

# **A Conceptual study on the Significance of the Entrepreneurship Skill Development Program (ESDP) for the long-term, sustainable expansion of MSMEs in India**

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## **Abstarct**

*The Entrepreneurship and Skill Development Programme (ESDP) was set up by the Ministry of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) to improve the skills and capacities of current and future entrepreneurs in India. The Ministry of MSME runs several programmes like this one to encourage young people to overcome challenges and start successful businesses all around the nation. The plan's many coordinated programmes aim to inspire young people to become entrepreneurs by focusing on business colleges, polytechnics, and other specialised institutions with potential. A critical component for any area to prosper is possessing a sufficient quantity of highly skilled people resources. Problems with employability, rather than a lack of employment opportunities, are at the heart of the matter these days. This is a major problem in many developing countries because even if preschool education is available, not all children in these countries have the abilities that employers look for in potential employees. Thus, this research aims to provide a conceptual overview of how ESDP is important for the long-term success of MSMEs in India.*

**Keywords:** Programs & Schemes, Government Initiatives, Employment Opportunities, Entrepreneurial Skill, Skill Development, Sustainable Growth, and ESDP

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Entrepreneurs are vital to any economy because they possess the skills and persistence to foresee demands and offer the public innovative, creative ideas for purchase. Despite the dangers and challenges, entrepreneurial efforts that are successful in establishing a startup are rewarded with advantages, recognition, and further education (Israr, 2017). For those involved, failure in entrepreneurship brings misfortune and diminished visibility in the commercial world. For homeowners, the Micro, Small, and Medium-Sized Enterprises (MSME) sector is vital, and it is essential to the economic growth of the majority of nations worldwide (Israr & Shaukat, 2019). Thus, it is an irrefutable well-known truth that MSMEs greatly contribute to the expansion of the economy as a whole. This pledge will raise living standards, quicken GDP growth, and decrease the rate of state creation. These facts should cause every economy to improve the profit that comes with such an undertaking. The facts that can only be confirmed by deeds or a singular performance are called skills. The process of developing and acquiring abilities is called teaching. But attaining sustainable business development could be a challenge needing unique skills.

Given the aforementioned conditions, company owners with supplementary entrepreneurial abilities have a higher chance of seeing success.

The most widely used technique for enhancing an entrepreneur's capacity to plan, direct, and oversee a business endeavor while considering the dangers engaged is through the development of entrepreneurs. To raise the number of business owners is the aim of entrepreneur development. For aspiring and established business owners, the Ministry of MSME has been putting on a few skill-building and entrepreneurship programs to help them launch profitable companies. The Entrepreneurship Skill Development Program (ESDP) is one of the programs that the MSME Service has distributed. In a country like India, where over 45% of the populace is between the ages of 20 and 35. With 1.224 billion people, or 17% of the world's population, India is becoming a "youth reservoir." By 2050, India will surpass the People's Republic of China as the world's most populous country, according to 2009 forecasts from the UN. Despite having a well-established system of vocational education, India's youth lack the skills that the demands of the contemporary economy.

According to the appropriate authorities, the MSME industry would need about 150 million qualified people by 2022. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are vital to economies because they create jobs, lower poverty, and support sustainable development. India has created a system of entrepreneurial development efforts to meet the need for skilled labor. Secondary sources provided the data for this investigation. To encourage the expansion of entrepreneurial activity, the micro, small, and medium-sized business sector has created a number of programs in the areas of finance, marketing, infrastructure, and skill development. These regulations emphasize skill development heavily because it is necessary to start a micro, small, or medium-sized firm.

## 2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The main objective of the study undertaken by Rajamohan S, Rajamohan, and Sathish A (2019) was to investigate the topic, which is normally relevant to either an advanced or growing nation like India. The Ministry of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (M/o MSME) provides a range of assistance to promote entrepreneurship in MSME sectors such as Khadi, Town, and Coir companies. This study aimed to identify the tactics and promote MSME support provided to enhance entrepreneurship in India.

