



SOCIETAL TRANSFORMATION AND SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS – THEIR ROLE AND SUCCESS

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Abstract

The growing youth evincing interest in the field made it must for everyone to know the concept of social entrepreneurship elaborately. The present paper was developed with an intention to discuss the travel of successful Indian social entrepreneurs in bringing societal transformation. Social entrepreneurs are individuals who take risks and find practical solutions to the problems faced by society. Their aim is social welfare and not profit maximization. The authors of the paper also tried explaining entrepreneurship, Social entrepreneurship, and differentiation between Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Social Entrepreneurs. In India, there are many successful social entrepreneurs making slow and steady social transformation in their own style. Such enterprise's success is not measured in the profit, but through its innovative ideas in societal transformation. This paper will help us to know four success stories to bring clarity on social entrepreneurship.

Keywords: *Entrepreneurs, Social Entrepreneurs, CSR, Success.*

INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurs are innovative and highly motivated individuals. When these two attributes are combined with a desire to solve social problems, a social entrepreneur is born. Entrepreneurs instil an interest in people of 'Why', 'How' and 'What' they do. Social enterprises are driven by social missions where they apply market driven strategies. Rashmi Bansal a renowned writer has acknowledged Social entrepreneurs as "a New-Breed of people", individuals with a blend of thinking-feeling will look a problem in the eye and declare a war of transformation. Such individuals are like the common man, they are not our well known personalities, but still they try to bring in the principles of business for creating a better world. They are solution oriented and find new ways to solve problems through creativity and innovation. Self-belief is another trait possessed by social entrepreneurs, without which they will not be successful. Overcoming the odds and striving to the desired goal is what makes them what they are today. Being strong leaders, they are able to lead and inspire the others and get them enthusiastic about the big vision keeping them focused on the mission.

OBJECTIVES OF THE PAPER

- To understand the success of social entrepreneurs in India.
- To bring in Transparency on entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurship and corporate social responsibility.

AN ENTREPRENEUR

An entrepreneur is a person responsible for setting up a business or enterprise. He is a person who is innovative and creative, who likes to take risks, do constructive things which others are scared to lay their hands on. He is a catalyst and works for the good of people. According to Adam Smith 'An individual who undertakes the formation of an organization for commercial purposes by recognizing the potential demand for goods and services and thereby acts as an economic agent and transforms demand into supply'.

A SOCIAL ENTREPRENEUR

Social Entrepreneurship has recently become more popular among society. Social entrepreneurs seek to transform societies at large, than maximizing profits. They find creative and innovative solutions for social problems. They do not depend on traditional avenues for creating social impact. Bornstein (2004) said 'Social entrepreneurship creates innovative solutions to immediate social problems and mobilizes the ideas, capacities, resources and social arrangements required for sustainable social transformation'.

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (CSR) VS. SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Corporate Social Responsibility is a voluntary activity of the corporate giants to give back to society or to help solve existing problems.

Social Entrepreneurship is where individuals search and identify problems in the society and find feasible and practical solutions to it.



MANTRA OF SUCCESS – DIFFERENT FACADES

Success can be measured using different parameters. Each defines success in different forms as they experience it in their life. Well-known personalities have expressed their idea of success. A famous quote by Swami Vivekananda says, “*Take up one idea. Make that one idea your life – think of it, dream of it, live on that idea. Let the brain, muscles, nerves, every part of your body, be full of that idea, and just leave every other idea alone, This is the way to Success.*” Mother Teresa, explain the success as “God doesn’t require us to succeed, he only requires that you try.” Success was defined by people from different walks of life as how they act or react to it:

- **Child:** “Try hard to do something on its own and its achievement is success”
- **Teenager:** “Life is meant to succeed so go ahead and become successful”
- **Adult:** “Self-actualisation – the complete satisfaction depends on the effort taken by them then achieving it”

ESSENCE OF SUCCESS IN SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

There are people in this scenario, putting heart and soul together in reaching their goals irrespective of many obstacles. The four social entrepreneur included in our discussion has made a firm approach towards society with their business innovation. It has moved the lives of many neglected people of India. In the world we have two types of people in our paper we are intended to discuss about action oriented people to highlight how these individuals can visualise things differently to enjoy the success.

