



# INAUGURATING SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS



Edited by:  
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# **Inaugurating Social Entrepreneurs**



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## Inaugurating Social Entrepreneurs

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## Table of Content

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Forward	V - VII
Acknowledgement	IX
Preface	XI - XIII
Summary of Chapters	XV - XVIII
Creating Job Opportunities by Promoting Social Enterprise Business Model: A Study with Reference to Handloom Weavers 1 <i>by: Dr. Nisha Pandey</i>	1 - 12
Skill development and skill gap analysis in India: An examination <i>by: Prof. Jyoti Dixit, Dr. Nisha Pandey</i>	13 - 29
Malaysia's Indigenous Social Entrepreneurs Journey to The E-Commerce Platform <i>by: Alex Leong &amp; Dr. Kumarashvari Subramaniam</i>	30 - 39
Boost of Supply Chain and IR4.0 As Enablers to Inspire Social Enterprise for The B40 Group In Malaysia <i>by: Ts Dr Prashanth Beleya &amp; Ts. Mohd Fakhri Mat Saad</i>	40 - 54
Creating An Ecosystem for Smart Village through Capacity Building Approach: A Case Study of Aspirational Districts Program, India <i>by: Raparla Venkata Krishna Veni &amp; Nisha Pandey</i>	55 - 69
Social business & social media; Influence and Impact <i>by: Dr. Asokan Vasudevan &amp; Sriganeshvarun Nagaraj</i>	70 - 87
The Struggle Is Real and How to Survive It <i>by: Salwa Abu Bakar &amp; Nur Azizah Mohamad Parij</i>	88 - 96
Digital Social Entrepreneurship as a Driver of Women Empowerment <i>by: Dr. Vivek Sharma &amp; Bhanu Priya</i>	97 - 112
Social Innovation in Waste Segregation for Creation of Wealth and Livelihood Opportunities: A Case study of Let's Recycle Social Enterprise <i>by: Dr. Nageswara Rao Ambati &amp; Mr. Prachya Jyoti Bhattacharya</i>	113 - 131



## FORWARD

Social entrepreneurship is rapidly expanding, owing largely to its capacity to reach beneficiaries across boundaries and its ease of access. The entrepreneurial journey of the B40 group highlights this trend, which was inspired by supply chain and technology. Social entrepreneurship has the ability to transform capitalism by reducing reliance on unpredictable revenue sources, broadening the area of impact, establishing consistent sources of income, offering returns to shareholders, entering new markets, and contributing beyond financial means. Its primary purpose is to fulfil social goals while retaining financial sustainability, which necessitates a good business plan for success.

Logistics are critical in social business and social entrepreneurship because they allow social entrepreneurs and firms to reach customers all over the world. This is becoming increasingly important as a result of globalisation and nation-state competition. The Fourth Industrial Revolution, with its sophisticated technology such as robots, artificial intelligence, big data analytics, and mobile devices, is altering business practices in underserved areas. Technology, particularly mobile technology, benefits the poor by encouraging collaboration, synergy, and economies of scale.

Social businesses are regarded as the backbone of society, and they play an essential role in alleviating poverty and other socioeconomic concerns. The link between the social enterprise business model and long-term growth is being studied, with the goal of aligning social entrepreneurship with societal ideals and community values through networking, mutual trust, and understanding. Policymakers may help by supporting specific initiatives that encourage social entrepreneurship. These businesses are owned, run, and governed by community members in order to provide long-term advantages. Through their goods and services, market-driven organisations known as “social enterprises” use community support and social capital to accomplish social and environmental goals.

Over the last two decades, India has seen a tremendous increase in the number of social companies. The Indian government has formed venture capital funds and public-private partnerships to help them grow. The legal status of these firms, however, is not clearly defined, prompting a research to establish distinct forms of social enterprise business models and associated legal frameworks.

The purpose of the aforementioned research project is to propose a social business model that supports community sustainability and social welfare. Weaving has been practised in India from ancient times and has grown into an art form via invention, technical breakthroughs, and resource utilisation. Social businesses include a variety of legal structures, such as cooperatives and mutual benefit organisations, and policies and programmes should emphasise the development of entrepreneurial skills for long-term communal livelihood. Local engagement and leadership are critical to the success of social businesses, and these organisations must contribute value for money.

Overall, this book sheds light on the convergence of social entrepreneurship, digital technology, and female entrepreneurship, highlighting opportunities, problems, and the possibility for positive social change. This book gives an in-depth look at several areas of social entrepreneurship, digital technology, and women’s entrepreneurship. It emphasises the difficulties that social entrepreneurs confront in terms of demand, product choices, and inadequate education and training. Technology integration, such as e-commerce platforms and digital tools, has the ability to empower the poor and underprivileged, increase social impact, and enhance the economy. Malaysia’s MYDIGITAL programme and engagement with service providers reflect the Malaysian government’s attempts to embrace new technologies and help companies in the digital age.

This book also emphasises the transition towards the social business model, in which corporations prioritise beneficial society effect over profitability. Social entrepreneurs seek to address social concerns by delivering vital services while maximising societal and environmental advantages. In contrast, social entrepreneurship focuses on individuals who employ commercial strategies to develop new solutions to social and environmental concerns. The relevance of long-term profitability as a metric of success for social entrepreneurs is emphasised.

Digital social entrepreneurship (DSE), which combines digital and non-digital capabilities, is positioned as the future of social entrepreneurship. Women's success in the digital economy requires the development of digital skills and financial literacy. Women have an important role in pushing DSE, using digital technologies, and addressing social challenges, and DSE has the ability to handle economic crises and disasters. Self-efficacy, creativity, emotions, and support networks have been recognised as major motivations for female entrepreneurs.

This book goes on to discuss the problems that women entrepreneurs confront, such as learning digital skills, defying societal expectations, and overcoming cultural practices. It highlights the significance of encouraging women to establish enterprises and fostering gender equality in the digital economy. Digital literacy is viewed as a tool for developing efficient systems and businesses, as well as providing prospects for sustainable development and combating climate change.

The book authors also briefly address social entrepreneurship study areas such as intra-organisational networking, individual factors impacting entrepreneurial intents, and the role of entrepreneurial knowledge and attitudes in female entrepreneurship. Financial literacy is frequently mentioned as being important to the survival of fledgling businesses.

Articles in the book also delves into India's initiatives in waste management, rural development, and the building of smart villages. Let's Recycle and other social entrepreneurs are making important contributions to tackling environmental concerns, generating job opportunities, and improving the livelihoods of marginalised populations. Furthermore, the emphasis on capacity development, infrastructure development, and community empowerment mirrors the wider aims of India's social and rural development programmes. The research emphasises social companies' importance in generating social innovation, meeting social needs, and promoting environmental sustainability.

Following that, the book describes the concept of smart villages, which attempt to provide basic city facilities while retaining rural characteristics. The Smart Village idea is advocated for rural development infrastructure, education, healthcare, clean water, and local stakeholder engagement. The Aspirational Villages/Districts and Sustainable Livelihoods Framework are described as ways for constructing smart villages and elevating underdeveloped communities via infrastructure development and capacity building.

The Aspirational Districts Programme (ADP) in India is described as a successful model for local area development, with an emphasis on healthcare, education, nutrition, and money. Through skill development and inclusive local development, the programme aspires to empower all community members, particularly the poorest and most disadvantaged. Indicators for smart villages are being created to track the development and efficacy of smart village initiatives.

Ultimately, the book addresses the skill gap research and government programmes in India to produce skilled workers, as well as Malaysia's efforts to regulate the cost of living and improve the financial well-being of low-income individuals. Both India and Malaysia recognised the importance of skill development and financial well-being in resolving socioeconomic concerns. Both nations are aiming to reduce skill gaps, promote employability, and improve individuals' and communities' quality of life.

The article highlights the need of analysing skill gaps in India to identify areas where skill development programmes are weak. To alleviate the disparity in employment participation, skill development and training programmes should specifically target rural women. Through specialised training, guaranteed placements, and assistance, the government Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) and other government programmes seek to improve rural lives. However, issues such as inadequate infrastructure and a lack of emphasis on non-technical skills remain. To prepare workers for the shifting landscape, the future of work in India will necessitate an emphasis on digitisation, AI, and skill development.

Malaysia stresses initiatives to reduce the cost of living, improve household income, and safeguard the financial well-being of low-income groups. The Ministry of Women, Family, and Community Development offers initiatives to enhance disadvantaged populations' living conditions and household income. Financial literacy is seen as an important aspect in enhancing one's financial well-being, even when resources are low. The growing cost of living and inflation, on the other hand, lead to an increase in poverty, and efficient wealth management and savings are critical for weathering economic shocks. Thus, Malaysian Welfare Department's Mind Transformation Programme seeks to give financial help as well as equip individuals with information and skills to confront the problems posed by growing living costs and poverty.

~ Dr. Cheng Kai Wah ~



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With heartfelt appreciation,

Dr. Nisha Pandey & Umi Kalsom Kassim,





## Preface

Inaugurating Social Entrepreneurs is a book that delves into the captivating world of social entrepreneurship, exploring its diverse facets and showcasing the inspiring journeys of individuals and organizations dedicated to creating a positive impact in their communities. From the intersection of social business and social media to the transformative power of digital innovation, this book sheds light on the influence and impact that social entrepreneurs have in our rapidly evolving world.

Social enterprises are viewed as the foundation of socio-economic welfare and justice for creating equilibrium in society by engaging all the stakeholders for the development of human and social capital. The philosophy of Social Entrepreneurship (SE) is to take individuals or groups taking action to create social value along with economic value. Social entrepreneurship creates transformation in society by intervening and supporting in the action which leads to solving social issues, they create value by making meaningful collections and utilization of resources for solving unaddressed needs of marginalized people with help of stakeholders and locales. SEs are a broad combination of business, charity, and social movements that re-imagine solutions to a wide range of challenges and offer new social values in the name of social change. Hybrid business models that combine economic and social values are common in social initiatives. Social entrepreneurship is a catalyst for significant social change that is fast evolving into a new field of study and practice. To date, the number of books on social entrepreneurship has been restricted to think tank assessments, policy publications, and practitioner guides addressing specific challenges. In the last two decades, social companies have grown significantly. The Schumpeter model of entrepreneurship to social entrepreneurship. Swedberg, identified five key elements of social entrepreneurship model: motivation, innovation, resistance, profit, and the link to macro level change. Motivation creates sense of mission to create social change in the society, while social innovation creates new combinations that produce social change. The new combination consists of several elements which can be innovation in itself like the conception of way of doing things, financing the venture, its legal form, its organization, acquiring resources, method of production and the accepted ways of doing things. Social innovation led to creative distraction and contributed to society's evolution, and therefore provides a link to macro level change. The capability approach explains two core normative values, the first is freedom to achieve wellbeing and the second is freedom to achieve wellbeing to be considered in terms of people's capabilities, their real opportunities to do what they value. Therefore, Social entrepreneurs act as social change agents who imagine and carry out new combinations of capabilities to make difference in the quality of life both at micro and macro level. The micro and macro quality of life includes aspects such as material wellbeing, education opportunities, health domain, job securities, family life, community life, environment, political freedom, and gender equality. The quality of life in terms of social innovation means that the number of option people can choose from. The stages of Social Innovation, most of the time start with generating ideas by understanding needs and identifying potential solution, in this kind of problems needs can be obvious like hunger or homelessness but at the other side the need is not so simple and obvious. Such needs must be spotted through keen observation and ethnographic or campaign and movements. If we take the example of Muhamad Yunus (Social Entrepreneur) and Grameen bank (Social Enterprises), it is ultimately the social innovation of microfinance which creates social value which is novel as well as improved model for serving the social needs. Social Innovation (SI) has also been used in the context of community psychology referred to as Experimental Social Innovation (ESI). The goal of community psychology is to bring social change to communities and to improve the quality of life of the members through the introduction and dissemination of innovative solutions. Community psychology and its idea of social innovation are based on compassion, caring, humility and a deep sense of shared humanity.

The Indian social innovation ecosystem produced many solutions out of compassion, caring and deep sense of shared values like Akash Tablet, Solar Electric light company (SELCO), and Arvind Eye care among others. They had used fewer resources and created greater socio-economic value for society. Social entrepreneurship is growing rapidly due to its capacity to reach beneficiaries across borders and its accessibility. Now, it is addressing problems like climate change, inequality, malnutrition, food security, these issues are affecting everyone regardless of gender, race, income and countries.

SE has the potential to minimize reliance on unpredictable sources of income, broaden scope of influence, develop reliable sources of income, give returns to shareholders, establish presence and footprint in a new market, and contribute beyond financial means. Social entrepreneurship (SE) aims to achieve social goals in a financially sustainable manner.

The sharing economy which supports social entrepreneurship and sustainable development is growing fast in Europe, US and in India and especially the Young they routinely share their cars, homes to save money, and richer social experience while reducing ecological footprint. Social mission innovativeness aims to recognize the pattern and then it works on “Pattern Breaking” and making new combination using different combination for providing feasible and economical solutions. Thus, SE is multidisciplinary construct, involving various entrepreneurial behaviors with a view to accomplishing a social mission, having purpose and action in the face of moral complexity. It is taken as a process of driving social transformation and meeting important social needs in a manner which is not subject to direct financial benefit of the entrepreneurs.

Traditional businesses are increasingly adopting the social business model to increase their positive influence on society and their stakeholders rather than on their shareholders. The provision of healthcare, housing, nutrition, education, and financial services for the poor and marginalized are all examples of the kinds of social aims that social businesses seek to achieve. In contrast to for-profit businesses, the success of a social enterprise is measured by the degree to which it has altered the status quo for the better.

Digital technology can help alleviate social constraints and improve the economy through innovative digital social entrepreneurship. Social entrepreneurs are passionate about bringing social change and understanding how digital tools and platforms can help them raise funds. Technology is turning imagination into reality. Digital entrepreneurs are using software and technology to generate wealth from their ideas.

The COVID-19 pandemic has paved the way for Digital social entrepreneurship, such initiative helped economies during economic crises and disasters. Social entrepreneurs create social value through innovations that address citizens’ problems, creating social and economic progress. Digital social entrepreneurship (DSE) is combining digital and non-digital capabilities in the same organizational unit. Digitalization in social entrepreneurship is driven by empathy, self-efficacy, moral judgements, perceived presence, perceived feasibility and perceived desirability. Technology plays a role in helping women entrepreneurs pursue social innovation. Women with strong problem-solving and design skills are more likely to engage in and address social issues. Factors such as access to information, collaborative activities, and thinking critically are important for developing problem-solving skills.

Self-efficacy, creativity and emotions are key factors for social entrepreneurs, as they feel more confident about their abilities and are more inclined to become social entrepreneurs. Motivational drivers include an intentional mindset and the support of their social network. Women start businesses for different reasons than their male counterparts, such as self-identity, independence, greater wealth, personal fulfillment, and flexibility. Financial skills and numerical skills are essential for successful venture creation and development, and education policies can help promote financial literacy. Women entrepreneurs need cognitive skills, financial literacy, and numerical ability to make complex decisions. Social media has empowered them both on personal and relational levels and has enabled them to optimize their networks and support the family unit. Women entrepreneurs need to learn new digital skills, recruit young digital natives, to maintain a competitive digital presence. Technology in the service of social entrepreneurship presents many opportunities for women. Technology enables new solutions, scale, co-creation, sustainability, investment potential, and challenges for digital social entrepreneurship among women. It can be used to improve people’s independence, scale existing solutions, and co-create solutions. The Indian government has established venture capital funds and public-private partnerships, but these businesses do not yet have a clear legal status. In order to solve this, a study was done to determine the different types of social enterprise business models and their legal framework.

Malaysia has taken progressive steps to cut and manage the cost of products and services, increase household income, and ensure the financial well-being of low-income groups. Lower-income groups are more vulnerable when the cost of living rises, and the Ministry of Women, Family, and Community Development has proposed measures to improve their standard of living and household income. According to Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM)’s Salary & Earnings Survey Report 2021, poverty is rising, with many people sliding into the poor category as a result of inflation, cost of living, and mandatory deductions. The most significant concept is that financial literacy can improve one’s financial well-being and quality of life even if they don’t have much money. To get government support, JKM clients must be screened and meet certain requirements, although some of these criteria need to be revised. To make ends meet and

weather economic shocks, it is critical to manage wealth properly. A ‘flow of money’ exercise revealed that only two of the eight groups said they would set away a part for savings. Savings are vital for avoiding future financial difficulties. According to the Ringgit Plus Malaysian Financial Literacy Study 2022, 70% of Malaysians will save less than RM500 per month in 2022, resulting in financial misery and an oncoming recession. Mental budgeting is a method for reducing money stress and improving financial management. Put aside 10% of your salary for savings, pay off your debts, and employ goal-oriented processes to meet specific requirements and goals. The Mind Transformation Program of Malaysian Welfare Department is a wise move in addressing rising living costs and poverty by providing financial assistance and empowering knowledge and skills.

Malaysia’s Indigenous Social Entrepreneurs (MISE) started e-commerce with workshops and hands-on experience but struggled with lack of demand, restricted choice, and online account management. Additional seminars will teach them plenty. The rural e-commerce hub Taobao Village combines Alibaba’s logistics, services, and training to enable farmers to sell their crops and regional specialties online.

Malaysia’s MYDIGITAL programme retrains workers. Pickup efficiency, transportation path planning, waybill single check, and VAT invoice processing speeds have improved with AI. The government is working with service providers to adopt new technology to help businesses compete in the digital age. Social entrepreneurs must remain current. These are hybrid organizations that bring together regional and global resources to promote social change and community development. The earliest SE structures are cooperatives. To create social value, SEs must reassess their business plans in light of the shifting environment and reinvest earnings. Value proposition, policy options, networks and partnerships, and strategic resources are all represented by business models. While social enterprises lack a formal organizational structure and legal framework, they do present advantageous prospects.

Policies and programmes should focus on developing entrepreneurial skills for sustainable community livelihood. Locals’ desire to participate in community development activities is crucial for sustainable community development. Leadership in social enterprises is essential to manage them successfully. Social companies must provide value for money.



## *Summary of Chapters*

### ***Creating Job Opportunities by Promoting Social Enterprise Business Model: A Study with Reference To Handloom Weavers***

Social enterprises are viewed as the foundation of society and are crucial to overcoming poverty and other socioeconomic issues. An investigation is conducted to see whether the social enterprise business model and sustainable development are related. By networking, mutual trust, and understanding, social entrepreneurship (SENT), a progressive phenomena, aims to link with societal principles and community values. Targeted actions taken by policymakers facilitate it. In order to produce long-lasting advantages, social enterprises are run, owned, and governed by members of the community. Market-driven organisations known as “social enterprises” work to advance social and environmental objectives by offering goods and services that draw on increased community support and social capital. In the last two decades, social companies have grown significantly in India. To assist the development of social enterprises in India, the Indian government has established venture capital funds and public-private partnerships, but these businesses do not yet have a clear legal status. In order to solve this, a study was done to determine the different types of social enterprise business models and their legal framework. Organizations that promote social interactions, social innovations, and social business concepts are known as social enterprises (SE).

These are hybrid organisations that bring together regional and global resources to promote social change and community development. The earliest SE structures are cooperatives. To create social value, SEs must reassess their business plans in light of the shifting environment and reinvest earnings. Value proposition, policy options, networks and partnerships, and strategic resources are all represented by business models. While social enterprises lack a formal organisational structure and legal framework, they do present advantageous prospects.

The goal of this research project is to recommend a social business model that might contribute to community sustainability and social welfare. Since the Industrial Revolution, weaving in India, which dates to between 2750 and 3250 BCE, has transformed into an art-based enterprise. Innovative patterns, fresh sources for raw materials, and better use of technology and resources have all helped weavers to survive. Because they were uneducated and illiterate, power looms and cotton mills competed with the handloom weaving industry. The function of social enterprises in local development was examined in this study using an interpretative case study methodology.

An famous kind of art and craft in Maharashtra, Paithani Art is used for lucky rituals and provides a living for the locals of the Paithan taluka in the Aurangabad district. Three different organisational types were seen in Paithan: a sole proprietorship, a public enterprise, and a cooperative society. Individual weavers spend their family’s wealth but face difficulty competing in the ecosystem. Government-funded businesses offer appropriate support, but they make less money per saree. The Paithan Taluka lacks essential services, job opportunities, and effective government.

Weavers require new typology, legal framework, and expert guidance to help decision-making as they struggle to preserve their tradition. Four different forms of social enterprises mutuals, trading charities, public sector spinoffs, and fresh start social enterprises are hybrid organisations with legal structures similar to cooperatives, mutual benefit societies, and associations. Policies and programmes should focus on developing entrepreneurial skills for sustainable community livelihood. Locals’ desire to participate in community development activities is crucial for sustainable community development. Leadership in social enterprises is essential to manage them successfully. Social companies must provide value for money.

### ***Creating An Ecosystem for Smart Village Through Capacity Building Approach: A Case Study Of Aspirational Districts Program, India***

Smart Villages are rural regions that preserve rural qualities while providing basic city services. Based on the Local 2030 SDG Agenda, this study presents ten indicators to monitor and evaluate the program’s progress. The Smart Village concept is recommended to ensure better infrastructure, education, healthcare, clean drinking water, and local stakeholders as rural development gains pace and becomes more participatory. Smart villages are a solution for improving rural quality of life, and SDGs can be utilized to develop indicators. This article assesses the definition of smart villages as well as the work done in Aspirational districts using a capacity building-sustainable livelihood strategy. Antonio et al. (2019) and Van Gevelt et al. (2018) highlighted the fundamental requirements for Smart Villages, Maja et al. (2020) created metrics for smart rural communities, and John Holmes (2017) stressed the use of new technology to provide sustainable and inexpensive power. The Millennium Villages Project (MVP) 2015 was a flagship effort of the United Nations Millennium Project that aimed to combine rural development methods in 10 African countries. Digital villages are being established in Europe, Malaysia, and India to improve the quality of life for rural populations. In 2014, India introduced the Smart Village, which is defined by five criteria parameters including retrofitting, reconstruction, green fields, e-Pan, and livelihood. Capacity-building is the process of increasing an organization’s or community’s ability to survive, adapt, and thrive in a rapidly changing economy.

The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (SLF) and Aspirational Villages/Districts (AVD) programmes attempt to rehabilitate undeveloped communities by providing infrastructure for healthcare, education, clean water and sanitation, and renewable energy. With SMART objectives and Smart Village Indicators designed to assess a village’s smartness, the Aspirational Districts Program (ADP) has been a successful model for local area development. Education, technical advancements, healthcare, agriculture, water and sanitation, energy, the environment, skill development, women’s empowerment, and financial inclusion are among the indicators. SDG 4 focuses on education that is free, equitable, and of high quality, as well as technology and digital education, healthcare and nutrition, clean water and sanitation, agriculture, energy, sustainability, and environmental challenges, skill development, women’s empowerment, and finance. Indicators for smart villages are being developed for the Indian setting.

The Aspirational Districts Program (ADP) has been a driver for development in LWE areas in healthcare, nutrition, education, and finance. Poshan Abhiyaan, Model Anganwadi Centers, the Dakshata Program, and the giving of saplings to parents are examples of success stories. India is committed to ensuring that everyone has access to safe drinking water and sanitation, to improving learning outcomes through innovation and digitization, and to increasing income through the promotion of agricultural goods. Dantewada (Chhattisgarh) district administration has given skill development and community outreach to bring the young of the district afflicted by left-wing extremism into the mainstream. Gumla, Jharkhand, and Khandwa, Madhya Pradesh, have both received infrastructure upgrades.

Trusts and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have worked together to create 112 districts in 27 states. Monitoring is critical for understanding the development and implementation of smart villages, as it aids in the identification of needs, impediments, and facilitators, as well as the adaptation of techniques for successful monitoring and assessment. ADP is a community capacity development programme that aims to empower all members of the community, especially the poorest and most disadvantaged, to build skills and competences and contribute to inclusive local development. To address urbanization, the Smart Villages Initiative is establishing smart rural village indicators. Smart villages are a new concept that can be used to achieve universal energy access and rural development in Indonesia's urban and regional development themes.

### ***Boost Of Supply Chain and Ir4.0 As Enablers To Inspire Social Enterprise For The B40 Group In Malaysia***

Social entrepreneurship is growing rapidly due to its capacity to reach beneficiaries across borders and its accessibility. The B40 group's entrepreneurial journey is inspired by supply chain and technology. Social entrepreneurship could transform capitalism. It has the potential to minimize reliance on unpredictable sources of income, broaden scope of influence, develop reliable sources of income, give returns to shareholders, establish presence and footprint in a new market, and contribute beyond financial means. Social entrepreneurship aims to achieve social goals in a financially sustainable manner. Its main goal is to alter the world or their communities, and it needs a solid business plan to succeed. Examples include employment creation, training, and diversity promotion. Traditional Red Perfume is a for-profit social venture that aims to make a difference and make money owned by Mrs. Nur Zakiah Bt Dzulkifli, who has physical limitations, has distributed their product to Singapore, Indonesia, and Thailand.

The company's goal is to become the world's leading HALAL fragrance provider and develop jobs and eliminate youth poverty in Kuala Pilah, Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia. Logistics in social business are crucial to social entrepreneurship. Global logistics helps social entrepreneurs and enterprises reach customers. Due to globalization and nation-state competition, this is crucial. Industrial Revolution 4.0 (IR 4.0) includes advanced robotics, artificial intelligence, sensors, big data analytics, 3D printing, cloud-enabled business models, high-powered mobile devices, and algorithms to drive motor vehicles. In disadvantaged neighborhoods, technology is changing business practices. Mobile technology empowers the poor and underprivileged by bringing stakeholders together and establishing synergies and economies of scale. Technology can create value chain synergies that are bigger than the sum of their parts. Social entrepreneurs can use technology to help the poor and underprivileged quickly scale up and take advantage of economies of scale. ICTs can change social company operations, empower clients, and boost the social economy. Malaysia's MYDIGITAL programme retrains workers. Pickup efficiency, transportation path planning, waybill single check, and VAT invoice processing speeds have improved with AI. The government is working with service providers to adopt new technology to help businesses compete in the digital age. Social entrepreneurs must remain current.

### ***Malaysia's Indigenous Social Entrepreneurs Journey to The E-Commerce Platform***

Malaysia's Indigenous Social Entrepreneurs (MISE), started e-commerce with workshops and hands-on experience but struggled with lack of demand, restricted choice, and online account management. Additional seminars will teach them plenty. The rural e-commerce hub Taobao Village combines Alibaba's logistics, services, and training to enable farmers to sell their crops and regional specialties online. Lecturers met entrepreneurs from the Taobao Village, and INTI began its first e-social entrepreneurship project to benefit Malaysia's Temuan Tribe, which relies on forest goods. Ecommerce was used to boost villager income and improve the community.

They chose products made by screw pine leaves and ChocoJar, made by chocolate, bubble rice and crunchy Oreo crumble. The team categorized the merchandise as Love of Recognition, Love Yourself, Love for Friends, Love for Society, and Love for Lovers. Social networking, teaching locals to handle orders, and handing over the Shopee account accelerated the online company. Lack of demand, restricted product selection, market limits, and lack of education and training made e-business execution difficult for the team. Due to their lack of resources and resistance to change, the indigenous people were hard to teach about e-commerce. The university and government must work harder to solve these issues.

### ***Social Business & Social Media; Influence and Impact***

Traditional businesses are increasingly adopting the social business model to increase their positive influence on society and their stakeholders rather than on their shareholders. The provision of healthcare, housing, nutrition, education, and financial services for the poor and marginalized are all examples of the kinds of social aims that social businesses seek to achieve. In contrast to for-profit businesses, the success of a social enterprise is measured by the degree to which it has altered the status quo for the better. Social enterprises seek to maximize profits while also optimizing benefits to society and the environment, with the proceeds from these endeavors typically funding social programs. A social enterprise is not to be confused with social entrepreneurship, which focuses on individuals who create solutions to social and environmental concerns by employing existing commercial tactics. Profitability over time is the true yardstick by which a social enterprise is evaluated, not its impact on society or the natural world.

### ***The Struggle Is Real And How To Survive It***

Malaysia has taken progressive steps to cut and manage the cost of products and services, increase household income, and ensure the financial well-being of low-income groups. Lower-income groups are more vulnerable when the cost of living rises, and the Ministry of Women, Family, and Community Development has proposed measures to improve their standard of living and household income. According to Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM)'s Salary & Earnings Survey Report 2021, poverty is rising, with many people sliding into the poor category as a result of inflation, cost of living, and mandatory deductions. The most significant concept is that financial literacy can improve one's financial well-being and quality of life even if they don't have much money. To get government support, JKM clients must be screened and meet certain requirements, although some of these criteria need to be revised. To make ends meet and weather economic shocks, it is critical to manage wealth properly. A 'flow of money' exercise revealed that only two of the eight groups said they would set away a part for savings. Savings are vital for avoiding future financial difficulties. According to the RinggitPlus Malaysian Financial Literacy Study 2022, 70% of Malaysians will save less than RM500 per month in 2022, resulting in financial misery and an oncoming recession. Mental budgeting is a method for reducing money stress and improving financial management. Put aside 10% of your salary for savings, pay off your debts, and employ goal-oriented processes to meet specific requirements and goals. The Mind Transformation Program of Malaysian Welfare Department is a wise move in addressing rising living costs and poverty by providing financial assistance and empowering knowledge and skills.

### **Social Innovation In Waste Segregation For Creation Of Wealth And Livelihood Opportunities: A Case Study of Let's Recycle Social Enterprise**

Let's Recycle is a social enterprise in Ahmedabad, India, dedicated to the "zero waste to landfill" motto. This study looks at how it overcame hurdles and created employment opportunities for marginalized members of the society. Social enterprises are driving social innovation in India by adopting creative business models and ensuring long-term viability. This paper explores the experiences of social enterprises and their contribution towards environmental sustainability. Social entrepreneurship is essential for creating new ideas to address social needs and build social connections, providing inventive solutions to problems like unemployment and helping alienated communities participate more fully. Social enterprises are well-positioned to lead the transition to a circular economy due to their potential for self-sufficiency and their focus on social benefits. Social entrepreneurship is an entrepreneurial activity with a social purpose, using well-established corporate principles to run non-profit organizations. It employs social innovations to create goods/services that address unmet needs and meet the needs of the beneficiary group. Gender sensitivities are essential for long-term waste management, and SE efforts such as SWaCH and INORA are aiming to improve garbage pickers' working conditions. Conflicts between private organizations and garbage pickers' unions pose a threat of privatization of solid waste management.

Zaman (2012) argued that waste management via social entrepreneurship can improve society's socioeconomic and environmental advantages while reducing inequalities. This study used a theoretical framework of circular-based economy to link the adoption of social innovation methods to the performance of the selected social enterprise. Data collection and analysis occurred in cycles until an emerging theoretical model explained the data. NEPRA's Let's Recycle initiative focuses on providing sustainable solid waste collection and recycling solutions to communities and organizations. Sandeep is the founder of NEPRA Resource Management Pvt Ltd, an Ahmedabad-based waste management company that uses the 'Let's Recycle' brand. He is a waste-to-wealth entrepreneur who sold his previous enterprises to focus on garbage management. 'Let's Recycle' is responsible for collecting dry waste from commercial buildings, 5-star hotels, and hospitals, using NEPRA's ERP App software to control, monitor, and track operations in real-time. NEPRA Resource Management Pvt Ltd focuses on collecting and sorting dry garbage for sale to recyclers, providing dignity and improved livelihoods to the poor while also mitigating pollution caused by plastic trash. Let's Recycle uses a micro-entrepreneurship model, ERP system, semi-automatic material recovery plant, and digital technology to provide transparency in weighing and rates for large waste producers. Sandeep believes there is a demand for organized trash management businesses due to government programs and new rules and has developed an ERP system to track and monitor activities.

NEPRA partnered with Aavishkaar to simplify and automate their Material Recovery Facility (MRF) and introduce new processes, resulting in decreased stock levels and improved worker productivity. NEPRA has been experimenting with and testing numerous innovations, such as a micro-entrepreneurship model, mobile application, and word-of-mouth or referral marketing strategy. They employ over 1,800 garbage pickers and collectors in Ahmedabad, Indore, and Pune, and use the profits to scale up operations. The Let's Recycle social venture has received 44 crores and plans to expand to Indore, India's cleanest city, with a 300-tonne unit operational next month. The workforce is growing, and the toll number serves as a direct line for garbage collectors. Let's Recycle provides high-quality waste management services to its clients while minimizing global environmental challenges and addressing the problem of financial exclusion of rag-pickers and those living at the bottom of the pyramid by providing employment opportunities. NEPRA is grateful to the government for raising awareness among the public and attracting qualified individuals with degrees from reputable universities to collaborate with them on various projects. They are not working in the area where people collect waste from landfill sites.

### **Skill Development and Skill Gap Analysis In India: An Examination**

This study evaluates the skill gaps, evaluation strategy, and government measures in India to generate skilled labour to suit market demands. It also underlines the influences on the future of employment and the approaches to be taken. A skill gap analysis is used to determine the skills people require to execute their jobs or skilled labour effectively but may not have. It encourages individual learning and benefits productivity and hiring initiatives. In order to close gaps and increase programme success, interventions might be developed. Analyzing skill gaps can assist identify areas in which skill development programmes are lacking and help create solutions. To lessen the discrepancy in workforce participation, programmes for skill development and training should be targeted at rural women. Since just 2.3% of the workforce in India has formal skill training, making them essentially unemployable, skill development is crucial for assessing "skills" and "talents." The country has the opportunity to give its workforce the skills it needs. India's economic growth is significantly hampered by the talent gap, which prompted the establishment of NSDC and the "Skill India" campaign.

