, fuelling innovation by the provision of financial and marketing support especially in the field of food, health and education and entrepreneurship development may transform present social and economic crisis into opportunities and growth.

India's female labour force participation rate (LFPR)

	2004-05	2009-10	2011-12	2017-18
Female population between 25-64	38	31	28	29
Female population between 15-64	24	27	24	25
Female population between 15-24	34	18	15	13

Note: Quartz | qz.com Data: Bain & Company-Google report

Benefitting from the motto, “vocal the local” may direct jobless towards new opportunities, ideas and fetch unexceptional results. This motto followed in spirit may bring “mindset change” to prefer the use of locally produced products as well as start making need based products (Tripathi, 2020). In the resent scenario of extreme joblessness, poverty, hunger, malnutrition generated due to lockdown as a preventive measure of COVID-19, self reliance is the best measure. As Covid-19 has changed the scenario worldwide. Suddenly there is shift from the concept of globalization to self reliance, *swadeshi*, promote local products etc. Make in India has become a necessity to support and sustain the population and India’s economy. The crisis situation in India may be turned into an opportunity by making need based products at local level, for the local markets. Eventually, with time and growth, businesses can be expanded.

The local industries, indigenous and lost craft, traditional occupations, products and industries need to be revived. We need to trust our own resources, traditional knowledge, art, craft, and practices. The faceless and ruthless monopolized system has further shattered with the lock down and country wide economic crunch. The situation may be challenged with self

reliance and by popularizing the use and produce at local level. We may put faith in the people at crisis time with the help of skill trainings, financial assistance, nutritional awareness and technology introduction we may turn our jobless youth power into healthy and dynamic entrepreneurs by nurturing them into valuable contributors to the society.

Mahajan (2020) narrated that since 1950, we believed in development through public sector and by the year 1991 we turned to globalization and handed over baton to capital – based multinational corporations and foreigners. It is time to usher in the economic policies that produce welfare, sustainable incomes, job creation. The small scale industries sector contributes about 40 per cent of the gross industrial value in the Indian economy. Small scale industry has enabled our country to achieve exceptional industrial growth and diversification. The rapid growth of small scale industries increased from approximately 0.87 million units in 1980-81 to over 3 million in the year 2000. Food product industry alone provide employment to 13.1 per cent (0.48 million persons) (DCMSME).

Agriculture sector employs around 50 per cent of the total workforce of 450 million although 25 per cent of the workforce is either poorly paid or in low value addition jobs (*Ahluwalia, 2020*). There are vast possibilities and opportunities in small scale sectors due to extensive support by the government, less investment, subsidies, trainings, machinery and raw material procurement, promotion and exclusive purchase by the government. Small scale industries may be proved as a significant contributor for rural industrialization as well as employment generation. This is the appropriate time to start a project in the small scale sector. This sector is ideally suited to build on the strengths of our traditional skills and knowledge, by infusion of technologies, capital and innovative marketing practices. This is the opportune time to set up projects in the small-scale sector. It may be said that the outlook is positive, indeed promising, given some safeguards. This expectation is based on an essential feature of the Indian industry and the demand structures.

The diversity in production systems and demand structures will ensure long term co-existence of many layers of demand for consumer products / technologies / processes. There will be flourishing and well grounded markets for the same product/process, differentiated

by quality, value added and sophistication. This characteristic of the Indian economy will allow complementary existence for various diverse types of units. The promotional and protective policies of the Govt. have ensured the presence of this sector in an astonishing range of products, particularly in consumer goods. However, the bugbear of the sector has been the inadequacies in capital, technology and marketing. The process of liberalisation coupled with Government support will therefore, attract the infusion of just these things in the sector.

KVKs system is already working on generating entrepreneurs by promoting the nutritional health along with the use of agricultural crops, local craft, indigenous recipes and food preservation; processing, packaging, product development and branding etc. KVK also promote and vigorously works towards the promotion of Farmer Producer Organization, Self Help Groups and Kisan clubs etc. The community science wing of KVK connects with all the farmers, farm women and school drop outs for motivating them to use the produce from farms in creating their own product range, packaging techniques, branding and selling it at appropriate platform to attain higher profits.

To boost up the production at local level and start micro scale enterprises, each KVKs may establish at least one unit / outlet for marketing the products made by KVKs trained entrepreneurs. Each KVKs may have incubation unit with all kind of processing and other necessary machinery available to farmers and farm women for use with minimum or no payment. Establishment of a bakery unit, *chakki*, sheller, oil dispeller and spice grinder are the other options to support rural people of a district for self sustenance without investing in expensive machinery and space. The KVKs system may show tremendous success rate in the development of micro and large scale entrepreneurs provided each training is planned meticulously and jointly by all the subject matter specialists. The success rate of any training may start from the very first step i.e. selection of a trainee. If a trainee (farmer/farm women/school drop-out) is selected based on their interest, resource availability, convenience and relevance for a particular training then there are better chances to start a related entrepreneur at later stage.

Once the selected trainees join a particular

vocational training and finish it successfully in five days they should be motivated to bring their families also. Now this larger group should be empowered with related and nutritional knowledge / counseling , entrepreneurial possibilities, packaging, branding, FSSAI registration process demonstration, recipes demonstration, introduction to financial support system, In case of farm women, family counseling to support her, technical assistance in terms of machinery selection and purchase. Here families play an important role. A wife/ husband joining the same platform caters for better understanding, enthusiasm and resolution to start a new venture. Generally, together they make wonderful team and support each other marvelously.

CONCLUSION

It is essential and need of the hour to address the dwelling problem of unemployment, poverty, hunger, and malnutrition and food insecurity among rural people from farm to fork while addressing nutritional security. It is imperative to understand the core strength and spirit of

KVKs system by the subject matter specialists and coordinators and pursue it effectively and as a team. The aim of each KVKs employee should be to treat each person (farmer, farm women, youth and school dropout) as a potential entrepreneur. The Covid-19 lockdown has made people realize family values and respect the traditional Indian systems. Presently, the consumer demand structure may ensure success of traditional and indigenous locally produced products. The affected economy and feared mindsets may provide prospering markets for the locally made products, differentiated by the value added quality and packaging etc. A complete training with enough exposure and easing out the process of financial help to farmers and farm women may accelerate the growth of local manufacturers with maximum employment generation in a shorter time frame. The effectively planned and executed trainings with all necessary support under one roof to needy and ready would not only salve and revive struggling micro, small and medium industry but also encourage others to start their own entrepreneur.

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