Micro, Small, and Medium-Sized Enterprises (MSMEs) have grown to be an important and dynamic segment of the Indian economy, according to Nadaf Rajahusain S, et al. (2018) in this study. The issue still exists despite the government's many initiatives in this sector as 79 MSME's consistently face financial difficulties. The performance records of MSME's, their possible contribution to the economy, and other steps made by different parties to promote MSME development in India are all examined in this article.

Sen (2011) stated that micro, small, and medium-sized firms are referred to by the names MSME, SME, and MSE in this paper, "The Key to Entrepreneurship Development in India." The term "MSME" also encompasses small and medium-sized businesses. The Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development (MSMED) Act of 2006 in India defines MSMEs. The main goal is to generate massive employment as horticulture's GDP contribution falls and as countries highlight its employment-generating potential. India's MSME market is fragmented, chaotic, and very varied. It comprises a variety of artistic production units, ranging from cutting-edge companies to conventional artworks.

A study conducted by Ravi (2010) found that micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSME) are often called the "driving force of development" when it comes to building economies. Entrepreneurship Development in India's Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprise Sector discusses this topic. Before diving into recent events, they provide a brief overview of this region's history in India.

This will help to highlight the region's significance and growth in relation to the Indian economy. The key takeaways are that, while state-specific strategies do have an effect on MSME development, more broad-based development arrangements, like framework consumption and access to funding, have had a disproportionately large influence on MSME development in India in recent years.

### **2.1 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The research aims to investigate MSMEs in India and the Entrepreneurship Skill Development Programmes.

- To examine the several aspects related to the ongoing research and enumerate the principal discoveries.
- To make recommendations on how to improve ESDP's outreach to all of its recipients

### **2.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The Indian government has acknowledged a variety of short- and long-term professional courses offering general education and specialised training at various instructional levels. In anticipation of its potential inadequacy to execute this framework alone, the government established the National Skill Development Chamber (NSDC) to coordinate skill development initiatives with other business actors with appropriate industry training (Kour, 2014). Different local skill sets are always evolving to meet the ever-changing demands of the company. A key problem in India's school system, the high dropout rate, may be alleviated via student instruction.

The ability of young people to start micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) is an important asset, and there are ongoing efforts to develop and expand projects that aim at encouraging entrepreneurship.

A Conceptual Analysis on the Significance of the Entrepreneurship Skill Development Programme (ESDP) is the author's work that aims to guarantee the long-term, sustainable development of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in India.

### **3. ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES IN INDIA (ESDP)**

To help existing and aspiring Indian entrepreneurs improve their entrepreneurial abilities, the Entrepreneurship and Skill Development Programme (ESDP) was established by the Ministry of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME). It is just one of several initiatives launched by the M/o MSME to empower young people to take smart risks and launch thriving enterprises throughout the country. In order to encourage young people to choose self-employment, the programme is structured to include a variety of activities at ITIs, polytechnics, and other technical/business schools.

An integral aspect of the "Development of MSMEs," the ministry revised the ESDP programme in 2019 to adapt it to the evolving nature of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSME) and entrepreneurialism in India (Bhaskaran, 2022). The business Facilitation Centre (EFC) is a unique component of the expanded ESDP that aims to improve business facilitation and increase the program's reach. The main objectives of ESDP in India are listed below:

- To teach and train people in an entrepreneurial culture.
- To inspire young people (males and females) from diverse societal backgrounds, including SC, ST, Women, and Physically Handicapped individuals, as well as Ex-Servicemen and BPL individuals, to consider self-employment or entrepreneurship as a potential career path.
- Providing the target audience with the technical and business skills required thinking and act like entrepreneurs from an early age is crucial to encouraging people to think about entrepreneurship as a career option and to help them thrive in any area.
- Fundamental entrepreneurship training will be offered to help entrepreneurs implement their ideas, influence the attitudes and behaviors of the target audience, and Keywords: Programs & Schemes, Government Initiatives, Employment Opportunities, Entrepreneurial Skill, Skill Development, Sustainable Growth, and ESDP.