An evaluation policy task force must be established to shape certain evaluation policies in order to handle this. An online test called the Wheebox Employability Skill Test (WEST) is used to find skill gaps in the realms of education, training, and employment. It assesses the analytical thinking, English language proficiency, self-motivation, learning agility, social skills, emotional intelligence, adaptability, and conflict-resolution abilities of prospective employees. To increase the employability of Indian youth through vocational training, the Indian government has started a number of national skill development programmes. The three leading initiatives to advance skill development are PMKVY, NCVET, and NSDC.

Under the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM), the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) and Aajeevika Skill Development Program work to improve rural livelihoods by offering specialised residential and non-residential training, 75% guaranteed placement above minimum wages, post-placement support, and training-related food and transportation assistance. In order to establish a team of skilled human resources to carry out farm and non-farm operations, the National Policy on Skill Development and Entrepreneurship 2015 and National Apprenticeship Training Scheme (NATS) both aim to offer rural adolescents modular training options. Due to poor infrastructure, a shortage of highly qualified trainers, and a lack of emphasis on non-technical skills, India has a severe skill development challenge that results in a large number of unemployed skilled workers. The lack of skill development in vocational education and training has been attributed to a number of factors, including a lack of industry-faculty connection, limited student mobility, scaling problems, and pandemics. To achieve high mobility, the Indian government must concentrate on branding initiatives.

The future of work will require a combination of digitalization, artificial intelligence (AI), hybrid workstations, skill development, a worldwide network, and resource access. The Indian government has launched programmes like the National e-Governance Plan and the GI Cloud Initiative to boost citizen invention, cut expenses, and speed up innovation in IT labs and engineering facilities. Industry 4.0 is anticipated to change the production environment and generate new skilled occupations. To make them ready for the new digital requirements, low-skilled workers and freshmen must be skilled, reskilled, and upskilled. The informal economy and sector-specific skill development initiatives should be the main topics of future research. Government actions are required to address the issue of skill development in India, which is both a big challenge and an opportunity.

## **Digital Social Entrepreneurship**

Digital technology can help alleviate social constraints and improve the economy through innovative digital social entrepreneurship. Social entrepreneurs are passionate about bringing a social change and understanding how digital tools and platforms can help them raise funds. Technology is turning imagination into reality. Digital entrepreneurs are using software and technology to generate wealth from their ideas, and the COVID-19 pandemic has paved the way for Digital social entrepreneurship, a solution to help economies during economic crises and disasters. Social entrepreneurs create social value through innovations that address citizens' problems, creating social and economic progress. Digital social entrepreneurship (DSE) is the future of social entrepreneurship, combining digital and non-digital capabilities in the same organizational unit. Digital social entrepreneurship among women is driven by empathy, self-efficacy, moral judgements, perceived presence, perceived feasibility and perceived desirability, and COVID-19 pandemic. Technology plays a role in helping women entrepreneurs pursue social innovation. Women with strong problem-solving and design skills are more likely to engage in and address social issues. Factors such as access to information, collaborative activities, and thinking critically are important for developing problem-solving skills.

Self-efficacy, creativity and emotions are key factors for social entrepreneurs, as they feel more confident about their abilities and are more inclined to become social entrepreneurs. Motivational drivers include an intentional mindset and the support of their social network. Women start businesses for different reasons than their male counterparts, such as self-identity, independence, greater wealth, personal fulfilment and flexibility. Financial skills and numerical skills are essential for successful venture creation and development, and education policies can help promote financial literacy. Women entrepreneurs need cognitive skills, financial literacy, and numerical ability to make complex decisions. Social media has empowered them both on personal and relational levels, and has enabled them to optimise their networks and support the family unit. Women entrepreneurs need to learn new digital skills, recruit young digital natives, and use the "3F"s (Friends, Family and Fools) to maintain a competitive digital presence. Technology in the service of social entrepreneurship presents many opportunities for women. Technology enables new solutions, scale, co-creation, sustainability, investment potential, and challenges for digital social entrepreneurship among women. It can be used to improve people's independence, scale existing solutions, and co-create solutions.

Women entrepreneurs face challenges in acquiring digital skills, defying social expectations, and struggling to be taken seriously. Digital literacy can help them create better systems and more efficient companies. Alison Gutterman, CEO and President of Jelmar, faced presumptions that she was living off her father's and grandfather's reputations. To overcome this, she has joined a variety of women entrepreneur groups to build confidence, own her accomplishments, build a support network, and balance business and family life. The 21st century digital-age woman is now able to create a life of her own dreams, but faces challenges such as balancing work life, coping with fear of failure, and restrictive social and cultural practices. Women should be empowered to set up businesses, and a digital economy free from gender inequalities should lead to economic and social empowerment. References include Adam, Jahanshahi, Bandura, Channa, Davidson, Drnovsek, Cardon, Ekpe, and Mat. Creativity and emotions are key drivers of social entrepreneurship, while digital sustainability and entrepreneurship are helping tackle climate change and sustainable development. Intra-organizational networking for innovation-based corporate entrepreneurship is a research agenda, while narcissism, machiavellianism, and psychopathy relate to entrepreneurial intention. Research on social entrepreneurship has focused on the influence of social and human capital, role models, networking capability, virtual currencies, entrepreneurial knowledge, exploration, self-efficacy theory, and career indecision. Studies have also examined the effects of individual characteristics on women's intention to become social entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurial knowledge, personal attitudes, and intentions are important for female entrepreneurship, and financial literacy is beneficial for new venture survival.





# CREATING JOB OPPORTUNITIES BY PROMOTING SOCIAL ENTERPRISE BUSINESS MODEL: A STUDY WITH REFERENCE TO HANDLOOM WEAVERS

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## *Abstract*

Recently, there has been a worldwide surge in socio-economic challenges. United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) draw attention to the survival and livelihood problems faced by the indigenous communities. "Social Enterprises are vital to overcome poverty and other socio-economic problems. Social enterprises grow on a system network of community relationships, with a high degree of reciprocity. Social enterprise initiatives draw attention to the sustainable local business model and are perceived as the building blocks of society, showing casing community engagement. Social entrepreneurs want to do things differently; with perseverance and patience, they want to create long-term social value. They do not give up under adverse circumstances and lead when no one wants to lead. They visualize concrete gains to the society and above all, they are determined and motivated to prove that there is an alternate space and business strategy for solving social problems. Practitioners and policymakers view social enterprises, as organisation, which usually sets the social objective, however do not fit into the conventional form of public or private organisations. Social Entrepreneurs introduces different types of social innovations and their learning model is from the practical to the general; they are rooted in grassroots realities of social enterprise development. Considering the fact that Social enterprises contribute to the sustainable development and what can be a suitable business model that offers opportunity to the indigenous community to develop, a research study is undertaken. The research is focused on two areas a) the different typology of the social enterprise business models in India and their legal structure, b) to propose the suitable legal structure that can support sustainable development. Accordingly, an attempt is made to draw an inference between the social enterprise business model and sustainable development.

**Key Words:** *Social Enterprise, Sustainable Development, Social Business Model.*

## 1.0 Introduction

With intensifying social issues, the need for Social Entrepreneurship (SENT) has increased manifold (Mir Shahid, 2016). Social Entrepreneurship can be facilitated by policy-makers through the adoption of target measures clean water, energy, education, affordable housing, health services and community development, as highlighted by UNCTAD (2012). To highlight the value of entrepreneurship to society it is important that the government should disseminate information about entrepreneurship, including social entrepreneurship, and engage diaspora community in local entrepreneurship networks (UNCTAD, 2012). Social Entrepreneurship has been the area of academic research for nearly 20 years. The meaning of Social Entrepreneurship is local and follows local practices (Sahay and Sengupta, 2018). Social Entrepreneurship mission is social welfare through social businesses and local market utilization (Hoque and Nahid, 2015). Social Entrepreneurship phenomenon is progressive due to the raising need and significance of socio environmental concerns (Bornstein 2004). Consequently, the need arises to start any kind of activity, organization or initiative that solves social problems. Considering the potential, social entrepreneurs are attracted to the creation of social enterprises, keeping in mind social, environmental or community objectives (GEM, 2015).

Social Entrepreneurship envisages the role of Social Enterprises (SE's) in human development. SE's are usually small capacity units responsible for local resource building through community participation. Social entrepreneurship literature also emphasizes the central role played by social entrepreneurs, community leaders, and volunteer. Social Enterprises are managed, owned, and governed by the people of the community to yield sustainable individual and group benefits (Peredo and Chrisman, Apr 2006). The essence of social entrepreneurship is to connect with society and community values through networking (Chell, 2007, 2017). Even the social entrepreneur's ideology, his altruism, and tradition are usually considered the key dimensions in the development of social entrepreneurship.

Social Entrepreneurs notices social problems and bring in a change in society through a collective endurance that requires good networking, trust and mutual understanding. Social Enterprises are initiated by a group of citizens who seek to provide an expanded range of services and more openness towards the local community. For social entrepreneur's, the creation of social capital is of as much value as financial capital (Leadbeater, 1997; SOCENT, 2017). The latest development in the evolution of social economy is the phenomenon of Social Enterprises. The first approach to the concept of Social Enterprise was developed in Europe and the EMES network proposed its framework (Borgaza and Defourny, 2001).

Mostly, social enterprise initiatives attempt to follow the sustainable local business models and the taxonomy of such enterprises is in resolving the grassroot problems of the community. Social enterprises, over the years, have emerged as significant contributors to economic development. These enterprises possess the capacity to self-sustain the enterprises financially by utilizing the local resources. Social Enterprises aim to achieve social as well as environmental goals by supplying the products and services through increased social capital and enhanced community involvement in the production process. Social Enterprises are market-driven enterprises that achieves success through the collective participation of communities that they serve (Pearce, 2003).

Nevertheless, rural communities are still vulnerable to multiple political and economic pressures. Prevailing policy frameworks put forth challenges in Social Enterprise operations since the policy framework does not fit the enterprise vision of social value creation. The plethora of policies available are scattered and not connected to social enterprise strategies. Appropriate legal and policy frameworks in the social enterprise ecosystem can provide financial relief and further provide measures to evaluate social impact depending on the various constructs responsible for social value creation. Social enterprises can exist in any form such as organization, charity, cooperatives, commercial businesses etc. however, there exists a considerable debate on its legal statute.

### **1.1 ‘Social Enterprise Sector’: An Indian Perspective**

The social enterprise in India mainly supports the sustainable development goals and are focused on achieving targets (Ganesh et.al 2018). India has witnessed a significant growth in social enterprises in the past two decades. India’s social, political and environmental landscape significantly supports the growth of social enterprise. A Bertelsmann Stiftung 2018 report on “*The Indian Social Enterprise Landscape*” suggests the existence of approximately 6 million social enterprises in India out of the global spectrum of 100 million enterprises. Another estimate was roughly around 2 million in the year 2016 according to the British Council’s report on “*The State of Social Enterprise in India*” and 1 million in 2012 as per Asian Development Bank’s report on “*India Social Enterprise Landscape*”. All these reports indicate India to be a vibrant country offering a plethora of opportunities in the area of social entrepreneurship.

In India, 70% of the population lives in rural areas and is still deprived of the basic access to sanitation, health, electricity and sustainable livelihood. Over the past few decades, investors have been actively investing in the projects that support sustainable and scalable development of social enterprises in India. Majority of these enterprises are active in the area of healthcare, education, clean energy, agriculture, sanitation, financial inclusion and water.

Simultaneously, a concern over the governance and the legal statute of social enterprise sector also transpires. In order to sustain the growth of social enterprises, the Government of India initiated various public private partnerships in critical sectors like healthcare, sanitation etc. GOI also established government backed venture capital funds and ensured the formulation and revision of policies and regulations like Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, National Education Policy, solid waste management for water and sanitation, new health policy etc. Social Enterprise landscape of India highlights major challenges that potentially inhibit the growth of social enterprises in India. The secondary data study analyzed in this area indicates the challenges faced by social enterprises in India like lack of finance, skilled manpower, inappropriate incubation support etc. The social enterprise sector still lacks a formal legal identity.

The ecosystem supporting social enterprise is strong in South Korea (Sengupta and Sahay, 2018). They are certified as organizations that carry out business activities through production and sales. The UK and European Unions defined the legal framework of social enterprise as businesses with social mission. In India, the central and state governments have not yet given a legal identity to social enterprises (Sengupta and Sahay, 2018). While there has been a good deal of effort ensuring the growth of Social Enterprises in India, the regularization of legal structure of social enterprise has been

relatively neglected. To address this need, the present research study was undertaken to ascertain the various forms of social enterprise business models and their legal structure.

## 1.2 Social Enterprise Business Model for Sustainable growth

According to *Beyond Profit 2010* survey, India's social enterprise sector is young and nascent. It is surprising that approximately one out of three SE's experience losses and the key reason indicated was legal structure. SE's adopt innovative business models, that starts as a not-for-profit one but then transforms into a for profit models. Some like the ArvindEye Care hospital are registered as a trust and accept fees from patients to sustain. Likewise, Social Enterprises develop various innovative business models. Inferences can be drawn through the existing social enterprises that had been popularized across the globe for their sustainable business models that foster social connections, social innovations and social business ideas. Few like the "Grameen Bank" established by Mohammad Yunus from Bangladesh, Ashoka in 1980 by Bill Crayton, Juratri, a French social enterprise founder in 1993, Dr. Verghese Kuriens white revolution, Dr. Balasubramaniam's GRAAM, SEWA by Ela Bhatt are among the most prominent social entrepreneurs who, with their foresightedness and vision, contributed to global social development.

Practitioners and policymakers view social Enterprises (SE) as organizations across the world. Social mission and financial sustainability usually set the objective of social enterprises and, therefore, they do not fit into the conventional form of public or private organization structure. SE primarily forms the hybrid organization type (Pache, Santos; Sept 2012). Hybridity as per the conceptualizations allows the coexistence of values and artefacts from two or more categories (Doherty, Huagh & Lyon; Jan 2014). This form of organization enables Social Enterprises to assemble appropriately the available local and non-local resources and embark on the possibility of community development through social change. Though SE has the organizational recognition, it still lacks the apt definition and structure clearly; the concept is still in the nascent stage as indicated in the above discussion. Cooperatives are considered to be the oldest forms of social enterprise (Spear, Cornforth and Aiken, 2009). The cooperative societies aim at benefiting the members who are from the disadvantaged communities, rather than the shareholders. Fact that SE plays a potential role in the community and local development, the discussion is directed towards the social enterprise produce and sustainable growth (Somerville, McElwee; Jun 2011).

Further, in terms of social enterprise business models the development of trust varies significantly in different forms of structures. Cooperatives usually ensure democratic control for their governance, while the other forms like charities or trusts will be involved in grants or fund- raisings at the national and regional level. SEs operating within India and attempting to solve the local social issues unique to the Indian social structure usually choose the donor funding, development aid and charitable contributions from the industry abroad for certain basic changes in premises. The condition has changed over time and thus, SE's need to review their business models with the changing environment.

Moreover, a social enterprise business model practices the standard procedure of reinvesting profits in the business; however, they may not eventually meet the SE objectives of delivering social value. A number of social enterprises are concerned with associating the economically disadvantaged communities with the labor market that can provide them with growth opportunities. This indicates the typology of Social Enterprises starting with the social issue and once they start making a surplus but it may not result into social value generation and are captured by the stakeholders. The core idea or the central objective of generating social value

is rooted in the core concept of their business model that guides their decisions; they are created and they exist to create social value.

We need to remember that business models represent value proposition, policy choices, networks and relationships, and strategic resources, among others. In the SE business models, all these are displayed in terms of good governance and sound business conduct for they represent a mission by the SEs to provide radical and innovative cost-effective solutions to chronic social problems. However, the underlying emphasis in such business models is that the SEs have to earn a minimum benchmark financial return so that they can generate a social return.

While examining the typology of social enterprises in the above section, it is clear that social enterprise business model represents various forms of legal structures like charity, trust, credit unions, cooperative societies, public or private organizations etc. The sole objective is local community development through productive work and creation of favorable growth opportunities. Additionally, the available literature on social entrepreneurship also emphasizes on the contribution of people, groups, communities, organizations, or the policymaker embedded in the creation of social framework of social enterprises. Therefore, to understand this phenomenon of social business, a theoretical and qualitative study is positioned through this research work. A research study undertaken will help in proposing the suggestive social business model that could be effective in social welfare and sustainable development of the community, with a special focus on the Indian social structure.

### **1.3 Research Objective**

Based on the comprehensive and coherent literature survey on Social Enterprises and its taxonomy in the above section, it is observed that social enterprises lack a formalized organizational structure and legal framework. Given that Social businesses offer favorable opportunities, one begins to ponder over the challenges faced by them in the absence of a legal framework and about best possible organisational structure for running such enterprises in India. Such queries need attention in view of the gravity of the problems social entrepreneurs set out to prove.

The present research study attempts to address the following research questions related to the role of social businesses in sustainable development:

- a. Are the existing Indian Social Enterprise business models appropriate to address the governance challenges?
- b. What framework can be suggested for the social businesses that ensure the sustainable growth of local communities?

Given the paucity of research on the legal framework of social businesses and their governance challenges, the existing research has been based on the assumption that the Social Enterprise business models in India are in the nascent stage and highly unorganized. The research study is based on the premise that social enterprises can strongly support in the social welfare and sustainable growth of disadvantaged communities in India.

## **2.0 Overview of Handloom Weaving Community of India**

Weaving is regarded as one of the most useful and artistic crafts. It has been said, “One who works with hands is a laborer while the one who works with hand and brain is a craftsman” (Das, 1986). History of weavers in India traces way back to 2750 and 3250 BCE at Mohenjo-Daro (now a part of Pakistan). It is highly likely that the existence of handloom weavers predates the archeological recovery. Indian historical literature reflects the traces of hand-made products like carpets and embroidered fabrics or handlooms. Clearly, the looms in India are almost 5000 years old.

Gradually, the handloom industry received its presence in Industrial processes and production during the British Colonial rule in India (Niti Ayag Report, Chapter VII). In post-independence India, the Industrial Revolution changed the Indian handloom market. Over the decades, Indian handloom market has evolved into an art based industry. The sector predominantly nurtures and preserves the ancient weaving skills that are unique to each state and region of India. However, even after all the development in technology that India has seen, the saree weavers still work on local technology and use local resources though still producing sarees with innovative ideas of designing.

The upgraded technology, good quality fabrics, effective market reach of the mills gave tough competition to hand weaving. Nonetheless, given the long history of handloom industry in India, the weavers managed to survive through innovative designs and patterns, and new raw material resources, thus ensuring improvised sales. The continued demand for handloom sarees and other fabrics from women in India helped the handloom community’s survival. However, this was not sufficient for the growth of weavers. The existence of large number of master weavers in this tough competition was because of better-managed technology and resources (Mukund and Sundari, 2001). However, the legal status of either of them was less known.

Even small power looms were giving competition to the handloom weavers (Social Commission report, 1949-50). The crux of the problem was weaver’s poor, ignorant, and illiterate status. However, it would be unfair to blame only the weaver when even the government measures are incomplete and execution is insufficient. The active antagonism of cooperative societies was also the major reason for lethargic growth of handloom industry during the pre-independence era (Venkatraman, 1942). To sum up, the social well-being of weavers in the pre-independence era was satisfactory until the competition from power looms and cotton mills increased. The earnings of weavers were sufficient to meet the bare minimum necessities though with no expectations of spending on luxuries of life (Venkatraman, 1942). The power looms offered better organizational structure as compared to hand-operated looms. The academic literature is also silent on the handloom weaving community’s legal framework.

## **2.1 Research Methodology and approach**

The methodology followed in this stud is the interpretative case study method to investigate the role of social enterprises in local development. A deductive reasoning approach was followed to interpret the social enterprise topology. The aim of the case study approach is to capture the underpinning challenges faced by social enterprises.

The population identified for the research study is the handloom weaving community. Secondary literature was reviewed to understand the handloom weaver’s community growth and its legal framework. The handloom weavers ‘continued existence since centuries and before, prompted these researchers to consider them for their study.

Data collection was carried out in two phases. The first phase involved desk research that helped in studying the handloom weaving community as a social enterprise. The second phase involved a series of interviews with the individual weavers, master weavers and cooperative societies for identifying common problems and challenges faced. The study involved a qualitative approach, with open-ended questions. In the second phase, a focus group technique was adopted for recording and interviewing the master weavers and their staff's views, apart from in depth interviews of individual weavers.

For this convenience sampling, the sample was taken away Paithan and Yeole talukas of district Aurangabad in Maharashtra. The sample size involved 60 staff members in groups of 10; with total 6 focus groups, all comprising of women artisans. 1 cooperative society manager and 10 individual weavers were interviewed one to one. However, given the relatively small sample size, we had better opportunity to probe the interesting issues in detail.

### **2.1.1 A Case Study**

Maharashtra state's topography ensures richness of the natural, mineral and forest resources, along with immense historic and mythological significance.

In continuation of the cultural heritage and ancient Indian wisdom, Maharashtra state is known globally for its iconic art and craft especially handloom weaving communities - the Paithani art. The Indian scriptures indicate the existence of Paithani art almost 2000 years ago. The silk cloth was weaved for the gods and goddesses and then for the king. The term Paithan means Pratishtan, i.e. the capital place. The Paithani Art was born in Paithan, the capital of Satvahana Dynasty in 200 BC and grew under their patronage. The art of Paithani used the ancient technique of tapestry where multiple threads of different colours are weaved along with gold and silver threads. Paithani Art over the year has made a distinguished place for itself, especially for auspicious ceremonies.

The Paithani Art today is a part of livelihood for the local people of Paithan taluka in the Aurangabad district. The total population of Paithan taluka as per 2021 Aadhar estimate is 306437 out of which 158461 are male and 147966 are female, in 63682 households. The population of Paithan is dependent on multi-skilling employment and then on agriculture. At Paithan, there are approximately 250 individual weavers, of which less than 10 weavers work independently which means right from procurement of raw material, design, marketing and orders, all managed by individual weavers. The other 200 weavers are individual weaver but work for a master weaver or a cooperative society.

At Paithan, 3 forms of organizations were observed – sole proprietorship, public enterprise and cooperative society. Individual weavers work as the sole proprietors of their loom. An individual weaver at Paithan usually owns 1-2 looms and almost all the adults of the family knows the Paithani weaving art. He invests his family savings, ensuring that his business sustains. For an individual weaver, his social networking works well in procuring the orders for his weaved saree. His already established customer contacts and word of mouth publicity give him better returns. More involvement of family members will help him in completing orders faster, provided his design get sufficient demand in the market. However, the individual weavers as entrepreneurs struggle to establish themselves in the competitive ecosystem. Since the power looms are replacing the handloom, the threat of losing this ancient art is high.

A public enterprise managed and owned by the Maharashtra State to support the local individual weavers with the employment runs on government funding. At Paithan, only 1



government-owned enterprise was present. The emporium has 60 looms and 60 workers, especially women. The enterprise provides adequate support in terms of training, child care, insurance etc. to the women employees. However, despite this being government-funded, the profit per saree is rather less.

Another form of legal structure is Cooperative Society. Cooperative Societies are the units formed by the members, of the members and for the members of the local community. Cooperatives mainly focus on sustainable businesses, with an emphasis on self-help. The cooperative societies are registered and usually supervised by the government. Cooperative societies support the individual weavers in procurement of raw material and in other funds raising initiatives. At Paithan, 5-6 cooperatives set up by the government during the last decade. Local community members of the Paithan taluka were elected as members. However, now all the existing cooperatives have been dissolved due to lack of members' initiatives to work, lack of support and lack of trained cooperative managers who can administer routine operations.

### **2.1.2 Findings and Interpretation**

Paithan's infrastructure lacks basic amenities that are necessary for a sustainable life. Health and education facilities are average or below average. The taluka lacks employment opportunities for the youngsters, with a high unemployment ratio. Women of the taluka were observed to be actively engaged in the loom-weaving activities, and further training would strengthen the skill. However, the male tended to display a laid-back attitude and were more interested in daily wages at the small shops of household industries. The youngsters migrated to the nearby cities in search of employment. The Paithani art travelled to various nearby talukas and cities, thereby enhancing competition and causing loss of exclusivity.

In spite of their historic existence, Paithan city and its loom weavers are deprived of a respectful quality of life. In the absence of strong governance at Paithan, the individual weavers are struggling hard to retain this ancient heritage of the nation. During the study, it was observed that the Yeole taluka close to Paithan is developing fast due to community participation in governance. Weavers from Paithan are migrating to Yeole taluka for a better life. Paithan taluka needs attention in terms of offering sustainable development.

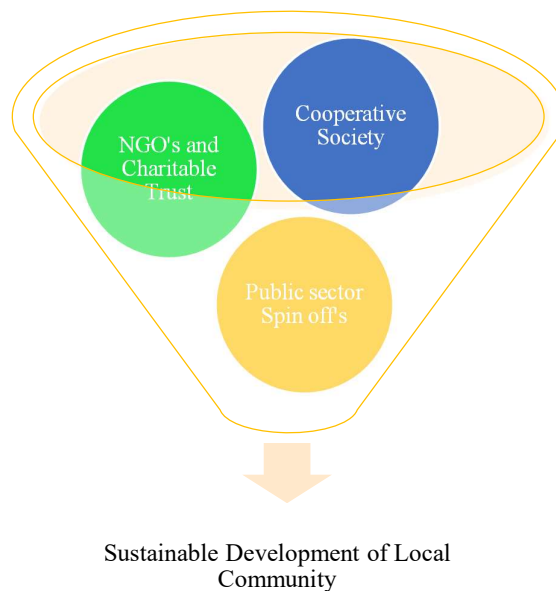
It is interpreted that the people of Paithan are demotivated by the governance challenges. The individual weaver's attitude of entrepreneurialism and risk-taking has been deteriorating over the years. The need for new typology is necessary for retaining local skill, local resources and local technology.

Further, it has been interpreted that all the above exiting forms of social enterprises lack appropriate legal structure that can define the roles and responsibility of board members clearly. Expert advice to the individual weavers on the various operational aspects seems to be missing, which leads to distrust and anger on the system. Regular training and grooming of weavers is necessary by the experts like fashion designers, marketing agencies, raw material suppliers which can support in decision making. Promoting the culture of active membership of the elected members of the cooperative societies through rewards, incentives, better infrastructure, healthy living conditions etc.

### **2.1.3 Suggestions**

The modern form of these enterprises are hybrid organizations. However, SE's are legally structured like cooperatives, mutual benefit societies and associations. The form of SE's differs from private for profit and public enterprises. Spear et.al (2009) identified four types of enterprises: Mutuels, trading charities, public sector spin off's and new start social enterprises. However, these do not include the community-based enterprises (CBE's) and development trusts', these are the enterprises that respond to the needs and problems of a particular community or local area. The community initiatives have their roots in the ideas of communitarianism (Etzioni 1993, Tam 1998). There has been a significant emphasis on community traditions over the last four decades, in the UK, European countries, Canada and elsewhere.

Based on the above, with the objective of sustainable local growth, following social enterprise business models are suggested at Paithan Taluka for handloom weavers:



A Cooperative society is traditionally based on the principle of mutualism. The first social assistance security cooperative, in which the mutualism was incorporated to benefit the external society. Social enterprises over the years moved from mutualism to solidarity to sustainable development. The charity or NGO will be helpful to the individual weavers in generating income and reaching out to market. Another type of legal structure that can be proposed for social enterprises at Paithan is public sector spin off which means taking over of non-performing public enterprises.

### 3.0 Conclusion

This study points out different ordeals of the grassroot level communities and the different legal structures of social enterprises to overcome them. This study clearly highlights that the local problems can be solved only through local member participation as the leaders or change agents. Moreover, the research helped understand the possible ways through which Social

Enterprises can positively contribute to strengthen social cohesion through neighborhood connection.

Further, it appears from the study that few people are actively participating in the community development activities; however, the willingness of locals is important for bringing in a change. To sum up, for sustainable community development it is imperative to determine the needs and unfulfilled demands of the community. The enterprises must analyze the economic conditions of the community and should decide what best can be done to improve the condition (Pittman et.al, 2009). To avoid policy enforcement by the government just to satisfy political agendas instead the development of impoverished communities should be justifiable by enabling the sustainable ecosystem through government commitment and accountability of community leaders. Policies and programs should specifically target development focusing on entrepreneurial talent for sustainable community livelihood.

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# SKILL DEVELOPMENT AND SKILL GAP ANALYSIS IN INDIA: AN EXAMINATION

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## *Abstract*

The purpose of this study is to assess the skill gaps critically, the evaluation plan and government skill development initiatives in India as the nation embarks on building skilled manpower to meet the demands of the industry. As skill development is an essential ingredient of India's future economic growth, it will be the defining element of the country's growth story. This paper finds that both the Indian Government and its partner agencies have undertaken numerous initiatives for the effective execution of the skill development system in the nation; however, there are significant challenges which need quick resolution. The study also sheds light on factors affecting the future of work from the lens of sustainable growth and the strategies to be adopted for the same. Promising areas of future research are highlighted towards the end of the study.

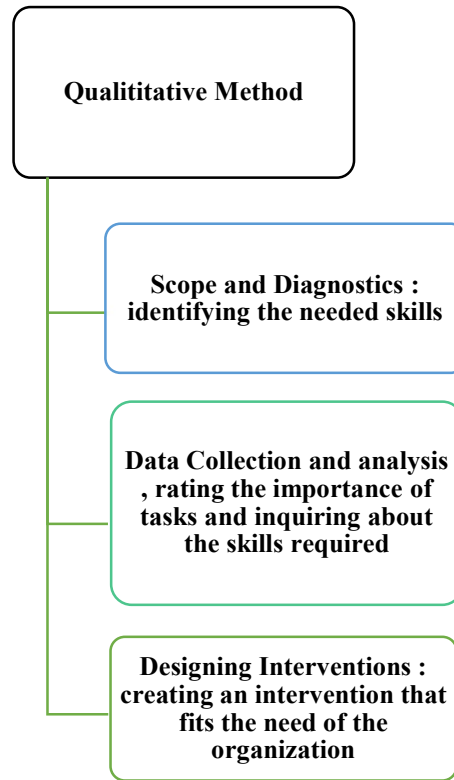
**Keywords:** *Skill gap, skill development, India.*

## 1.0 Introduction

Globalisation and digital presence necessitated a skilled workforce in emerging and advanced countries worldwide. A rapidly emerging economy, India, is shifting towards a knowledge-based economy that needs a new generation of qualified and skilled individuals (Kaur & Kaur, 2020). However, when the growth rate in the Indian economy increased from 3.5% per annum to 5.4% between 1950 to 1980, some signs of skill shortage began to show up. This growth rate in GDP jumped to 7.3% during the tenth five-year plan period (2002-2007). This made the Indian government realise the shortage of skills in India. If this shortage of skilled manpower is not met, then it may result in machines replacing labour on a large scale and leaving a large number of youthful labour unemployed (Mehrotra et al., 2013). Therefore, the government felt the need to introduce a skill development policy in the eleventh five-year plan. As a result, a chapter on skill challenges facing the nation was introduced in the plan, and the first national skill development policy was framed. Additionally, NSDC (National Skill Development Corporation) was set up on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2008 to promote various skill development initiatives and incubate SSCs (Sector Skill Councils) to bridge the skill gaps by fostering industry connections and developing industry-relevant courses and curricula. Conducting skill gap analysis helps to measure gaps and identify the skills needed to meet the business goals.

Skill gap analysis is used to identify the skills that individuals need but may not have to perform their job or skilled work effectively. Andrea Boatman from the Academy of Innovative HR (AIHR) has developed and explained the importance and usefulness of running a skill gap analysis. Skill Gap Analysis (SGA) provides insights to the workforce about the ability to determine the employees/students with the knowledge of particular aspects of a business with crucial skill gaps, which is crucial for designing the training resources that require the most attention. SGA promotes individual learning and has a positive impact on employees' or students' productivity and also helps in strategic workforce planning and improves recruitment efforts by being able to identify the necessary skills that match the requirements of specific roles. It constructs a competitive advantage to stay ahead of other competitors while being aware of the strengths and weaknesses, planning, and the ability to optimise performance. (Boatman, AIHR Academy). The stages involved in the qualitative method of skill gap analysis have been outlined below.

Figure 1: Qualitative Method of Skill Gap Analysis



*Source: aihr.com*

Skill gap analysis tool is used effectively to evaluate skill development programs across India. This would improve the employability and skill training of participants of these programs once interventions are made in programs to decrease skill gaps and improve the program's success. The primary stages of skill gap analysis can be overlaid on skill development programs by focusing on the three stages adapted from the method provided by AIHR Academy, which is explained in brief below.

- Scope and Diagnostics focuses on identifying needed skills – through the infrastructure requirements, funding, skills needed among instructors and trainers of programs, and facilitation to recognise the mission, business goals, and critical needs.
- Data collection and analysis focuses on developing meaningful job profiles by analysing current activities, rating the importance of these tasks, and examining other needed skills for everyone involved in the skilling programs.
- Designing Interventions – After finding the gaps among the skill development programs from scope diagnostics, data collection and analysis, programs can work towards solutions or interventions for filling in skill gaps in the program. First, a strategy can be created to fill these gaps as part of developing and implementing interventions.



Such interventions in the skill development program can include:

- Training & development of existing members/employees/staff through reskilling and upskilling in newly required or missing skills from learning and development programs
- Job redesign can involve reskilling based on the needs of new program requirements
- Recruitment of people with critical skills saves time and effort in training someone and allows the program to be operational and productive faster to fill the skill gap (AIHR Academy).

While the above skill gap analysis stages and solutions mainly focus on analysing the program itself by focusing on the program's management and staff, it will also be beneficial to include students and trainees separately to understand the gaps and interventions needed in the program curriculum and functioning.

Skill gap analysis for the skill development program also assists in identifying gaps in the skill development program. A strategy can be developed to fill the gaps and improve the entire program, making it more successful in accomplishing its goals and mission.

