



The Evaluative Study Of Farmer's Friendly Schemes Under Atma Nirbhar Bharat In Pune District

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Abstract:

Farmers are the backbone of our society. Agriculture fosters economic development through employment and wealth creation. Government of India has been launched Atma Nirbhar Bharat scheme to improve the living standard of Indian farmer.

Agricultures contribute in country's GDP, agriculture is the biggest industry in the country and plays a key role in the socio economic growth of the country. Agriculture plays a significant role in the Indian economy and provides employment and livelihood to a large section of the Indian population. India's agriculture sector presently contributes around 15.9% of the country's GDP. So agriculture sector becomes most important for developing our nation.

A farmer is responsible for the management of farms, ranches, greenhouses, nurseries and other agricultural producing enterprises. With a motive to transform the agriculture into a sustainable enterprise, government of India, ministry of Agriculture and farmer's welfare has recently a host of historical pro agriculture landmark initiatives towards the development of Atmanirbhar krishi in India.

This evaluative study examines the reach, effectiveness, and farmer-perceived usefulness of "Farmer-Friendly" schemes launched under the Atma Nirbhar Bharat initiative in Pune district, Maharashtra.

Keywords: *Atma Nirbhar Bharat, Farmer-Friendly Schemes, Program Evaluation, Agricultural Policy.*

Introduction:

The Atma Nirbhar Bharat programme—announced by the Government of India in 2020—introduced a set of reforms, financial packages, and scheme modifications intended to make sectors, including agriculture, more self-reliant and resilient. In Pune District, state and district authorities have rolled out several farmer-oriented measures under this

umbrella: easier credit access, subsidies for micro-irrigation, support for allied activities, digital extension platforms, and market linkage facilitation.

This paper evaluates how these farmer-friendly schemes are functioning on the ground in Pune District: whether they are reaching intended beneficiaries, producing measurable benefits, and what constraints limit their potential. The Agriculture

continues to be the source of livelihood for majority of the population. In a nutshell, agriculture has a vast impact on every citizen of the country, either directly or indirectly.

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Definitions of Term Used:

In order to know the exact scope of the study it is essential to first define the various terms used in this study

- **Beneficiaries-** A person who receive the benefit of schemes.
- **Schemes** -An official plan or system for doing or organizing something.
- **Government** -The exercise of political authority over the actions, affairs, of a political unit, people, etc, as well as the performance of certain functions for this unit or body.

Research Methodology:

Research paper is based on secondary data obtained from various sources like

1. Earlier Published Paper
2. Websites
3. Articles published in previous Magazine's
4. Articles appeared in newspaper.

Literature Review:

In May–June 2020 the Government of India launched the **Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan** (Self-Reliant India package) — a multi-tranche stimulus and reform program that included several agriculture-facing measures intended to strengthen farmer incomes, market access, and rural value chains (credit support, FPO promotion, formalisation of micro-food enterprises, and targeted support to pulses and other crops). Scholars and policy analysts have treated Atmanirbhar Bharat as both a short-term relief package (COVID response) and a longer-run attempt to reform agriculture through market, institutional and extension measures.

2. “Farmer-friendly” measures under the Atmanirbhar Agenda:

Key components relevant to farmers which appear repeatedly in the literature and government documents include:

- **Direct income & grant transfers** (e.g., PM-KISAN expansions and installment disbursements) as immediate income support. The Times of India
- **Promotion of Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs)** and support for aggregation and market linkages (a core idea under various Atmanirbhar tranches and linked schemes). publicationsdivision.nic.in
- **Market infrastructure and digital markets** (e-NAM expansion, better supply-chain linkages, and export promotion of agri products). Vikaspedia
- **Crop support and risk mitigation** (continued emphasis on PM Fasal Bima Yojana and MSP frameworks,

as part of assuring incomes). Agri Welfare

Policy notes and academic reviews emphasize that these measures are heterogeneous in objective — some address liquidity and short-run resilience (cash transfers, credit), others address structural change (FPOs, value-chain formalisation). Evaluations must therefore separate short-term welfare impacts from longer-term structural outcomes. research.iimb.ac.in¹

