ABSTRACT

Business Incubation is gaining importance worldwide as an effective tool for augmenting the process of innovation and entrepreneurship. Technology innovation and entrepreneurship needs a rich and diverse ecosystem which supports in nurturing the ideas and helps in development and commercialization of a product. Business Incubation Centers are therefore established to provide workspaces, lab spaces, research and technology assistance, management assistance marketing support, access to funds, mentoring, networking opportunities and overall support in start-up process under one roof. The objective is to support the startups at every stage of startup phase and help them survive and grow at early stage.

In India, the Business Incubation is at a nascent stage. The Government is taking proactive steps to build an eco-system for nurturing innovation led startups. National Science & Technology Entrepreneurship Development Board (NSTEDB) was established in the year 1982, by Government of India under the Department of Science & Technology. It is the institutional mechanism created for promotion of knowledge-driven and technology-intensive enterprises. For achieving this objective, NSTEDB launched two major interventions, the Scheme for Science & Technology Entrepreneurs Parks (STEPs), which was started in the early 1980’s and the Technology Business Incubators (TBIs) Programme launched in early 2000.

Under the above mentioned schemes, in Maharashtra also, the business incubation centers have been established. The literature review shows that very few researches have been carried out in India from the view point of Incubatees and there is absence of research study on performance of business incubation centers in Maharashtra. The researcher has made a modest attempt to study the performance of Business Incubation Centers in Maharashtra. This study is based on the evaluation of policies, practices and the outcome of business incubation. More importantly, this study identifies the challenges, factors contributing to success of the centers and also the need gaps from the view point of Incubatees.
The sample size consists of all five Technology based Business Incubation Centers in Maharashtra which are supported by NSTEDB (Department of Science and Technology) and 35 Incubatees of these sampled Business Incubation Centers.

The primary and secondary data is used for the present study. The survey research technique was used and the data was collected using structured questionnaires. The analysis of the primary and secondary data was done by using descriptive research method and appropriate statistical techniques for hypothesis testing.

The value added services of business incubation centers are contributing in the enhancement of the ability of Incubatees to survive and grow. However, the mentoring, funding support, industry tie ups need to be strengthened. In order to improve the performance of the centers, efforts are necessary to connect different stakeholders and strengthen the ties between Academic Institutions, Research Institutions, Industry and the Government.