Before considering conducting a new skill gap analysis, it is imperative to recognise the different methods and gaps that have already been identified and the interventions being made. After recognising and including the already identified needs and interventions being made in the skill gap analysis, skill development programs can be designed.

According to the Ministry of Statistics & Programme, Implementation (2017) and as per the 2011 Census, the workforce participation for women is barely 26%, about half the rate for men, which is 53%. Rural women should be addressed for skill development and training programmes to reduce the workforce participation disparity (Arizpe & Botey, 2019; Bescher-Donnelly & Smith, 2019). Statistics from the Ministry show that these programs have been lagging as a high percentage of rural women are still unemployed. Further, a gap in the evaluation methods has made it more challenging to address the implementation of these programs and schemes.

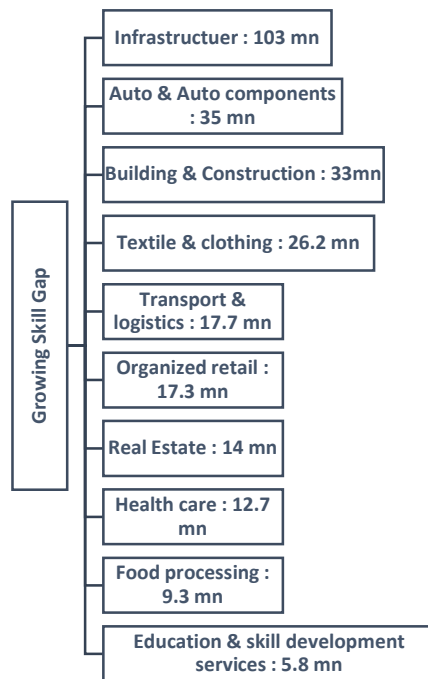
In light of the above discussion, various facets of skill gap and skill development are analysed below.

### **1.1 Gaps in Skill Development in India**

The efficacy of skill development for measuring “skills” and “talents” is crucial when it holds the future of India at stake, and a framework is needed to measure the “skilled” workforce. Data suggests that only 2.3% of the workforce in India has had formal skill training, with little to no job skills that make them largely unemployable training as compared to 68% in the UK, 75% in Germany, 52% in the USA, 80% in Japan and 96% in South Korea (Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, 2015). Although there have been initiatives such as Make in India, Digital India, and programs focusing on start-ups and funding programs laid on Skilled India, the skill landscape for developing skills is still lacking in 2015 (India Skills Report 2015). Barely 1/3 of the students applying for roles in the labour market have the necessary skills to match the

employer’s role (India Skills Report, 2016). Although India has the largest young population in the world, the Indian workforce has little to no job skills, making them largely unemployed. However, this means there is scope for the nation to provide the necessary skills for its workforce. New job opportunities are created in core engineering, retail, hospitality, e-commerce and banking, but there are not enough people trained to fill these positions (India Skills Report 2016). In light of the above discussion, Figure 3 explains the workforce shortage in various sectors by 2022. Amongst all the sectors, the infrastructure sector is facing a severe shortage of workforce and demands more skilled labour. Along the same lines, Figure 4 discusses the change in the employability pattern from 2016 to 2022. Figure 4 suggests that there is not much improvement in employability from 2016 to 2022. It shows that more vocational training programs are needed to make the Indian population employable.

Figure: 3 Workforce Shortage in Different Industries By 2022



Source: Sony & Aithal (2020)

## How Employability has Changed Over the Years?

2016 - 2022

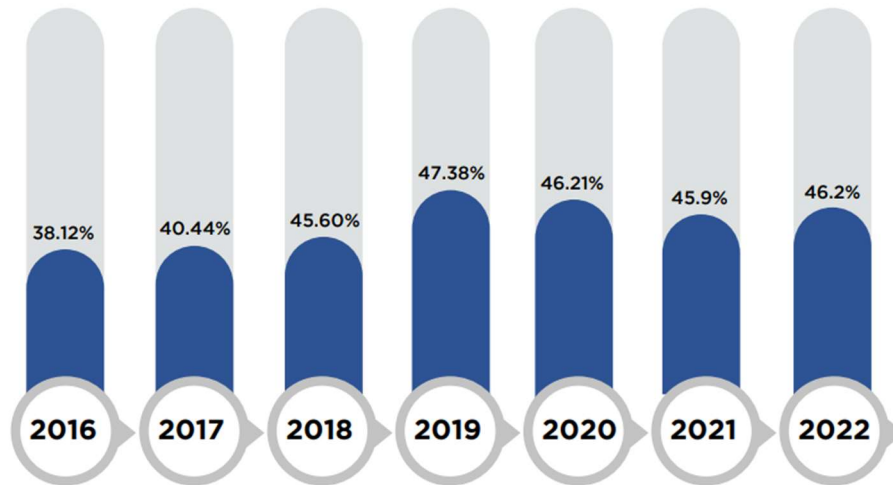


Figure 4: Change in employability over the years  
Source ISR Report 2022

### 1.2 Need for skill development programs

The skill gap challenges firms to grow and maintain competitiveness as the workforce does not have the skills to drive businesses forward. It is a solid barrier to economic growth in the country. The International Labour Organization (ILO) believes India will start at a 29 million skill deficit by 2030. Accenture opines that a loss of \$1.97 trillion will be occurred in GDP due to the skill gap over the ten years. As discussed, this prompted the need to set up NSDC in 2009 and the “Skill India” campaign launch in 2015 to empower youth with skill sets, making them more employable. Additionally, there has been a growing interest in skill development programs in India. It will assist in developing a pool of workforce for sustainable economic growth. Skill development is vital for industry associations and chambers of commerce and industry as their member organisations face skill shortages (Das, 2015). MSMEs will be impacted more as large firms can easily lure away skilled manpower.

### 1.3 Developing an effective evaluation plan for skill development and achievement of evaluation plan

The main goal of an evaluation is to find out what is effective and not in the program and then make improvements in the future to make it more effective. Before evaluating a program, some primary grounds for the policy must be set for conducting the evaluation and its analysis. This could be considered as an evaluation policy task force to influence specific evaluation policies (not

general policies) that are critically important. This task force would focus on how the functioning of the evaluation would impact the actual policy by considering its definition, methods, budget, ethics, requirements, human resources and implementations while evaluating the program (American Evaluation Association)

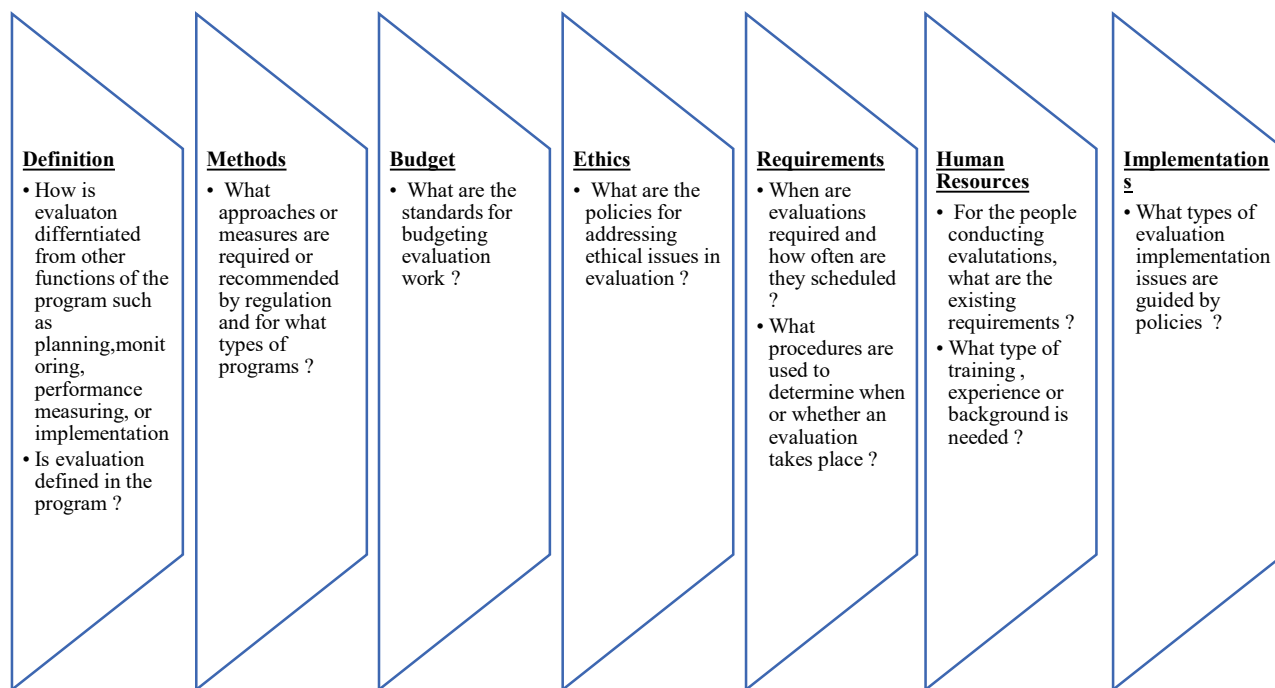


Figure 2: Evaluation Policy Considerations for Skill Development Programs

Source: American Evaluation Association

The above figure outlines how to set a policy for conducting evaluations for any program through a series of evaluation questions. By creating a policy for conducting evaluation, the framework can be beneficial in being organised and getting valuable results which can further be analysed to evaluate skill development programs, their achievements, and their gaps.

#### 1.4 How is Skill Development Currently Being Evaluated in India?

Skill development programs can be defined in a standardised framework. Any candidate seeking training should appear for online assignments and practice tests based on actual learning. The details of the online assessment are discussed below.

### 1.4.1 Online Assessment

Through online assessment, the goal is to bring the supply and demand side of the landscape together by evaluating the talent pool corporations use to judge their employees. The Wheebox Employability Skill Test was introduced in 2013, mapping the skill set nationwide for this goal. It is used to identify gaps in skills that are present, which include communication skills, logical ability, problem-solving skills, numerical aptitude and domain knowledge. The main objective of this evaluation has been to provide a reliable and authentic assessment of aspects of education, training and employment by providing a statistically valid multi-dimensional adaptive assessment to judge the employment suitability of a significant number of candidates. (India Skills Report 2016). Figure 5 details various aspects of online skills assessment designed by Wheebox.

<p>How are these assessments used? Online Assessment is a tool corporations adopt to gauge talent or skills in their prospective employees.</p> <p>Wheebox is a Global Online Assessment Company that offers a highly customised advanced platform which assists employers in pre-screening, cognitive and behavioural evaluations &amp; development needs to select suitable candidates and assess employability. The company works to empower businesses and academic institutions, sector skills councils, and government with deep talent insights to provide better hiring and development decisions.</p>	<p>Wheebox Employability Skills Test (WEST)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- India's most extensive employability skill test endorsed by industry and academia, which evaluates potential employer's numerical reasoning, logical reasoning, English Language Skills, Self Determination and learning agility, interpersonal skills and emotional intelligence, adaptability, and conflict resolution</li> <li>- conducted an online assessment to identify the skill gap that exists in the industry by deploying a scientific approach across 320 domains</li> <li>- task force studied and interacted with corporations across all industry sectors intending to bring reliable, authentic assessment to various aspects of education, training and employment</li> </ul>	<p>India Skills Report 2021, by WHEEBOX</p> <p>Participants :</p> <p>Number of candidates appearing for Wheebox National Employability Test: 65000</p> <p>- 150+ corporates, 15 Industries</p> <p>Results :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In the midst of the pandemic, the data collected in this study shows that youth employability is significantly lower than last year ( 46.2%); standing at 45.9% with highly employable resources in 2021 due to the skill gap</li> <li>- Candidates from Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, UP, and Karnataka with the most employable talent</li> <li>- 41.25% employable women, 38.91 % employable men; but 36% women &amp; 64% men actually in the workforce</li> </ul>
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Figure 5: Wheebox Online Skills Assessment  
Sources: India Skills Report 2016, India Skills Report 2021

## 2.0 Government interventions to develop skills ecosystem

The Indian government has launched several national skill development programs to improve the employability of Indian youth through vocational training.. Figure 6 explains the skill development ecosystem in India. Additionally, some of the flagship initiatives to promote skill development by the government are

a) Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY)

It is a flagship scheme of the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE) implemented through the National Skill Development Corporation. The goal of this skill certification is to empower a large number of Indian youth to up industry-relevant skill training that will help them in getting a better livelihood. The skill training is provided to prepare students for industry-specific skills, which includes short-term training, recognition of prior learning, special projects, Kaushal and rozgar mela, among others. 10 million youth have been covered under this scheme during the period 2016-20, and the government-sponsored the training and assessment with a fund allocation of Rs. 12000 crores.

b) National Council for Vocational Education and Training (NCVET)

It is an autonomous non-statutory and regulatory body under the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship for monitoring the institutions engaged in providing short-term and long-term educational training in vocational education and designing the basic standards required for operations of such institutions. It was operationalised on 04.11.2019 to promote vocational and technical education. The NCVET will enable the integration of fragmented regulatory systems and infuse quality assurance across the entire vocational training value chain, leading to better outcomes. The main functions of NCVET are recognition and regulation of awarded bodies, assessment agencies and skill information providers, approval of qualifications, monitoring and supervision of recognised entities and grievance redressal.

c) National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC)

A fundamental national entity named National Skill Development Corporation was formed in 2008 by the central government in partnership with industry bodies. It operates under Public Private Partnership (PPP) model. Through the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE), the government of India owns 49% of the share capital, while the private sector owns 51%. It aims to promote skill development by catalysing the creation of large, quality and for-profit vocational institutions. Its mandate is also to enable support system which focuses on quality assurance, information systems and train the trainer academies either directly or through partnerships. It encourages skill development by funding enterprises, companies and organisations that provide skill training. It also develops appropriate models to enhance, support and coordinate private sector initiatives. The NSDC was set up as a Public Private Partnership Company to create and fund vocational training institutions and support systems for skill development.

d) Aajeevika Skill Development Programme under the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) Aajeevika

NRLM is the skill and placement initiative by the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), Government of India, launched in June 2011. It is a partnership with public, private, non-government and community organisations. A network of institutions can run a project under Aajeevika Program with training and placement schemes in different districts in a state or a cluster of states. They are also expected to build strong relationships with industry associations and employers. The aim was to promote rural livelihoods by allowing young people from poor communities to upgrade their skills and join the skilled workforce in growing sectors of the economy. The program's focus is on skilling and placement in the formal sector for rural youth who are poor to promote rural livelihood and reduce rural poverty. This program evolved out of the need to diversify the incomes of the rural poor and to cater to the occupational aspirations of their youth.

**Key features of the program are.**

- Provides customised residential and non-residential training
- Minimum 624 hours of training with modules on trade-specific skills, IT and soft skills.
- Special programs for Jammu and Kashmir, Minorities and Most critical Left-wing Extremist Districts
- Implemented under the supervision of the central and state governments
- 75% assured placement above minimum wages
- Post-placement support
- Food and transport support during training

e) Skill Training for Rural Youth (STRY)

This program provides skill-based training to rural youth in agri-based vocational areas. The norms of the scheme are executed as per the standards mentioned by National Policy on Skill Development and Entrepreneurship 2015, in agriculture and allied areas to develop employment in rural areas. The objective of the scheme is to offer modular training opportunities to rural youths that apply to farmers and farm women, depending on their local needs. Additionally, the program aims to create a team of skilled human resources to perform farm and non-farm operations.

f) National Apprenticeship Training Scheme (NATS)

This scheme was launched in August 2016 by the Government of India to provide job opportunities to the maximum number of candidates and thus achieve overall economic growth. The program focuses on providing skill training and placement in the formal sector of the economy and includes vocational training in private firms. The key objective of this scheme is to promote skill development and to bridge the gaps in providing the skill of fresh graduates, diploma holders in engineering & technology and +2 vocational pass-outs that they do not acquire during their study in colleges so that they generate livelihood. Furthermore, the program aims to facilitate the employers to develop disciplined and regulated skilled manpower to face the future manpower terms that will

help to meet the challenges of technology extension in the industries at the competitive cutting edge in the global market. Additionally, creating self-employment and job opportunities for the youths by catalysing the innovation ecosystem that enhances the productive entrepreneurship germinates, sustains and leads to the betterment of wage and self-employment opportunities for the particular target group is the other objective of this program.



Figure 6: Skill development ecosystem in India  
Source: Chenoy et al. (2019)

### 3.0 Challenges in Skill Development Initiatives

India is facing many challenges posed due to poor infrastructure and policy framework in the conduct of its skill development initiatives. Some of these challenges are discussed below:

- a) Inadequate infrastructure  
NSDC has predicted an incremental requirement of 347 million skilled workforces in India by 2022, but the nation faces a significant skill development challenge over the next decade, as each year, 12 million individuals are supposed to join the labour force. Conversely, the nation has a total training capacity of around 4.3 million, consequently depriving each year around 64% of newcomers of the opportunity for skill-developing training. It is a significant challenge to devise such a considerable infrastructure to bridge this gap.



- b) **Insufficient scale and restricted capability**  
The current infrastructure facility available in educational institutions is inadequate, considering the massive demand for labour. There aren't many trained and highly skilled trainers available. It reflects a lack of infrastructure prevalent not only in urban areas but also in small towns and rural areas. The faculty should be skilled to take up higher obligations. The training infrastructure too needs to be made adequate keeping in mind the number of aspirants to be skilled. Another critical aspect of the skill development exercise is "Train the trainer" (Patil, 2009). The expertise of the faculty ensures that the candidate has picked up suitable abilities and has had an extraordinary learning experience. The trainer should have the ability to understand the need of students keeping in mind the current skill requirement in the industry. It is expected that there will be an optimal blend of both theoretical and practical learning experiences. Thus, training the trainer has become a significant challenge.
- c) **No focus on non-technical skills**  
The vocational training centres in India are focusing on developing technical skills only though the businesses feel the need to have behavioural skills also. According to the India Hiring Intent Survey, employers also focus on skills like domain expertise, communication, a culturally fit person, values honesty and integrity, adaptability, interpersonal skills and a learning attitude. Such training is not covered as an integral part of skill development programs. It poses a significant challenge as it results in a much unemployed skilled labour force.
- d) **Mismatch of skills**  
There are many mismatches between skills needed by the industry and the training imparted by the vocational and training institutes. The absence of industry-faculty interaction is a crucial issue that restricts the suitability of skill sets with the employer. This increases unemployability despite having a skilled workforce (Young E., 2016). It suggests that industry professionals should be included while designing the curriculum as outdated curriculum makes training programs completely redundant, leading to the supply of specific skills exceeding their demand. Regular upgradation of curriculum and accordingly adjusting training infrastructure is the need of the hour though it might be complex and expensive.
- e) **Less student Mobilization**  
The enrolment of students for vocational education and training is low as compared to the enrolment capacity of the institutes. The orthodox thinking of students is the critical reason for less skill development. The students are not ready to migrate, and they are reluctant to accept low salaries at entry-level and less challenging roles with low growth. Some students are less financially pronounced, and some are not aware of the skill development schemes run by the government. Students prefer regular degrees to vocational certificates, which they think to carry more value. This indicates that the Indian government must focus on branding such programs that may ensure high mobility towards such programs.

f) Scalability

The success of any model depends on assistance from the stakeholders. The progress of such schemes is reduced as there is minimal buy-in from the corporate sector. As this model requires high capital investments, people are not ready to accept them. The difficulty associated with poor infrastructure and the slow processing of bank loans demoralises budding entrepreneurs with their schemes. The challenges in rural areas include a lack of awareness about the schemes and credit facilities. On the other hand, metropolitan regions face high operational costs, which discourages entrepreneurs from coming forward.

#### 4.0 Unravelling the future (*India skills report 2022*)

The emergence of new skill sets and employment opportunities and pandemics such as COVID-19 have affected business models. Online or hybrid work models align with the vision of digital India. Various factors will impact the future of work that would help to strategise sustainable growth.

a) Embracing developing technologies

Digitization has paved the way for new skill sets and prospects to be leveraged. It is estimated that intelligent machines will replace 20 million jobs by 2030; however, new jobs will be created in the future. The rise of data sciences and analytics requires qualified experts with relevant skills and qualifications with proficiency in the latest programming applications. Experts from various industry verticals are in demand across businesses and advanced and developing nations worldwide. Artificial Intelligence (AI) has changed people's outlook towards technology and the advanced working environment. Automated innovative techniques that accelerate business processes are highly sought after the firms. Owing to rising interest in the IT industry, the future of work will be aligned towards machines wherein employees' free time will be utilised for strategic roles.

b) Hybrid workstation

Organisations worldwide realised the benefit of remote work during the COVID-19 pandemic. Many businesses are keen on implementing hybrid work culture in the near future. However, the scarcity of technology may hinder making a hybrid workplace a global reality. Remote work increases flexibility and convenience and reduces costs for businesses and employees. Hybrid work culture is tech-driven and depends on innovative solutions that will lessen tedious work in the organisations. To strategise sustainable growth, the firms will need qualified labor force to create a perfect balance towards hybrid work culture.

c) Skilling for the future

Harnessing the digital revolution can help India to reduce the skill gap and actualizing our vision of high development and high efficiency. The Indian government has undertaken initiatives such as Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) to

provide skill training to individuals. The government should bring the infrastructure and generate more employment opportunities to retain able youth talent. This will help India to improve the employability index of its population.

d) Worldwide network and access to resources

It is estimated that 45% of the Indian population has access to the internet, and Indians, on average, spend 2.5 hours per day using social media platforms. The Indian youth can be accessed via online advertisements and outreach activities by e-learning organisations, training institutes and various universities to advance their abilities and skills. Various certification programs are offered to students to empower a job-ready labour force. Various e-learning platforms such as UpGrad, Coursera, and Unacademy have taken the initiative to provide in-demand skills to students and professionals in India. COVID-19 has given rise to various online apps, e-commerce websites and software products. These trends will strongly influence the employability landscape in India through the advent of a modern workplace equipped with digital tools. This demands skills from employees who are not simply analytical thinkers who work towards the goal of achieving the growth motive of the firm.

e) Local initiatives for IT development

The industries in India are growing by using recent technologies. Cloud computing has become the essence of all types of organisations. To align with global developments, the government of India has taken initiatives such as National e-Governance Plan and GI Cloud Initiative. Various national data centres and state-wide area network infrastructure are set up in India under this initiative. This will accelerate innovation in IT labs and engineering facilities. This will decrease dependence on foreign firms for technology infrastructure and administrative services. Various software developed by the Indian IT industry is helping in the continuous flow of products hitting the market. Such in-house development of IT products reduces costs and improves the innovative spirit of the nation's forward-thinking citizens. Various e-learning and e-commerce are rapidly making their way into Indian markets, which will help the Indian government to achieve its mission of digital India.

f) Industry 4.0

The expression "Industry 4.0" was coined in Germany in relation to the digital transformation in the manufacturing industry (Sony & Aithal, 2020). Indian industrial IoT market, which specifically caters to the manufacturing sector, currently accounts for 60% of the Indian IoT market. The big data analytic market in India is expected to grow at a CAGR of 26%, reaching about \$1.6 billion by 2025 (Nishimura, 2018). Capital-intensive industry such as the automotive industry has pioneered the adoption of Industry 4.0. Evolving technology, a rising number of parts, intense competition, and ever-increasing labor costs have forced these firms to adopt Industry 4.0. Sectors such as textiles and packaging are also adopting Industry 4.0 technologies (Chiplunkar, 2017). "Make in India" and Industry 4.0 will transform the manufacturing landscape using digital technologies such as IoT and Robotics. This will result in the creation of new skilled jobs, which will require altogether different types of skill sets, training and

knowledge. Therefore, the low-skilled workers and freshers must be skilled, reskilled and upskilled to prepare them for new digital requirements.

## **5.0 Conclusion**

This study examines the status of the skill gap in India and also discusses the initiatives of the Indian government to create opportunities for Indian youth to develop their skill sets which improves their employability. Need and challenges in skill development initiatives are also considered in the study. The findings suggest that many of the training programs of the government fail to reach out to the targeted beneficiaries due to a lack of awareness and monitoring mechanisms (Das, 2015). The study investigates the evaluation plans for skill development. The paper ends with a discussion of factors that will affect the future of work in India. Future research can focus on sector-specific skill development programs to match the demand and supply of skills in various industries. Future research can also consider the skill gaps and skill development initiatives in informal sectors, especially the participation of women (Agrawal, 2014).

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# MALAYSIA'S INDIGENOUS SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS JOURNEY TO THE E-COMMERCE PLATFORM

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## Abstract

The growing popularity of e-commerce platforms has spurred rural and indigenous entrepreneurs to the online marketplace. With the launch of Alibaba's Taobao Village, it gives rise to the rural e-tailers to sell their products online with the hope of a better economic well-being. This chapter focuses on Malaysia's indigenous social entrepreneurs' (MISE) journey. It presents MISE readiness to embrace the e-commerce platform, despite the odds and challenges. The journey started with MISE attending workshops which provided them with in-depth knowledge on e-commerce as well as hands-on experience with ecommerce platforms. This exposure opened doors for them to venture into online business. They confidently promoted their forest harvest and handmade products on e-commerce platforms namely Shopee and Lazada. The MISE also used social media platforms to publicize their business. Despite all the hard work, sadly, their efforts did not reap good returns. MISE- faced numerous hurdles: lack of demand, products are not attractive and limited range, inability to manage online account, etc. To ensure that the MISE are not left behind or discouraged, more workshops will be organized to equip them with sufficient skills and abilities, in order to be competitive in the online business.

**Keywords:** *Social Entrepreneurs, Indigenous, E-Commerce, Agricultural, Social Media*

## 1.0 Introduction:

INTI is honored to have acquainted with Alibaba for the very first time in 2017. A team of lecturers from INTI Nilai, Subang, and Penang was invited to attend a 5-day workshop at the Nilai campus. During the training, three Chinese entrepreneurs and four Alibaba personnel were here to share commercial insights based on their real-life contemporary experiences of being e-entrepreneurs, the experiences of Alibaba, and the ecosystem partners as well as other digital businesses across the globe.

In the following year, 5 INTI lecturers were invited to HangZhou, China, for another 5-day workshops at the Alibaba Headquarter – Xixi campus, a home of 22,000 of its 100,000 global employees. It is more than just an office, it is an incubator for all advanced technological inventions, including robots, Artificial intelligence, and testing of self-driving cars to automated hotels. It was an eye-opening visit to the Alibaba headquarter at that time (2018), seeing some new technologies such as:

- Automated vehicles - moving around the campus making grocery deliveries;
- Retail Technology – humanless store where payment is made through facial recognition; and
- Robotic Hotel – humanless hotel with automatic guest check-ins, voice-control and facial recognition technology.

On the third day, Alibaba arranged a tour bringing a total of 30 lecturers (from Malaysia, Thailand, Russia) visiting the *Taobao Village*. It is a rural e-commerce hub that uses Alibaba's logistics, services, and training to help and encourage farmers to sell their agricultural crops and regional delicacies online to earn for better livings. It is also part of Alibaba's social campaign to contribute to the country's ongoing poverty relief efforts.

### *The Taobao Village:*

With the launching of *Taobao Village*, there is a rise of rural e-tailers and it has enhanced the economic ecology of the villages. In general, the rural e-tailers use local resources and Alibaba's e-commerce platform to sell local agricultural products, traditional handicrafts, or manufactured goods obtained from nearby wholesale markets (Leong, Pan, Sue, and Cui 2016). As a result of the e-tailers' development of e-commerce business clusters, a primitive e-commerce eco-system was created, supported by related sectors including express delivery services. It also brings up new business opportunities, such as graphic design, photography, goods storage, IT technicians, etc.



According to Wang (2019), through the 10 years' effort, about half of China's rural population now benefits from the Taobao Village business model. Up to August 2019, there are a total of 4,310 Taobao Villages in 25 provinces, generated approximately RMB700 billion of sales in the 12 months ending June 2019. The total number of active online Taobao shops has increased by almost 10 times, from 70,000 in 2014 to 660,000 in 2018.

During the visit, lecturers managed to meet a few entrepreneurs from the Taobao Village, and had very constructive discussion sessions with them. Their success is built on the fact that Chinese consumers demand more transparency in food sourcing and enjoy the novelty of discovering locally grown or made products (Hua, 2019). Through livestreaming and videos, the rural villagers are able to connect to consumers and show the organic ways of planting and handling the agricultural crops. Besides, according to the entrepreneurs, they were rather skeptical towards the 'myth' of "e-commerce businesses" initially, as they knew nothing about it. With supports from the government and Alibaba, they chose to believe in it. Besides, through the annual Taobao Village Summit, they were convinced and encouraged by the success of other rural entrepreneurs and scholars in China. Of course, it is never easy, as it requires considerable efforts to learn how to manage an ecommerce account; and make adjustments to understand consumer needs in order to leverage for product improvement, e.g. size of fruits, sweetness, packaging, control of fruit ripening during delivery period, and so on.

### ***e-Social Entrepreneurship***

In the same year, after the visit, INTI started its very first endeavor in e-social entrepreneurs, to help the indigenous people in Malaysia. With the help from the faculty, the team managed to contact the indigenous people from Kampung Tekir, Labu, Negeri Sembilan.

### ***The Temuan Tribe***

The indigenous people belong to the Temuan Tribe. They are the third largest tribe out of the nineteen Orang Asli people groups in the Peninsular Malaysia. The Temuan villages, with populations ranging from 50 to 500, are located in lowland valleys in Malacca, Negeri Sembilan, Pahang, Selangor, and Johor (JoshuaProject, 2023). They depend very much on forest products for living. For subsistence, they farmed a few crops, hunted in forests, and fished in rivers (Hazim, 2023). Through conversations, the team found that they tap rubber, sell fruits and handcrafts, and perform wage labor with local contractors to earn money for things like food, cigarettes, clothing and tools. Also, in general, the girls get married at 12 years old, and most of them complete only standard 6, and very few go to secondary schools.

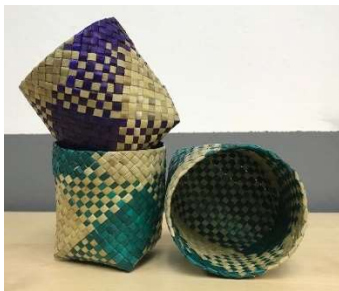


The objectives of the team are to increase villager income through ecommerce, and foster a positive impact on the community for better living. The initial plan of the team was split into two phases.

### 1.1 First Phase:

- Introducing online business to villagers;
- Identifying products that are potential with market demands; and
- Setting up a Shopee account to sell the related products.

The team conducted a simple workshop, introducing ecommerce and explaining how it could benefit the villagers in general, with China's Taobao Village as case studies, for their awareness and references. In terms of product selection, the team faced difficulty in choosing products that are with great value and market demand, because they have limited choices of forest products. Besides, to financially support the indigenous people, most tourists are willing to pay more for the forest products, causing their reluctance to reduce the costs of the forest products for the team to sell online.



### ***Product Selection:***

Through a few discussions, the team decided to start up the online business with products made by screwpine leaves. The team identified the possible functions of the screwpine-leaf containers, e.g. as a pencil holder, teaspoon holder and so on.

Having considered that consumers may not buy the forest products, the team came up with the idea of making it a “gift of love” for one to express their love, appreciation and concern towards friends, colleagues, and family members. This idea was developed based on the facts that most people spend long hours hunched over computers and handphones and thus lose connection with friends, and experience work stress (Ram, 2019).

With the concept of “*handmade with nature*” and “*homemade with love*”, the team chose to pair the screwpine-leaf container with a local popular chocolate snack – *ChocoJar*, made by chocolate, bubble rice and crunchy Oreo crumble.

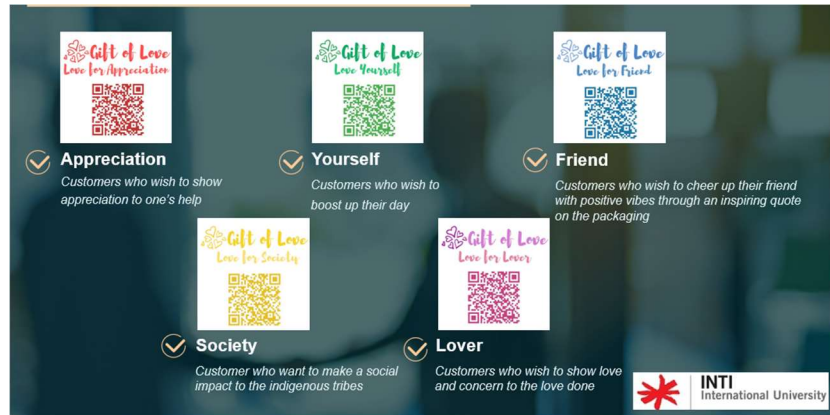


### ***Product Categories:***

Based on the concept of a “Gift of Love”, the team classified the product in the following categories:

- **Love of Appreciation**
  - A gift of showing gratitude to friends; and
  - A card is attached with quotes of appreciation.
- **Love Yourself**
  - A gift to oneself to boost up the day; and
  - A card is attached with quotes of motivation and inspiration.
- **Love for Friends**
  - A gift to cheer up friends with positive vibes; and
  - A card is attached with inspiring quotes
- **Love for Society**

- A gift that makes a social impact to the indigenous tribes, with donations to the community.
- **Love for Lovers**
  - A gift to the loved one; and
  - A card is attached with lovely quotes.

