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SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP - STUDY OF KAUSHALYA FOUNDATION

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ABSTRACT

Social entrepreneurs establish innovative and systemic approaches for meeting the needs of the populations that lack the financial resources or political clout to achieve lasting benefit on their own. Rather than leaving societal needs to the government or business sectors, social entrepreneurs find, what is not working and solve the problem by changing the system, spreading the solution, and persuading entire societies to take new leaps. Social entrepreneurs often seem to be possessed by their ideas, committing their lives to changing the direction of their field. They are both visionaries and ultimate realists, concerned with the practical implementation of their vision above all else. Social entrepreneurship should reflect the need for a substitute for the market discipline that works for business entrepreneurs. Social entrepreneurs play the role of change agents in the social sector. Social sector leaders will exemplify these characteristics in different ways and to different degrees. The closer a person gets to satisfying all these conditions, the more that person fits the model of a social entrepreneur. Those who are more innovative in their work and who create more significant social improvements will naturally be seen as more entrepreneurial. Let's consider each one in terms of "KAUSHALYA FOUNDATION".

KEYWORDS

Entrepreneurship, Growers, Innovation, Vendors, Vision.

INTRODUCTION

ntrepreneurs are essential drivers of innovation and progress. In the business world, they act as engines of growth, opportunity and innovation to fuel economic expansion. Social entrepreneurs act similarly, tapping inspiration and creativity, courage and resilience, to seize opportunities that challenge and change established, but fundamentally unbalanced systems. These entrepreneurs are ambitious and persistent, tackling major social issues and offering creative ideas for wide-scale change.

Unlike business entrepreneurs who generate values by creating the new markets, the social entrepreneur aims for the values in the form of constructive change which will benefit the communities and ultimately societies at large. Social entrepreneurs establish innovative and systemic approaches for meeting the needs of the populations that lack the financial resources or political clout to achieve lasting benefit on their own. Rather than leaving societal needs to the government or business sectors, social entrepreneurs find what is not working and solve the problem by changing the system, spreading the solution, and persuading entire societies to take new leaps. Social entrepreneurs often seem to be possessed by their ideas, committing their lives to changing the direction of their field. They are both visionaries and ultimate realists, concerned with the practical implementation of their vision above all else.

Each social entrepreneur presents ideas that are user-friendly, understandable, ethical, and engage widespread support in order to maximize the number of local people that will stand up, seize their idea, and implement with it. In other words, every leading social entrepreneur is a mass recruiter of local change makers—a role model proving that citizens who channel their passion into action can do almost anything.

Over the past two decades, the citizen sector has discovered what the business sector learned long ago: There is nothing as powerful as a new idea in the hands of a first-class entrepreneur. Just as entrepreneurs change the face of business, social entrepreneurs act as the change agents for society, seizing opportunities others miss and improving systems, inventing new approaches, and creating solutions to change society for the better. While a business entrepreneur might create entirely new industries, a social entrepreneur comes up with new solutions to social problems and then implements them on a large scale.

Social entrepreneurship should reflect the need for a substitute for the market discipline that works for business entrepreneurs. Social entrepreneurs play the role of change agents in the social sector, by:

- Adopting a mission to create and sustain social value (not just private value)
- Recognizing and relentlessly pursuing new opportunities to serve that mission
- Engaging in a process of continuous innovation, adaptation, and learning
- Acting boldly without being limited by resources currently in hand
- Exhibiting heightened accountability to the constituencies served and for the outcomes created

This is clearly an idealized definition. Social sector leaders will exemplify these characteristics in different ways and to different degrees. The closer a person gets to satisfying all these conditions, the more that person fits the model of a social entrepreneur. Those who are more innovative in their work and who create more significant social improvements will naturally be seen as more entrepreneurial. Let's consider each one in terms of "KAUSHALYA FOUNDATION"

"KAUSHALYA FOUNDATION" – THE SOCIAL ENTREPRENEUR

Started in 2007, – Kaushalya Foundation(KF), by creative and highly qualified professionals from Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Ahmedabad with wide experience in the field of agriculture and organized retailing chose to sell vegetables on the streets of Patna. Perhaps the most highly educated green grocer India has ever produced, the young man from Nalanda, Kaushalyandra Kumar has established his venture Kaushalya Foundation in 2007. KF launched the project Samriddhi, a farmer's co-operative in Patna in 2008, which sells vegetables in ice-cooled pushcarts. They are focusing on mobilizing and organizing informal and fragmenting vegetable sector of Bihar. The goal of the foundation is to create values and opportunities to the societies dependent on agriculture sector, especially disadvantaged ensuring sustainable livelihood, enriched environment, improved quality of life and good human values.

