

Entrepreneurship of Bamboo shoots among the tribes of Assam: Issues and Prospects

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Abstract

Entrepreneurship is one of the most popular concepts so far developed in recent times. It is assumed to be highly significant across the world in present perspectives for mobilizing talent and skill development among the youths. Bamboo shoots entrepreneurship may solve challenging issues to some extend prevailing in Assam. The bamboo is the main source of bamboo shoots which is found abundantly in northeast India. It is considered one of most important sources of employment generation so as to provide sustainable economic development. The awareness among masses can be created to realize how to channelize the youth in precise perspectives. The unemployed youths, especially in this region inspire to undertake entrepreneurial venture as their career opportunities for income generation. These areas remain almost unexplored which provide ample scope for creating new venture to uplift the unprivileged section of tribal people. However, the different scheme has been launched from time to time but still need to put an extra effort on the part of the government. The numbers of programmed and training should be organized to educate the people about the entrepreneurial development and also to involve the youth of the region in greater nation building.

KEYWORDS: Entrepreneurship, Sustainable, Development, Bamboo shoots, Tribes.

Introduction

In recent times, the entrepreneurship is the subject who is much talked about but less understood by common people. The concept of entrepreneurship has been interpreted from various angles which vary person to person. It is said to be highly relevance in the context of present perspective to imbibe the young mind with competitive spirit and a sense of pride in their Alma matter. Further, it also assists to recognize the emerging global trend of sweeping change and to equip with the modern technology. Above all, the concept of art of living is to be learned for faster, smarter and better living standard. In simple language, entrepreneurship is said to be a desire for some unique achievement, risk taking, uncertainty facing capacity, thrill seeking, adventurism or innovating capacity. Apparently, entrepreneurship is a creation of new venture with a view to uplift the unprivileged section of people, to eliminate mass poverty, to create millions of job for unemployed youths, to achieve double digit economic growth. The entrepreneurship may promote the region to the new height of development.

Area of study

Assam is located at the gateway of Northeast India which is separated by Bangladesh from mainstream India. The state is bounded in the north by Arunachal Pradesh and Bhutan; in the east by Nagaland, Manipur, and Burma; in the south by

Tripura, Mizoram, and Bangladesh; and in the west by West Bengal. Assam is the second largest state with an area of 78438 km² in northeast India. The state is famous for one horn rhinoceros. As per the census report 2011, its population is 3.12 crore (approx) of which 12.4% is a tribal population. There are 23 notified schedule tribe in Assam as per the government official document. The Bodo community is around 13% of the state population which is the half of the schedule tribe population comprises 40.9%. The schedule tribe both plains and hills include Mishing, Miri, Karbi, Rabha, Tiwa, Boro, Deori, Mech, Dimasa, Hajong, Singhphho, Khamti, Garo, Biate, Khasi, Jaintia, Kuki, Chakma, Hmar, Synteng, War, Bhoi, Barman in cachar etc.

Objectives of the study

The study is mainly to create awareness among youth and to change their mind set regarding entrepreneurship. It may help the youth of the region to inspire and draw tendency for taking up entrepreneurial venture. In the context of socio-economic development of Assam, it is imperative to study the prospects of bamboo entrepreneurship in the region. Added to all this, the fact is that it also focused to recommend the findings and suggestions to policy makers, government and NGO's. The main objectives of the present study are state as follows:

- ❖ To observe the present status of bamboo shoots entrepreneurship.
- ❖ To examine the various issues and prospects of bamboo shoots entrepreneurship.

Methodology and Data collection

The present study is a descriptive mainly based on observation about the issues and prospects of bamboo shoots entrepreneurship. The data has been collected from secondary sources such as published & unpublished thesis and dissertation, published & unpublished government report, government official documents, books, articles, newspaper and magazines, bulletin, periodical, pamphlets, website, print and online journals, etc.

Significance of the study

Assam is one of the richest in forest resources among the states in north-east India. The bamboo is one of the main forest resources to contribute large amount of revenue to the stake holder. Despite all of these, the unemployment problem has become a burning issue in this region. To solve this chronic problem to some extent especially among the unemployed tribal youth, the employment generation through bamboo shoots entrepreneurship is considered most essential. In fact, the tribal people have used bamboo shoots as their traditional forest vegetable since ages. It is one of the income source of the family that is traded in local market in different parts of the region. Indeed, there is a better prospects of bamboo shoots entrepreneurship for commercial purpose of which some of the tribal youth of this region are supposed to be benefitted to some extent from this entrepreneurial venture.

Analysis and Discussion

Locally, Bamboo is known as ‘Bah’ in different parts of Assam. The land of this region is suitable for the bamboo cultivation. The different species of Bamboo grows and found abundantly in Assam are kakobah, nalbah, bholkabah, jatibah, mulibah, tokobah etc. Bamboo is a group of woody perennial grasses in the true grass family poaceae. It has a very large family with over 10,000 species. The size of bamboo varies from small annuals to giant timber bamboo. The bamboo is the fastest-growing woody plant in the world. The scientific name of the bamboo is ‘Bambusa’ and the botanical name is ‘Bambusa Bambos’. It is known as‘Bans’ in India.

