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Institutional Frameworks for Innovation in India: A Study of "Maharashtra Innovation Society"

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ABSTRACT

In the journey of India's transition towards a knowledge based and startup innovation oriented economy, play important role in transforming innovation policy into actionable outcomes. The research paper analyses the origin, objectives, governance structure and functional mandate of MIS, situating it within the broader national innovation ecosystem comprising initiatives such as startup India, Digital India and Atal Innovation Mission. Using a doctrinal and policy based research methodology; the paper evaluates MIS as an institutional intermediary that connects government, academia, industry, start-ups and research institutions. The research paper studies the legal and administrative framework underpinning MIS highlighting issues of coordination, accountability, regulatory support and sustainability. The research paper studies how Maharashtra Innovation Society represents a significant model of decentralized innovation governance in India. Through Maharashtra Innovation Society government of India contributing to regional innovation capacity and economic development. In this research paper researcher will study challenges such as policy overlap uneven regional outreach and limited evaluation mechanism.

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Introduction

"Innovation boost the economic growth and social development in emerging in India. To promote entrepreneurship culture in India Government of India promote innovation. These promotions driven through policy coordination, ecosystem development and stakeholder engagement. Institutional frameworks for innovation in India through MSME and Maharashtra innovation Society (MIS). MIS has significant contribution in within state level innovation ecosystem. To foster the innovation culture in Maharashtra MIS supporting research and development, enabling public-private collaboration and strengthening innovation led governance.MIS has strategic significance in translating policy intent into actionable outcomes and sustaining long term innovation capacity. State governments rapidly established innovation centres like MIS to respond to regional state level innovation development".

Institutional Innovation ecosystem

"During the innovation interaction among various factors like government agencies incubation centres universities, research institutions private firms' investor play key role. To boost the innovation key institutions pricy formulation and coordination facilitates industry academia collaboration. At the state level, incubation centres act as intermediaries to ensure policy coherence. Recent years India's innovation ecosystem rapidly evolving. At the national level innovation initiatives focused on research funding, startup promotion, digital infrastructure and skill development. Along with national level state, also introduce their own policies and sector specific interventions. Theses policy framework at state level shapes innovation at local level".

Maharashtra Innovation Societies role in Innovation

"MIS was establish as a state supported institutional platform to promote innovation in society. Aim of MIS is to provide a centralized and coordinated mechanism to support start-ups. Innovators across Maharashtra. MIS has its greater innovation flexibility, and stronger engagement with private sector and academic institutions. Objectives of MIS"

- "Promoting technology based and knowledge based innovations
- To support early stage start-ups through incubation centres assisting by mentors
- Promoting innovation in public administration
- Bridging the gap between innovators and government demand"

"MIS maintain the balance between government oversights with operational flexibility. Further, it manages innovation programs alien with public policy. For the administration, MIS worked under the Department of Skill Development, Employment Entrepreneurship of Government of Maharashtra".

Funding programs by MIS

"(MSInS) play a very important role in strengthening Maharashtra's startup and innovation ecosystem. Their importance lies mainly in how they reduce financial barriers for innovators**,** especially at the idea and early-stage level, where access to capital is usually the biggest challenge. Many entrepreneurs have strong ideas but lack funds to build prototypes, test products, or validate their business models. MSInS funding helps bridge this gap by providing seed support, grants, and reimbursements that allow innovators to convert ideas into workable solutions without depending entirely on

private investors. This funding programs is that they encourage innovation and risk-taking. Traditional funding sources often avoid early or untested ideas, but MSInS supports start-ups working on new technologies, social innovations, and solutions for real-world problems. This government backing gives founders confidence to experiment, innovate, and solve local and global challenges. As a result, more start-ups are willing to work in areas like agriculture, healthcare, sustainability, manufacturing, and deep tech, which may not attract quick commercial funding but are crucial for long-term economic growth. It promote inclusive entrepreneurship. Special support for women-led start-ups, student innovators, and first-generation entrepreneurs ensures that innovation is not limited to a small group of people. By providing targeted financial assistance and opportunities, MSInS helps create a more balanced and diverse startup ecosystem across urban and rural Maharashtra. This inclusivity leads to wider participation, job creation, and regional development".

Maharashtra Innovation and Technological Development Fund (MITDF)

"This fund mechanism associated with the innovation ecosystem, functioning as an alternative investment tool to attract capital into innovative and technology based start-ups. This is not a direct grant; this fund provides **venture funding and financial backing** to promising start-ups that show strong potential for growth and technological impact, potentially up to **tens of crores** at later stages of growth. This helps start-ups secure larger investments for scaling operations, expanding into new markets, or developing advanced technology solutions".

Financial Reimbursement for IPR

"MSInS provides financial reimbursement for patent and IPR (Intellectual Property Rights) filings. Where selected start-ups can get a portion of their patent filing payment reimbursed — including for domestic and international patents. This reduces the financial burden of securing legal rights over inventions and encourages innovators to protect and commercialize their technologies. Such reimbursement programs may also extend to quality certifications and participation in exhibitions**,** enabling start-ups to establish credibility and access wider markets".