- IIMs/IITs/ICAR/CSIR/NIT/Administrative Training Institutes (ATIs), post harvesting and food production, and premier labs like BARC/CSIR/DRDO, etc., to offer top-notch/advanced training in the fields of e-commerce, BPO, Soft Ware, Biotech, Drug Discovery, Pharmacogenomics, Tech. acquisition.
- To promote the expansion of current MSMEs and aid in the formation of new ones, as this will increase productivity and provide employment. the target group's present capabilities should be upgraded or their technical and vocational skills should be developed.
- The Implementing Agencies (IAs) are in charge of ensuring that ESDP beneficiaries register on Udyam. Help MBA/engineering students by providing them with opportunities for on-the-job training, examining the outcomes of a few standard ESDP programs, gathering a list of technologies that are accessible, establishing a first-rate lab for MSMEs to use for technology diffusion, etc.
- Students will also be assigned other activities that will allow them to gain experience working in a government setting. A pay check and an experience certificate will be given to the hired pupils (Bhaskaran, 2022).

The modules included in ESDP are as follows:

1. The IMC, or Industrial Motivational Campaign: Industrial Motivation Campaigns, lasting one or two days, are designed to identify and encourage both conventional and non-traditional business owners who have the ability to create MSEs and Cluster SPVs, Industry Associations, and Chambers that will aid in the dissemination of MSMEs' marketing initiatives.
2. Entrepreneurship Awareness Programmes (EAPs): These programmes, which are organized on a regular basis, aim to educate young people on many aspects of the industrial activity required to build MSEs, thereby developing their potential. These EAPs are typically provided by ITIs, Polytechnics, and other technical colleges where students can find tools to support their pursuit of self-employment.
4. Entrepreneurship-cum-skill Development Programs (E-SDP): Through the organization of comprehensive training programs, a range of technical and skill development training programs are organized to improve the skills of aspiring business owners, the present workforce, as well as the skills of newly hired employees and MSE technicians.

The objective of offering training in this field is to improve the decision-making skills of both existing and prospective entrepreneurs, resulting in higher productivity and profitability. This includes Management Development Programmes (MDP) and Mega Events.

The DC (MSME) office's field officers will implement the above listed programs and activities after receiving approval from the empowered committee, which is led by AS&DC, MSME. 40% of the targeted recipients of EDPs and E-SDPs must be from the socially and economically disadvantaged categories (SC/ST, women, people with physical disabilities, etc.).

Participants who identify as SC, ST, physically challenged, below the poverty line (BPL), or female are excused from paying a participation fee. According to IBEF, over a million MSMEs registered on the Udyam registration site until November 2020. Despite this, microbusinesses accounted for almost 93% of all registrations, underscoring the uneven framework of the entrepreneurial process. Furthermore, only 7% of SC and 2% of ST held enterprises, according to the annual report published by the M/o MSME.

The program's intention to encourage individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds, especially women, to pursue entrepreneurship only serves to highlight how dire the situation is. Women controlled 8.05 million, or 14%, of the 58.2 million MSMEs in operation in India, as to the NITI Aayog's "Moving the Needle" report released in March 2021. Women also concurred that there was an even greater bias in favor of smaller organizations, with nearly 98% of companies classified as micro-enterprises.

### **3.1 MSMEs IN INDIA AND ESDP**

The most often used strategy for enhancing an entrepreneur's capacity to launch, grow, and oversee a company while being aware of the hazards associated with it is known as "entrepreneurship development." The O/o DC-MSME has introduced the "Entrepreneurship and Skill Development Program (ESDP)" within the "Development of MSMEs" vertical. The program's objective is to uplift young people from diverse demographic backgrounds, including both genders.