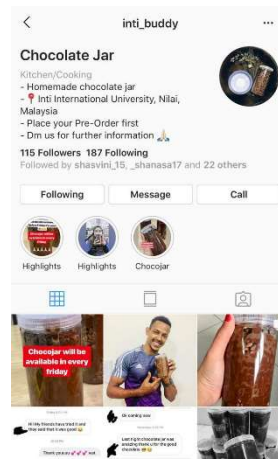
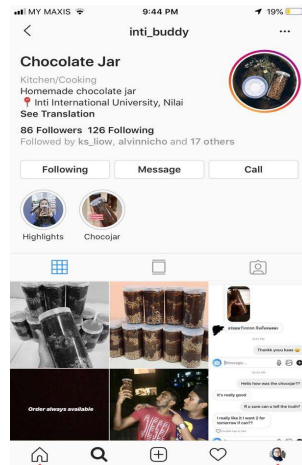


## 1.2 Second Phase:

- Accelerating the online business of forest products through promoting via Facebook and Instagram;
- Teaching villagers to handle orders from Shopee and Lazada; and
- Eventually Hand-over the Shopee account to the villagers for managing the business.

### 1.2.1 Social Media Platforms:

Having confirmed the product categories, the team set up a Shopee and Lazada account and started the e-commerce business in early 2019. In order to accelerate the online business, the team made good use of the social media platforms, such as Facebook and Instagram, to enhance the publicity of the “Gifts of Love”, supported by the forest products.



For customers who inquired about the products via Facebook and Instagram, the team would advised them to purchase from the official store in Shopee and Lazada. However, it appears that most customers were not familiar and comfortable with the two shopping platforms. As such, many transactions were made through WhatsApp, as customers were more comfortable to contact directly.

### 1.2.2 Managing the E-commerce Account:

The team planned to educate the indigenous people about e-commerce, as the knowledge of managing online stores could enable them to showcase and sell their products. E-commerce also helps create awareness of their tribes and unique crafts globally; builds their 'branding' much faster; broadens the marketplace exponentially; and hence helps them earn a better living. Through using multiple online touchpoints (such as social media, google search, Shopee or Lazada), the team believed that they could be reached by not only more customers but also local and global non-governmental organizations (NGO) for sales and assistance. Furthermore, it reduces their overhead costs (store rental and third-party commissions) and operation risks to minimal.

## **2.0 Challenges:**

After a six-month execution of the e-business, the outcome is not favorable for a few reasons. Some of challenges faced by the team are as follows:

### **2.1 Lack of Demands:**

According to the Malaysia Digital Economy Corporation (MDEC), Malaysia's e-commerce ecosystem was still in a relatively early stage of development in 2018. There was a lack of a supporting ecosystem, poor fulfillment experience, and low adoption rates. Besides, Malaysians in general were reluctant to purchase products through local online platforms until the pandemic took place. They were often motivated to make purchase only if there is free shipping or exclusive deals offered by the online stores (Mahalingam, 2018). In 2019, the topmost purchase categories are fashion & beauty, electronics, sports, and hobbies (Janio, 2021). As such, the demand for the online sales of forest products was relatively low, as it is not a necessity.

### **2.2 Limited Product Range**

The team found that the forest products are not attractive, outstanding, and reasonably priced that cause low demands. The inability of indigenous people to produce a wide range of products is a result of several interrelated factors, such as:

- **Market constraints:** The community do not access and participate in markets directly, making it difficult for them to understand the market needs and trends. They keep producing the same products over the last 20 years, which visitors buy because of helping them, instead of in need.
- **Education:** Lacking proper education and training is another constraint towards their inability to develop new skills and technologies, as well as innovate in product development.
- **Lack of resources:** They may not have the economic resources and opportunities needed to invest in the production of a wide range of products.

### **2.3 Inability to Accept New Change**

The team faced difficulty in educating the indigenous people about e-commerce and how to manage the online account. It appears that most of the indigenous people are comfortable with the surroundings and living, thus they are reluctant to accept new adjustment. Furthermore, through conversation, the team learned to know that most of them only complete standard 6 and only few go to secondary school. This is supported by Ahmad (2022) that most indigenous children do not have the opportunity to attend kindergarten before proceeding to primary school. As they are not fluent in Bahasa Melayu, they are slow in learning, writing and reading, and they take longer time

to process information. Many must take care of their younger siblings, or work in the forests to help parents to earn a living, therefore they choose to drop out of school (Mahdzar, Omar, Jaapar, and Zaini, 2021). Due to a lack of exposure and proper education, they found ecommerce too complicated to be understood and chose to reject it.

These challenges result in indigenous communities being largely dependent on narrow range of products, without concerning the market demand, which can limit their economic prospects and opportunities. Besides, the term - “Made by Orang Asli” or Support the Orang Asli” should not be a long-term ‘branding’ source of income, instead, they should adopt a more pro-active approach in product developments. To address these challenges, it requires more sustained effort not only from the university, but also government’s support in investment in education and training, the development of market infrastructure, the provision of resources and support to the indigenous communities.

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# BOOST OF SUPPLY CHAIN AND IR4.0 AS ENABLERS TO INSPIRE SOCIAL ENTERPRISE FOR THE B40 GROUP IN MALAYSIA

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## *Abstract*



Malaysia's social entrepreneurship market is expanding and has the ability to strengthen the country's socioeconomic system. Many social businesses have been actively promoting social values and tackling social and environmental problems globally. Social enterprises have the capacity to address unemployment, sustainable livelihoods, and critical social and environmental challenges. In this chapter, we will deeper the understanding of social entrepreneurship and, even better, we will show how supply chain and technology inspire the B40 group to go on the entrepreneurial journey. Social entrepreneurship is a field that is expanding rapidly due to the innovative ability which enable investors from the private sector to be the lead investors. Through its ability to connect with beneficiaries across geographic borders and its accessible design, technology has also accelerated social entrepreneurship. We want to know, from a supply chain standpoint, how we achieve it. We examine the resources, data, and cash flows of the microentrepreneurs for these social enterprises using a variety of successful social firms from different countries. We demonstrate how a social enterprise benefits its affiliated micro-entrepreneurs by enhancing their supply chain operations through:(a) easier access to financial credits; (b) easier access to market information;(c) easier market access;(d) better access to supplies and raw materials; and (e) higher productivity through better health and equipment. Then we speculate on how to make social enterprises economically viable and suggest that instead of running production operations directly, social enterprises would be best compared helping micro-enterprises.

**Keyword:** *Social Entrepreneurship, Supply Chain, IR4.0, B40*

## 1.0 Introduction

Impact-driven and enterprising people have been leading the way in social entrepreneurship, a new type of enterprise, which has emerged from the traditional for-profit, non-profit, and public sectors. This paradigm unleashes value through generating economic prosperity as well as positive effects on society and the environment. By addressing social or environmental problems that the traditional sectors have failed to address, social entrepreneurship is the only type of business that has the capacity to fundamentally alter capitalism as we currently know it. Based on the Malaysian Department of Statistics 2020, there was an additional of 12.5 per cent of households with income less than RM2,500 (DOSM,2019). Meanwhile, 20.0 per cent of households from the M40 group with income between RM4,850 and RM10,959 has moved to the B40 group. Households in the T20 group were also affected by COVID-19 pandemic where 12.8 per cent of this group has shifted to the M40 group (DOSM,2019). As the percentage decrease in income for B40 and M40 households was larger than T20 households' group, the income distribution for B40 and M40 declined to 15.9 per cent (2019: 16.0%) and 36.9 per cent (2019: 37.2%) respectively. Meanwhile, T20 group owned 47.2 per cent of income, increased by 0.4 percentage points from 2019. The incidence of absolute poverty also increased from 5.6 per cent (2019) to 8.4 per cent (DOSM,2019).

The challenge of developing the social entrepreneurship sector in Malaysia is difficult and overwhelming, requiring the full support and dedication of all parties concerned, from grassroots communities to industry leaders and influencers. Table below defines the factors favoring the shift towards social enterprise.

Sector	Factors of a shift	Main Benefits
<b>Non-Profit</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reducing reliance on unpredictable sources of income to sustain operations</li> <li>▪ Increasing ability to scale up impact while being more cost-effective in reaching beneficiaries</li> <li>▪ Expanding scope of impact beyond the current beneficiary profile</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Creation of reliable sources of income to help maintain or grow operations</li> <li>▪ Independence and ability to utilize funding not earmarked for specific purpose</li> <li>▪ Availability of funding to invest strategically in products/services for beneficiaries</li> </ul>
<b>For-Profit</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Creating a distinctive capability and advantage by tapping into a traditionally 'non-viable' market</li> <li>▪ Contributing more to the community through more strategic and coordinated philanthropy</li> <li>▪ Attracting and retaining talent by providing an opportunity for employees to provide in-kind support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide returns to shareholders who are increasingly more conscious about investment</li> <li>▪ Establish presence and footprint in a new market through social or environmental contributions</li> <li>▪ Contributing back beyond financial means, through in-kind support and capabilities</li> </ul>
<b>Government</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reducing the cost of public service and goods delivery</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cost-effective means to serve the public with basic services and goods</li> </ul>


	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increasing the quality of the public service and goods delivery</li> <li>▪ Responding quickly to the needs of the public</li> <li>▪ Reaching out to a public previously beyond reach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide more ‘customer-centric’ focus in terms of delivery of public service and goods</li> <li>▪ Inclusive and participative form of government where all are served</li> </ul>
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Table 1: Factors favoring the shift towards social enterprise

Source: Unleashing the Power of Social Entrepreneurship, Malaysian Social Enterprise Blueprint 2015-2018

<https://atasbe.mymagic.my/multimedia/pdf/MSEB%20FINAL%20-%20web.pdf>

## 1.1 What is Social Entrepreneurship

A company with its main focus on achieving social goals in a way that is financially sustainable is known as a social enterprise or a social business (Dees, 2001). Both nonprofit organizations and charities as well as for-profit social entrepreneurs do business in order to fill gaps and go where typical corporations would not in order to reap positive social and environmental benefits. Because their primary motivation is to change the world or their communities, social entrepreneurs vary from regular business owners. They frequently have firsthand knowledge of the causes they support, which informs their company's mission. Social entrepreneurs are more likely to concentrate on indicators like the number of jobs generated, the number of trees planted, or the amount of donations given to a nonprofit organization that addresses the issue they invested in.

## 1.2 How does a social enterprise make profit?

It needs a strong business plan to turn a profit, just like any other company. As a result, it must offer goods, products, or services that clients value and are ready to pay for. To maintain, expand, and guarantee long-term success, social companies engage in commercial activity.

The different models that we have adopted as a social enterprise in INTI International University include:

- Creating jobs within the B40 client’s communities from the Department of Social Welfare Malaysia (Jabatan Kebajikan Masyarakat Malaysia), such as ethically outsourcing production to communities in need of fair work and career development opportunities – Trained 5 girls from the orphanage home in Rembau, Negeri Sembilan. Provide training to become own “MARYKAY” groomer for the cosmetic product to earn a sustainable livelihood.
- Holding workshops and people-development activities to impart knowledge and give people the tools they need to improve their communities and the lives of B40 clients.
- Encourage and developing inclusion and diversity on behalf of underrepresented groups and inspiring others.



*Figure 1: B40 Clients from Department of Social Welfare Malaysia (Jabatan Kebajikan Masyarakat Malaysia) participated in the Motivational Program at INTI International University*

*Given this scenario, the concept of generating social impact through entrepreneurship is gradually emerging as an important element of economic growth and inclusion was achieved through (a) easier access to financial credits; (b) easier access to market information; (c) easier market access.*

*Case Study 1: Classic Red Parfum – HALAL Fragrance: Social Entrepreneurship Examples That Balance Purpose and Profit.*

Let's take a closer look at the Classic Red Parfum product: HALAL Fragrance for-profit social enterprise as an example and the company's missions that prove creating positive change and being profitable as a business don't have to be mutually exclusive.



Classic Red Parfum, as a fragrance company expect that every person on this earth like a best fragrance and want to feel great. At Classic Red Parfum always try to realize their mission by providing quality aromatic, pure, safe and at the best price for men and women. They are expert in providing advisory services in the use and selection of international and local branded perfumes. With more than 140,000 brands in the market the company created their own brand and help the customers to make the right choice based on the personality every day. This business is owned by Puan. Nur Zakiah Bt Dzulkifli who has physical disabilities. She is not able to walk due to her disability. Henceforth, her motivation and determination to have a sustainable life has encourage her to start her own business and be a successful Entrepreneur. Social Business has created a sustainable livelihood for this entrepreneur

to build up her business through the Department of Social Welfare Malaysia by enrolling her into the 2 Years Exit Program. The company has distributed their product to Singapore and Indonesia and moving forward to neighborhood country Thailand. The product details can be obtained from [www.classicredempire.com](http://www.classicredempire.com) and <https://www.facebook.com/Classicredparfumhq> . We have trained the client in using the Shoppe platform and Lazada platform to boost her sales of her HALAL parfum. Besides that, our students have created a landing page for the company to get more access to the market and to get easier information on the new market via the page [www.classicredempire.com](http://www.classicredempire.com).

Mission of the company is to become the leading world HALAL fragrance provider and provide diversity perfume to the customers at the highest quality of fragrance essence with the concern of safety, purity, durability and high in quality.

**Impact:** Created job opportunity and reduce poverty for the youth from the state in Kuala Pilah, Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia and the products helped customers to use chemical free perfume.



Figure 2: The Client during the Product Launch

### 1.3 The benefit to Build Social Business

If a social enterprise can clearly articulate its motivation and impact, its mission can serve as a differentiator in a crowded market. If we are planning to launch people's social business, we should be enthusiastic about the following special advantages that come with building one:

- More partnership opportunities
- Branding
- Alignment between personal and professional mission
- More media attention

A successful social enterprise must prioritize transparency and long-term effect. And if your cause is important to you and has an impact you can gauge, these things will be simpler to accomplish.

## **1.4 Create a Positive Change Through Social Entrepreneurship**

A new era of awareness has been ushered in by our connected world, where we can choose to look across the street or around the globe for problems to address and ways to better our lives. People from all over the world are deciding to effect change in any way they can, whether it be by becoming more conscientious customers or by starting their own businesses that serve as engines for social and environmental good.

## **2.0 Logistics Practices in Social Business**

Logistics has always been at the peripheral of globalization. Particularly since the 1960s, the changes brought about by the standardization and diffusion of shipping container technologies led to the expansion of logistical managerial rationales to the whole of production, from design to packaging (Attewell, 2018). Today's global economy relies more than ever on international logistics chains to connect markets, people, businesses, and countries. Billions of people around the world depend on logistics for a steady supply of food and goods. The greatness of logistics that connect producers on one side of the planet to consumers on the other is how seamless the whole process appears to be. Rendering the process invisible are companies like Maersk Line, one of the largest container shipping companies.

Businesses worldwide have been scrutinizing possible methods of incorporating logistics processes and functions into the core strategic model ever since the COVID-19 pandemic struck. The importance of logistics had elevated from a macro perspective as businesses and governments scrambled to get products and services across boundaries. Not surprisingly, social entrepreneurs too have incorporated transport and logistics infrastructure in their operations to support and fulfil their causes both at a local and global level. Social entrepreneurs and socially driven enterprises are often the engine behind the global threads that connect products and services to the people who need them the most. Social entrepreneurs are individuals with innovative solutions to society's most pressing social problems across various fields ranging from health to education, economic development, and housing. Just as entrepreneurs change the face of business, social entrepreneurs act as the change agents for society, seizing opportunities to improve systems, invent new approaches, and create solutions to change society for the better. They often rely on global logistics to deliver their services and products – and to bring change to the communities they are serving at large scale.

Social entrepreneurs are part of the social enterprise construct that have been a vital cog in many developing economies. The need to integrate logistics and its processes into the social enterprise model becomes ever so vital due to the rapid rise in globalization and competition between nations (Pathak and Muralidharan, 2016). For entrepreneurs, an inadequate or substandard logistical infrastructure becomes a barrier to growth. Delays and uncertainty affect the whole supply chain, making it increasingly difficult for teams to plan and execute a smooth flow of traffic and to control the quality and timing of the offered service. Often, to cover the costs of additional transport and

warehousing, products become more expensive and less affordable by the end user. These costs and the complications involved can be enough to prevent social enterprises from attempting to enter the global marketplace. *Listing the case above the; (d) better access to supplies and raw materials can achieved via providing a smooth accessibility in logistic.*

As such, this is where Industrial Revolution (IR 4.0) begins to alter the way businesses are evolving and recalibrating. Industry 4.0 is becoming a real driving force shaping the future of the global supply chain and logistics processes. It's a blend of technologies from advanced robotics and artificial intelligence; sophisticated sensors; big data analytics; 3D printing; cloud-enabled business models; high-powered mobile devices; and algorithms to direct motor vehicles. The potential of incorporating IR 4.0 into logistics is visible from autonomous trucks to various applications such as Uber, Grab, and other areas in logistics such as forecasting tools and customer purchase actions. Multinational corporations and social entrepreneurs understand the need to integrate such tools into their business activities to stay relevant and spur future growth prospects (Huda et al., 2019).

### **3.0 Entrepreneurial Agility in Digital Entrepreneurship**

Is it feasible to develop a sustainable, human-centered, resilient economy that meets a variety of goals, such as equity, inclusion, and growth? By using social well-being as a compass to guide the creation of goods and services, could industry create prosperity that goes beyond jobs and economic growth? In the policy brief "Industry 4.0," it is asserted that economic growth should be seen as a path to inclusive prosperity. It is also a call to reconsider the place of business in society and to reorder the objectives and means of implementing public policy (Davos, 2022). The following analysis, which is based on data from interviewing the clients, is an initial attempt to explain how the clients succeed in their business startups. The values of social entrepreneurship are helping to build a new genre of entrepreneurship that is well-positioned to heal the social and economic wounds caused by COVID-19's unanticipated effects. Though on the condition that industrial and innovation policies embrace it in their frame of reference, we believe this genre, which we refer to as social-tech entrepreneurship, is significant for launching a new generation of place-based, innovation-driven development. The entrepreneurial agility can be achieved *(e) higher productivity through better health and equipment.*

#### **3.1 The role of Technology in Social Entrepreneurship**

Traditional business practices are being challenged by technology (Hervé et al., 2020). The results demonstrate that there is no difference in this situation when it comes to poor neighborhoods. One of our clients claimed that many residents of underprivileged areas have some sort of Internet connection. Additionally, it makes a lot of other resources accessible, including tools for marketing, learning, and communication (Tarik et al., 2020). Based on the customer interviews, it demonstrates how certain startups use the Internet for self-paced learning in business management and market research. The results also demonstrated how crowdsourcing and open innovation are

made possible by the Internet accessibility. This is consistent with the assumption that information, communication and technologies (ICTs) are opening opportunities for knowledge and idea sharing between new people from very various backgrounds and professions (Tarik et al., 2020).

Social Media Initiative 2 main (FB, Insta), 2 alt (TikTok, Shopee)			
 Facebook	New page constructed and shall feature ClassicRed's new and upcoming products.  <b>Target:</b> min 1000 customer engagement views & 500+ likes.	 TikTok	Generate informative video bites to showcase product.  <b>Target:</b> 3-digit follower count.
 Instagram	Sister Account to feature KOL and professional product display.  <b>Target:</b> 3-digit follower count & 500+ likes.	 ShopeeFEED	ShopeeFeed to showcase product on Shopee.  <b>Target:</b> 200+ Live Viewers.

Figure 3: The Role of Technology in creating the values through social media for the Clients

### 3.1.1 The Mobile Revolution

Mobile technology is among the key element of social innovation activities, according to social entrepreneurs. There are more chances of a person owning a mobile device, has acknowledged the fact that the mobile revolution has empowered the poor and the underprivileged more than others. The search for a respectable income and a healthy lifestyle can therefore be enabled, empowered, and included by the mobile technology. Using smart phone, the clients leverage on the Internet connectivity and utilize mobile application in order to sell their goods and services.

### 3.1.2 Bringing Together all the Stakeholders

The use of technology by drivers, handymen, traders, and small business owners to interact with their clients as well as the opposite end of the spectrum their suppliers, owners, and middlemen has become widespread in many nations, to continue the points mentioned above. Technology makes it possible for all value chain participants to come together in this way, which ultimately benefits everyone (Davos, 2022). It is important to note that technology is intrinsically value neutral, meaning that it can be used for both good and bad purposes. Unified communications enhance the interaction between sellers and customers by sharing their feedback in the product fulfillment processes. Below we can view the customers feedback in the social media to upscale the client's business prospect.





Figure 4: Testimonials from customers via Facebook and IG

Source: Adapted from: <https://www.facebook.com/Classicredparfumhq>

### 3.1.3 Synergies and Economies of Scale

Given the enabling and empowering role that technology plays, many nonprofits are concentrating solely on developing and fostering an ecosystem where innovators, funders, thought leaders, influencers, and regulators, on the one hand, and beneficiaries, intermediaries, users, and owners, on the other hand, can come together in a massive electronic and digital umbrella where social innovation can occur, and value is created for all and society at large (Davos,2022). In these situations, ICTs has the capacity to forge synergies between disparate components of the value chain, resulting in a whole greater than the sum of its parts. Additionally, social entrepreneurs can use technology to help the poor and underprivileged quickly scale up and take advantage of the benefits of economies of scale. Because of economies of scale and synergy, new ideas and solutions can benefit more people than they could on their own, which would require more time and money.

### 3.1.4 Society Benefits

Now evaluate whether such a usage of technology can help a person from a disadvantaged background launch a business. He or she can target a worldwide audience and profit from the scale

effect by using the Internet and mobile technologies, but they can also potentially provide a solution that is less expensive and adds greater value per unit of expenditure. In fact, entrepreneurs like Nobel Laureate and social entrepreneur from Bangladesh, Mohammed Yunus, show how social innovation and technology can work together to benefit society by enabling rural women in his country to finance their small businesses through the provision of microcredit. These women then organized into groups and attained scale, which in turn led to innovation that created value.

Besides that, online social networking sites (SNS) are essentially associations of digital communities with related and similar interests. Like-minded individuals are brought together online by digital communities on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, MySpace, LinkedIn, or Live Journal, where information about each person can be shared and distributed in a seamless manner. It is obvious that the exponential growth of digital communities has led to more frequent engagements among users on the social networking sites. In addition to these sites, there are various other platforms that connect people who share similar interests, such as messaging system like the instant messaging (IM), chat room, address books, social bookmarking features like Digg and Delicious, and content sharing platforms like Flickr and YouTube (Prachi, 2021).

By making it simpler for users to learn more about one another and build meaningful relationships with one another, online SNS have had a significant positive impact in the aspect of social capital. However, it is also capable to introduce some adverse effects (Prachi, 2021). Because the online SNS exchange and reveal huge amount of personal information about the users, issues on privacy could emerged and surfaced.

In the spirit of digital transformation, ICTs can revolutionize social business operations, empower the clients, and increase the social economy's effect by providing them with relevant digital platforms and strategic planning tools for competitive advantage as well as the protection to the environment.

#### **4.0 Upskilling the Entrepreneurs for Future Demand**

Year 2021 was a challenging year for Malaysia. The significance of digital transformation and leadership, however, has been amply demonstrated by the preceding year. Government has initiated various opportunity for business traders to support their business and to increase the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the country. The Malaysian government's Economic Planning Unit (EPU) has announced the MYDIGITAL initiative in February 2021, with prime objective to reskilling the current workforce in the country to be wiser in the use of technology adaptation (TM ONE,2021). In a world that is rapidly entering the IR 4.0, this would ensure that Malaysians remain to be relevant (TM ONE,2021). Business leaders used to have frequent discussions on how to handle the shift from conventional brick-and-mortar to digital models and processes. Today, practically all companies including SMEs, whether they are entirely online or still operated offline, would be categorized as digital enterprises. The three key technologies emphasized in the adaptation are:



Smart Services by integrating intelligence into essential infrastructure and common objects from any device, anytime, everywhere, they promise to revolutionise businesses.



A growing demand for enabling numerous stakeholders to access business data, customer information, and projects from various places and devices in real-time has led to the proliferation of cloud-based platforms.



The third technology, cybersecurity, is therefore required. Businesses must make investments in cutting-edge cybersecurity measures to support all the recently adopted technologies and create digital trust. Enterprises will need to modify their IT and business models in order to incorporate these and other new technologies, ones that are flexible enough to put technology at the centre of the business plan.

As today's business models increasingly demand end-to-end solutions, which connect manufacturers, logistics, supply chains, and other key components in order to fulfil and excel customer demands, offering a digital option to customers and stakeholders is essential.

Retail enterprises in Malaysia have discovered a digital enthusiasm to look for the most efficient ways to survive and even to prosper beyond the current precarious conditions, driven by lockdowns and social distance measures (IDC,2020). Edge computing will be used in an intelligent cloud to process data closer to the point of collection, and AI and machine learning (ML) will be used to give actionable insights faster and more effectively (IDC,2020).

A huge logistics organization that experienced gains in speed and efficiency serves as an example of a real-world business advantage from intelligent cloud technology. Through the application of AI in pickup route planning, some of the advantages included improvements of 30% in pickup efficiency and 5% in transportation path planning; while waybill single check improved three times and Value Added Tax (VAT) invoice processing rates improved by 10 times (IDC,2020). More organizations have developed into being digital actors or transformers to stay ahead in some industries where digital transformation has become an absolute necessity, such as the financial services sector (TM ONE,2021).

## Moving along the cloud maturity checkpoints - the IDC Cloud Maturity Framework

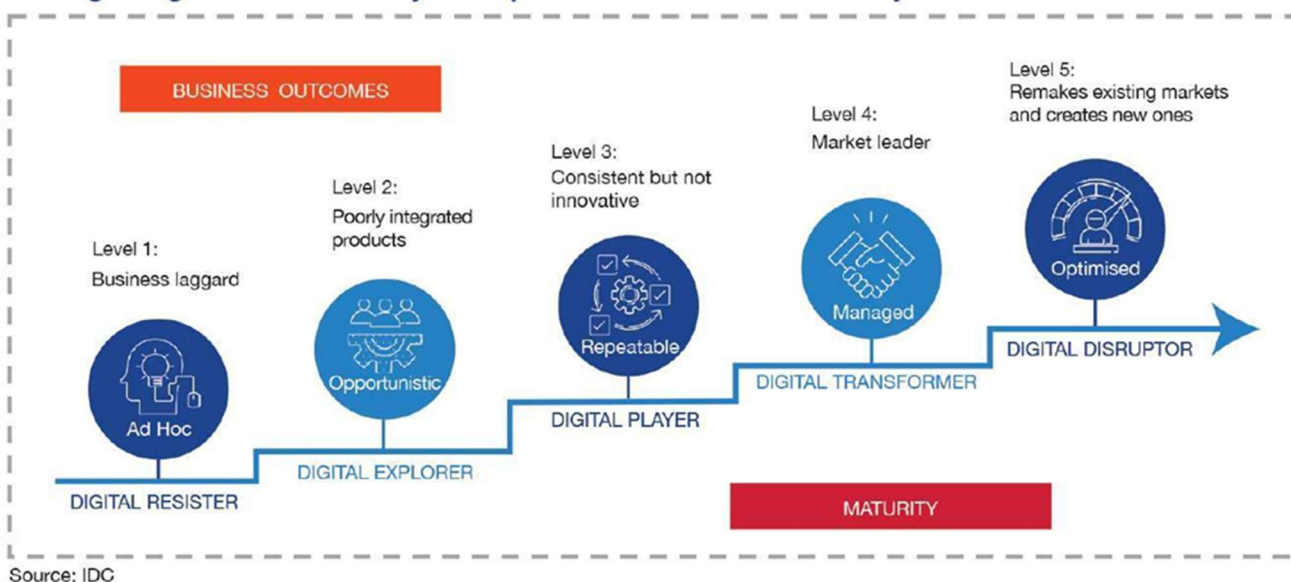


Figure 5: IDC Cloud Maturity framework

Source: Adapted from: <https://www.idc.com/ca/blog/detail?id=e87562689df34b9d3598>

The use of enterprise intelligence in the cloud, which is supported by AI, is successfully modernising various industries. The foundation of fundamental Cloud benefits, such as improved efficiencies, facilitating core expertise, and producing trend-setting achievements, has been formed by rapidly expanding technology. Data enablement services like big data, data lakes, and data warehousing, as well as containerization and microservices, which are akin to a vital engine to upgrade industry intelligence, are examples of what these cutting-edge technologies offer (TM,2021).

In view on the above, it is considerably safe to anticipate a higher surge of deployments of novel services and solutions in the market in the near future, along with intelligent edge and intelligent network connection, which will be further strengthened by the advent of 5G networking.

## 5.0 Conclusion

With a strong commitment to advancing transformation for Malaysian businesses and the public sector, the government is actively collaborating with other telecommunications service providers to adopt emerging technologies to help businesses including SMEs to remain competitive in this digital era. In addition, the service providers are constantly creating specialized solutions for important verticals in cooperation with partners and clients.

The full range of latest services include cybersecurity, intelligent Cloud, reliable and multi-type digital connectivity, professional and managed services from local experts, are well-positioned to

assist industries in revolutionizing themselves, reshaping businesses and cities, and opening new opportunities for Malaysia in the crucial days that lie ahead.

For the social entrepreneurs, in order to better manage their future social business operations, it is imperative to keep abreast of the latest development and to constantly acquire new knowledge on fundamental areas such as cyber security, big data, business analytics, AI, cloud services and 5G networking.

Certainly, the innovation process has no bounds. Any businesses, regardless of size and capacity including the B40 group, may develop ground-breaking solutions to better serve its clients. This is a crucial component of Malaysian businesses' and government institutions' commitment and inclusivity to accelerate the digital transformation agenda for the country.

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# CREATING AN ECOSYSTEM FOR SMART VILLAGE THROUGH CAPACITY BUILDING APPROACH: A CASE STUDY OF ASPIRATIONAL DISTRICTS PROGRAM, INDIA

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## *Abstract*

Smart Villages are critical for India where 65% population is still rural, and most of her metro cities are reeling under unplanned internal migration. Smart Villages are rural areas that retain the valued aspects of rural life while providing the basic amenities of city life. The purpose of this paper is to rethink, rescale and refocus on the smart villages, thereby making them open to policymaking and strategic considerations in India. They need income (Kamai), holistic healthcare (Dawai) and sustainable education (Padhai), to reverse the migration to cities. For this research study, we have adopted an exploratory participant approach, by conducting interviews with District magistrates, and studying secondary data, in the aspirational or backward districts of MP, Maharashtra and UP, to observe the progress and transformation made through active community engagement, to revitalize and empower them. We have tried to propose 10 smart village indicators for monitoring and evaluation of the program for successful implementation, based on Local 2030 SDG Agenda. To achieve holistic rural development, a common assessment framework is used to study Aspirational districts drawing a connection based on community capacity development through sustainable livelihood, enhancing village economic infrastructure, by providing alternative sources of employment, human capital development and social mobilization.

**Keywords:** *Smart Villages, capacity building, sustainable livelihoods, Aspirational districts.*



## 1.0 Introduction

Urbanization is a worldwide phenomenon that has far-reaching consequences on the planet and the environment. It was predicted that nearly seven out of ten people on the planet, will live in cities by 2050 (World Bank, 2022). Urbanization has led to severe administrative challenges like housing issues, poor sanitation Kuddus, et.al. (2020), poor nutrition, pollution, and communicable health problems Zhang. (2016) leading to ballooning of urban slums. Four out of every five people who live in extreme poverty worldwide, according to the UNDESA World Social Report 2021, live in rural areas. Many of these people experience severe depletion and degradation of natural resources, which contributes towards climate change and recurrence of zoonotic diseases. Lagging rural areas lead to rural migration resulting in polarized regional development. The primary reason is the lack of basic infrastructure such as livelihood, healthcare, education, sanitation, roads, electricity, water, and recreational facilities in villages, leading to a glaring disparity in the lifestyle between urban and rural communities Zhang X. Q. (2016). Rural areas cannot be ignored for a country's holistic development, as they house around 47 percent of the world's poor and 70 percent of the destitute (UN Habitat 2020).

However, the question that arises is, who would be left in the farming sector and whether rural areas can become lucrative enough to stop the exodus from villages?

Rural development, according to the World Bank (1975), is "a strategy to improve the environmental, economic and social living conditions of the people living in rural areas. This will enable the vulnerable members of the backward areas to benefit from the rural development." Rural development is gaining traction and becoming more participative with governments shifting from bureaucrat-dominated public-oriented governance, towards public-private participation, by providing sustainable livelihoods and improving the capacity building of the regions. In both developed and developing countries significant emphasis is being laid on capacity building and sustainability at the local and the national levels (Bowen, et al., 2000).

The development of the village areas is gaining traction in recent times, through the Smart village concept, proposed by Viswanathan, and Sowmya Vedula in 2010. The concept of "Smart Village" is to ensure better infrastructure, good education, good healthcare, clean drinking water, and the active participation of local stakeholders, with solutions to the issues of local significance and the development of local communities (Sutriadi, 2018; Viswanathan, and Sowmya Vedula 2010).

With the persistent challenges of feeding a rising global population, climate changes, there is a need to relook into our policies with an aim to provide food and nutrition security for all. This can be accomplished through the 2030 Agenda of Localization of Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDG 2022). According to Maja et al., 2020, the SDGs are interconnected to address new challenges in rural areas, such as environmental, demographic, ecological and climate change side effects, poor governance, and negative consequences.

According to the United Nations, industry, innovation and infrastructure are the three main pillars of sustainable development. Various governments have started integrating various rural development policies and interventions, to provide inclusive services, for community-based delivery and sustainable development in the areas of agriculture, environmental restoration, primary education, primary healthcare, and local infrastructure. "Smart village" is a solution to improve the quality of life in the rural areas. It is important to identify the SDGs that can be used in the development of smart village indicators, so that they can be utilized and mapped

for the development of rural communities. Sustainable Development Goals 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, and 11, are used for rural area development UN SDG 2022 towards responsible urbanization and support policies.