Utility of bamboo

The bamboo has a various utility in different aspect of human life in their day to day activities. In the light of present perspectives, its analyses from diverse point of view in varying period of times has highly relevant and pertinent. Apparently, it has been applied by number of industry such as manufacturing industry, paper industry, cottage industry, decorative industry and many other industry. The usefulness of bamboo are underlined as:

- Bamboo is one of the most important raw material of paper industry.
- It is an essential ingredients of manufacturing industry. It is used as raw materials and semi raw materials and also as a supporting materials in construction of bridge, building, railway tract etc.
- It is also applied as raw materials of boundary wall (fence), roof, hut, stick (lathi), house pillar, etc.
- The bamboo is one of the main tools of ploughing while cultivation.
- In early days, the bullock cart was means of transport exercised as goods carrier from one place to another which is made of bamboo.
- The various traditional musical instrument are also made from bamboo. Among them, flute is one of the most famous musical instrument especially made of bamboo.
- The different type of ornament made by bamboo are used by tribal people in rejoicing their traditional customs and rituals. .
- Literature reveal that the bamboo is used to make bows and arrows as arms for hunting purpose in early days. The bows and arrows made of bamboo is practice in archery as a games and sports.
- The various kitchen appliances are also made from bamboo.
- The dry bamboo is very easy to catch fire which is used as fire wood for cooking purposes especially in rural India.
- In winter season, the dry bamboo is caught fired to warm up human body across the country.

Observation reveal that it has a very high demand in cottage industry to produce various product especially made of bamboo which are jharu (cleaner), dhari (carpet), sata (japi), kholoi, dhori (sepa), dhola, soloni, pakha (fan), brush, tokri etc. These are the various materials found abundantly in the retailer of cottage industry in local market (Assam).The retailer has a more than fifty items which are imported from different cottage industry. The jharu is worth Rs 20 only which is lowest cost and the dhori (sepa)

is of worth Rs 250- 300 only which cost is maximum found available in the retailer during observation. The image of various items made of bamboo has attached below.



(Photo at local market in Assam dated 30th Dec, 2014)

Bamboo shoots

Bamboo shoots is a gift of nature. At this time of year, its bamboo shoots season, a yummy food from Mother Nature; so quite often we have this dish on our dinning table, we love it. (Dakine) Bamboo shoots are especially made from bamboo saplings which is used for consumption purpose in the region. The edible bamboo shoots are used in variety of style such as pickle, raw soups, dry, fermented etc. It can be cook with meat, fish, egg, etc and the taste of its curry may be slight sour. The Bamboo shoots has a very high demand in international market which is not yet explored in the region so far as observation reveal. The pickle especially made from shoot is Rs 320 per kg. at local market (Assam). The underlined reflection of pickle made from shoots has been shown in different angle.

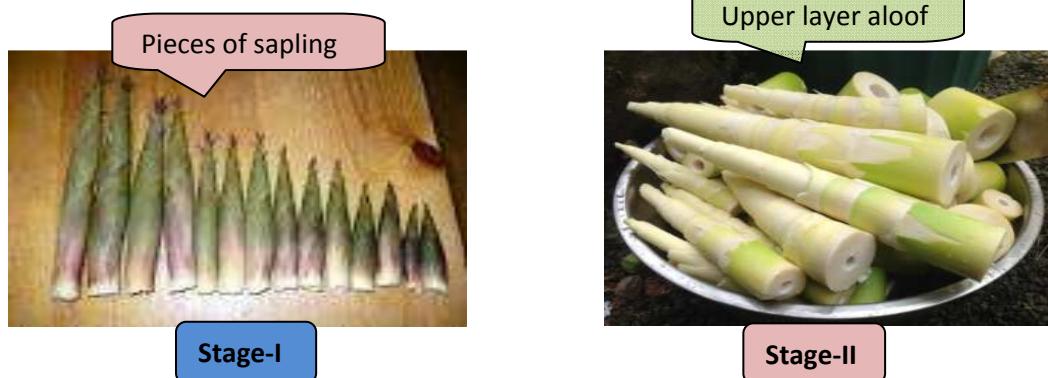


(Photo at Leo Expo, Assam on 18th Dec, 2014)