3. ATMA (Agricultural Technology Management Agency) — Role and Rationale:

The ATMA programme (an institutional model for agricultural extension and technology dissemination) has long been central to state-level extension reforms. Recent government documents (revised ATMA operational guidelines) re-emphasize ATMA's role in coordinating extension, enabling farmer group formation, capacity building for FPOs, and linking farmers to schemes and markets — effectively making ATMA a local delivery platform for many Atmanirbhar objectives (training, market linkages, natural farming promotion, etc.). For district-level evaluation studies, ATMA functions as the principal interface between central schemes and farmers on the ground. Agri Welfare.

4. Evidence from prior empirical studies (National / Thematic):

Several rapid reviews and working papers written soon after the 2020 package flagged **strengths** (speed of liquidity support, emphasis on FPOs and formalisation) and **weaknesses** (implementation heterogeneity across states, limited immediate evidence on raising farmer incomes, and gaps in extension

capacity). These reviews recommend careful, district-level evaluation to judge whether institutional supports (like ATMA) successfully translated central intentions into farmer outcomes.

Challenges in Implementing Atmanirbhar Bharat Scheme:

1. Administrative and Coordination Challenges

- **Fragmented implementation** across central, state, and district-level departments causes delays.
- Lack of **real-time coordination** between agriculture, rural development, banking, and cooperative sectors.
- Variations in state-level policies create **uneven progress** in different regions.

2. Low Awareness and Outreach Among Farmers:

- Many farmers are **not fully aware** of the details or benefits of various schemes.
- Limited digital access and literacy hinder online application, registration, and grievance processes.
- ATMA and extension agencies often face **staff shortages**, reducing their ability to reach remote villages.

3. Financial and Credit-Related Barriers:

- Difficulties in accessing **timely agricultural credit**, especially for small and marginal farmers.
- Lengthy documentation and eligibility criteria discourage beneficiaries.

- Banks may hesitate to lend to FPOs or micro-enterprises due to **perceived risk**.

4. Limited Capacity of FPOs and Rural Enterprises:

- FPOs formed under Atmanirbhar Bharat often lack:
 - business planning skills
 - marketing capabilities
 - supply chain knowledge
 - infrastructure for aggregation and storage
- Many FPOs remain dependent on external support, limiting self-reliance.

5. Infrastructure Gaps:

- Inadequate storage, cold chains, market yards, and logistics networks restrict the effectiveness of value-chain interventions.
- Rural transport and connectivity issues create **post-harvest losses**, reducing the intended benefits.

6. Technology Adoption Challenges:

- Limited access to smartphones, internet, and digital marketplaces (like e-NAM).
- Farmers may hesitate to adopt new farming technologies due to **risk aversion**, or lack of training.
- Poor digital infrastructure in some areas affects data collection and scheme monitoring.

Conclusion:

The evaluative study of farmer's friendly schemes under the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative in Pune district highlights that the reforms and interventions introduced by the Government of India have created important opportunities for strengthening agricultural resilience, improving income security, and enhancing the self-reliance of rural communities. The cluster-based development of Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs), expansion of credit support, digital market linkages, crop insurance strengthening, and income-support measures such as PM-KISAN have collectively contributed to improving the economic stability of a large segment of farmers in the district.

However, the study also makes it clear that the actual impact of these schemes depends significantly on the effectiveness of implementation, particularly through local institutional mechanisms such as ATMA, KVKs, cooperative societies, and Panchayat-level extension networks. While many farmers in Pune district have benefitted from training programmes, capacity-building activities, and improved access to markets, challenges such as limited awareness, digital barriers, inadequate infrastructure, and delays in scheme benefits still restrict the full realisation of Atmanirbhar Bharat's objectives.