This paper tries to evaluate the definition of smart villages, and the work done in Aspirational districts through the capacity building- sustainable livelihood approach. Government of India launched its first Delta ranking (incremental progress) program, “the Aspirational Districts Program (ADP)” in January 2018, to bridge the gap between urban & rural India, and to accelerate the improvement in the backward districts of the country. The present research focuses on the development work done in these backward areas, through SMART approach.

Section one defines smart villages, while section two looks into theoretical linkages for capacity development of smart villages. Section three looks into the sustainable development of the Aspirational districts using a case study approach. Section four delves into the success stories, proposes a framework for multiplier effect and identifies various indicators for attaining smart villages in the Indian context.

## **2. Literature review**

### **2.1. What is a smart village?**

The current modern era is popularly known as “Smart age”. The concept of “*Smart Village*” is to ensure better infrastructure, good education, good healthcare, and clean drinking water, to improve the quality of life of the people living in rural areas (Syaodih 2019). Maja et al. 2020; Sutriadi 2018, analyze the smart village concept, “as an innovation for the sustainable planning at the village level, that promotes knowledge-based development through continuous learning of human resources, to encourage regional development as a part of the national development”. Antonio et al. (2019) stressed that there can be no smart cities without smart villages. "SMART Approach for SMART Villages" is the motivation behind "smart villages" through the utilization of technology, to improve the quality of education, infrastructure, generating local business opportunities, improving health and welfare, increasing democratic involvement, thereby improving the quality of life of a villager. Sustainable and environmentally friendly ‘Smart Villages’, are the need of the hour to overcome the barriers for rural development (Viswanathan, and Sowmya Vedula 2010). According to them services are to be synchronized into standardized processes with proper planning and appropriate business models, particularly in the area of technology and IT (Viswanathan, and Sowmya Vedula 2010).

Van Gevelt et al. (2018) identified basic conditions like providing energy services to villages to ensure livelihood opportunities, provision for various services like healthcare, education, clean water, sanitation and empowerment, that can have a cascading effect on the Smart Villages concept. The intention of identifying these goals is that, they can be mapped and utilized to develop the smart village indicators (Van Gevelt et al. 2018). Maja et al., 2020 developed indicators for smart rural villages that aligned with Industry 4.0 technologies. Maja et al. (2020) strategically mapped the areas that are lagging behind and measured them up to smart village indicators. John Holmes 2017, stated that transformations in agricultural practices are enabling to increase the farm incomes, and provide new opportunities for local service industries. Ultra-modern techniques are being observed in agricultural practices like precision irrigation, fertilizer application, access to real-time precise weather forecasts, advice on crops and farming techniques, early diagnosis and treatment of pests and diseases, and

mechanization, etc. (Azevedo 2019). John Holmes, 2017 emphasized the use of new technologies for providing sustainable and affordable power, to enable modern information and communication technologies (ICT) to connect villagers with the rest of the world.

Various countries are making efforts for rural development through the Smart Village concept. We have identified a few of them:

### **2.2. Millennium Villages Project**

The Millennium Villages Project (MVP) 2015, started by Sachs at Columbia University in collaboration with UNDP, promised to provide an integrated strategy to accomplish the Millennium Development Goals, for rural development. The Millennium Villages Project was a flagship initiative of the UN Millennium Project to integrate rural development models in ten countries of Africa. It helps to lift the rural African communities out of extreme poverty and escape from the poverty trap. Simple scalable solutions were provided like high-yield seeds, fertilizers, medicines, drinking wells, and materials to build school rooms and clinics, and provide integrated rural development strategies in ten nations across the continent of Africa.

### **2.3. Digital village in Europe**

The Fraunhofer Institute in Germany (2020) has committed 25 million euros since 2019 in establishing the model project "Smarte LandRegionen" in conjunction with the Ministry of Interior to address the interconnection of residents, communities, and local governments by offering improved services.

France 2019 has taken Bress and Breston rural areas to bridge the gap between rural and urban divide, and has invested 2 million euros since 2015, to improve basic services, such as economic development, social inclusion, healthcare and sustainable energy resources.

### **2.3. Niger Smart Villages project**

A Whole-of-Government approach has been used to carry out the Niger Smart Villages project in 2015, in collaboration with WHO, UNESCO, and DIAL (The Digital Impact Alliance). A whole-of-government approach requires coordination across various ministries and government organizations, to work together on a policy to plan, design, and deliver all government services and operations. In collaboration with DIAL, ANSI, and ITU 2020, a roadmap for the development of Smart Villages has been proposed to meet the SDGs' specific targets and goals. Through an inclusive digital transformation process, SDG-related services will be made to improve the quality of life for rural residents. It will be a continuous process where improvement can be conceptualized, planned, designed, deployed, and operated, for the betterment of the vulnerable communities.

## **2.4. Smart Village concept in Malaysia**

The Malaysian government is converting 191 villages into high-tech "smart villages" (GovInsider 2020) to increase the income-levels of rural residents. The digital divide is being closed and infrastructure is being improved by giving young villagers access to high-speed internet, setting up digital marketplaces where they can sell their items online, drones for smart farming, and telemedicine facilities (GovInsider 2020).

## **2.5. Smart Village concept in India**

India also introduced the idea of the Smart Village in 2014, drawing on Mahatma Gandhi's vision and concepts of Adarsh Gram (the Ideal Village) and Swaraj (self-reliance) (Garg et al. 2015). According to the SAGY (Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana) regulations, each member of parliament is required to adopt a rural village and transform it into a model. A village can be identified as a "Smart Village", if it satisfies the five criteria dimensions like retrofitting, redevelopment, green fields, e-Pan (electronic planning), and livelihood.

## **3.0 Theoretical Linkages**

Sustainable development of rural areas is a multi-dimensional aspect, which encompasses the economic, social, environmental and political components, requiring regional and national strategies at the local level and active participation of local stakeholders, leading to the development of local communities. The objective of a smart village is to enhance the quality of community life and bringing together a variety of stakeholders, (Syaodih 2019) to determine what needs to be developed first and what would help to create sustainable livelihoods.

### **3.1. Capacity Building approach**

Capacity-building is a process to improve an organization's or community's capacity to survive, adapt, and thrive in a fast changing economic (Beckley et al. 2002). Capacity building involves giving organizations financial aid and resource support, to improve the self-sustaining ability of the people, to understand, evaluate, and solve their problems more effectively by employing their own or external resources (deGraaf, 1986). According to Beckley et al. (2002), community capacity is "the collective ability of a group (the community) to integrate various forms of capital within institutional and relational contexts, to achieve desired results or outcomes".

Capacity-building programs often develop at multiple levels at micro (individuals), meso (organizations), and macro levels (society at large). Programs should enhance people's knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors at the micro level, strengthen culture, and management practices at the meso level, and collective participation at the macro levels. Volunteers can offer their time and energy (human capital) to boost a non-profit's productive capacity, for mission fulfilment, according to Brudney and Meijs 2009.

### **3.2. Sustainable Livelihood Approach**

The "Sustainable Livelihoods Framework" (SLF) developed by the UK Department for International Cooperation (DFID, 2001) attempts to conceptualize the livelihoods approach holistically. It is a useful technique for identifying the main causes of poverty, as well as the variables that push individuals into poverty and the potential interrupters or elements that help people. The SLF framework may be used to capture the numerous aspects that influence people's livelihood choices, and when combined with participatory approaches it can assist the determination of action priorities based on goals and interests, for their well-being. The approach to sustainable livelihoods initiates creative thinking i.e., out of the box. It allows professionals from to identifying problems and suggest alternative solutions for localization of SDG goals (DFID, 2001). It helps to formulate developmental activities that are: people-centred, responsive, sustainable and participatory, with multilevel and dynamic partnership with public and private sectors.

Community engagement indicators include both qualitative and quantitative measures. They must be collected at various phases of implementation like pre-assessment, assessment, planning, implementation, monitoring & evaluation. The three key issues for assessment should be (1) identification of metrics (2) the minimum attainment level for each metric and (3) how the metrics should be developed or strengthened in lines of urban areas Gerli et al. (2022). Setting measurable indicators helps to find out whether the pre-set goals are achievable.

### **4.0 Case Study-Aspirational Districts in India**

Smart villages are rural analogues of smart cities. This paradigm underpins the idea of improving underdeveloped areas of the nation and bringing them to a sustainable level. Instead of seeing rural communities as perpetual recipients of government assistance, they are now being given the tools they need, to become the catalysts for positive change. The Aspirational Villages/Districts programme is based on the idea of fostering economic and social development by providing infrastructure for healthcare, education, clean water and sanitation, and sustainable energy for the underdeveloped areas, to guarantee better livelihoods, security, higher incomes, gender equality, and democratic participation.

By accelerating economic growth, lowering stark spatial inequities, and supporting sustainable livelihood, the ADP initiative marks a paradigm change in the transformation of 112 of India's least developed districts across 28 states. It is based on the government's motto of "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas," which echoes the idea of "Leaving No One Behind" in order to realize the SDGs. (UNDP) 2021). ADP has been a successful model for local area development, the progress being monitored on dashboards, prevailing a healthy competition among districts, which can be used for accelerating development in other backward regions of the country, and also in other parts of the world. By designating devoted professionals to collaborate and provide technical expertise, skill training, etc., the program has increased the technical and administrative capacities of the districts, with a greater emphasis on capacity building. With a focus on the underperforming sectors, these backward districts have displayed a remarkable resilience and decrease in vulnerability.

We have tried to analyze the Aspirational districts program with SMART approach and with Smart Village Indicators developed by us.

#### 4.1. S-M-A-R-T approach for Smart villages

SMART Objectives are a set of objectives put in place by parameters, to bring structure and traceability to the project, with clear milestones to attain these goals, and in an estimated timeline (Paul Meyer 2003). To achieve a capacity goal, the organization needs to identify SMART objectives, to attain SMART goals intelligently; within a specific time-period.

SMART goals/objectives will ensure the accuracy of the plan, what is expected, by what means, resources needed, in a specific timeline to access the success of the project. A capacity development goal should set middle-term and long-term targets to be achieved, to attain the overall developmental framework (Paul Meyer 2003).



**Figure 1:** S-M-A-R-T approach for Smart villages for attaining capacity goal  
**Source:** Author’s compilation based on Paul Meyer 2003

#### 4.2. Smart Village indicators in Indian context

After going through various literature, we have developed 10 smart village indicators for assessment, for the Indian context in alignment with the localization of SDGs. The measurement indicators for the smartness of a village should include education, technological improvements, healthcare, agriculture, water & sanitation, energy, environment, skill improvements, women empowerment, and financial inclusion. The assessment can be done through success stories, surveys, and outcomes.

We have compiled the smart indicators for measuring the outcomes in a table.

Metric	Objective	SDG achieved	Smart Village Indicator
Education	Access to education facilities up to	SDG 4: “Ensuring free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education.”	% No of Smart schools, % no of students who can read & write skills, no of teachers’ skill enhancement programs,

	Class X and retention		improvement in infrastructure facilities like; toilets, tables, blackboards, and other provisions.
Technology	Assess to electronic gadgets for rural children to improve their computer literacy.	“SDG 4: Technology and digital education are central for achieving SDG 4”	% Availability of interactive learning devices at the village primary / secondary classrooms, no of e-libraries, and availability of web-based teaching.
Healthcare & Nutrition	To address the healthcare and nutritional needs of the rural areas	SDG 3 "Good Health and Well-being”	Improvement in nutrition status with special focus on children, adolescents, pregnant women, and lactating mothers. Special focus on no of children getting nutritional food to fight against malnutrition, TB, HIV; improving availability of telemedicine, mobile health clinics, and Anganwadis
Clean water & Sanitation	To address water issues and toilets for all households	“SDG 6: Access to safe drinking water, sanitation, & hygiene	% No of households having potable tap water and toilet facility, improving quality and ease of life.
Agriculture	Upgradation of agriculture sector to generate extra income	“SDG 2: Achieve food security and promote sustainable agriculture”	Soil testing cards, modernization through smart technologies in agriculture, e-naam market places, credit facilities, boost diary and livestock health, and sources for secondary income.
Energy	Developing renewable, green, and clean energy	“SDG 7: Access to affordable, and, sustainable energy”.	Developing capability and infrastructure to develop new and possible cleaner technologies to become self-reliant.
Sustainability and environmental issues	Rejuvenation of villages to become sustainable	“SDG11: Development of Sustainable cities and communities	Promoting rainwater harvesting, restoration of ponds/lakes, water management, irrigation techniques
Skill Development	Skill development activities among youth	“SDG 4.4: Providing technical and vocational skills, for youth and adults for creating decent jobs, and promoting entrepreneurship”	Providing training and internship programs for village youth in computer applications, vocational programs and agriculture
Women empowerment	To evaluate the process of increasing the capacity	“SDG 5: Promoting gender equality and empowering women”	% no of skill enhancement programs with a special focus on rural women in income generation activities.

	utilization and empowerment among rural women		
Finance	Promoting inclusive growth, improve ease of obtaining financing.	“SDG 8.10: Strengthen the domestic financial institutions to encourage easy access to financial services”.	% No of residents with bank accounts, usage of mobile or digital app. Direct benefit transfer, and easy availability of credit.

**Table 1:** Development of Smart village indicators for the Indian context

*Source: Author’s own compilation*

We tried to analyse the ADP program through the linkage of theoretical concepts, like capacity building, and sustainable livelihood approach.

## 5.0 Observations

The Aspirational Districts program has tried to build community resilience, particularly in the least developed or backward areas of India, which are very critical for obtaining holistic development of the country (UNDP 2021). According to UNDP report (2021) Aspirational Districts Program, has been a catalyst for expediting development in the areas such as healthcare, nutrition, education and finance in these backward districts. Aspirational District Fellows have been selected and fellowship is being provided to them, to motivate young professionals, with required skills and competencies to bring a “change leadership” experience, and contribute towards the development of the 35 Left Wing Extremism affected (LWE) districts (Vikaspedia 2022).

Each district has come up with innovative ideas which were constantly measured and ranked, to keep up the competition among the peers. This brought out some exemplary ideas among youth and other stakeholders by creating employment opportunities and recognition. The development and skilling programs have brought about significant reduction in extremism and migration issues.

### 5.1. Success stories

Some of the success stories that are part of the ADP are:

- **Healthcare Sector:** India has initiated the Poshan Abhiyaan campaign, to work towards achieving SDG 2, "zero hunger". Multiple initiatives were taken up by the government to address malnutrition, through welfare schemes like Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS), Poshan Abhiyaan, Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana, Anaemia-mukt Bharat, and hygiene through Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan, to improve the nutritional status (NITI 2019). In the Ranchi district of Jharkhand, the "Poshan App" has aided in the constant monitoring and tracking of changes in nutrition outcomes (NITI 2019). It provided real-time data for monitoring bed occupancy, child development charts, and nutritional therapy at the district level (NITI 2019).
- The district administration of the tribal-dominated Aspirational District of Nandurbar have created a centralized kitchen to provide hot nutritious meals to the children at Ashram Shalas



and encourage education among tribals (NITI Aayog 2022). District Administration of Ramgarh established Model Anganwadi Centers to improve learning outcomes (NITI Aayog 2022). To reduce maternal mortality, the District Administration of Gadchiroli in Maharashtra enabled the Dakshata Initiative (Vikaspedia 2022), for tracking pregnant women and encourage breastfeeding in early months. Aspirational District of Hailakandi gifted 5 saplings to parents to encourage the birth of a girl child (NITI Aayog 2022).

- **Sanitation:** According to a report by NITI Aayog (NITI 2019): “Nearly six million villages, 633 districts (90.7 per cent of all districts) and 35 states / Union territories were verified as Open Defecation Free (ODF) in December 2019, under the Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) (NITI 2019).” India is committed to ensuring that everyone has access to safe drinking water and sanitation. More than 12 million toilets have been built in rural areas under the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan initiative (NITI 2019).
- **Education sector:** Innovation and digitization were used to improve the learning outcomes in backward districts to achieve SDG 4 by providing comprehensive and quality education for all. Many districts have built specialized solutions to fulfill their educational demands. The 'Humara Vidhyalaya' app of Namsai (Arunachal24 2019), a rural area in the Arunachal Pradesh district has improved learning outcomes in areas where there is a massive gap in school infrastructure and high dropout rates. The district administration established a competitive climate among teachers and students, to monitor, assess, and mentor weak students. To improve the learning outcomes Byju's an Edutech, has provided free access to its tech-driven learning programs to the children from 'Aspirational districts' (Business Standard 2021). “Gyanodaya-Godda App" a school education initiative launched in Godda district (Jharkhand) by Eckovation's along with district administration and Adani Foundation, is delivering cutting-edge interactive curriculum through smart classrooms, to improve education through interactive learning methods. The district authorities of Aspirational districts of Sukma in Chhattisgarh, have established Aakar Residential School, which caters to the inclusion and education of differently-abled students, to improve their cognitive skills Civilsdaily (2022). "ANNIE Smart Classes" a technological innovation for visually impaired students, launched in Ranchi district (Jharkhand), is India’s first Braille Smart Class and has made a marked impact on Braille learning.
- **Agriculture sector:** The district administration of Chandauli is promoting agro products, to increase the income of the farmers by giving training to grow organic ‘Black rice’ a forbidden grain (Vikaspedia 2022). This grain cultivation was abandoned earlier due to its color and no market, but is now being promoted due to its medicinal values in the global markets (Vikaspedia 2022). This crop is bringing exponential gains to farmers in comparison to conventional rice cultivation.
- **Skill Development:** The district administration of Dantewada (Chhattisgarh) has put tremendous efforts to bring the youth of the left-wing extremism-affected district, into the mainstream through development activities even in the remotest part of the district. A call center “YuvaBPO” (UNDP 2020) was established, to connect and coordinate with district administration, by providing skill development, and community outreach through women empowerment.
- **Women Empowerment:** Women in the Kondagaon backward district (DARPG 2020), in the Bastar division of Chhattisgarh, were provided with basic training to assemble

and manufacture LED bulbs in their homes and sell them in nearby cities (NITI 2019). The quality of the LEDs is so good, that it is threatening the branded products. These tribal women were also being trained to make designer bangles and handlooms thereby creating employment-oriented activities (Vikaspedia 2022).

- **Infrastructure:** Gumla, a backward district in Jharkhand (Aggarwal, M. 2022), has installed solar mini-grids to assist farmers and women-led enterprises, with access to clean energy and minimize the reliance on unstable conventional energy. Udham Singh Nagar authorities in Uttarakhand took on the Sarvajal Project to deliver customised and decentralised drinking water solutions. Solar-powered, cloud-connected water distribution kiosks are being constructed to provide clean, pleasant water to individuals living in rural places Civilsdaily (2022). Khandwa district in Madhya Pradesh launched the Lok Sewak App for good governance, e-attendance, with Geo-tagging technologies to ensure the availability and working of government workers Civilsdaily (2022). The Aspirational District of Washim has created a database of the government land to serve as a guide for future policy decisions Civilsdaily (2022).

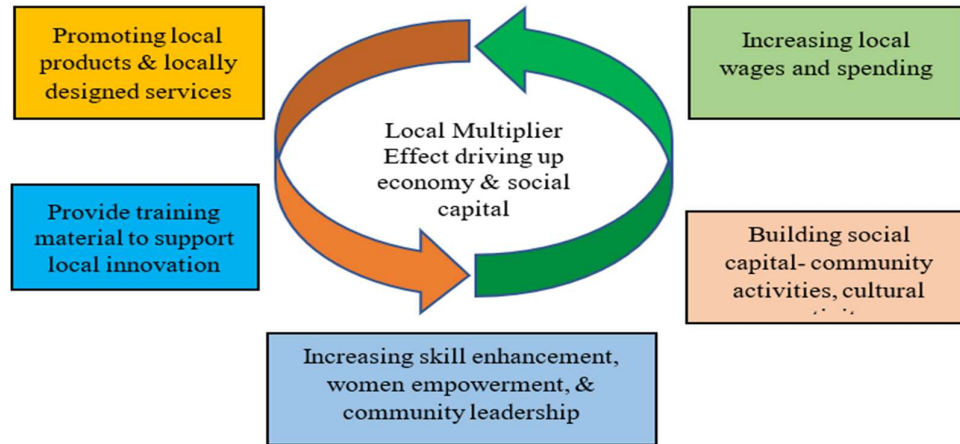
## 5.2. Role of Trusts & NGOs in Transformation

TATA Trusts and NITI Aayog collaborated to develop 112 districts in 27 states, to develop a customised mobile app to collect data in 17 vernacular languages. A dashboard was created to track the survey's progress in real-time (TATA Trusts 2020). Piramal Foundation had done a quality work in the areas of health and education in Aspirational Districts, by providing support, and focusing on leadership development, technology integration and implementing various innovative practices in these backward areas to improve capacity building (Piramal Foundation 2022). Similarly, health workers (ASHA) have been provided training to conduct door to door survey, to gather information about non-communicable diseases, vaccination drive, and ensure that each pregnant woman and child is immunised (NITI 2018).

Monitoring is essential for understanding the development and execution of smart villages, with regard to outcomes. It can assist in the identification of specific needs, barriers and enablers, as well as the strengths and weaknesses of the stakeholder engagement process. It can also help in adapting the strategies for successful monitoring and evaluation.

### 5.3. Framework for analyzing the multiplier effect

The goal of Aspirational District program is to converge the existing government and non-government schemes, resources, and other district-level developmental activities, to bring about meaningful transformation in these districts. It maximizes people's potential to boost up their abilities, to improve social networks, provide access to material resources, and capacity to influence key institutions. This will not only boost the local economy, improve social capital, but also create a local multiplier effect. We have proposed a framework to understand how this program tried to create the multiplier effect to improve the quality of life of these backward villages.



**Figure 2:** Author’s interpretation of Community capacity building approach for sustainable development

The aim of the initiative is to provide "quality of life experience" dimensions (QLE) across “livability of life, improve life ability of person, utility of life, and appreciation of life”, as identified by (LIFE) NITI Aayog. By providing skill enhancement programs and fostering innovative solutions, the initiative has been able to improve local social capital and create a local multiplier effect for community's requirements.

Monitoring is being done using the S.M.A.R.T. approach, which ensures that the actions are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and timely. These initiatives can be implemented through sponsors via a range of public and private NGOs.

## 6.0 Conclusion

ADP is a community capacity development program designed to strengthen local bodies, and address the capacity gaps in local governance. The aim is to empower all community members, particularly the poorest and the most disadvantaged, develop skills and competencies, such that they have more control over their lives, and contribute towards inclusive local development. By fostering innovation and utilizing digital technologies to solve local area challenges related to the economic, social, and environment aspects, it creates a link between individuals and government bureaucracy, young and dynamic stakeholders, and aspirational district fellows. Through the real-time data monitoring, numerous low-performing districts have improved their performance over the past three years, since the start of the initiative. The smart village parameters will help to monitor the performance and compare them with their peers to access the progress. This will lead to achieve SMART objectives and in turn lead to sustainable development.

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## **SOCIAL BUSINESS & SOCIAL MEDIA; INFLUENCE AND IMPACT**

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### ***Abstract***

The ever-growing population multiplied by the ever-ending needs of humans, the business establishment have gone way further in making profits to its shareholders. However, there was no societal impact which takes care of giving back to society until a Nobel Laureate coined the term social business where a business model benefits not the shareholders but benefits the stake holders. This case study deals with the growth of social business and its influence in uplifting society. Even traditional business is switching to social media to propel their business. This chapter defines the needs of social media and its impact on social business to make a bigger impact to the community and to its stake holders.

***Keywords:*** *Business, Social Business, Social Media*

## **1.0 What is Business?**

An organisation or entrepreneurial entity engaged in business, industrial, or professional activities is a business. Organising some economic production (of goods or services) is the goal of a company. Both for-profit and non-profit businesses serve a charitable purpose or advance a social cause. Businesses range in size and scope from small sole proprietorships to large multinational corporations. The efforts and activities of individuals to produce and sell goods and services for profit are also referred to as a business. Before beginning operations, businesses frequently require business plans. A formal document known as a business plan contains a list of the strategies and plans the company will use to achieve its goals and objectives (Adam Barone, 2022). Since business owners may be required to obtain permits and licenses and comply with registration requirements to begin operating legally, determining the company's legal structure is an important consideration. In many nations, corporations are considered legal entities, meaning they can own property, incur debt, and be sued in court. The majority of businesses are "for-profit" or run for-profit. In any case, a few organisations that aim to propel a specific reason without benefit are alluded to as not-for-benefit or charity. Charities, cultural, educational, and recreational enterprises, political and advocacy groups, and social service organisations are some examples of these organisations. Purchasing and selling goods and services are frequently part of business activities. Online, in a physical storefront, or on the side of the road, a business can happen anywhere. The industry in which a business operates frequently defines its business. Industries include, for instance, the real estate industry, the advertising industry, and the mattress manufacturing industry. The term "business" is frequently used to refer to transactions involving underlying goods or services. ExxonMobil, for instance, makes money by selling oil. A business can be organised in various ways and matched by multiple legal and tax structures (Adam Barone, 2022).

## **1.1 What is Social Business?**

A social cause-related business is known as a social business. The investors only put money into the company to use it for good rather than making a profit. But the investor might get his money back after a certain time and pay for the company's expenses. Even though a social business can be done anywhere, the most important areas are still healthcare, housing, nutrition, education, and financial services for the poor and marginalised. Success in the field of social business is determined by the impact or positive change it has brought to the existing system, in contrast to profit-making organisations. Although organisations engaged in social business are not necessarily prohibited from making profits, as was previously mentioned, profit takes a back seat. Profit, after all, makes sustainability possible for both the investor and the organisation. However, the company can only make a certain amount of money in profits, which must be reinvested in the business. Most of the time, social businesses can't make more money than they put in. It is extremely challenging to draw a line between profitability and social impact in social business, and after a few years of operation, social businesses frequently turn profitable (Prachi Juneja, 2015). Because what may begin as a mole may become a mountain five to six years later, it necessitates abandoning corporate ways of thinking. Social enterprise and the term "social business" are frequently misunderstood. In some ways, they are



similar, while in others, they are distinct. A social business may be referred to as a component of social enterprise or as one of how it demonstrates itself. Additionally, whereas a social business cannot receive funding from the public through grants or the government, a social enterprise can. Muhammad Yunus introduced the concept of social business, which he essentially presented as an alternative to capitalism. It was designed to overcome the flaws and failures of capitalism, which focuses solely on making money and neglects or ignores other aspects of the business. He devised a novel system in which social and commercial enterprises coexist. Likewise, social organisations are not kept from creating gains. However, they are not permitted to take dividends and reinvest the profit in the business to expand operations and provide maximum benefit to as many people as possible. The idea of social business emphasises an action-based system in which the poor participate in their growth rather than devising means to alleviate the poor or a trickle-down economic system to alleviate the poor. Prof. Muhammad Yunus used this to establish Grameen Bank and provide microcredit to the poor without requiring a mortgage on a home or other asset. This created opportunities for the poor and made it possible for them to participate in the free market, removing them from the disadvantage of relying on grants from the government. Last but not least, there are two kinds of social businesses. The first type focuses solely on addressing a social issue. The second kind is one that poor people own and can make money from. After that, the profits can be divided among the poor (the business owners). A business with specific social goals that serve its primary purpose is referred to as a social enterprise or social business (Prachi Juneja, 2015). Profits from social enterprises are primarily used to fund social programs and aim to maximise profits while simultaneously maximising benefits to society and the environment. In response to the traditional commercial enterprise, the U.K. developed the social enterprise concept in the late 1970s. The private and volunteer sectors intersect at the social enterprise level. They try to balance social and financial objectives like housing for low-income families or job training. Selling products and services to customers is the primary funding source, but grants also play a role. A social enterprise operates in a manner that is distinct from that of a typical business because the primary objective is not to maximise profits. Even though a social enterprise's primary goal isn't to make money, revenue is still significant to the business's survival. Applicable income separates a social venture from a conventional foundation that depends on external financing to satisfy its social mission. Despite this objective, social enterprises can still make money. Instead, it's simply that funding payouts to shareholders are secondary to reinvesting profits in their social mission. Social entrepreneurship, which focuses on individuals who develop solutions to social and environmental issues by utilising existing business strategies, is not to be confused with a social enterprise. While social enterprises are formed to fulfil a business purpose and address societal needs through their commercial activities, social entrepreneurs are looking for novel approaches to driving change. Cause-driven business is a social business. Investors and owners in a social business can gradually recoup their investment, but they cannot accept dividends after that point. The investors do not seek personal gain; the investment is made solely to achieve one or more social objectives through the operation of the business. In addition to achieving the social objective of providing healthcare for the poor, housing for the poor, financial services for the poor, nutrition for malnourished children, safe drinking water, introducing renewable energy, etc., the company must cover all costs and professionally turn a profit. The success of a social business is not

measured by how the company affects people or the environment but rather by how much money it makes in a given period. The company's sustainability indicates that it is operating as a business. The company's goal is to accomplish social objectives. Social entrepreneurship, which focuses on individuals who develop solutions to social and environmental issues by utilising existing business strategies, is not to be confused with a social enterprise (Prachi Juneja, 2015). While social enterprises are formed to fulfil a business purpose and address societal needs through their commercial activities, social entrepreneurs are looking for novel approaches to driving change. Cause-driven business is a social business. Investors and owners in a social business can gradually recoup their investment, but they cannot accept dividends after that point. The investors do not seek personal gain; the investment is made solely to achieve one or more social objectives through the operation of the business. In addition to achieving the social objective of providing healthcare for the poor, housing for the poor, financial services for the poor, nutrition for malnourished children, safe drinking water, introducing renewable energy, etc., the company must cover all costs and turn a profit. in a professional way. The success of a social business is not measured by how the company affects people or the environment but rather by how much money it makes in a given period. The company's sustainability indicates that it is operating as a business. The company's goal is to accomplish social objectives. Social enterprises can be for-profit or non-profit and can be many different kinds of organisations. The fact that all social enterprises typically have two primary objectives, the first of which is to generate profits and the second of which is to achieve the social, cultural, economic, or environmental outcomes outlined in the company's mission, is a feature that unites all of them. It is essential to remember that social enterprises operate within the framework of a conventional business. On the surface, they may appear to operate, look, and behave similarly to conventional businesses. However, understanding a social enterprise's mission, which outlines its primary social objectives, is essential for comprehension. Social enterprises continue to place a high value on profit generation because earnings are necessary to ensure the company's continued existence. However, one important difference exists: rather than distributing profits to shareholders, profits are reinvested in the company to support its social mission. It's important to remember that social enterprises are not considered social enterprises if they do not sell anything to their customers. Instead, it is thought of as a social program (Prachi Juneja, 2015).

## **1.2 The Purpose of Social Business**

Business ventures have traditionally been based on one of two contradictory business models. A not-for-profit, charity, or commercial enterprise would be established to maximise social and environmental returns. However, times have changed, and as a result, business practices have changed. A relatively new continuum of business models has emerged due to consumers' increased social awareness, businesses' increased sense of accountability, and tighter government regulations. Social entrepreneurs are starting businesses in the middle of the spectrum between pure financial and pure social returns. "Blended value," a non-divisible combination of economic, social, and environmental value that generates blended returns, is the goal of these innovators (Bugg-Levine, Antony; Emerson, Jed., 2011). Social

entrepreneurs, who combine an interest in achieving social and environmental objectives with an entrepreneurial spirit and sound business principles, are gaining support from investors and customers who share their values. Interest in social entrepreneurship has increased over the past few years, and business owners and leaders of non-profit organisations are proud to identify as social entrepreneurs. Social entrepreneurs are innovators and risk-takers who use sound business principles to establish for-profit or non-profit organisations that address social or environmental needs. Social enterprises that result from such innovation can address various global and local issues, including affordable housing, sustainable agriculture, green energy projects, poverty reduction, job creation, and microfinance initiatives. They have been described as leaders in social change because they combine an entrepreneurial spirit with a concern for the “social” and economic bottom line. Numerous new terms are gaining traction within the expanding social economy sector. However, the distinctions between frequently overlapping terms can be perplexing in this relatively new area. The three primary venture types that fall in the middle of the spectrum are outlined in the following table (Bugg-Levine, Antony; Emerson, Jed, 2011).