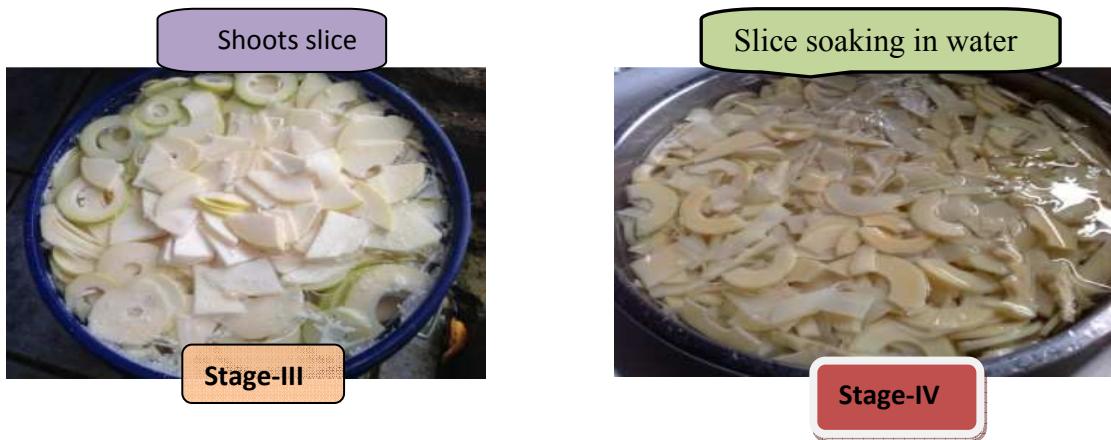
The process of making shoots

The process of making shoots is very simple. As stated earlier, the shoots are usually made from a sapling which is the propagation of mature bamboo. The shoots especially made from bamboo has to pass through various cycle to arrive at consumable stage. The various phases of making shoots have been witness down.

Stage – (I & II): The sapling is cut out from its mature bamboo is the first stage and in the second stage, upper layer of the sapling is taken out with the help of dao (daggers) to make the shoots.



Stage – (III & IV): In stage III, it is cleaned and washed properly with water before cutting it into small pieces and then slice them and soak in water for 4 or 5 days which comes in final stage. The bamboo shoots are highly nutritious food. It can be consumed as soup also after boiling the shoots with plenty of water for 3 to 4 hours at least. After that, they are ready to consume.



(Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/Bamboo_shoot).

The nutritional composition of bamboo shoots

It is widely known that the bamboo shoots are traditional forest vegetable in China for more than 2,500 years. It is not only delicious but is also rich in nutrients. The bamboo shoots are one among the five most popular healthcare foods in the world. It is called ‘the King of Forest Vegetables’ in Japan. These bamboo shoots contain various nutrients such as protein, amino acid, fat, sugar and inorganic salt. Some of the compositions of nutrients found available in shoots are:

- ❖ The protein contains an average 2.65g per 100g of fresh bamboo shoots.

- ❖ The fat content is an average 0.60%, but it is still higher than many other vegetables.
- ❖ The total sugar contents 2.5% on average is lower than many other vegetables.
- ❖ And the water content is 90% or more.
- ❖ There are also seventeen types of amino acids in bamboo shoots and over ten types of minerals.
- ❖ It is a good source of the element selenium as well.

The health benefits of Shoots

Over the long period time, people usually exercise various type of plants as their medicine in different ways to treat diseases. The shoots of bamboo is one of them that facilitate to cure diseases caused in human body. Some of among them are as follows:

- ❖ The juice of bamboo shoots can be used to clean up the infection made by caterpillar.
- ❖ It is very helpful for curing the ulcer or wound.
- ❖ Diarrhea also can be treated by bamboo shoots and it also improves the digestive system.
- ❖ The soup of the shoots, having twice a day can speed up the muscles cycle in children.
- ❖ The menstruation can also stimulate by Bamboo shoots.
- ❖ Bamboo shoots also have beneficial effects in treating bleeding piles and gonorrhea.
- ❖ The intestinal worms can be killed by using fresh juice of bamboo shoots.
- ❖ Bamboo shoots are rich in nutrients and low on calorie and fats.
- ❖ A single cup of bamboo shoots is enough to meet the body's daily fiber requirement which is an excellent source of fiber.
- ❖ It also facilitates to keep the blood pressure to normal levels.
- ❖ It is anti-cancer, anti-bacterial, anti-fungal, and anti-viral properties due to rich source of Lignans.
- ❖ The element germaclinium activates the human cell which is present in bamboo shoots.

Findings and suggestions

The bamboo grows in natural process through its own propagation. The roots of bamboo are used for regeneration since it does not have seeds. In recent time, the Bamboo has been almost cut down for household and commercial purpose. Thus, there is huge ecological imbalance due to deforestation. Bamboo grows almost all the parts of the region. It may be the large source of revenue if land is properly utilised to the maximum extent. Different scheme has been launched from time to time but that too has not been implemented in letter and spirit as per observation. There is a vast scope of innovation in this sector. Above all, the concerned individuals must take initiative to invite and attract the investor to invest in this field and the cooperation from all section of people is most welcome for effective time bound plans implementation to serve the very purpose.

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