The foundation has been working towards professionalizing vegetable street vendors and marginal growers, and empowering them to face the future challenges in the new global economy, and thus creating wealth and prosperity from farm gate to food plate through undertaking the holistic view of vegetable supply chain.

The foundation is reformer and revolutionary, but with a social mission. They are making fundamental changes in the way things are done in the vegetable sector. Their visions are bold. They want professionalism in trade channel of agriculture sector by creating lucrative, dignified self-employment for the families and societies dependent on this sector. They attack the underlying causes of problems, rather than simply treating symptoms. In order to improve socio-economic condition, they are functioning at the grass root level. They are trying to reduce needs rather than just meeting them. They seek to create systemic changes and sustainable improvements by breaking intergenerational transfer of poverty. They are acting as media between street vendor sand vegetable growers to the mainstream market. Though they may act locally, their actions have the potential to stimulate global improvements in their chosen arenas.

KF is getting overwhelming response from farmers & vegetables vendors. The number of farmers & vendors associated with the organization has increased to 3000 & 600 respectively. This number is growing exponentially with increasing awareness label.

At present, the Kaushalya Foundation is a setup, consisting of 23 employees spread operating in two states. If they remain on course, Kaushlendra believes they will be be spearheading brand Bihar, a 100cr organisation in 2012. Expansion plans are going according to plan with two new collection centres are scheduled to be commissioned in Fatuha and Ekangar Sarai which will

This is the core of what distinguishes social entrepreneurs from business entrepreneurs even from socially responsible businesses. The social mission of the foundation is fundamental. Their mission of social improvement cannot be reduced to creating private benefits (financial returns or consumption benefits) for individuals. Making a profit, creating wealth, or serving the desires of customers may be part of the model, but these are means to a social end, not the end in itself. Samriddhi is trying to increase the profitability and efficiency at the each level of vegetable supply chain from farmers to street vendors to organized retailers by developing organizational framework. Each level of the supply chain can optimize their values and opportunities by increasing their self efficiency. Profit is not the gauge of value creation for the foundation, but social impact. The foundation is envisioning for a long-term social return on investment. They are working on reasonable and holistic approaches to provide social security and financial services to all the level of supply chain. They want to create lasting improvements and to think about sustaining the impact.

RECOGNIZING AND RELENTLESSLY PURSUING NEW OPPORTUNITIES

They are not simply driven by the perception of a social need or by their compassion, rather they have a vision of how to achieve improvement and they are determined to make their vision work. They are persistent. Their social model – an organization of vegetable vendors and approach – bringing two ends together of vegetable supply chain take advantage of new economy that favors big retail chains. The foundation approach is the fastest means to do so. They have the potential to gain better terms of trades such as better sourcing prices, lower transaction costs access to training and other services. The foundation has designed a framework for organizing the two far ends of the chain under a common umbrella and facilitates direct link between producer groups and street vendors. Their framework connects small and marginalized stakeholders to the mainstream market by improving financial and social concerns. The model also empowers vendors and growers for the new market challenges for better returns to growers and vendors. The foundation's framework provides platform and support to vendors and growers to reduce the operational cost and increasing the price realisation in the evolving economy. This in turn provides added benefits to the vendors & growers like insurance cover for family, free education and many social and financial services. The foundation is trying to learn about what works and what does not work in vegetable supply chain to end customer. The key element is persistence combined with a willingness to make adjustments as one goes. Rather than giving up when an obstacle is encountered, entrepreneurs ask.