### **1.3 The Impact of Social Business**

Social entrepreneurship, a rapidly developing field that uses an entrepreneurial approach to generate social impact and is essential to economic growth and inclusion, contributes to improving a nation’s social fabric and economy. Jobs can be created, new products and services can be offered, sustainability can be promoted, and there is hope for the future through social enterprises. The social entrepreneurship industry employs approximately 40 million people worldwide and involves over 200 million volunteers, according to the European Commission, and it is expanding. However, social enterprises are not just for developing nations. In 2015, France's social and solidarity economy sector was responsible for 223,000 businesses, 2.34 million workers, and 10.3% of the country's employment. Additionally, it was responsible for nearly 8% of the GDP. According to Social Enterprise UK's (SEUK) 2018 report, "The Hidden Revolution," the UK's social enterprise sector contributes three times as much to the economy as agriculture. It has a much greater impact than previously thought. The UK's economy is worth £60 billion, accounting for 3% of GDP and 5% of all employment. The report also found that the top five cooperatives in Britain, a social enterprises, pay more taxes than Amazon, Facebook, Apple, eBay, and Starbucks. Social entrepreneurs and enterprises are a bit hazy despite their positive economic impact. For instance, there is no universal definition of social entrepreneurship (Financier Worldwide, 2020). The European Research Network on Social and Economic Policy defines social enterprises as "non-profit private organisations dealing with the production of goods and the rendering of services, which is directly linked with their clear objective that the community should benefit from their activity," according to their definition. They incorporate a variety of stakeholders into their management bodies and rely on collective dynamics where they profoundly esteem their independence and face the financial challenge related with their exercises." Ethical practices like impact investing, conscious consumption, and programs for corporate social responsibility are widely used in social entrepreneurship. To bring about positive social change through their projects, social entrepreneurs frequently are

willing to take risks and put in the time and effort. Naturally, the modern social entrepreneur is driven by profit. Still, they also take a more holistic approach to business and appear to be more concerned with the planet's and humanity's future. These change agents employ entrepreneurial strategies to provide systemic solutions to environmental and societal issues. Social entrepreneurs frequently drive the production of environmentally friendly goods, satisfy the requirements of an underserved community, or concentrate on charitable endeavours. Social entrepreneurs promote a wide range of sustainable development-focused solutions through hybrid, for-profit, and non-profit ventures. Social entrepreneurs and social enterprises would prioritise projects that increase financial inclusion, increase access to renewable energy, provide high-quality educational resources, and provide clean water (Financier Worldwide, 2020). Social entrepreneurship will significantly drive economic expansion in the future as employees and customers become more concerned about environmental, social, and governance (ESG) issues. Some of the world's biggest investment banking and asset management companies are backing ESG. One of the most obvious and striking effects of social entrepreneurship is the creation of jobs, especially for those from underprivileged, underserved, or ignored social groups. Social enterprises, in the words of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), are "intermediate between unemployment and the open labour market, "Reintegrating large numbers of workers into the labour market can have significant social and financial effects, even from a purely numerical perspective. According to the OECD, social economy organisations (SEOs) make up about 6.5 per cent of all employment in the European Union (EU). Social enterprises will require some form of government support in the coming months due to the devastating effects of the COVID-19 outbreak. Social enterprises have received little attention, even though financial aid packages for businesses, employees, and self-employed individuals have been announced (Financier Worldwide, 2020). It is unknown whether this group will have specific access to government funding during such a risky and unprecedented period. Social enterprises have already begun receiving assistance from additional creditors. For instance, Open Road Alliance, a fund based in the United States that specialises in providing social enterprises facing financial difficulties with short-term bridge loans, is providing organisations fighting the virus with loans and grants of up to \$100,000. Netflix and Facebook, two tech companies, are also making funds available. Social business is filling quickly in size, degree and backing. It is being utilised by an unprecedented number of organisations in emerging markets to address social issues. The health of many of these projects is being improved, the environment is being protected, and more economic opportunities are being created (Financier Worldwide, 2020).

## **2.0 What is Media?**

Media is the plural form of "medium," which means "any channel of communication" broadly. Art, news, educational content, and a wide variety of other types of information are all examples of this, and they can include anything from printed paper to digital data. Media can have phones, television, the Internet, and anything else that can reach or influence people. Media refers to data storage devices (hard drives, CD-ROMs, diskettes, etc.) and informatics as well as the ones used to transmit it (cables, wires) or even to spread it in various forms (such

as videos, sounds, podcasts, and so forth). Media outlets today are increasingly focusing on the digital aspect of this field. All forms of electronic communication that traverse the globe via computer networks and fibre optic cables are included in modern digital media. The Internet or social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram are examples of some of these contemporary media that have reformed our reality (Justin Stoltzfus, 2020). There are two primary categories of media broadcast and print. The Web has likewise arisen as a central part, as a quickly developing number of individuals worldwide get their news, motion pictures, and so forth online. Newspapers, journals, magazines, books, and reports are all included in the print media category. It is the oldest type, and although it has suffered since the Internet's inception, most people still use it. Radio and television emerged at the beginning and middle of the 20th century and are examples of broadcast media. Most people still get their news from radio and television, but experts say online sources will soon take over. Throughout the course of recent years, link news has filled in significance. As more and more people look for news, entertainment, and educational content online, the Internet, specifically blogs and websites, is quickly becoming a viable and vital means of communication. The term 'practical,' in business, implies fit for creating benefits for a long time. Most free email services include little boxes that display advertisements and other messages; virtually every part of the Internet has become a communication medium. The 1990s marked the beginning of the Internet as we know it today. Only 1% of the world's population was online in 1995, whereas over 49% are today. During the Cold War in the United States in the 1960s, scientists and the military were concerned about a missile attack that could disable the telephone system, which led to the development of the Internet concept. Stephen Peddling, an English hypothetical physicist, cosmologist, creator and Head of Exploration at the Middle for Hypothetical Cosmology inside the College of Cambridge, once said: "Science, like every other area of life, requires superheroes for the media, but there is no clear line between their abilities (Market Business News, n.d.). The computer-based technology that makes it easier to share ideas, thoughts, and information through virtual communities and networks is referred to as social media. Users can share personal information, documents, videos, and photos electronically through internet-based social media. Through web-based software or applications, users engage with social media on a computer, tablet, or smartphone. While social media is widely used in Europe and the United States, Asia, like Indonesia, leads the list of countries that use it. As of October 2021, more than 4.5 billion people use social media. Businesses that wanted to take advantage of a popular new communication method to reach out to customers later adopted social media, which began as a way to communicate with friends and family. The ability to connect and share information with anyone on the planet—or with many people simultaneously- is a crucial feature of social media's power. More than 3.8 billion people worldwide use social media.

## **2.1 What is social media?**

Social media is an ever-evolving and changing field, with new apps like TikTok and Clubhouse joining established social networks like Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, and Instagram almost every year. It is anticipated that the number of people using social media in the United States will reach approximately 257 million by 2023. The Pew Research Centre says that social media

users are usually younger. At least one social media platform was used by nearly 90% of 18- to 29-year-olds. Additionally, these users typically have higher levels of education and earn more than \$75,000 annually. There are a variety of tech-enabled activities that could be used as social media. These exercises incorporate photograph sharing (Maya Dollarhide, 2021), writing for a blog, social gaming, informal organisations, video sharing, business organisations, virtual universes, surveys, and more. Social media is used by politicians and governments alike to communicate with voters and constituents. People use social media to stay in touch with their friends and family. Some people will use various social media applications to share their thoughts, feelings, insights, and emotions, find career opportunities, and connect with people worldwide who share their interests. Participants in these activities are a part of a social network that exists only online. Social media is an essential tool for businesses. Companies use the platform to find customers, interact with them, increase sales through advertising and promotion, observe consumer trends, and provide customer support or service. The impact that social media has on businesses is significant. It enables the integration of social interactions on e-commerce sites and facilitates communication with customers. Its capacity to gather data assists the centre in promoting endeavours and marketing with exploring. Because it makes it possible to send targeted, timely, and exclusive sales and coupons to potential customers, it aids in product and service promotion (Maya Dollarhide, 2021). Through loyalty programs linked to social media, social media can also assist in developing customer relationships. The way we interact with one another online has changed as a result of social media. It enables us to connect, keep in touch with long-distance friends, access an infinite amount of information at our fingertips, and learn about what's happening in the world in real time. In many ways, social media has made the world seem more approachable and helped many people online find common ground. Using social media is linked to having more friends and a more comprehensive range of personal networks, especially in emerging economies, according to a Pew Research Centre survey. With 57% of teens meeting a friend online, many teens begin friendships virtually. Social media marketing is also used by businesses to target customers on their phones and computers, build a following to build a loyal fan base, and develop a brand culture. A few organisations, like Denny's, have made whole personas on Twitter to market to more youthful customers utilising their language and personas ( Maya Dollarhide, 2021).

### **2.1.1 The purpose of social media**

People are using social media for many different things. The acronym SLIM stands for the four primary uses of social media sharing, learning, interacting, and marketing. Firstly, the term sharing explains many ways to share information and ideas on social media. A person can publish their thoughts in writing through images, videos, or voice recordings using a variety of platforms where they can also provide the audience with links to fascinating pictures, videos, and articles. The data offered can be either private or public. For instance, a person can send a private message to one person via email and broadcast a video to a global audience through YouTube. Before sharing information, always take into account in terms of communication situation (Inquire, n.d.). Secondly, learning tools can also be made use of social media. A person can learn about what's going on in their community and around the world or get updates

about their friends and family. They can get a sense of the most recent news almost immediately, thanks to the speed of the information flow. Today, social media is often used to spread breaking news before traditional media like newspapers and television can cover it in depth. Social media can also reveal public sentiment regarding current events' most pressing issues or, on a less urgent level, opinions regarding a new movie or restaurant (Inquire, n.d.). Thirdly, social media's interactive nature may be their most powerful feature. Thanks to social media, time and distance are no longer barriers between people. An individual can talk to people in person anywhere in the world using video chat technologies like Skype. They can text and chat digitally with friends and family on Facebook and mobile devices. People can even interact with media members, public officials, professional athletes, and celebrities on Twitter (Inquire, n.d.). Finally, social media are increasingly being used for marketing. Social media is used by businesses to advertise themselves and their products. Charitable organisations promote charity events and raise funds. People advertise themselves to potential employers. Additionally, you can promote events and concepts that are significant to you through social media (Inquire, n.d.).

### **2.1.2 Use of social media for Business**

Social media for business is no longer optional. Reaching customers, gaining valuable insights, and growing the brand are essential. With over half of the world's population using social media, platforms like Facebook, Instagram or Twitter are a natural place to reach new and highly targeted potential customers. Creating real human connections is one of the key benefits of social media for business. Introduce followers to the people who make up the company and showcase how existing customers are using and benefiting from the products. Authenticity builds trust. Trust, in turn, creates marketing receptiveness and drives new business. And social is the best place to get real (McLachlan and Newberry, 2021). Social media offers an easy and low-commitment way for potential customers to express interest in business and products. Lead generation is an essential benefit of social media for businesses; many social networks offer advertising formats designed to collect leads. As social media users continue to grow and social sales tools evolve, social networks will become increasingly important for product search and eCommerce. The time is right to align your social marketing efforts with sales goals.

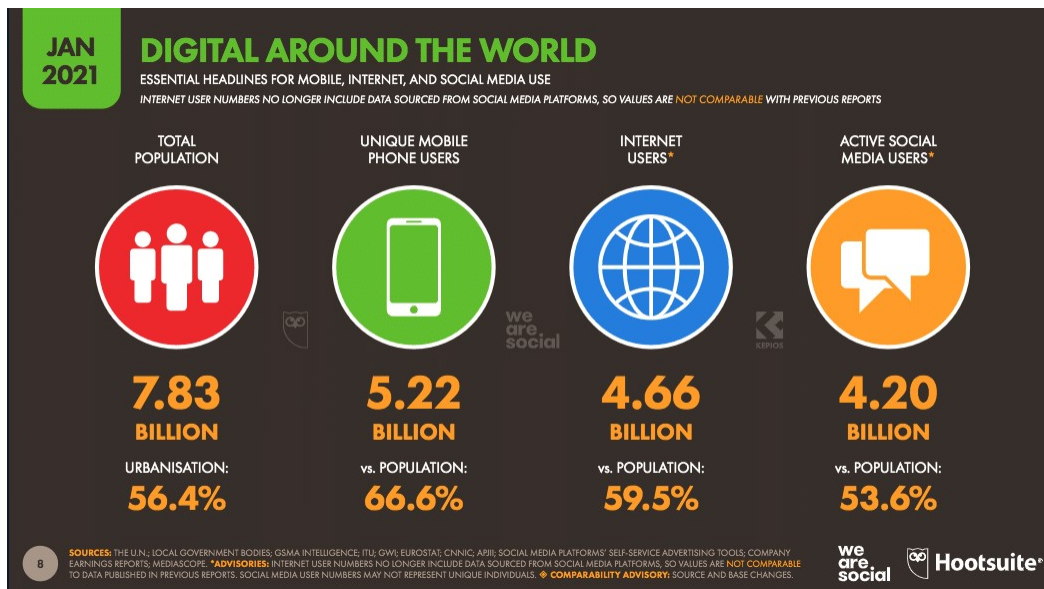


Figure 1: Digital Around the world  
 Source: (McLachlan and Newberry, 2021)

### 2.1.3 Use of social media for Social Business by far

Social business is not just about social media marketing but can involve all business functions. It's about collaboration, community, customer-centricity and changing evolutions in how we do business based on social principles and technologies. There is no universal list of tips for becoming a social business. It's not a matter of tips and tricks (i-scoop, 2022). Becoming a social business is a gradual process involving many maturation levels – expressed in maturity models. However, one of the first stages of social business is engaging audiences, customers, prospects, fans and communities with relevant content, valuable conversations and social platforms. Ten years ago, the pioneering social network MySpace hadn't yet launched. Today, over 80% of the world's internet users interact with social media, so much that social now accounts for approximately one in every five hours spent online. A McKinsey Global Institute study estimated that businesses' better use of social media could unlock from \$900 billion to \$1.3 trillion in additional value if businesses learned to use social media more effectively (i-scoop, 2022).

At its simplest, social business is when a 'social organisation' engages with an audience using a social platform. The audience could be internal, external, or both, and the organisation could use one platform or many (refer to figure 2).





Figure 2: Social Business Model  
(Texavi, 2015)

While organisations are using social, they are at the early development end of the Social Maturity Model. The social Maturity Model helps businesses assess and adjust their activities at each phase in this journey. The Social Business Maturity Model has milestones, checkpoints and metrics that help businesses with periodic assessment of their progress (refer to figure 3 below). The model, a continuum defined by several social experts such as the people at social dashboard powerhouse Hootsuite, runs from the primitive Social Advocate stage, where an organisation designates an employee as the ‘social’ contact, all the way to the highly integrated Social Enterprise, in which empowered teams from large organisations to interact across multiple time zones, cultures and social media platforms, delivering coordinated communication in accord with a well-developed policy. Companies at the Social Advocate stage can’t be expected to optimise the benefits of social (i-scoop, 2022).



Figure 3: Texavi's Social Business Maturity Model  
(Texas, 2015)

#### 2.1.4 Reach of social media in Social Business

Armed with a fundamental understanding of what consumers think of their brands, the most effective social organisations then react, attempting to engage in a dialogue. While most companies (71% in a recent survey) think that customers engage with them on social to learn about new products, most consumers say the most important reason to follow an organisation's social marketing efforts is "discounts." Successful social players incorporate this insight into their marketing. If they don't always offer perks or coupons, they know to at least offer their customers advice and tips. Understanding why your customers follow you on social media is necessary to engage them in an initial dialogue. The companies with the most success using social media also learn how to move from conversations to conversions because they measure their efforts and then analyse and fine-tune them. They track not only "Likes" and Retweets but also clickthroughs and sales. They follow their steps from social messages to conversion with Google Analytics or other analytics tools and evaluate their results against corporate Key Performance Indicators.

### 2.3 Application of social media for Social Business

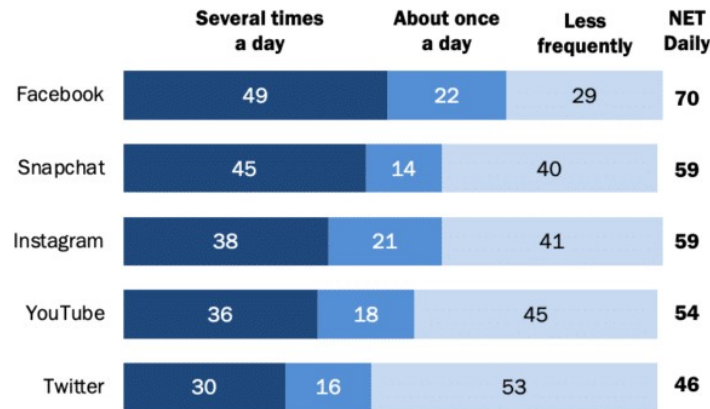
#### 2.3.1 Increase brand awareness

The social media with its current numbers of users has a great chance in increasing the awareness of any brand. Latest research carried out by pew Research center which is attached is the example that every business is looking forward to.

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### Seven-in-ten Facebook users say they visit site daily

Among U.S. adults who say they use \_\_\_\_, % who use that site ...



Note: Respondents who did not give an answer are not shown. "Less frequently" category includes users who visit these sites a few times a week, every few weeks or less often.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Jan. 25-Feb. 8, 2021.

"Social Media Use in 2021"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

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Figure 4: Daily Statistics by Users

### 2.3.2 Make a mark for your brand

The 2021 Edelman Trust Barometer states that the people across the world started to distrust on government, NGOs and media. With just 61 trust business is an institution. People are looking to brands for insights and information... and there's no better place to share that than social media. Social media offers the business the opportunity to make a mark for their brand make start making connection with its customers.

### 2.3.3 Better way to Lead

Social media offers the cheapest and the best way to generate leads to your business. Not only generate leads to your business it also creates traffic to your website. Social media also offers a platform for chatting directly with the clients and customers. Many businesses use their social media sites to learn the art of making money through their knowledge and share their experience.

### 2.3.4 Social Sales

With the help of social media business can reach new customer through new contacts, as the number of social media users increases so does the tools of social media also evolves leading a new way to boost the sales funnel in reaching out to new customers.

### 2.3.5 Collaborate with Influencers

The business does not have to generate content where as they can tie up with influencers and ambassadors to recommend and promote the sales of the product through influencers endorsement of celebrity endorsement. There are million following few influencers that can create a huge impact in the business.

### 2.3.6 Be there to reach out

Research carried out by Hootsuite clearly states that the current generation are not shying away in any form to research about your business its operations, mission and vision. The more caring the business is there is high chances that the younger generation will get back to you. Be present in the most prominent social media platform as it reaches out all the wide range of audience.

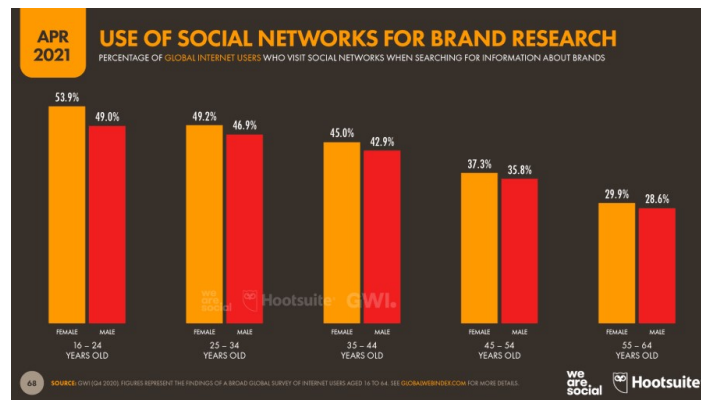


Figure 5: Credit- Hootsuite

## 3.0 Advantages of social media in Business

### 3.1 Better tool for communication

You as a business using your social media tool can put your point of view and justify your stand when a customer is angry with you or if something is wrong, or somebody is purposefully putting your business in jeopardy. Whether or not you are present to answer, your customers are already chatting about you on social media. If you and your staff are alert, you can spot significant social media posts about your business and respond to both the positive and the negative before they become serious problems.

### 3.2 Better tool to connect

Social networks give you the option to communicate directly with customers and admirers, as well as for them to communicate directly with your company. Social media allows for two-way communication as opposed to traditional media, which only allows for one-way communication. You must be involved if you want your clients and followers to be involved

as well. Remain engaged and address questions and comments on your own social media posts in a way that represents your business.

### **3.3 Be there for your client**

Beyond that, almost half of social media users anticipate a response from firms on social media within three hours. People expect brands to be accessible on social media and seek out their social accounts for customer support. If you have the correct tools, social customer care can coexist with more traditional customer service. You can manage incoming communications via social media, email, text messaging, and live chat with the use of a customer care platform like Sparkcentral by Hootsuite.

### **3.4 Know your clients**

In real time, social media generates a tonne of data on your clients. To make more informed business judgements, you can use such knowledge. The majority of the main social networks give analytics that reveal user demographics who engage with your account. This might help you modify your social media marketing plan so that it more effectively targets your target market.

### **3.5 Get to know more about your Brand:**

Social media monitoring was previously recognised as a crucial component of audience engagement. But it's also a vital resource for brand-specific intelligence. While it's critical to understand how frequently people are mentioning your brand online, it's equally crucial to understand what they are actually saying and how they feel about it. Numerous mentions might be a positive thing. However, if you're receiving a lot of remarks with a bad attitude, you need to act quickly to identify what went wrong and fix it. Utilizing social media for your company enables you to monitor sentiment analysis so you can safeguard the reputation of your brand.

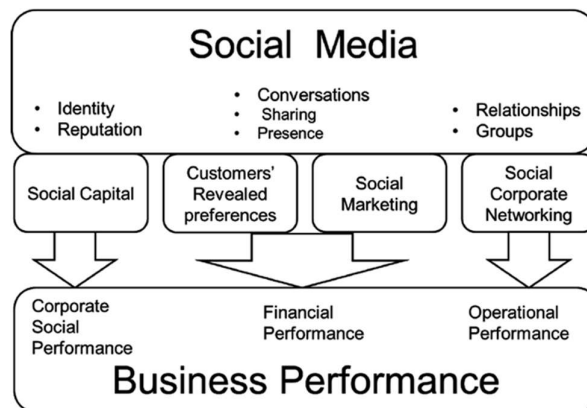
Benefits of using social media for social business:

- Social media has significant advertising potential as it is easily available to all online users and the Businesses engage with customers directly online (Bajpai, 2012).
- Simeon Edosomwan et (2011), Changed the way people engage and communicate on a global scale. The channel of communication and its efficacy inside the organization have increased as a result of the use of social media websites. Professional benefits since these social media offer collaboration without industry leaders.
- Mohammad Yousef Abuhashesh(2014) ,Consumers are increasingly more likely to use online social networks Business has the chance to communicate with customers. There is potential to improve marketing, public relations, and customer service.
- Parveen, Farzana (2012), Either the marketing or corporate communication department oversees social media. Governmental and business entities use social media as a

communication tool. Social media has been acknowledged as the most effective tool for company.

#### 4.0 Social Business and social media

Resources- and capability-based perspectives held that a company's ability to effectively transform resources (assets, knowledge, and processes) into capabilities (e.g., customer links, sales skills, and reputation placement) that result in competitive advantages, determines how successfully the firm conducts business. A conceptual framework that Jordi and Jordi (2015) introduced highlights the mechanisms through which social media resources are converted into business performance capabilities. The seven types of resources found on social media platforms include identification, dialogues, sharing, presence, relationships, reputation, and groups. However, in the world of business,



**Figure 6: Conceptual Framework on Relationship between social media and Business Performance**

Performance is measured in terms of organisational, financial, and social performance qualities. Sales volume, rate of growth, profitability, and stock price are taken into account while calculating financial performance. When evaluating operational effectiveness, consider position

Measurements include new product introduction, product quality, operational effectiveness, and customer happiness. Finally, the success of a company's social initiatives is largely dependent on its capacity to interact honestly with society, with a focus on reputation management and branding.

Social capital, consumers' revealed preferences, social marketing, and corporate networking are the four interactions that have an impact on the performance of social media and businesses. A group of social media resources and business performance domains are connected to each of the channels. These social media performance channels, however, are not mutually exclusive, and they are not all required to be active at once.

The extension of social media that influences how a company interacts with society is referred to as the "social capital channel." Resources related to identity and reputation are converted into corporate social performance (CSP). Trustworthy relationships are built through the company's social capital, which is derived from its corporate brand and reputation. This results from actions like those observed on Wikipedia, blogs, and search engines. Currently, social media exposes businesses to unrecorded public criticism. Since studies have shown that social media has a direct impact on CSP, firms in today's business environment are forced to move beyond the usual lines. They must not only promote their operations and goods and services, but also take it a step further by interacting with society. (Siti & Katijah, 2019, ; Jordi & Juan, 2015).

Social marketing adds value for financial resources in addition to customers' disclosed preferences. Social media marketing is an expanded kind of social media where "conversations," "sharing," and "presence" are used to create valuable commercial capabilities. In the past, businesses have relied largely on advertising mediums like print billboards, radio, and television to launch new goods and services. Direct marketing agents deliver traditional media marketing, which involves awareness and understanding. Businesses have incorporated social media as a complementary tool in their marketing plans due of its new edge (Siti & Katijah, 2019).

The final component of Jordi and Pardi's (2015) conceptual framework that affects operational capabilities is social corporate networking. Social corporate networking refers to the loose connections made by employees of corporations using social networks. A variety of social networks are involved in this mode of communication; two examples are LinkedIn and ResearchGate, which are professional social media platforms.

## **5.0 Conclusion**

Online social platforms offer a low cost, highly accessible means of communication that promote interaction and facilitate relationships with people both inside and outside of one's immediate social circle. This communication channel also facilitates performance activities like online discussion, information exchange, and client sourcing.

Even though social media marketing has several advantages over traditional marketing, its effects on business performance are not really different from those of traditional marketing. Additionally, compared to traditional marketing methods, social media marketing has a higher reputational risk.

The strategies and goals of advertising tools have altered due to social media resources (conversations, sharing, and presence) on Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter social networks, blogs, and microblogs.

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## THE STRUGGLE IS REAL AND HOW TO SURVIVE IT

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### *Abstract*

Economists and International Monetary Fund (IMF) predicted year 2023 is going to be the toughest year as inflation hike up and world economy is falling into recession. Malaysia has seen year 2022 itself was a challenging year as Bank Negara Malaysia raised overnight policy (OPR) fourth times within May to November even though Malaysia's economic activity has strengthened further in the third quarter of the year. Malaysia's inflation in 2022 resulted slightly above initial forecasts, to a five-year high of 3.3% year on year and the Consumer Price Index (CPI) rose to a high of 4.7% in August. Inflationary pressures have pushed the cost-of-living soars which has alarmed the Malaysians financial well-being especially for the B40 group. This chapter describes the background of some government progressive efforts in supporting B40 to ensure their financial well-being through financial aids and financial literacy. However, we also highlighted on the need for revision of eligibility criteria for financial assistance and support. Finally, we emphasize on the right technique to manage money for lower income groups and those who cannot make ends meet.

**Keywords:** *B40, financial distress, financial well-being, financial literacy, money management*

## **1.0 Introduction**

Malaysia has set up its vision to be a high-income nation by year 2024. In achieving this vision, Malaysian government has taken progressive initiatives to reduce and control the price of goods and services as well as raising households' income ensuring the citizens well-being in the high cost of living. Well-being encompasses the broad aspect of overall living quality which includes the level of income, job security, housing facilities, quality of living standard, healthcare access, education facilities, environment, and social bonding, etc (Hicks, Tinkler and Allin, 2013). Financial well-being is an essential concern for individuals, societies as well as the government to achieve the vision. Assisting and supporting the financial well-being of lower-income groups is a critical concern of any government as this group struggles the most to meet their needs.

Hike in inflation and cost of living makes the lower income group more vulnerable due to their high financial commitment but low disposable income (Mayan, Nor and Samat, 2017). According to Shafie Rohami (2011), the increase in price of goods, especially food had caused the dizziness greed that monopolizes business deal until the government is unable to control the price of goods on the market. Mayan et al. (2017) has suggested several proposals to improve the standard of living and household income of B40 group comprising of empowering human capital, physical capital, and financial capital. Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development has cascading functions through its portfolios' and one of them is through *Jabatan Kebajikan Masyarakat* to improve on the social wellbeing of lower income household.

The Ministry has devised some strategy by throwing financial assistance, executing knowledge and skills training programme under their wing. This creates awareness to empower people on the spiritual and temporal requires determination to change their life by changing themselves (Mayan et al. 2017). Knowledge and skills can be improved through modern technology offering free access to education and better training for self-development.

### **1.1 The Newly Poor Group**

The Malaysian household is categorized into three different income groups, B40, M40 and T20. Bottom 40% (B40) reflects those with household income of lower than RM4,850 classification based on the Household Income & Basic Amenities Survey Report 2019. Recent findings from the survey conducted by the Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM), 20% of households from the M20 group (income bracket up to RM10,970) have also slipped into the B40 group due to the Covid-19 pandemic fallout. The escalating living costs, the rise of the Overnight Policy Rate (OPR) by Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM) affecting those with loan repayments, risk them to default. These financially at-risk groups are now experiencing greater financial hardship. It is even worse when the newly poor groups (M40) are stuck with not much access to incentives and assistance from the government as compared to B40.

### **1.2 The Struggle**

DOSM in its Salaries & Wages Survey Report 2021 in October 2022 provides insights of a worsening trend. Based on the government's Poverty Line Income (PLI) of RM2,208 in 2019, is slightly less than the median individual income in 2021 of RM2,250. This has yet to factor in the escalating inflation rate, cost of living and compulsory deduction (such as taxes, *zakat* and contribution to social security scheme) imposed on households, paired with slower wage growth where many will then fall into the poor category.

"I was devastated and stressed out when my application for assistance did not go through as I fall under the M40 category. For example, I recently applied for full assistance for my third child who is suffering from mild autism, but the household income for applicants stated in the form should be below RM5,000. Hence, I was automatically not eligible for assistance." shared Nurul, a 39-year-old civil servant and mother of four.

[https://www.nst.com.my/news/nation/2022/12/860974/malaysias-new-poor-dilemma?utm\\_source=dable](https://www.nst.com.my/news/nation/2022/12/860974/malaysias-new-poor-dilemma?utm_source=dable)

The requirements are based on income and ignore the number of dependents. Obviously, for M40 who has one child compared to another who has four young, school-going children like Nurul will struggle to make ends meet. This situation apparently supports findings from research performed by Brown, Ghosh and Taylor (2012) presenting the higher the number of children in the household will associate the household positively with more financial issues such as those related to accommodation, loan repayments, annual holidays, new furniture, new clothes, and entertaining friends and family. Having to explain to kids why they can't have new school uniforms or having to ask family members for a loan, or simply avoiding socializing to avoid the associated costs of paying for drinks out are quite frustrating and embarrassing.

*Will there be lights at the end of the tunnel for these left outs? What are the options available for Nurul and many more?*

## **2.0 My Dilemma**

It was a sunny afternoon in late October when I sent a virtual meeting invitation to Nadia, a finance lecturer, to brainstorm on the scope of my financial management sharing in another 1 week. "They have to make sure they have enough emergency funds, minimum of 3 to 6 months of their current salary" and she added "invest in medical or even life insurance". I was stunned by the suggestions. "But Nadia, they may not even have anything to spare by the end of the month." Even those who fall under the M40 category might struggle with the notion of savings, let alone those B40 people. What they earn is just below the average income and may have to take on side jobs to make up the cost. These people are relying on government assistance to survive!

"Well, you're right then!" "In that case, you may want to emphasize the importance of having the intention to climb out of the poverty pit and change for the better. They need motivation, throw some ideas on how they can do that".

"I have a friend who's a housewife that can pay her own car installment every month by just putting sweet porridge that she home cooked at a few stalls nearby. Tell them to start simple, with whatever skills that they have and resources that they own, such as offering folding cloth services and many more."

## **3.0 The Clients**

Key financial functions include money management, insurance, loan, and saving or also known as investment. To manage money, you must have lots of money to begin with. This is a myth. Skepticism surrounding the importance of finance management starts with the claim of not having lots of money that needs to be managed. The exposure to financial literacy will improve one's financial wellbeing and quality of life.



Figure 1: B40 clients who participated in the Mind Transformation Program

There were almost 80 *Jabatan Kebajikan Malaysia* (JKM) clients in front of me, and I started by quoting Thomas Robert Dewar ‘Minds are like parachutes. They function when they are open.’ and asked them to just say out loud what they see on my slide. “It’s a glass of water!” “It’s a half glass of water!” And I started to add on, “you’re right! But do you realize the glass is half full?” And I looked at their faces. Some just stared at me while some nodded. “In the next 30 minutes, I would like all of you to have an open mind, be positive and you may just need to empty your cups to learn something from my sharing.”

To receive the said government assistance, each of these clients must be screened and pass some predetermined criteria. It is their right to be assessed fairly whether they are eligible to receive such assistance. However, some criteria are in dire need of revision, especially to also factor in the number of dependents, put some weightage on urban or non-urban area, and many more.

### **3.1 In Action**

To claim that you don’t have anything to be managed is not quite right. Wealth is very subjective, and it will not be easy to define, especially quantitatively. From Ibnu Abbas & Anas bin Malik R.A, Rasulullah SAW said: ‘If a son of Adam, i.e., a human being, had a valley of gold, he would certainly desire to have two more valleys of gold, and would not fill his mouth (feeling satisfied) with anything other than earth (that is, after death) and God accepts the repentance of those who repent.’ So, what’s more important is to manage it well no matter how much you have.

By the end of the sharing, we wanted to emphasize on the importance of having a sound management of cash flow to make ends meet and sustain any economic shocks such as unemployment or any adverse life events such as falling sick or vehicle breakdowns.

Households that fail to do so are referred to as financially vulnerable and having economic hardship.

“Discuss and present how you would spend a RM1,500 income in 10 minutes.” One of the participants remarked, “Not enough madam!” I can only offer a small smile. Not so sure the reply refers to either the time allocated or the money to be apportioned. I believed it refers to the latter. Obviously, if that is the only source of income, the household is considered poor. The participants were asked to draw up a flow chart detailing how the money will be spent and saved.



Figure 2: Flow of Money presented by the group

We found that from 8 groups, only 2 of the groups indicated that they would set aside a portion for savings. The findings may give us some hints. The rest merely listing out all their routine expenditures. This practice is against the saving concept. Our focus was to understand the current financial practices that they had in place. The ‘flow of money’ exercise provided some insights into the macro-level organization of our participants’ household financial management. Overall, the results provide weak evidence in favor of household priority over savings. As pointed out by Brown, savings are crucial in mitigating a household’s future financial problems such as difficulties in repaying loans. It is for rainy days.

#### **4.0 The Current Standing and Future**

Financial management deals with routine, day-to-day money matters. To start managing our finance, it is crucial to first identify the level of our financial vulnerability through some important symptoms, such as problems in getting to the end of the month or inability to face unexpected expenses. Households that failed to sustain economic shocks such as job loss and spiking inflation rate are referred to as financially vulnerable, financially fragile, having economic hardship, or possessing low financial capability. Financial distress associated with failure in cash management can be persistent throughout one’s lifetime. (Brown et al., 2012)

RinggitPlus Malaysian Financial Literacy Survey 2022 revealed that 70 percent of Malaysians saved less than RM500 per month in 2022 or did not save at all. Malaysia PwC partner, mentioned during recent interview with The Straits Times; despite low wages and higher inflation, Malaysians were spending more post-pandemic on holidays or other leisure expenses rather than saving. Sum up by a financial planner in the interview, it foresees number of Malaysians filing for bankruptcy increasing in the coming year, with depleting cash reserves and decline in income. This could extend to financial distress and impending recession.