Promoting new companies, growing the number of MSMEs that already exist, and fostering an entrepreneurial culture across the country are all very clear goals. The ESDP is being implemented in every region of the country, north and south. During 2021–2022, 315 projects totaling 15,599 recipients received funding from the ESDP, and these projects were completed. The consumption that followed cost Rs. 1.83 crore, whereas the asset that was allocated and received is valued at Rs. 10 crores.

The Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) has developed a number of initiatives and projects for the development of entrepreneurs in an effort to end unemployment and further improve the financial development of the country. The Service gains from and works in tandem with the following businesses, according to Sarabu (2019):

1. Sufficient credit advancement from banks and other financial institutions;
2. Uplevel and modernize innovation support;
3. Integrated Infrastructure Offices.
4. Modern testing and quality control facilities.
5. Availability of the existing management's rehearsals.
6. The advancement of talents and the growth of entrepreneurship via suitable preparation offices.
7. Support for the creation of products, intervention plans, and bundling;
8. Support for improved access into both domestic and foreign business sectors and
9. Clever cluster strategies to encourage group and individual empowerment and restrict building.

In order to establish and fortify the structure and assistance for programs aimed at fostering entrepreneurship and developing skills, the Ministry of MSME offers capital awards to national preparation organizations such as NIMSME, KVIC, Coir Board, Apparatus Rooms, NSIC, and MGIRI. The principal aims of Enterprise Development Programs (EDPs) are to cultivate and reinforce the entrepreneurial spirit, select rational products and devise feasible ventures, acquaint individuals with the process and procedures associated with initiating and managing small enterprises, equip and ready entrepreneurs to tackle the obstacles posed by business risk, expand their outlook on the industry, and facilitate business expansion while adhering to regulatory constraints.

### **3.2 SKILL DEVELOPMENT PLANS BY MSMEs**

A variety of initiatives have been introduced by the Ministry of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) and its field institutes, including training-oriented entrepreneurship development programs and entrepreneurship skill development programs (ESDP) (EDP). These MSMEI-run programs focus on building trade skills in a variety of fields, including electronics, food processing, and electrical work.

Many comprehensive training programs have been designed for the current workforce with the basic purpose of boosting the abilities of potential entrepreneurs and giving them with improved and increased technological production skills. One of the most important elements in promoting micro, small, and medium-sized businesses is the development and training of entrepreneurs, especially for first-generation business startups (Sundram et al., 2020).

To foster this entrepreneurial spirit in the upcoming generation, the government has established three national level entrepreneurial development institutions;

1.The National Institute for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (nimsme) was established in Hyderabad, India, in 1960.

2. The National Institute for Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development (NIESBUD), located in Noida, was founded in 1983 (UP).

3. In 1993, the Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship (IIE) was located in Guwahati, India. They were founded with the goal of conducting training, conducting research, developing training modules, and providing consultancy services for the enhancement of skill, entrepreneurship, and competitiveness.

The government has started a variety of initiatives to encourage entrepreneurship and provide skills to individuals who engage in it. The Assistance to Training Institute (ATI) program is one of them. This program's main objectives are to increase self-employment in rural and urban areas, expand the entrepreneurial base, and support indigenous entrepreneurship for micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises by providing training and business startup assistance (Skill development report 2014–15).

The government has started a few more initiatives to promote skill development across the country. They are listed in the following order:

- 1.“Indian Institute for Skills” first ever Indian institute for skills.
2. “Skill India”
3. “Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana” (PMKVY)
4. “Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Kendras” under skill India mission

### 3.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF ESDP IN INDIA

In India right now, an entrepreneurship program is more crucial than ever. Therefore, it is essential to give students the right knowledge. Through entrepreneurship, the economy can increase greatly and young people's potential can be realized. It is also true, though, that even while this area initially fascinates students, it is often difficult for them to pursue it further. It results from a lack of suitable guidance and mentoring to help them overcome roadblocks. One of the primary reasons we suggest that you sign up for classes such as the WE NEN. The primary goal of the program is to teach college students the when, why, and how of launching a business through case studies.