Financial Support for women led start-ups

"Women lead directors get financial assistance schemes. This scheme provides women entrepreneurs**,** helping improve inclusion and diversity within the startup ecosystem. This can include grants from approximately ₹1 lakh up to ₹25 lakh for eligible women-led start-ups to strengthen their business ideas, fund initial growth, or participate in innovation programs and events. By providing dedicated support and funding, the initiative aims to lower entry barriers for women and expand their representation among innovators and founders in Maharashtra".

Work orders and Competitions

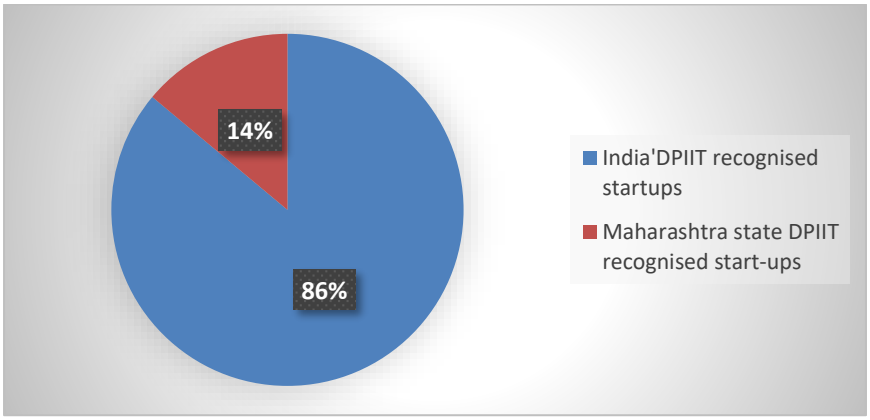
"Even though it is not direct funding, When any start-up taking part in events like Maharashtra Startup Week can help selected start-ups get work orders from government departments up to ₹25 lakh or more. It gives start-ups early stage chance to earn early revenue. Help to form their solutions in real-life government settings, and prove that their product actually works. Such government-backed projects also build trust and credibility of start-ups in market. These type of funding's or competitions easier for start-

ups to attract customers and investors, while the steady cash flow helps them run and grow their business sustainably".

Maha-fund under start-up policy

"It is a government support fund. Which created under the Maharashtra Startup, Entrepreneurship and Innovation Policy. IT help new and early-stage start-ups grow without struggling for money in their initial years. Maha-Fund structure is to support entrepreneurs who have good ideas but lack the financial backing needed to turn those ideas into successful businesses. The government sets aside a large pool of money and uses it to support start-ups through funding, incubation support, mentoring, and access to investors". This policy help to reduces dependency on private investors at an early stage of start-up. Many start-ups fail not because the idea is weak, but because they run out of money before reaching the market. Through this fund, start-ups can receive financial support to build products, hire key team members, improve technology, and enter the market. This gives founders enough time and stability to focus on innovation instead of worrying about day-to-day expenses".

Overview of start-ups



"Maharashtra DPIIT-recognised start-ups: 33,816 and All-India DPIIT-recognised start-ups: 2, 09,082. Maharashtra accounts for approximately 16.2% of all DPIIT-recognised start-ups in India. This graph highlighting the Maharashtra state give strong contribution to India's startup ecosystem. In the leadership Position With over 33,000+ recognised start-ups, Maharashtra consistently ranks among the top startup-friendly states in India. The concentration reflects the presence of major startup hubs such as Mumbai, Pune, Nagpur, Nashik, Aurangabad, and emerging tier-2/3 districts."

Conclusion

"The graph clearly indicates that Maharashtra is a key pillar of India's startup ecosystem**,** contributing over 16% of DPIIT-recognised start-ups nationwide. This reflects sustained policy support, institutional backing by Maharashtra State Innovation Society (MSInS)**,** and a mature innovation environment across the state. **MIS** policy plays a crucial role in building a strong startup ecosystem**,** creating jobs, encouraging innovation, and boosting Maharashtra's economy. By supporting start-ups from idea stage to growth stage, the fund helps turn local innovation into sustainable and scalable businesses. MSInS has

helped build a strong startup environment by supporting incubation centres, encouraging innovation at the district level, promoting women and youth entrepreneurs, and helping start-ups connect with government opportunities. These efforts have not been limited to big cities but have also reached smaller cities and districts".

Findings

- "MIS played a significant role in strengthening Maharashtra's innovation and startup ecosystem.
- MIS has made conscious efforts to expand innovation beyond metropolitan regions**.**
- Measurement of innovation outcomes remains a challenge**.**
- MIS targeting educational institutions, regional incubators, women entrepreneurs, and youth contribute to a more geographically and socially inclusive innovation ecosystem".

Suggestion

- "MIS develop a robust monitoring and evaluation framework focused on outcomes rather than only outputs.
- Required strengthening financial support mechanisms through blended finance models.
- Institutionalize government procurement pathways for start-ups.
- Regional innovation capacity through deeper partnerships with local universities, technical institutes, and district-level incubators needed in society".

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