BINDESHWAR PATHAK - SULABH INTERNATIONAL

Born into a Brahmin family, in Bihar, today Bindeshwar Pathak is acknowledged as a humanist and a social reformer who changed the lives of those placed at the lowest rung in India’s social pyramid. He never had an ambition to become a social entrepreneur. Having encountered many failures in life, perhaps he was destined to do something big.

Pathak could not meet his first ambition of being a Lecturer in criminology as he missed a first class in the University exams by a few marks. He then helped his grandfather in selling home-cure Ayurveda mixtures on streets. Years later, he decided to pursue a Master’s degree from Sagar University in Madhya Pradesh as he felt selling the mixtures lacked respect. The year 1967 was a turning point for Pathak as a member of Sarvodya, Mr. Rajendra Lal Das convinced him to fulfil an abandoned dream of Gandhi and look for ways to liberate the scavenger caste in India.

With complete honesty and no delay, Pathak set to work. He came with a solution of twin-pit toilets instead of humans disposing human waste. While one pit is being used, the other is left closed for a period of two years, so that the dried wastages can be used as fertilizer. Pathak had to wait for long as no government was sanctioning his plan. At this young age Pathak faced lot of financial problems as governments changed. He requested Indira Gandhi the prime minister, stating his new idea which would eliminate scavenging and was not being taken up by the state. A missive was sent by Indira Gandhi to the CM and Rs. 25,000, was sanctioned for his project. The new secretary halted the work. Later he met Mishraji, explained about Sulabh Shauchalayas. He gave him a cheque of Rs. 500. This is how the very first Sulabh Shauchalaya came into existence in August 1973. Sulabh toilets started its operations in the nearby states in 1978 and very soon across the country. Today the same concepts of toilets are being used all over the world.

Pathak a single man’s commitment in abolishing the practice of manual scavenging extended in creating rehabilitation and vocational training centers to find new jobs in society and make a living. A new life was given to the lowest rung of India’s society. The single entity is well known as “Sulabh International”. Even today the focus is not changed still he is working towards the human and societal transformation. This show an individual’s success is not defined by their position and ranks they have, but it is all about how few things in different directions.

ANAND KUMAR- THE SUPER 30

The son of a clerk from postal department in Patna, Anand Kumar thought differently when compared to other children of his age. Given a choice to play or read biographies of great scientist and make science models, Anand always choose the latter. His ambition was to be a Mathematician. During his free time he would devise mathematical problems. In Graduation, he submitted papers on Number Theory which were published in Mathematical Spectrum and The Mathematical Gazette. The publishing of his formulas increased his enthusiasm and he applied for Masters to Cambridge University. He got admission, but only a partial scholarship. His father appealed to the postal department for assistance. But before the funds were disbursed, his father passed away. Anand’s dream was shattered as all the responsibilities fell on his shoulders and he had to stay with his family.

Anand started helping his mother in selling papad. He wanted to earn a living by teaching mathematics. He took tuition’s for rich businessmen’s children. Anand hired a classroom in a school and started taking tuitions. The centre started with 2



students and reached 1000 in two and half years. Having met Abhayanand, he decided to make his classes more systematic and started preparing students for IIT JEE and charged a minimal sum of 1,500 a year. One day a boy, the son of a farmer requested if the fees could be paid in instalments. He was touched by the boy's sincerity, he admitted him. Also, a batch of 'Super 30' were selected to appear for the IIT JEE exam. From the first batch, 18 out of 30 students cracked the exam.

Building on this experience, making required corrections a second batch was enrolled. That year due to the local press, 1000 students applied and a written test had to be held. At the 2004 JEE 22 out of 30 students qualified for IIT with better ranks. The following year all 30 cleared JEE and cent percent results were declared. As the institution grew, two of Anand's students joined as teachers.

Anand has increased the 'Super 30' batch to 45. He plans to increase it to 60 and then 90. This idea was spread to the whole of Bihar and lately, they also take classes on mobile phones for students from Bhagalpur, Nalanda and Gaya. Anand commitment and interest in mathematics may be small thing but the vision he had in imparting his skill to the poor children to give them a better career was remarkable. He enjoyed what he knew, with that key strength anand started loving the work he was doing that's how Anand captures the fruits of success.