After discussing the potential of entrepreneurship, it's important to look at the factors that make its expansion so important (Olayiwola et al., 2019). Some significant arguments for the urgent need for entrepreneurial development are as follows:

**Increased Employment Possibilities:** One of the main factors driving the adoption of entrepreneurship programs in India is the increased employment prospects they offer.

Entrepreneurs create a lot of jobs because most businesses need a diverse variety of workers with a range of profiles. The employment market has consequently significantly improved. It can only come about as a direct result of an efficient program designed to foster entrepreneurial development, though.

**Autonomous Working Environment:** Creating more of an autonomous working environment is a potentially beneficial addition to programs that promote entrepreneurship. There is a great lot of flexibility because it is not necessary to work for a certain supervisor. Thus, an entrepreneurial development program is beneficial in this regard as well. One of the most significant aspects of entrepreneurial development programs may be the assistance they provide in helping individuals envision their lives and professions. Entrepreneurs often possess a wealth of ideas, but they lack the know-how to implement them. This is where the development programs come into play, and they are quite helpful for prospective business owners. Another ability that the curriculum helps develop is financial planning, which is essential for every entrepreneur to succeed.

**Address Problems Facing the Masses:** If he wants to succeed in business, an entrepreneur should concentrate on issues that affect most people. An entrepreneurship programme may assist in the development of this goal by encouraging the launch of sustainable businesses. Being able to make better judgements in the face of uncertainty requires entrepreneurs to have strong vision.

**Boost the Economy of the Nation:** The growth of the country's economy is dependent on initiatives that encourage entrepreneurship. Given the current state of our economy and the fact that development programmes aim to create employment, which increase cash flow, encouraging entrepreneurship might be a good move. In addition, the present economic disparity in the nation can only be reduced by entrepreneurial endeavours that raise living standards. (Senthilkumar & Vetrivel Krishnan, 2018).

**Think About Local Resources:** A country's GDP is impacted by state-level economic growth as well. Utilizing local resources also makes it possible for a state to advance. The majority of entrepreneurial endeavors place a strong emphasis on employing local resources, which raises demand for them, facilitates the creation of wealth, and ultimately promotes economic judgment (Paramasivan & Selvam, 2013).

### 3.4 CHALLENGES OF ESDP

One of the various skill-development programs the government has implemented to encourage the formation of MSMEs and boost entrepreneurship in the country is the ESDP program. However, a variety of problems are impeding the MSMEs' ability to develop (Sharma & Rana, 2021).

**Infrastructure bottlenecks:** Microenterprises, as previously said, are the majority of MSME firms. The transition from micro to small or medium-sized businesses requires improved infrastructure, such as an affordable location, dependable water and energy connections, etc.

**Access to Technology:** Low levels of technology significantly restrict MSMEs' capacity to compete on the global market. Technological obsolescence is a major problem preventing the MSME sector from developing its potential.

**Weak industry-academic interface:** The country's poor connection between businesses and educational institutions has a negative impact on students' chances of becoming entrepreneurs.

**Scale and Cost:** Despite the government's financial support for the sustainability of various projects, expanding these measures and programs' scope remain a matter for concern.

**Mismatch between Supply and Demand:** There is a significant disparity between the demand and supply for skilled labor. Programs for developing skills must be in line with the prospective skills that employers are looking for globally.

## 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

One of the key sectors propelling the expansion of the Indian economy is the MSME sector. The government has tried many different strategies and programmes in recent years to increase the amount of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) and encourage more people to start their own businesses.

Undoubtedly, the ESDP has contributed to the country's skill development, since it is one of the projects overseen by the Ministry of MSME. Upon closer inspection of the programmes, it becomes apparent that the bulk of ESDP recipients are from the general group, and just 10% are SC/ST in reverse.