ENGAGING IN A PROCESS OF CONTINUOUS INNOVATION, ADAPTATION, AND LEARNING

Social entrepreneurs are innovative. The foundation is focusing on new grounds, developing new models, and pioneering new approaches. However, innovation can take many forms. It does not require inventing something wholly new. They are simply applying an existing idea in a new way or to a new situation. They are using many business strategic concepts in vegetable sector from long-term contracts, distribution channels to regular training. Entrepreneurs need not be inventors. They simply need to be creative in applying what others have invented. The foundation is adapting the business sector concepts in vegetable market which is the backbone of the Indian economy. Their innovations may appear in how they structure their core programs or in how they assemble the resources and fund their work. On the funding side, the foundation is looking for innovative ways to assure that their ventures will have access to resources as long as they are creating social value. It is not just a one-time disintegrating of creativity, rather it is a continuous process of exploring, learning, and improving the quality of life for people based on the vegetable segment of India. Of course, with innovation comes uncertainty and risk of failure. Large numbers of government schemes are available which can change the grower's life. But vegetable sectors couldn't use the affluent resources due to lack of understanding, expertise and time. The foundation is acting as agent to assist to learn about various government schemes. The foundation tends to have a high tolerance for ambiguity and learns how to manage risks for themselves and others. They are treating failure of a project as a learning experience, not a personal tragedy.

ACTING BOLDLY WITHOUT BEING LIMITED BY RESOURCES

Social entrepreneurs do not let their own limited resources keep them from pursuing their visions. The foundation provides unlimited resources to all vendors and growers as they have collaborated with all levels of supply chain. They use scarce resources efficiently, and they leverage their limited resources by drawing in partners and collaborating with others. They focus more on long term contracts with organized buyer – retailers with systematic distribution centers at various locations. This helps in efficient logistics with effluent storage capacity. Most of the farmers are unaware of new technology and financial resources. With unlimited financial and technological resources, farmers emphasize on better quality, optimum costs and minimum wastage of vegetables. The foundation provides all resource options, from pure philanthropy to the commercial methods of the business sector. They are developing resource strategies that are likely to support and reinforce their social missions. They take calculated risks and manage the downside, so as to reduce the harm that will result from failure of quality of the product. They understand the risk tolerances of their end customers and use this to spread the risk to those who are better prepared to accept.

EXHIBITING A HEIGHTENED SENSE OF ACCOUNTABILITY

The foundation has created centralized system for various types of services. They are focusing from billing, procurement and marketing, promotions, advertising to administration and merchandising. Because market discipline does not automatically weed out inefficient or ineffective social ventures, social entrepreneurs take steps to assure they are creating value. This means that they seek a sound understanding of the constituencies they are serving. They are making sure the all the levels of supply chain have correctly assessed the needs and values of the people they intend to serve and the communities in which they operate. In some cases, this requires close connections with those communities. They understand the expectations and values of their investors including anyone who invests money, time, and/or expertise to help them. They seek to provide real social improvements to their beneficiaries and their communities, as well as attractive (social and/or financial) return to their investors. Creating a fit between retail values and community needs is an important part of the challenge. When feasible, the foundation is creating market-like feedback mechanisms to reinforce this accountability. They are assessing their progress in terms of social, financial, and managerial outcomes, not simply in terms of their size, outputs, or processes. They use this information to make course corrections as needed.

CONCLUSION

The Foundation describes a set of behaviors that are exceptional. These behaviors should be encouraged and rewarded in those who have the capabilities and temperament for this kind of work. While we might wish for more entrepreneurial behavior in both sectors, society has a need for different leadership types and styles. Social entrepreneurs are one special breed of leader, and they should be recognized as such. This definition preserves their distinctive status and assures that social entrepreneurship is not treated lightly.

The foundation creates and supports infrastructure from root level of vegetable supply chain to big retailers. They are aiming to propagate organic farming and use their expertise in marketing to reach the markets not only in India but also abroad so that the farmers of Bihar fetch good return for their produce. The foundation is targeting to penetrate the vegetable markets in the US, Europe and Japan.

The ice-cooled pushcart vegetables are a hit with customers in parts of southern Patna which increases confidence in the foundation in the whole system of vegetable supply chain. The vegetables taste garden fresh, are priced reasonably and, to add to that, they are weighed accurately with electronic weighing machines. Moreover, the pushcart vendor gives the buyers a cash-memo which no other vegetable seller does, as further authentication of the quality and quantity of the vegetables.

Finally, they are not only selling vegetables, but also the name of the farmer and the village where it has been grown. The farmer should not remain an unsung hero any more as the tag on the vegetables mention of the name of the farmer and his village.

KF is enriching the lives of all-

Farmers - Better price realization

- Access to quality inputs and credit

- Reduction in wastage

Consumers - More choice and convenience

Lower priceReliable quality

Inter-mediaries - Displacement from current role

- Market intelligence provider

Roadside vendors - Streamlining and supply chain

Access to creditReduction in wastage

Government - Reduction in poverty

- Partnering government in social responsibility.

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