Anshu Gupta – Goonj

Born into a middle class family and a family of engineers, getting an engineer degree would have done everything. Anshu met with an accident in class 12 and was completely bed ridden. That is when he did a lot of research and realised engineering was not his cup of tea, but had keen interest in journalism. As he wrote for newspapers, they measured the size of the article and paid him. Having pursued his PG from Indian Institute of Mass Communication and joined an advertising agency. In a few months, Anshu realised that was not his passion and got into photography. He could not succeed as he had a cataract in his right eye. He then joined PowerGate a public sector company. Anshu was still not satisfied with what he was doing. He did not get the kick from his job; he wanted to give something back to society.

Goonj was his dream. He collected clothes from his own house and then relatives and friends and distributed them to people in the cold nights. Clothes were distributed to the disaster relief through Red Cross. Later he realised that Red Cross did not value the things and don't know how to distribute it. The same year, Goonj was registered as an NGO, but faced a lot of problems for finance. They raised money by collecting raddi paper, beer bottles etc. and selling them. Having received an order for bamboo clocks, they worked hard on it, only to realise that the paper they had wrapped the clocks in had left an impression on the wet polish, leading to the order being cancelled.

In 1999, Goonj took up a stall in Delhi Haat, where people understood what they were doing. In 2001, they found people giving a lot of things to Goonj. It was only in December 2004, during the tsunami Goonj made its mark. Two million units of clothes were left on the roadside unused. Goonj took the initiative to convert those into useful items like schoolbags, dhurries, yoga mats, baby beddings and most importantly sanitary napkins.

Anshu realised that women in regions like Orissa would wear only a saree without a blouse or petticoat only because of the poverty. During the five days, women managed with sand, ash, or pieces of jute, polythene and newspaper. That is when the ladies working with Goonj went down to the basic level and started making sanitary napkins with the unwanted cloth. Today they produce over two lakhs of napkins a month. Today Anshu and his organisation Goonj are making a difference in the lives of people who lack basic needs for survival. While we all dream of success, but only Anshu was working hard to achieve his dream of success.

DISCUSSION

"To give pleasure to a single heart by a single act is better than a thousand heads bowing in prayer." by an Unknown. Social entrepreneur is a flame of good spirit, which has taken birth in India to fire inequality, caste, poverty and sufferings of poor. As our father of nation Mahatama Gandhi said "You must be the change you wish to see in the world." Though the above business scenario informed many things, many people in India lacks awareness on it. The movement initiated through Sulabh International, Conserve, The Super 30, Goonj and many more need much recognition. These movements came into practice to make change in lives of poor and society.

- Sulabh works for eliminating untouchability, discrimination against human scavengers and a section condemned to clean and carry human excreta manually. It is known for cost-effective sanitation, scavengers liberation, societal transformation, pollution prevention and development Bio source of energy.



- Super 30 has produced hundred IITians from extremely poor background. All of them were given free coaching, accommodation and food. The programme targets only students from poor background. One man's dream has changed the absolute disbelief of the poor students.
- Goonj found the people in north India suffer a lot during winter not because of food and shelter its because of clothing. This entity looks for one of the basic needs of human, clothing a main concern for poors in the road. The products they make are from last strands and shreds of cloth, paper and little other household material. Realization on need for cloth in a different perspective has protected many lives during winter.

CONCLUSION

There are successful entrepreneurs in India, who work hard to change their lives and work hard to make their dream come true, but social entrepreneurs are looking change in the lives of poor's and sufferers in our community. They don't start a business entity with an intention to earn profit, social entrepreneurs start business as a platform for better standard of living for all stakeholders of it. All the four succeed social entrepreneurs have undergone severe pain and challenges in establishing their vision and it's still on. These individuals are purely thinkers and visionaries like, TATA, Reliance etc. but these individuals are thinkers and feelers in transforming lives of poor in the society. All the achievers taken referred for this study are upper middle class or middle class people. Also, they have experienced pain and struggle in their life. There is famous quote from an unknown conveys "unwearied ceaseless effort is the price that must be paid for turning faith into a rich is infallible experience."

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