Conceptually, financial distress can result from 6 array of reasons other than income and wealth, such as unsustainable borrowing, poor management, adverse life events, and absence of financial instruments (Anderloni et al., 2012).

#### **4.1 The way out**

Households with lack of sufficient savings need to be exposed to the value of creating and following a budget. Creating a household budget can serve many purposes: getting out of debt faster, saving for a long-term goal such as a house or retirement, or simply getting ready for any hardship in the future. Budgeting has proven to successfully trim down financial worries or having to make ends meet and more likely to achieve their financial goals.

Melzer (2011) suggested financial distress of households to be gauged through checklist checking difficulty of paying bills (utility bills, rent, mortgage, and other bills), skipping meals due to lack of money, and postponing medical care. In short, measuring households' financial standing is the first step that leads to financial goal setting to prepare our financial plan.

Mental budgeting is an approach normally implied at lower income and wealth levels, and when the household cannot make ends meet. This budgeting approach implies the mental separation of the household budgets. It clearly improves keeping track of household finances and financial management. Individuals avoid having a negative balance in any mental budget account. For instance, a portion of money will be set aside for work purpose or expansion of business, while a certain percentage for food, and there's also allocation for savings, gifts, and donation. (Antonides et al., 2011; Habibah et al., 2018) Strathman et al. (1994) describe short term time preference put emphasize on the present, while long term time preference involves saving and precaution.



Figure 3: The Basic Technique for Cash Management

The right technique in managing cash flow is to set aside at least 10 percent from the income for general savings, not including emergency funds or other financial goals like holiday trips. For this specific purpose, you need to create specific funds. The next important move is to repay loans before we can finally allocate the rest for those fixed commitments like rent and those expenditure which is subject to variation like food and other mindful spending like donation. The budget execution plan can vary. (Vyas et al., 2016) in their study have identified 3 patterns and themes from their research on 15 different families interviewed about their instruments and tools to create domestic ‘financial systems’: Macro-level arrangements, Locale-based systems, and Goal-oriented systems. These goal-oriented systems are purposefully designed for achieving both short- and long-term family-specific goals, e.g., saving money for school opening needs, or expanding business operation. Some common tools used include coin jars, envelopes, or even spreadsheets (hardcopy or electronic) to manage their money.

“Madi is a friend of mine who is the sole breadwinner and cares for her mother. She did not have any full-time job. And believe me, she’s a living proof of how the cash envelopes system that has been practiced since her teenage years up till now successfully controlled her household’s spending, especially the sundry and small household expenses” Having this Goal-oriented system aims to achieve specific needs and goals.

Monitor and reassess your budget accordingly if you end up with excess or deficit budget. The savings can be increased if there is excess while a deficit one should be kept from happening again in the future. Financial strain can greatly impact the lives of the household in paying for things that would ensure safety (such as repair and maintenance of vehicles), or to keep their kids in school. This could be worse and be a financial crisis when the most basic needs such as losing their home or having difficulty putting food on the table.

When the basic human needs are missing, this should be the primary driver to motivate them to fight hard to stay afloat. That could mean finding a new job that will provide financial security. Or maybe it could be upskilling themselves that will enable them to make more money. Or run their own business to overcome scarcity of jobs that suit their preference and constraints. If there is a will there is a way.

## **5.0 Conclusion**

In addressing the rising cost of living and poverty by offering financial aids and empowering the knowledge and skills of those individuals, the approach taken by *Jabatan Kebajikan Malaysia* in strengthening human capital through the Mind Transformation Program is a smart move for B40 group. To boost the motivation of those who are financially struggling to transform and be better is the right cause of action. Each of us must take responsibility to start by changing our own paradigm and inspiring others to do the same, then, together, we can make things work out the way we want it to be. Being in control of your cash flow will ease the financial distress.



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## **Digital Social Entrepreneurship as a Driver of Women Empowerment**

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### ***Abstract***

Technological advancements have changed the business models and business with digital technology as the main component across the globe. Social entrepreneurship which is a crucial element of social welfare and a brilliant career choice has also changed drastically. The technological advancements have paved the way further which helps social entrepreneurs to use Digital technology as a component of business model. Digital social entrepreneurs integrate digital technology for social impact, making it the future of social entrepreneurship. Moreover, gender is an important area of study, both in the context of social behaviour and entrepreneurship which has not been studied in the literature. Therefore, it is important to study what motivates women in considering Digital social entrepreneurship which has both entrepreneurial, high technical and pro-social aspects in it. The present paper is a study on such antecedents that led the women to be a digital social entrepreneur. Alongside, the paper also throws light on the various opportunities in the field of digital social entrepreneurship for womanists. This paper on one side significantly has theoretical contribution and on the other side it also helps the policy makers to have an empirical understanding of the antecedents so that they can make policies that can encourage the right set of people in the right way in choosing Digital social entrepreneurship, thus helping the practitioners and policymakers.

***Keywords:*** *Business, Digital social entrepreneurship and Technological advancements*

## 1.0 Introduction

Today's world has a number of social constraints, and advanced digital technologies can help alleviate these challenges through innovative digital social entrepreneurship. Academia and government assistance programs have recently begun to view digital technology as critical tools for moderating and combating today's most severe societal challenges. Furthermore, in the realm of academic research, the merging of these two disciplines has received greater conscious attention, accelerating the discussion on an integrated research stream of digitalization and social entrepreneurship (George et al., 2021, Gregori and Holzmann, 2020). Social entrepreneurs use innovative techniques and methods that can not only help the society but the economy as well. Moreover, social entrepreneurs are very passionate about bringing a social change and by understanding how digital tools and platforms such as crowd funding (Chandna et al., 2022) can help them in raising funds -something that has always been a major obstacle in entrepreneurship. Digital entrepreneurs have altogether changed the way of doing business, which has impacted global markets enormously (Kraus, 2018). This digital era has brought disruptive changes in the way in which knowledge can be transferred and can help improve the society. With the help of digital entrepreneurship (DE), there also exists an opportunity for women entrepreneurs who can change the society through these new business and innovative models. Social media apps such as Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, Instagram and other techno-savvy apps have not only completely changed the business world but have changed the entire communication network. We are now talking about the financial technologies (Fintech) which have changed our finance sector. Artificial intelligence has altogether changed the recent way of life. We are also blessed with technologies such as smart robotics, 5G technology, digital printing including 5D printing. We are even experiencing digital food. In addition to altering the way we live, these inventions have also improved the quality of our decisions and our sense of reality, which can be modified to extend our perspective in a variety of ways. Technology has also changed the world which can be better understood by the fact that it is expected to be implemented in 95% of electronics for new product designs. We can't deny the fact now that technology is turning imagination into reality.

Entrepreneurship has been around for centuries, but it has never before been as digital as it is today. Digital entrepreneurs are using software and technology in new ways to generate wealth from their ideas. It has been an amazing opportunity for many budding entrepreneurs who want to take their ventures from offline modalities and transform them into digital businesses. The traditional system of entrepreneurship and business models has also changed to Digital entrepreneurship and technology-oriented entrepreneurship. A subset of entrepreneurship called "digital entrepreneurship" may be characterized as one in which the traditional working system of the organization which was earlier in a physical form has been digitized "and thereby can be seen "as the reconciliation of traditional entrepreneurship with the new way of creating and doing business in the digital era" (Le Dinh et al., 2018, p. 1). Davidson and Vaast (2010) define digital entrepreneurship "as the pursuit of opportunities based on the use of digital media and other information and communication technologies". Digital entrepreneurs rely upon the characteristics of digital media and IT to pursue opportunities. In doing so, they exacerbate changes in the competitive landscape, as they attempt to seize the opportunities and thereby potentially further the creative destruction process of the digital economy.

The COVID-19 pandemic has taught us that the whole world is interlinked and a tremor in one corner today can shock the whole world. Reports by the World Bank claimed that the pandemic's immediate impact was a 5.2 percent contraction in global GDP in 2020 - the deepest global recession in decades. Despite governments' efforts to counter the downturn with fiscal and monetary policy support (Frydman & Phelps, 2020), a deep recession triggered by the pandemic is expected to leave lasting scars through lower investment, an erosion of human

capital through lost work and schooling, and fragmentation of global trade and supply linkages (World Bank, 2020). Such pandemics and natural disasters have paved the way for a new kind of entrepreneurship known as Digital social entrepreneurship. According to a study conducted by Lew & Park, 2021 Digital social entrepreneurship is a solution which also acts as a carrier through which various agencies apart from government, also known as N-Helix agents, can help economies during unseen times such as economic crises and disasters.

### **1.1 Social Entrepreneurship**

Social entrepreneurs differ from other entrepreneurs because they are not just concerned about profits: they create social value through innovations that address citizens' problems rather than individual needs (Kramer et al., 2011, Graces (2020). In this sense, social entrepreneurs intend to benefit others with their actions (Christopoulos & Vogl, 2015), and, consequently, they achieve social outcomes, contribute to the progress of citizens and reduce unemployment (Sepulveda & Bonilla, 2014). In short, social entrepreneurship (hereafter, SE) offers solutions to social, economic and environmental problems at the local level and, by doing so, creates social and economic progress (Ellis, 2010). Social entrepreneurship behavior can be defined as market and non-market activities that can lead to the creation of opportunities inducing social impacts (Hockert's 2007, 2010, 2017). Therefore, social entrepreneurship plays an important aspect in social welfare and a noble career choice. A rise in the availability and affordability of technology has resulted in increased usage of digital technology in the operations of such social entrepreneurship.

### **1.2 Digital social entrepreneurship**

Digital social entrepreneurship (DSE) can be described as the form of entrepreneurship that uses digital technology as an inevitable part of its business model and uses the advantage of digital technology for social impact - it is the future of social entrepreneurship (Short et al., 2009). Digital Social Entrepreneurship (DSE), which refers to the entrepreneurial work of social ventures centred on digital technologies and forms of hybridity, related to the need to blend digital and non-digital capabilities in the same organizational unit (Masiero & Ravishankar 2019). Many big companies such as Apple & Google (Mickle, 2020) have taken new initiatives called as "digital social entrepreneurial initiatives," which is the intersection between stakeholders' needs and digital social initiatives and have emerged after collaboration among multiple social, academic, economic, industrial, political, and civil societies (also called N-Helix) to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic (Ibanez, 2021).

Extant literature based on the entrepreneurial intention theory (Krueger 1993; Krueger & Kickul 2006) and theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1985). Mair & Noboa (2006) has identified Empathy as a proxy for attitudes towards behavior, Moral judgement as a proxy for social norms, Self-efficacy as a proxy for internal behavioral control, and Perceived presence of social support as a proxy for external behavioral control as the antecedents of social entrepreneurship. However, a study conducted by Ghatak et al., (2020) found that along with empathy, self-efficacy, moral judgements, perceived presence, perceived feasibility and perceived desirability, social experience and digital experience also act as antecedents or drivers for behavior intention towards digital entrepreneurship. In fact, a study conducted by Ibanez (2021) found that digital social entrepreneurship is a result of COVID-19 pandemic, which has an impact on the N helix (collaboration of industry, government, academia, non-profit organizations, civil society) which in turn satisfy stakeholders need.

### 1.3 Digital social entrepreneurship among Women

In the last ten decades, women's participation in entrepreneurship has increased, which has accelerated the economic growth and development of developing nations (Afshar et al., 2019). In cutting edge economies, women own nearly 25% of the start-ups in Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, and Latin America and this percentage has increased over time (Ekpe & Mat, 2012; Jahanshahi&Brem, 2020; Yin &Jahanshahi, 2018). According to a report published by Forbes India, 13.76% of women are entrepreneurs in India. There are various factors such as individuals, contextual, and environmental factors that are of paramount importance to increase the presence of women in entrepreneurship activities. Technology plays a role in helping women entrepreneurs to pursue social innovation in two different ways: through social innovation that is embodied by technology and social innovation that is enabled by technology. Women who believe in digital social innovation are successfully becoming digital social entrepreneurs.

### 2.0 Drivers of digital social entrepreneurship among women

- 1. Problem-solving skills:** women with strong problem-solving or design skills may have more intention to engage in and address social issues. Problem-solving skills refer to the ability to handle difficult or unexpected situations effectively in their life, workplace or society. Several factors can boost problem-solving skills. In this regard, Polas & Jahanshahi (2021) believed that having access to information, actively engaging in collaborative activities, and thinking critically are important factors for developing problem-solving skills. In the same line of reasoning, it was established through studies that the active contribution to society enhances social awareness and, hence, they improve social problem-solving skills.
- 2. Networking Ability:** Women with a sound networking ability may be more prone to engage in social behaviors. The intention to solve social problems entails good insights and cutting-edge information on the most recent challenges in the social environment (Mazdeh et al., 2013; Schmitt et al., 2018; Zhang & Cueto, 2017). Women with networking ability better understand the social challenges and problems because they have access to more information sources. Having more people in their networks means that the members are connected to more information sources who help them to enhance their awareness about society (Mu et al., 2017). It is well accepted that more people in the network and a strong interaction among the members facilitate the knowledge flow across the network (Kelley et al.,2009).
- 3. Entrepreneurial knowledge:** A well-cited meaning of entrepreneurial knowledge is “the concepts, skills, and mentality which entrepreneurs use or should use” to identify and seize different entrepreneurial opportunities in their business environment (Roxas, 2014; Tshikovhi & Shambare, 2015; Watch ravesringkan et al., 2013). Entrepreneurial knowledge can be function-oriented and acquired from advertising, marketing, human resources, and financial activities in the business environment. Entrepreneurial knowledge can also be strategy-oriented knowledge acquired from daily strategic decision-making, competitive analysis of the market or evaluation of the business environment (Roxas et al., 2008). Social entrepreneurship would be higher among women with a higher level of entrepreneurial knowledge.
- 4. Self-efficacy, creativity and emotions:** The involvement of a person with a higher level of self-efficiency in social activities is high because such individuals feel more confident about their own abilities (Taylor & Betz, 1983; Valdivia, 2015) and, therefore, they are in a better position to use their knowledge and experience to perform specific social or

environmental tasks. Individuals with a higher level of self-efficacy are more inclined to become social entrepreneurs. Self-efficacy is a key factor to explain individual intentions and decisions (Bandura, 1977). Self-efficacy or self-confidence refers to the individuals' self-perceptions of their skills and capacities (Drnovšek et al., 2010, Wilson et al., 2007). In other words, self-efficacy describes the ability of a given person to master his cognitive, memory processing, and behavioral skills to effectively deal with the surrounding environment (Segal, Borgia, & Schoenfeld, 2002). There is a close relationship between entrepreneurship, creativity, innovation and emotions, as described by De Val and Erro (2017). They consider that creativity is a cognitive and volitional ability linked to the emotional system. Under this conception, creativity is embedded in emotions. Lastly, De Val and Erro (2017) affirmed that when creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship are developed together, a cluster of value appears – as several value chains are bundled together – and social welfare emerges. In other words, the creation of a cluster of values that results from creative innovations and is developed as a new project by entrepreneurs it results in several new activities that generate value for different collectives.

## 5. **Motivational drivers:**

- A) **Intentional mindset** – It triggers the individuals' passion for a cause that is facilitated by the support provided by their social network, which both seem to be important for maintaining persistence in the oftentimes challenging situation of being a social entrepreneur. In addition to having specific knowledge about the social problems in question, people who start social enterprises have often been victims of social problems and are altruistically bound to alleviate the sufferings of others in similar circumstances. In addition to showing that certain specific factors and enablers can predict social entrepreneurial engagement. Social entrepreneurs gave a sense of importance and high value to their enterprise because they are highly absorbed, involved and fully committed in the affairs of their ventures' progression in providing social welfare. The feelings and desires they developed, constantly drive their daily efforts despite the challenges they face.
- B) **Contextual factors** - Different empirical studies identify self-identity, independence, greater wealth (Dann and Bennett, 2005; Walker and Webster, 2006), personal fulfilment and desire for flexibility over their professional and personal lives (Mcgowan et al., 2015) as women's main entrepreneurial motivations. Previous research suggests that women start businesses for somewhat different reasons than their male counterparts. Urbano et al. (2014) point out that women are less inclined to achieve economic benefits than to pursue social value. They are more likely to be involved in social than business entrepreneurship (Estrin et al., 2013; Solesvik et al., 2019). Family needs and the flexibility to live a more balanced life are revealed as significant drivers of female entrepreneurial motivation and female entrepreneurs usually attach more importance to community impact (Bernardino et al., 2018). Contextual factors refer to the influence of environmental elements such as culture, institutions and local availability of resources and role models (Nowinski and Haddoud, 2019). Empirical evidence shows that women's decisions to embark on business ventures depend on their socio-cultural background (Moreira et al., 2019).

- 6. **Financial skills and numerical skills-** An appropriate set of skills for financial management is one of the most critical competencies in new venture creation and development (Rasheed and Siddiqui, 2019). More numerate individuals may also be better equipped to process information and make complex optimal decisions. Therefore,

individuals planning to start up a business should be prepared to embrace financial and numeracy skills effectively. Education policies play a credible role in reinforcing the development of financial and numerical skills to promote entrepreneurial intentions among women. It also explains the benefits of training in the ability to make appropriate financial decisions that transcend the launching of new ventures. Financial literacy is knowledge and understanding that enable sound financial decision-making and effective management of personal finances in periods of uncertainty and challenges, such as the current pandemic environment. New evidence reveals that the COVID-19 pandemic has financially impacted women more so than men (Alon et al., 2019; Madgavkar et al., 2020; Yakoboskiet al., 2020), calling for action to policymakers and the education community to develop training programmes and other interventions that result in positive financial outcomes for women and society as a whole.

7. **Cognitive skills-** Previous studies reveal a lower propensity to start a business among women (Reynolds and Curtin, 2008; Verheul et al., 2009). Entrepreneurs require confidence, leadership and managerial skills to enable them to access new markets (Okafor and Amalu, 2010). Since businesses are constantly engaged in complex decision-making activities concerning the acquisition and use of financial resources (Wise,2013), entrepreneurs need to exhibit a high level of financial literacy and certain numerical ability. They face financial decisions nearly every day, such as purchasing new equipment, hiring new employees or acknowledging the possibility of project failure. Many studies have shown that cognition is an important feature of successful entrepreneurship.
8. **Social media** - A study conducted by Miniesy & Karim (2021) found that 95% female entrepreneurs claimed that they would not have started their enterprises without the support of social media. Social media has empowered women both on personal and relational levels, and women's empowerment is more evident in the latter. Before digital entrepreneurship, male youths have significantly higher averages than female entrepreneurs in almost all empowerment characteristics, whereas after digital entrepreneurship, female entrepreneurs have significantly higher averages in making decisions related to investment, personal education and personal health, as well as those of other household members (Leong,2018). Female entrepreneurs are relatively more empowered than male youths after digital entrepreneurship. A study conducted by Olsson & Bernhard (2020) demonstrated that women entrepreneurs express a need to further increase their knowledge in order to develop their small businesses by using social media, confirming the importance to keep up the pace in digitalization to survive and grow as a small business. To accomplish this, women entrepreneurs emphasize the need of support and inspiration, especially from fellow entrepreneurs in networks (Olsson & Bernhard, 2020). The study conducted by Lichy et al., (2020) reveals that the activities of women entrepreneurs are fundamentally enabled by social networking sites as it allows them to optimise their networks in prospecting, communicating and developing relationships with stakeholders. It also allows them to support the social fabric of the family unit by providing an extra source of income and facilitating connections
9. **Role of ICT & Digital Skills** - Women having the skills to operate the internet have higher intentions to become an entrepreneur. E-commerce web-space can use the results to influence women of the new generation to use available tools in their journey of entrepreneurship (Shukla et al., 2021). In order to remain competitive, the women entrepreneurs constantly had to learn new digital skills to capture the potential of their

businesses and keeping up the pace in digitalization. Learning by doing, informal learning and step-by-step self-development entrepreneurial behavior were practiced, combined with strategic recruiting of young digital natives. Continuous learning took place when digital natives and digital immigrants worked together. The dependence on young digitally skilled employees may be viewed as a reversed master and apprentice relationship and this is of importance to maintain a competitive digital presence and integration of ICT in the businesses (Olsson & Bernhard, 2020).

### **10. Role of the “3F”s (Friends, Family and Fools)**

It is crucial for digital entrepreneurs to have capital for their start-ups. Dr. Diala speaks about the importance of financial markets in digital entrepreneurship and introduces the term financial “bootstrapping,” which refers to, “launching new ventures with modest personal funds” (Winborg and Landstrom 2001, p. 235), and satisfying the need for resources without depending on debt or external finances. Financial bootstrapping techniques are essential for business start-ups, particularly tech-based ones, and include making deals with customers, borrowing from suppliers, low-cost labor, and creating special relationships with individuals and organizations. For instance, in developed countries, the state can hold events and competitions for a specific age or gender group (e.g., female entrepreneurs under the age of 30), where a selected applicant gets funded by the government.

### **3.0 Opportunities of digital social entrepreneurship for women**

Technology in the service of social entrepreneurship presents many opportunities. It can enable robust new solutions and help scale existing ones. It can also support engagement, contribute to the sustainability of social enterprises, and boost financial investment.

1. **New solutions** - Technology enables novel entrepreneurial approaches to social problems, by creating solutions that would not have existed otherwise. One example is the adoption of robotics and sensors to improve people’s independence, or enable data-intensive and personalized care. Carebidet, for example, is an automatic toileting system that ensures dignity and self-dependence for people with reduced mobility. Algorithms that spot delays in interest or energy-bill payments as an early indicator of emerging poverty is another one.
2. **Scale Technology**- scale technology can also play a big role in scaling existing solutions so that they reach more beneficiaries in more places.
3. **Co-creation** -When it comes to engagement, technology is also immensely useful. Social enterprises can share expensive technologies with underserved segments of population via digital platforms, allowing them to develop and test solutions that address their needs. The Hackability project, for example, engages makers and people with disabilities in creating objects that solve the same daily challenges they experience personally.
4. **Sustainability**-Technology reinforces the economic sustainability of social entrepreneurship models, and often paves the way for greater balance between social and business logic. That is because it typically helps enterprises scale, and an increase in the volume of activity both multiplies thin sustainability margins and contributes to efficient operations. For example, many organizations that care for the elderly install inexpensive monitors in older adults’ homes. This helps them better understand their habits and needs of those they serve so that social workers can be more effective and reach more people.



5. **Investment potential** - By transforming labor-intensive models into capital-intensive ones, social-tech entrepreneurs can motivate investment in social-tech entrepreneurship and spur social enterprises to become investment-ready. Social-tech entrepreneurship stands in the very middle between the demand for innovative social solutions and impact investors who are willing to provide specialized financial resources, making them crucial to building a hybrid, impact-oriented value chain.

#### **4.0 Challenges for digital social entrepreneurship among women**

##### **1. Digital skills**

Women's entrepreneurial journey is difficult, even in the emerging digital landscape. Acquiring digital skills is a challenge for several, and it is completely unreasonable to assume that everyone knows the same. And yes, in most cases, most young people do know how to browse the Internet, use a computer and in general have very good knowledge of the digital world. However, that is not true for everyone. And we need to understand that not everyone has the same values and not everyone has been raised in the same way. Companies are not able to evolve and at the same time, women entrepreneurs are not able to make their dreams come true because they are not able to enter the labor market in the way they want. They might have brilliant ideas, though they do not know how to bring them to life. If, however, they possess the digital literacy needed they will be able to create better systems and much more efficient companies.

##### **2. Defying social expectations**

Most female business owners who have attended networking events can relate to this scenario: you walk into a crowded seminar and can count the number of women there on one hand. When women entrepreneurs talk business with primarily male executives, it can be unnerving. In this situation, women may feel as though they need to adopt a stereotypically "male" attitude toward business: competitive, aggressive and sometimes harsh. However, successful female CEOs believe that remaining true to yourself and finding your own voice are the keys to rising above preconceived expectations.

##### **3. Struggling to be taken seriously**

At one time or another, most women CEOs find themselves in a male-dominated industry or workplace that does not want to acknowledge their leadership role. Alison Gutterman, CEO and President of Jelmar, had this experience early in her career. "As a female entrepreneur in a male-dominated industry, earning respect has been a struggle," she said. Because Jelmar is her family's business, she faced presumptions that she was living off her father's and grandfather's reputations. "I was more than willing to put in the work to create my own reputation for being a hardworking, honorable businessperson in my own right," Gutterman said. "To overcome this, I have had to learn to build my confidence and overcome my negative self-talk. Those negative comments that have built up in your head are stopping you from reaching your full potential," said Gutterman. To combat them, she has joined a variety of women entrepreneur groups. "These groups have provided me mentors and peers to inspire me, hit me with reality checks on my capabilities and successes, and help me grow and learn from their outside perspectives and experiences," she said.

#### **4. Owning your accomplishments**

The communal, consensus-building qualities encouraged in young girls can leave women unintentionally downplaying their own worth. Menstruation may be a taboo subject in India, but Aditi, founder of Menstrupedia is not bothered by it. She's driven by the desire to educate young girls and women on this "taboo" subject, hoping to help them separate fact from fiction and have healthy periods. Co-founded with her husband Tuhin Paul in 2012, Menstrupedia.com is arguably India's first website with a clear aim of dissemination of all knowledge relating to menstruation.

#### **5. Building a support network**

A robust support network is essential for entrepreneurial success, so it is no surprise that 48% of female founders report that a lack of available advisors and mentors limits their professional growth. It has been seen that a majority of the businesses in India is under the control of male businessmen, so a proper mentorship, training and skilling through these support groups can help the women entrepreneurs.

#### **6. Balancing business and family life**

Balancing work life is no doubt a serious concern when a woman is running her own enterprise. The responsibilities of sharing the duties, raising the children and doing good in social network needs the devotion of both the parents. In order to achieve the illusive work-life balance, parent entrepreneurs must discover ways to reconcile their multiple obligations to their families and their businesses.

#### **7. Coping with the fear of failure**

Fear of failure is a feeling which can motivate some while it has the tendency of demotivating entrepreneurs. These fears in women can either inhibit them from going further or kindle a fire to remerge as winners in their fields.

### **5.0 Conclusion**

The 21<sup>st</sup> century digital-age woman is one who has seen many battles across centuries but has now come where she can create a life of her own dreams. Studies conducted in different countries have shown that one out of five women wants to be an entrepreneur. Their continuous progress has proved that the day is not far when they will dominate the social enterprise landscape. To change the society and accomplish things and grow their businesses, women entrepreneurs have begun to implement ICT in the digital technology markets as well as its social capital, which has increased the number of online businesses around the world. Unquestionably, technical advancements are empowering women to engage in digital entrepreneurship, but this is still a gendered activity, and women continue to get sucked into the perplexing and turbulent multitasking tornado. No doubt, women social entrepreneurs frequently encounter a variety of difficulties and depend on the assistance of others to accomplish their objectives of social outreach and financial stability; these women entrepreneurs face more constraints as compared to other non-social ventures or commercial

ventures. Alongside, they also have to face the steps of negotiation and dominant social discourses. Another major obstacle in virtual landscape for women entrepreneurs is restrictive social and cultural practices. The absence of recognition for women in senior roles, as well as their profoundly influential initiatives, leads to a culture in which young girls are discouraged from developing entrepreneurial talents or pursuing leadership positions in social entrepreneurship.

Interestingly, it has been observed in studies that once women are empowered, they definitely make income, are progressively recognized as the young drivers of sustainable and inclusive economic development and as the brightest future for developing-nation economies. Since there can be no single methodology for success, all the parties including civil society organizations should deploy a variety of different instruments and methodologies to help women to set up businesses. Another way out is to have a digital economy free from gender inequalities, which will ultimately lead to economic and social empowerment of digital social entrepreneurship among the women. This calls for stronger digital infrastructure and connectivity with the internet as well as the accessibility and affordability of digital means.

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# **SOCIAL INNOVATION IN WASTE SEGREGATION FOR CREATION OF WEALTH AND LIVELIHOOD OPPORTUNITIES: A CASE STUDY OF LET'S RECYCLE SOCIAL ENTERPRISE**

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## **Abstract**

Let's Recycle is a social enterprise in Ahmedabad, India, dedicated to the "zero waste to landfill" motto. This article looks at how Let's Recycle, a social enterprise that provides garbage collection and recycling services, overcame enterprise hurdles and created livelihood opportunities for rag-pickers. This study reveals that waste recycling is an entrepreneurial venture filling a state-created service delivery vacuum and providing employment opportunities for marginalized members of the society. A personal interaction was conducted with one of the founders, Mr Sandeep Patel, using a scheduled unstructured interview. Secondary sources included research publications, journals, and the founders' published interview transcripts. The study addresses key challenges and the entrepreneurs' social impact. Engaging the correct teams, marketing and networking, capacity building, suitable technology, reinvesting revenues, diversifying, and being members of cooperatives were all used to keep the businesses afloat. The study helps integrate traditional and socio-environmental entrepreneurship approaches to investigate the long-term viability of waste recycling businesses.

**Keywords:** *Social Entrepreneurship, Social Innovation, Livelihoods, Sustainability, Waste management, Rag-pickers*

## 1.0 Background of the study

With an aspiration to reach rapid economic growth globally, India is making efforts to urbanize rapidly (Kaza, S. et al., 2018). High-paced urbanization causes changing consumption patterns, industrialization, and the generation of substantial urban waste (Mahajan, N., 2016). According to the Basel Convention, United Nations Environment Programme defined waste "*as substances or objects, which are disposed of or are intended to be disposed of or are required to be disposed of by the provisions of national law*" (Hoornweg, et al., 2012). Further, as per Census 2011, the Indian population is 1.21 billion (Census of India, 2011). In the last decade, the population has risen by 181 million (Mahajan, A., Ray, A., 2013). Of this, about 32.8% citizens live in urban areas. Remarkably, trends indicate that the urban population is increasing at 3-3.5% per annum, whereas the per capita waste generation is increasing by 1.3% per annum (ASSOCHAM, 2017) and maximum amount of waste is untreated (Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) Annual Report 2015-16). Clearly, rapid urbanization also means rising waste generation.

India's social enterprises can include poor residents in the country's economic development. Social businesses are tackling India's vast development requirements by adopting creative business models while ensuring long-term viability via sustainable income generation methods. For instance, social enterprises have experimented with various social innovations to meet the needs of the beneficiaries and ensure access to improved waste management facilities. Social enterprises (SEs) drive social innovation (Harrisson, Klein and Browne, 2010; Defourny and Nyssens, 2013). To date, various social innovations and business models of social enterprises support have been implemented in the waste management sector, each of which has its advantages and lessons learned, and disadvantages. While social innovation within social enterprises has been studied extensively, social innovations adopted by social enterprises in waste management are less well-understood.

This situation presents a timely opportunity to explore the experiences of social enterprises and their contribution towards environmental sustainability. In particular, the first part of the paper provides a theoretical framework of the study and presents a review of literature on the adoption of social innovation practices in waste management. Subsequently, the second part of the paper empirically investigates the pattern by which social entrepreneurs successfully adopted social innovation practices to the performance of the social enterprise in waste management and its impact on sustainability.

## 2.0 Theoretical framework

Social Enterprises (SEs), according to the Asian Development Bank (2012), are organizations that use a triple bottom line strategy to address social and environmental concerns while also generating financially sustainable income. According to NBS (2013), social enterprises are the apparent leaders in the category and should serve the bottom of the pyramid. They do not rely only on grants to function since they can meet their expenditures and make a little profit. Creating jobs is one of the most crucial features of Social Enterprises. Private limited businesses, cooperatives, not-for-profit organizations, trusts, and other types of legal entities may be registered as social enterprises (Asian Development Bank, 2012; Ogain et al. 2012). Traditional literature stated that innovation could only happen if its barriers were removed. One of the critical impediments identified in this setting was a lack of resources. However, Acar et al. (2019) found that optimal limitations improve creativity and innovation performance.

## **2.1 Supply Chain and Innovation**

A supply chain may be thought of as a dynamic structure that involves the transfer of information, goods, and money at various stages (Chopra & Kalra, 2019). It involves various players, either directly or indirectly, in meeting the customer's needs. At various points of the supply chain, each participant offers distinct value. A social enterprise might produce more excellent value for its many stakeholders—internal and external—by using the creative ways selected by the management. Competitors will seek out a valuable, scarce, imperfectly inimitable resource and lack strategically comparable alternatives, making it difficult to replicate, giving the company a competitive edge (Arlbjørn et al., 2011). It might be regarded as necessary for achieving a long-term competitive advantage.

## **2.2 Circular Economy Approach:**

Social entrepreneurship is a crucial player in the circular economy concept. Social enterprises are corporate institutions whose primary goal is to achieve specified social and environmental results rather than maximize profit, and where private activity is carried out to benefit the public good (Goncalves et al., 2016). As a result, social businesses reside somewhere between the for-profit and non-profit sectors (Vickers and Lyon 2014). Social entrepreneurship is essential in social innovation or creating new ideas to address social needs and build social connections; it provides inventive solutions to problems like unemployment and helps alienated communities participate more fully (Ambati, 2019). The business model of social enterprises is especially significant since the cash produced by the enterprise's activities may cover running expenses, implying that these businesses do not need to depend on grants or donations to start their community development projects (Goncalves et al., 2016). These features enable social businesses to fill a need in society that may arise as a consequence of market failures, where profit-maximizing corporations continue to produce negative social and economic externalities, as well as the government's inability to provide social services (Peattie and Morley, 2008).