Additionally, women company owners are still mostly insignificant since they focus on microbusinesses. Given this, it's clear that we need to do more to encourage people from low-income backgrounds to start their own businesses. Significant damage to the business environment and the cancellation of ESDP exercises were both caused by the epidemic. The government should support skill development to satisfy global demand and enhance the MSME sector as the economy develops. In order to help the ESDP reach each receiver more effectively, the following suggestions are made:

- Financial institutions that lend money, such banks, should streamline their procedures and save costs wherever possible when helping entrepreneurs establish specialised units.
- To promote and assist MSMEs, entrepreneurs should take advantage of market opportunities as they arise and implement a number of crucial approaches.
- The ESDP needs to have an effective mechanism in place to check in on the learners' circumstances at prearranged times, ideally for a year after the training.
- Developing and distributing innovations suitable for the MSME sector is a crucial task.
- Acquire necessary competencies to stay abreast with worldwide advancements.
- The government ought to reduce the sway that entrepreneurs have when they first start their companies.
- Plans and efforts that promote a climate in business that is beneficial to entrepreneurs should be put into action by the government.
- The government ought to consider including entrepreneurship development as a subject in educational programs at higher education institutions and optional schools. This would help to impart essential knowledge and cultivate the necessary entrepreneurship skills and demeanor in young people.
- Entrepreneurs should be empowered and supported by society and government alike.
- Steering and mechanical advancement. To support MSMEs, a board of advisors and professionals should be ready.
- Mindfulness programmes and realistic planning and development programmes should be provided to MSMEs. additional ambitious would-be company owners may get the education and guidance they need to launch successful ventures if additional chapters of the Entrepreneurship Development Foundations are established at the regional level. Furthermore, there should be an adequate quantity of credit bureaus.
- Since the most vulnerable segments are the most disadvantaged and have the highest unemployment rate, the government and the MSME-DI will prioritize this preparation and seek to enrol more students in the program.

## 5. CONCLUSION

In order to contribute to India's tangible development, the Ministry of MSME aspires to play a pivotal role in fostering entrepreneurialism. A large amount of financial and other help will be provided to small and medium-sized enterprises as part of this extensive and massive commitment. It increased their clout in the Indian market, which in turn boosted local employment and encouraged business

ownership, all of which contributed to the area's growth. Socrates and Gopalakrishna (2020) argue that India may expedite its economic growth by fostering an entrepreneurial spirit among its growing working class. Not only has entrepreneurialism been shown to provide considerable financial advantages in many nations, but India is at a stage of growth where it may achieve comparable results. India is ready to launch new companies in the high-innovation sector, among other things, to help propel its economy to global prominence. Its many attractive new businesses, a welcoming environment for entrepreneurs, and rising FDI into its data innovation administrations industry are among of its strongest features. Now is the time for India to prioritise training for experienced partners and prospective entrepreneurs in areas such as financing initiatives, systems administration, and entrepreneurial skill development in order to promote an entrepreneurial approach to managing financial growth. Clearly, the government can play a major role in facilitating the provision of such possibilities. In addition, it has the ability to provide the essential administrative.

The Indian economy is driven by one of the primary sectors that is driving the rise of the MSME sector. Numerous programmes and initiatives have been established by the government. So that the country's micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) might grow and thrive in recent years, it sponsored entrepreneurship. It is certain that the ESDP, among the several programmes overseen by the M/o MSME, has contributed to the enhancement of the nation's skill set. A deeper look at the data, however, reveals that just 10% of ESDP grantees are SC/ST backward, while 90% fall into the general group.

In addition, there are still very few female company owners, and the vast majority of these firms are microbusinesses (Salini & Venkateswaran, 2020).

In light of this, there is an urgent need to support and empower underprivileged communities to take the entrepreneurial plunge. The ESDP program's activities were disrupted due to the pandemic, which significantly damaged the entrepreneurial climate. With a recovering economy, the government should support training to fill global demand and strengthen micro, small, and medium-sized enterprise (MSME) employment.

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