According to Ian Vickers and Fergus Lyon, social enterprises are well-positioned to lead the transition to a circular economy because of these features. Concerns about the effects of climate change, particularly on disadvantaged populations, have prompted a surge in environmentally-motivated social businesses worldwide, many of which concentrate on waste management and reduction (Vickers and Lyon, 2014). Due to their significant potential for self-sufficiency, social companies in waste management may also be regarded as a strategic decision. Emulating a closed-loop system, in which primary waste products are repurposed as secondary inputs, may lower input prices and boost profit margins, thus improving market competitiveness. A circular economy approach to waste management is expected to help both the economy and the environment (Worst, 2016).

Furthermore, because of their focus on social benefits, social enterprises are uniquely positioned to impact how people think about trash. Social businesses that are influenced by grassroots political and social movements are better equipped to deliver "bottom-up" answers to environmental issues and educate many ordinary people about how they can help improve environmental sustainability (Vickers and Lyon, 2014). By occupying a middle ground, social companies have the potential to influence the policies and activities of both private and public sector players. However, according to Vickers and Lyon, these organizations are restricted without public sector institutional support - social entrepreneurs must be able to collaborate meaningfully with local government institutions and the communities whose social outcomes they want to enhance.

### 3.0 Review of Literature

"Social entrepreneurship" is a relatively recent notion, especially in academic circles. It was described by Austin, Stevenson, and Wei-Skillen (2006) as an entrepreneurial activity with a social purpose. It is generally acknowledged as a worldwide phenomenon, serving fundamental societal needs often overlooked in the mainstream rush for progress. Reis (1999) states that social entrepreneurship entails using well-established corporate principles to run non-profit organizations. According to Borzaga and Defourny (2001); Davidsson, P., and Henreksson, M. (2002), the entrepreneurship process has four essential components: recognizing opportunities, developing a problem, actualizing the solution, and harvesting. Another characteristic of social entrepreneurs is that they employ social innovations to create goods or services that address the unmet needs of target groups or customers who are ready or able to pay (Scholtz, 2010). The innovative product they bring to market must address an unmet need or market, and the price-to-benefit ratio must be appealing and affordable (Christensen et al., 2006; Hart, 2005) and meet the needs of the beneficiary group (Prahalad, 2005).

In addition, according to Narracott and Norman (2011), social entrepreneurship business models with human-centered design would enable scaling up of a company, leading to low-cost service, enabling the lowest of the poor to have access to waste management and sanitation facilities. In his research, Narracott highlighted how low-income Ghanaians were able and ready to pay for sanitation services provided by social businesses. Similarly, the results of the British Council Report (2016) show that 40 percent of the 498 social businesses in India have the goal of improving environmental sustainability, notably, waste management systems and providing a better quality of life. Waste management is one of the primary issues that national and international organizations are considering when searching for social business solutions.

One of the most critical factors in the formation of social entrepreneurship is the environment (Sharir and Lerner, 2006). In addition, the relationship between the environment and social entrepreneurs is quite essential in society (Mair and Marti, 2009; Townsend, 2008). The entrepreneurs' main goals are to assist food and water scarcity, pollution, decay, and sustainability via creative and economical solutions (Larson, 2011; Shepherd and Patzelt, 2011).

In India, trash management has traditionally been considered a woman's job at the home level, and women are seen to be better informed about waste management procedures and environmental concerns in general. According to statistics, almost 90% of garbage pickers are mistreated, discriminated against, and harassed. Gender sensitivities have long been recognized as an essential part of long-term waste management. Women rubbish-pickers may become the mainstream gender in their profession by promoting a gender-sensitive management culture and guaranteeing their training and capacity-building. This will also guarantee that anti-harassment and anti-discrimination policies are implemented proactively (Chikarmane and Narayan, 2005; Mhapsekar, 2015).

Garbage is not properly segregated in India, and it is mixed trash. It is challenging to recycle non-segregated or mixed garbage effectively. Rubbish-pickers are dispersed populations that handle such waste by laboring in dangerous and inhumane circumstances. Waste-pickers now separate rubbish piles and sell them to waste collectors for recycling. The World Bank conducted a study at a landfill in Mexico City and found that waste pickers and scavengers at the site typically had a life expectancy of 39 years (Nuripuh et al., 2022). Furthermore,

research suggests that the new-born mortality rate in the garbage picker's neighbourhood is one in every three (Hunt C, 1996). Due to the inaccessibility of the mainstream garbage supply chain, waste-pickers earn less than a dollar per day on average. Currently, SE efforts such as SWaCH and INORA are aiming to address the problem of SWM and improve garbage pickers' working conditions (SWaCH, 2011).

Hashimoto (2016) explored social entrepreneurship via SWaCH and INORA. According to the report, an integrated strategy should be used to improve the working circumstances of garbage-pickers. Waste-pickers can be consolidated as a result of the coordinated strategy. A good waste management program and a financially feasible social enterprise benefit the city. His research identifies conflicts between private organizations and garbage pickers' unions. Despite a trash-pickers union in the general population framework, the growing production of garbage in Pune and the lack of consistency in the government's intervention in dealing with the problem pose a threat of privatization of solid waste management.

Zaman (2012) researched zero waste management and analysed two case studies, one in Australia and the other in Bangladesh. According to the author, waste management via social entrepreneurship is a chance to improve society's socioeconomic and environmental advantages while reducing inequalities. It also provides a forum to share ideas, promotes environmental best management practices, exchanges valuable items, and provides jobs for residents. In this concept, the organization acts as a community service provider by recycling, reusing, repairing, composting, and selling things to residents, therefore recirculating the material flow throughout society for a longer time.

According to Indian sources, several social businesses are involved in trash management, sanitation, and giving services to the underprivileged (Ramani et al., 2012; Sijbesma et al., 2010). In particular, they have been praised for their work in developing and disseminating social innovation items among the poor. As a result, they are actively involved in producing and marketing waste management, sanitation, and sanitation goods and services needed. Solving waste management challenges using social innovations created by social businesses helps achieve sustainability and global sanitation objectives, which may have a wide variety of good social, economic, and environmental consequences. However, there was a severe lack of study in social entrepreneurship in the waste management industry. Therefore, the current study aimed to use a theoretical framework of circular-based economy to link the adoption of social innovation methods to the performance of the selected social enterprise.

#### **4.0 Research Methodology**

Participants' observations, conversations and interviews, and documents were used to gather data for this study. Using fieldwork, we performed participant observations over six months (July – Dec 2021). We spent an average of 4 hours per week performing participatory research in different 'Let's Recycle' locations during this period. We took thorough field notes and sometimes snapped pictures. We often accompanied executive team members to off-site meetings, including rag-pickers and other employees of the organization. We developed 'rich' (Weick, 2007) insights into 'Let's Recycle's day-to-day operations due to the participatory observations. We could also attend various 'Let's Recycle' events, such as the annual meet and trade exhibits. During the participant observations in the field, we had multiple talks with members and employees of 'Let's Recycle' and its external stakeholders. We were aware of our respondents' tastes and needs, and grounds for choosing 'Let's Recycle' over other social enterprises/companies in comparable industries in such negotiations.

We also performed open-ended interviews with the founder. In addition, we conducted 07 interviews with additional organization members and stakeholders. The average interview lasted 2 hours and 15 minutes. The majority of the time, interviews and conversations were audio-recorded with the interviewees' consent. We made comprehensive notes throughout the interviews on other occasions. The final data source we evaluated was archival records. We were granted conditional access to the 'Let's Recycle' media archives. Additional materials were also gathered from public sources. We utilized NVivo software to organize and analyse the data.

We conceptualized the data and used inductive theory building (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007) from process research. We did the data analysis in four phases, using the Gioia technique (Gioia et al., 2012). First, we chronologically sorted the data and generated in-depth and thorough narratives (Smith, 2014) on the organizational journey. Second, we identified the organization's crisis occurrences based on the narratives. Using 'asking questions' and 'continuous comparison,' we began coding the data that was connected in the third. We created a data structure based on the higher-order coding that followed. We then compared our coding results and agreed to deliberate debate and discussion. We often returned to the field to gain clarity or get new insights into the data we had gathered. Data collection and analysis occurred in cycles until an emerging theoretical model explained the data. We evacuated the field when we reached data saturation (Horsburgh, 2003).

## **5. Let's Recycle Case Study**

In 2011, Sandeep Patel, Dhruvin Patel and Ravi Patel set up NEPRA Resource Management Pvt. Ltd. as a solid waste recycling social enterprise in India. NEPRA's Let's Recycle initiative focuses on providing sustainable solid waste collection and recycling solutions to communities and organizations across India. NEPRA worked with various stakeholders in society, including garbage pickers, transporters, recyclers, and at-source waste segregation, to ensure equitable growth, a sustainable city, and a circular economy. Sourcing rubbish from underprivileged waste-pickers and maintaining long-term connections by giving fair and transparent prices has structured India's unregulated and unorganized waste management sector.

### **5.1 Mission**

Their practices demonstrate the company's commitment to environmental sustainability. Their broader approach includes dealing with concerns such as climate change. They believe that through offering employment and social and financial inclusion measures, they can positively influence people at the bottom of the pyramid. They also strive to deliver high-quality service to their clients, continuously serving them for their inferred and expressed demands, and they always want to push the boundaries of knowledge, seeking new and novel ways to do things. Let's Recycle provides a setting where individuals may further their careers while also working in a collaborative environment. They try to maintain a balance among the three P's (Planet, People, and Profit) of sustainability to provide viable value for shareholders.

### **5.2 The Idea of Let's Recycle and Growth of the Social Enterprise**

Sandeep is the founder of NEPRA Resource Management Pvt Ltd, an Ahmedabad-based waste management company that uses the 'Let's Recycle' brand. He is a waste-to-wealth entrepreneur, for himself and his employees, who eagerly scavenges among piles of dumped debris at the Ahmedabad plant.

Sandeep dabbled in several businesses before settling on waste because he enjoys a challenge. "If an opportunity presents itself with which I can collaborate, I take advantage of it. I am a typical Gujarati with a strong business sense." Sandeep's in-laws work in the waste management industry, "making copper sulphate and zinc sulphate from waste." They required assistance in obtaining additional raw materials. "The majority of Gujarat's chemical trading facilities were dumping a lot of industrial waste," he says. This ensured his shift to waste management.

Another journey had begun. It was 2006-07, and 750 individuals were hired; most of them were the offspring of textile workers in Ahmedabad. Sandeep began his experiment with rubbish with the aid of the Sharda Trust, which has the support of textile giant Arvind Group. However, while examining the recycling value chain, he discovered that the sector lacked transparency. He sold all of his previous enterprises in 2009-10 to focus on garbage management. "I acquired roughly one crore by diluting shares in three enterprises." He continues, "I enlisted the help of two of my friends and decided to go on to something greater."

From initial stages, the path of this company has been a constant learning and progress for them. They mostly collected separated garbage from hotels, hospitals, and rag-pickers, who sold the rubbish to them when they first started. They discovered that a certain amount of recyclable waste is still ending up in landfills during the journey. The founders conducted a research and found that the primary type of waste produced in commercial buildings, 5-star hotels, and hospitals is dry waste, accounting for over 80% of all waste generated. This trash was previously collected by local municipal organizations and thrown in landfills. Thus, it was an incredible opportunity; yet, it was also a challenge, because collecting and classifying the large volume of everyday waste generated in Ahmedabad was a challenge. However, they rose to the challenge and began collecting roughly 2-3 tonnes of dry garbage per day. This figure has now come up to around 50 tonnes per day. It includes buying materials from rag-pickers, motels, and hospitals. Food waste, bio-medical waste, and dry waste are the three types of waste generated by hospitals. 'Let's Recycle' is only responsible for collecting dry waste because other government agencies handle food and bio-medical waste.

Dry waste is collected by collection vans from homes, schools, hospitals, malls, colleges, and any other location where garbage is generated by registered drivers using NEPRA's ERP App software. These drivers collect dry garbage from registered waste-pickers, enter it into the app, and compensate fairly. The support office guarantees that operations are controlled, monitored, and tracked in real-time using GPS. By the time the truck arrives at the facility, all of the data has been updated in real-time and double-checked. The rubbish is unloaded and fed into the equipment there.



## 5.3 Strategy and Operations

### 5.3.1 *In-Depth Innovations*

Let's Recycle's parent company, NEPRA Resource Management Pvt Ltd, concentrates on collecting and sorting dry garbage for sale to recyclers, to reduce the impact and cost of dumping waste in landfills around cities. It collaborates with waste collectors in the informal sector. As a result, it has a dual social impact: it provides dignity and improved livelihoods to the poor while also assisting in the mitigation of the major problem of pollution caused by plastic trash. Its business approach connects waste generators, such as huge organizations that must take responsibility for the waste they generate, with recyclers that devise new ways to extract value from waste.

Many tiny entrepreneurs are in charge of collection. They transport the rubbish to the plants, where it is recycled. "Previously, there was a more manual setup, but we improvised and set up a semi-automated material recovery facility, from which we learned a lot. Then we moved on to an automated material recovery facility, where the machines do most of the segregation and quality control is done manually."

Both segregation and quality control were done manually in 2013-14. They have a collection schedule in place with all of their clients and the rag-pickers, and they collect every day from a cluster of rag-pickers. Some have a pre-arranged schedule, such as alternate days and a time range, and the company collects the items at that time.

"As a part of social enterprise, it is our job to segregate waste according to the needs of recyclers." And it's also one of the major roadblocks to growing this company. "We use technology for everything from traceability and tracking to sorting" explains Patel. It all starts with a traceable process that begins with facial recognition on the waste-picker's smartphone app. The collectors, small business owners with trucks, then enter the platform. In this approach, an end-to-end digital system is established, from collection through sorting plant distribution, and finally to the point of service for the client, the recycler.

Let's Recycle is not a brand-new concept or anything never been done before. For example, the company used a micro-entrepreneurship model similar to OLA and UBER. This company will not have its own trucks to collect rubbish; instead, it has built a mobile application that will assign work to the individual who owns the vehicles. Throughout the day, the owners of the trucks receive waste collection appointments and carry the waste to the factories, where it is processed. It was also discovered that the company has another feature: an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system, which helped them regulate, track, and monitor their personnel, waste management locations and operations, resulting in a more authentic and efficient working system. Similarly, the company uses technologically new approaches such as a semi-automatic material recovery plant, where machines conduct most of the segregation and quality control is done manually. It demonstrates how the Let's Recycle venture always embraces improvements anytime they notice something positive in the market. As a result, they can reduce the venture's many operational costs while increasing earnings.

This appears to be a simple chain, but it is a complicated, fractured one. As a result, digital technology plays a vital role in Let's Recycle's value offer.

The garbage-picker's value proposition is transparency in weighing and rates in such a system. The timely collection of garbage is critical for large waste producers such as residential complexes and enterprises. It is also essential acquiring the correct sort of garbage without

impurities for the recycler. For example, there are eight types of plastic, some of which include laminations that are more difficult to recycle due to their metallic component and may not be suitable for particular clients.

Sandeep understands that garbage can be profitable. He believes the signals are visible, particularly in the last two years, when a shift toward recycling has been. Sandeep believes there is ample demand for organized trash management businesses because of government programs like the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan and the drive on solid waste management rules. Sandeep claims they are India's only waste management organization to have developed an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system to track and monitor all activities. The goal, according to Sandeep, was to divert 30,000 tonnes of waste from landfills by 2020, up from 373 tonnes in 2012. He says that this may be accomplished by expanding the company's footprint into new cities. Then came the Swachh Bharat Mission and new rules, which raised awareness and sparked a renewed interest in implementing solutions.

#### **5.4 Resource Mobilization**

The founders never had any difficulty raising and mobilizing the resources to launch their new business. Their first cash came primarily from the pockets of their promoters. The proprietors put the money into the business from their own pockets, their parents' pockets, and other comparable sources. Sandeep realized he was quickly running out of funds and would require institutional investors as the project with L&T came to an end. He began his rounds. "Of the 70 venture capitalists we approached, 68 claimed they do not invest in this space. They were not interested in waste management, and other PE firms claimed the ticket amount (of Rs. 6 crore) was too tiny," he remembers. A coffee and a little talk at Aavishkaar's Mumbai headquarters in May 2012 got the ball moving, resulting in a three-crore first investment.

NEPRA's Material Recovery Facility (MRF), where recyclable items are received, separated, and sorted, was primitive and unstructured before Aavishkaar's engagement (NEPRA's financing partner). As a result, manual waste segregation and sorting resulted in a flood of acquired waste inventory on the shop floor, resulting in sub-optimal working circumstances. NEPRA simplified and automated the MRF with the help of Aavishkaar and introduced new processes, including crushing and cleaning plastic waste. As a result, stock levels decreased. Contracts with municipal corporations and tipping fees were not a source of revenue for NEPRA. Aavishkaar invested US\$500,000 in NEPRA in February 2013 to assist it to streamline and grow operations while having a more significant impact. Aavishkaar would continue to fund the company with a total investment of US\$9.7 million over the next five years, including joint investment in June 2018 with another investor.

NEPRA has acquired and recycled over 27,000 MT of garbage since partnering with Aavishkaar and presently gathers, sorts, and segregates about 50 MT of dry waste every day. Worker productivity increased from 50 kilos per person to 300 kilograms per day at NEPRA's. Its management information system was also improved (MIS). As garbage is a continuously changing, multi-commodity industry, and the firm needed a solid IT platform to manage processing and collection costs so that all decisions were made with the best economics in mind. Between 2013 and 2018, collection expenses were reduced by 33% because of vehicle tracking and better route planning. NEPRA's announced yearly revenues were of US\$250,000 in the fiscal year 2013, and as of September 2018, the firm was earning monthly revenues of over US\$750,000, with revenues expected to exceed US\$10 million in the fiscal year 2019.

## 5.5 Marketing Strategies

The company's work cannot be classified as an innovation or anything that has not been done before. They have been experimenting with and testing numerous things already on the market in many corporations from various industries, if not this one specifically. For example, if we look at their collection mechanism, they do not have any vehicles to collect the generated waste. Instead of purchasing their automobiles, they formed a micro-entrepreneurship model similar to OLA and UBER. They developed a mobile application via which work is assigned to the individual who owns the vehicles. He receives appointments for collection throughout the day, much like a taxi does. So, when they noticed something positive happening in the market, they seized the opportunity and developed their mobile application, resulting in the creation of micro-entrepreneurs in the market and, eventually, a social impact. It was something they needed and demanded; therefore, their efforts had a social influence once again. They said no when asked if they ran any public awareness campaigns or advertised their services. "Most of the promotion and campaigns are online," he explained, "and for offline, we do several activities through which we aim to raise awareness." They did few offline promotions initially, like the RATH yatra and DAKOR padayatra (walk to the temple before Holi), Sandeep states that, he walked to the Ambaji temple in September.

Overall, it indicates that they do not do a lot of promotion, especially lately as people have become more aware now.. Also, they do not need to promote to the general public because they are not selling anything. It works differently for them. It is a word-of-mouth or referral marketing strategy used by corporate teams that have previously worked with them. For example, in the hospitality industry, staff changes regularly, so one employee who sees them operating at one location suggests or refers their services to other locations. This is how the business quickly expanded to encompass all of Ahmadabad's major corporations, hospitals, and hotels.

## 5.6 Scaling and partnerships

Currently, in Ahmedabad, Indore, and Pune, NEPRA employs over 1,800 garbage pickers and collectors to handle over 500 tonnes of solid waste every day. The profits are used to extend its worldwide reach and scale up its operations.

"We have scaled our venture with the help of two significant investments to make our dream come true. We received 44 crores (35 crores through Asha Impact and nine crore from HNIs). Previously, we had received Rs. 28 crores. We made a top line of 60 crores from the first amount (28 crores). We want to expand to Indore, India's cleanest city, with the next round of funding of Rs 44 crore, and expect to have a 300-tonne unit operational next month," Sandeep adds. Around 26 crores have been invested on CAPEX and 10 crores in operating capital in Indore, "where the quality of garbage is better." Sandeep was also happy to share that he and his crew have received an order to pick up and treat dry garbage in Jamnagar, and they will mimic the Indore collection methodology. Over the following three months, the unit will be put up.

With the growth of the company's branches, the workforce is also growing. Sandeep is pleased to announce that, in addition to the expansion, the company will be hiring more personnel for

each unit. The commissioning of the Indore factory will result in an increase of the current workforce from 250 to 350 people. Sandeep attributes this growth to the supportive policies of the current government, such as the 'Swachh Bharat Mission,' which has raised awareness and attracted investors from around the world. The company is also receiving subsidies from the government, including land, to establish a Material Recovery Facility. The toll number serves as a direct line for garbage collectors to report any complaints or late pickups and to confirm collections. People in the community can easily spot the truck and call the number to inquire about their waste collection needs, which the company is happy to fulfil and compensate for.

## **5.7 Organization culture**

The Let's Recycle social venture has a strong financial foundation and currently employs around 200 workers. With a "bottom-heavy-top-light" structure, only 10% of the employees work in the office, with the rest working on the ground. The collection team consists of 60 workers, and the Material Recovery Facility, which is currently being established, will employ 100-120 workers. The facility will sort and categorize the collected waste materials.

"Let's Recycle generates a positive working atmosphere where people feel inspired to work and contribute to the firm's success," says the creator. They also give excellent prospects for professional and career advancement for its personnel." Furthermore, "Rag-pickers who work in my enterprise are taught in all the abilities necessary to detect garbage. Thus they are adept at cautiously handling most hazardous waste goods including acid bottles, hospital waste, and mobile batteries," according to the statement.

The social enterprise has its toll-free line that anybody, including individuals, families, and businesses, may call to request that the organization collect their trash and pay them. This also aids the organizer in receiving client complaints about service delivery and monitoring personnel performance. The enterprise established specific day and time plans for collecting rubbish from clients and other rag-pickers and cooperating with rag-pickers. As a consequence, "we are presently able to collect 50 tonners of rubbish every day, which comprises food waste, dry waste, and bio-medical waste, as well as waste acquired through rag-pickers from hospitals, hotels, and government offices." Similarly, by collecting rubbish from individual families, retail sectors, hospitals, government institutions, industry, corporate offices, and so on, this business provides services to them."

As a result, let's recycle is able to give high-quality waste management services to its clients while also minimizing global environmental challenges. Furthermore, by balancing the 3P's, i.e., Planet, People, and Profit, this business can attain sustainable development. We can conclude that Let's Recycle's social innovation is not only assisting us in achieving environmental sustainability, but it is also addressing the problem of financial exclusion of rag-pickers and those living at the bottom of the pyramid by providing employment opportunities, which adds social value by improving the dignity of the beneficiaries.

Sandeep's path has not been without its share of lessons. His hopes were nearly shattered when a fire broke out at the Ahmedabad facility. "Everything had vanished. The main lesson was that we had not taken out any project insurance. We had put down 40-50 lakh at the site and had 25-30 lakh in stock, for a total exposure of 75 lakh. He recalls, "The whole thing went up in flames."

Vineet Rai, the founder of Aavishkaar, gave much-needed assistance at the time. Further, he advised the members of Let's Recycle not to get discouraged and concentrate on getting back on track.

"Our employees' support, who stated that they would not accept any income for the next ten days, was very heartening. It was a touching gesture," Sandeep adds. Many things altered as a result of the fire. "Even though we reopened 15 days after the fire, I realized we needed to automate our plants." By 2015, we had installed new mechanized instruments to assure material mobility and a new facility to handle polymer optical sorting," he says.

## **5.8 Social Value Creation**

### **5.8.1. Employment Creation**

When they first launched their business, finding good personnel was a huge difficulty because they couldn't find efficient or interested people in this field. This mainly was because waste management was not a top concern for those with excellent master's degrees in various fields. For the next 10-15 years, they did not see this as a growth sector. However, they are grateful to the government, especially programs such as Swachh Bharat, which have raised awareness among the public. People's perceptions have shifted, and they increasingly regard garbage management as a business. They are already attracting a large number of qualified individuals with degrees from reputable universities who are eager to collaborate with them on various projects. They had no one approaching them in 2014 who was interested in working in the waste management business. Now, in 2017-18, practically every institute is doing waste management studies; this is the change that has assisted them in overcoming this difficulty, which has come from the top.

Another concern they encounter is child labour or refugee status. Currently, as an organization, they are not working in the area where people collect waste from landfill sites because establishing a traceable chain is difficult here, and these people's expertise is concentrated at landfill sites. As a company, they must also report to their investors and demonstrate that they are not collecting waste from child labour. The employees of NEPRA are delegated with the task of collecting waste materials from landfill sites. On such occasions, it is possible that they may encounter children who come to sell waste. However, purchasing waste from these minors would contravene company policies and perpetuate the exploitation of child labour. In order to prevent such situations, the company has decided to refrain from conducting waste collection at the landfill sites.

The dry trash is treated in an automated system created by NEPRA that uses optical sorting to prepare it as a commodity for recyclers. To ensure low danger and health risks, the system uses limited manual segmentation at the beginning of the processing process. To guarantee that the system runs well, the team has devised a daily strategy. Women who have been up-scaled and given social security are among their in-house segregation. The separated goods are sent to the post-sorting conveyor for final sorting and quality control. The objects are compacted or shredded before being delivered to a recycling centre. 90 percent of total input is recycled into different commodities such as T-shirts, pipes, buckets, rubbish bags, and so on, while the remaining 10% is supplied to cement firms as refuse-derived fuels, resulting in zero waste. Fair

rewards effectively use the whole value chain, resulting in a happy and healthy circular economy.

NEPRA has established a well-organized dry waste supply chain that links trash generators, collectors, and recyclers. In Ahmedabad, it has incorporated nearly 1,800 garbage pickers into the official economy. The founders take satisfaction in the fact that by sourcing rubbish from marginalized waste-pickers and providing transparent prices, they helped formalize India's unregulated and unorganized waste management business. By offering fair rates, transparent service, and fast cash payments, NEPRA is improving the lives of approximately 1800 garbage pickers in India, who are often poor, uneducated, and untrained. The firm has been able to give earnings that are on average 30- 40% greater than what these individuals would have earned elsewhere by developing an organized garbage collecting supply chain and removing intermediaries. Women make up around 55 percent of NEPRA's workforce.

### **5.8.2. Achieving Social Inclusion**

It was all business for Mr. Sandeep until Aavishkaar, a subsidiary of the Aavishkaar-Intellect Group, invested INR 3 crores. Mr. Sandeep explained that he recognized they were giving a lot of comfort to people's lives via their efforts. His outlook on the company shifted, and they began to monitor the social metric. The creator discovered there was little transparency in the recycling value chain while conducting research. In addition, the waste management industry was disorganized. As a result, Mr Sandeep sold all of his previous businesses in 2009-10 to focus on garbage management and create NEPRA. When Aavishkaar, part of the Aavishkaar-Intellect Group, invested INR 3 crores, the social effect of the enterprise was highlighted. Sandeep while sharing his experience mentions that;

*"That everything has been a business up to that time. We saw then that our effort was providing a lot of relief to people's lives. Our business approach shifted, and we began measuring the social capital,"*

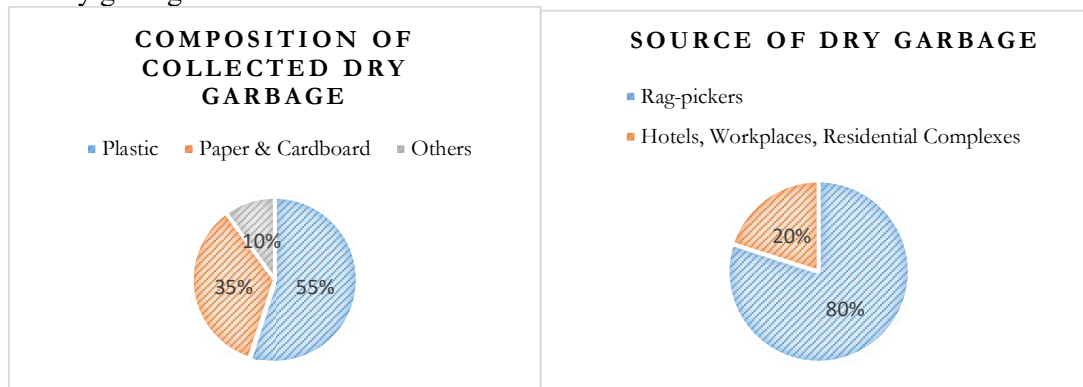
Aavishkaar-Intellect group visualized and witnessed the impact that the company is going to create livelihood opportunities for the rag-pickers in an organized manner, where the bottom of the pyramid is the largest, but poorest socio-economic group, estimated to number over 300 million people, or nearly 25% of the population. This portion of our economy's population earns less than Rs 300 per day and is primarily engaged in tasks such as cleaning, rubbish collection, begging, and so on. Waste collection ranks last in the hierarchy of urban jobs, and the majority of those employed in this occupation are women and children. They were previously impoverished, but now they have a surplus of income and have televisions and refrigerators in their homes," he said in the interview.

*"Some of the people we hired for 6,000 per month are now making more than 1 lakh per month. All of our early training and knowledge has paid off handsomely. I didn't realize it at the time, but we were essential in assisting other people from lower socioeconomic backgrounds in achieving their goals. We were having a great influence on individuals," he continues.*

## 5.9 Sustainability management

The waste management industry used to lack structure and organization. Despite the separation of waste at its source, there was no established system for recycling. To address these challenges, solutions such as the development of technological infrastructure for increased transparency and scalability, the creation of a unified platform for recyclers, and the provision of fair compensation by accessing larger waste sources have been proposed. NEPRA aims to streamline and optimize the supply chain through automation to support the recycling process.

Rag-pickers account for around 80% of the normal 6-6.5 tonnes of dry garbage produced each day. The following diagrams showcase the sources of the dry garbage and the composition of the dry garbage collected.



Source: (Dandapani, 2017)

NEPRA has brought over 1,800 waste-pickers into the official economy by offering them fair rates, transparent services, and direct cash payments without the need of a middleman (Dandapani, 2017). NEPRA's activities have expanded to the point that it currently employs over 250 full-time persons from low-income backgrounds. It provides them with health benefits, financial services, and health insurance.

During the period 2012–2018, NEPRA's Let's Recycle project had a substantial socioeconomic and environmental impact. The following table below showcases the work done by NEPRA and its significance.

IMPACT	DETAILS
Socio Economic	Aided over 500 organisations in their recycling efforts.
Environmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Recycled – 880 tonnes of paper, 5107 MT of plastic, 2000 tonnes of glass.</li> <li>➤ Saved - 10,616 MT of garbage from landfills (2012-2016), 3,159 MT of CO2 equivalent, 14,995 trees, 1.76 million litres of water, 32.12 million KWH of energy and 13.61 million gallons of oil.</li> </ul>

Waste Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ ERP-driven system – can handle 100 MT of rubbish daily.</li> <li>➤ Recycled – 27,000 MT of solid waste</li> <li>➤ Goal – divert 30,000 MT from landfills by 2020</li> </ul>
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*Source: (NEPRA Website, 2019) and (Rai, 2018)*

## 6.0 Future Plans:

It is not as crucial to arrive at your destination as it is to reap the benefits of your selected path. Creating a zero-waste business is a long-term objective, but it is extremely helpful in current operations because it stimulates ongoing waste management development. Let's Recycle is a NEPRA project that assists in visualizing a firm as a Zero Waste operation and then determining how to make that vision a reality. They thrive on waste diversion and recycling innovation, providing a new perspective to waste management.

Let's Recycle works with full environmental compliance as well as quality and economic effectiveness in its operational methods. Their current goal is to grow to 25 additional Indian cities by 2023. "For expansion, you need both cash and raw material, and for the kind of industry that we are in, raw material will never be going down, rather increasing year on year," he stated when asked how they hope to meet this goal. The funding problem of the previous two years has been resolved because they now have a large number of investors and 'social capital.' Their message for aspiring Entrepreneurs:

*"Based on my personal experience, the industry that my partners and I chose was garbage management, which isn't considered as respectful in the community where you came from; in short, no one believed in us. But we never lost faith in ourselves or the work we did. We were always confident in our ability to generate a profit from our business. As a result, instead of focusing on what others say, you should be confident in what you're doing, trust in your concept and yourself, and learn from your mistakes, because the more people who oppose your idea, the more likely it is that you're on the right track. Because there will be no competition if others are not eager to enter this area, and because you are the sole player, you are the champion."*



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## Dr. Nisha Pandey



Dr. Nisha Pandey is currently serving as the Director at the Gujarat Institute of Development Research (GIDR) in Ahmedabad. Prior to her tenure at GIDR, she held the position of Professor at the Vivekanand Education Society Business School in Mumbai, where she also assumed the role of Chairperson at the Yunus Centre for Social Business. Additionally, she has contributed her expertise as a Visiting Scholar at INTI International University in Malaysia and as a Visiting Professor at MIU, University Fairfield, Iowa, USA.

Dr. Pandey holds a Ph.D. in Environmental Economics, which she earned from Harcourt Butler Technological Institute in Kanpur. Furthermore, she boasts valuable post-doctoral research experience gained at IIT Bombay. Throughout her career, she has been involved in numerous interdisciplinary research projects, collaborating with esteemed institutions such as the Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay, Management Development Institute in Gurgaon, and Harcourt Butler Technological Institute in Kanpur.

Dr. Pandey's contributions to academia and research are evident in her impressive portfolio. She has presented and published over 50 research papers at both national and international conferences, forums, and journals. Her scholarly work extends to the authorship of three books focusing on social entrepreneurship and women's empowerment.

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Currently, Dr. Pandey is actively engaged in the project "An Analysis of Premises, Potential, and Prospects of The Aspirational District Programme," which is funded by MGNRE, Government of India, and the Gujarat Matikam Kalakari & Rural Technology Institute (GMK&RTI). Her comprehensive body of work reflects her dedication to the field of economics and social sciences, as well as her commitment to addressing critical societal issues through research and policy development.

