

Informal Workers and Promotion of Social Entrepreneurship (A Case Study of Petty Traders of Dehradun District of Uttarakhand)

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ABSTRACT

Petty traders are the persons who deal in trading within their limited resources. They have a very nominal amount of capital to invest and no or insufficient place to work with and a limited knowledge of the market. They depend mainly on their family members for assistance. The petty traders in the district were found in two forms (1) Street vendors-moving street vendors, residential street vendors, fixed shop street vendors and pavement vendors, and (2) Market vendors. This study is based on primary data of Petty Traders of Dehradun District of Uttarakhand.

Key Words : Informal workers, Promotion of Social Entrepreneurship

INTRODUCTION

Informal sector includes all the economic activities and enterprises which are not officially regulated and which operate outside the economic system offered by the state and its institutions. It is characterised by a low level of organisation with no access to formal credit, little or no division between labour and capital, labour relations based on casual employment and/ or social relationship as opposed to formal contracts, labour intensive technology and low skill labour. These units to a large extent belong to the household sector and can not be associated with other organisations. Salient characteristics of informal sector are: (i) small size operation, (ii) ease of entry, (iii) informal structure and family ownership (iv) reliance on indigeneous resources, (v) use of indigeneous technology, (vi) highly competitive and unprotected market, (vii) lack of access to Government favours, (viii) unregulated and unprotected labour market, and (ix) absence of trade unions.

Review of Literature :

Noponen, Helze (1987) studied women petty traders,

street vendors and fisher women in south India and concluded that lack of institutional credit is the main problem in their works and women's organisations under the able leadership of WWF and SEWA are helping them to come out of this problem.

National Commission (1988) studied the self employed women and women in informal sector and found that 35% of the respondents earned less than Rs. 3000 in a whole year. Each woman was doing four kinds of work- for insurance, labouring in fields for wages, working with family plot, rearing livestock and processing agricultural produce for sale. The work contributed 40 percent to the income of the family.

Deliege, Robert (1989) studied the particular perspective of job mobility in relation to the community of brick makers in a village of Tamil Nadu state in south India inhabited by Paraiyars, an untouchable caste. He concluded that brick-making work is carried out by a team of two workers who can be husband-wife, father-son, brother-sister or the like. The study also explains that baking and transporting operations in the klins and underlines that the work in brick klins is very hard. The working conditions are harsh and workers work under

the burning sun. A couple is able to make 2000 bricks a day but when it feels tired can not keep the rhythm next day.

Chhetry, Shanti (1999) studied women workers in the informal sector in Darjeeling district of West Bengal and concluded that informal sector may not have satisfied every worker it has absorbed; the workers may be low paid, they may be deprived of legal status, may be subject of numerous exploitation, may be liable for increasing civic nuisances, but this sector has stood as the constant source of employment to them without which they would have thrown in a precarious state.

Krishnaraj, Maitreyi and Deshmukh, Joy P. (1989) studied the women in handicrafts in India and concluded that male participation in crafts has been slowly decreasing over the years while female participation is on the rise, particularly in rural home based crafts sector. The proportion of women employed in different handicrafts varied from a low of 40% to a high of nearly 80 to 90% women artisans dominate in traders like decoration of cloth (embroidery and lace making), coir work, cane and bamboo craft, dying and bleaching of textiles, earthen ware, mat making and artistic leather ware etc.

Kumari, Sudha (1989) studied the working conditions of the women working in the informal sector of India and concluded that hours of work are longer than permitted by law, medical and maternity benefits are conspicuously absent and payment of wages and retrenchment etc. are all arbitrary in the informal sector.

Jhabvala, Renana (1992) studied the problems of women petty traders in Gujarat and other states of India and concluded that they faced not only the financial problems but also the police atrocities and exploitation. They are compelled to bear with these problems only because they do not have legal status.

METHODOLOGY

Petty Traders:

Petty traders are the persons who deal in trading within their limited resources. They have a very normal amount of capital to invest, no or in sufficient place to work with and a limited knowledge of the market. Moreover, they depend mainly on their family members for assistance. All the petty traders are broadly classified into two categories in the district. Street vendors and Market vendors.

Street Vendors:

These vendors are normally sell their commodities in the streets. They are found mainly in these forms: **Moving Street Vendors:** They use a cycle, a rickshaw, a trolley or a moving stall and move from door to door to sell their commodities. **Residential Street Vendors:** They vend their commodities at their own houses or shop nearby their houses. **Fixed Shop Street Vendors:** They occupy a corner or a shop of the street and thus have a fixed shop to sell their commodities. **Pavement Vendors:** They occupy a space in the pavements or outside the regular shops and sell their commodities.

Market Vendors:

These petty traders have a fixed place or a shop in the market and sell their market.

It is very difficult to state what a particular category of vendors sells. The fact is that all the above categories of vendors sell all types of commodities as allowed by their resources and preference of their customers. It is very much common in Dehradun district that petty traders are engaged in retailing in new and second hand clothes, woolen garments and foreign goods smuggled from nearby countries. They run restaurants and tea stalls, and vegetables and fruits stalls. Some petty traders sell grocery items including condiments and spices and dry fruits. Some petty traders deal in newspapers and magazines while others in video cassette and picture cards. Not only this but they sell many other items of common interest and daily use also.

There are some piece rate workers who have the skills only. They have neither risk taking capacity nor money nor place to work with. They can provide their services only. They provide job work and charge the rate as per piece. They provide help in day to day working of petty traders. They are also included in the category of petty traders in our analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Reasons for Taking the Job of Petty Trading:

There is a large number of participation of people in petty trading in Dehradun district. Following are the main reasons for taking the job of Petty Trading-Low Income of the Family, No Requirement of Specific Resources, Safety and No Tension, To Utilize the Idle Time, Encouragement by the Government, Low Level of Family Income and Encouragement by the Family Members.

Table 1 : Reasons for Taking the Job of Petty Trading by the Sample Petty Traders

Sr. No.	Reasons	Male Workers		Female Workers		Total Workers	
		No. of Male Petty Traders	% of Male Petty Trader to Total Sample Male Petty Traders	No. Female Traders	% of Female Petty Trader to Total Sample Female Petty Traders	No. of Total Petty Traders	% of Total Petty Trader to Total Sample Petty Traders
1.	Low family Income	51	42.5	32	40.0	83	41.5
2.	No. requirement of specific resources	30	25.0	20	25.0	50	25.0
3.	To utilize the idle time	09	07.5	06	07.5	15	07.0
4.	Encouragement by the family members	15	12.5	10	12.5	25	12.5
5.	Encouragement by the Govt.	12	10.0	08	10.0	20	10.0
6.	Safety and no tension	03	02.5	34	05.0	07	3.5
Total		120	100	80	100	200	100

Source: Field Survey

Social Entrepreneurship:

Social entrepreneurship is the process by which individuals, startups and entrepreneurs develop and fund solutions that directly address social issues. A social entrepreneur, therefore, is a person who explores business opportunities that have a positive impact on their community, in society or the world.

Social entrepreneurship is the process of recognizing and resourcefully pursuing opportunities to create social value. Social entrepreneurs are innovative, resourceful, and result oriented. They draw upon the best thinking in both business and non-profit worlds to develop strategies than maximize their social impact. These entrepreneurial leaders operate in all kind of organization: large and small, new and old, religious and secular, non-profit, for profit and hybrid. These organisations comprise the social sector.

Suggestions:

Government should extend the facility of loan for petty traders through self-employment schemes. Norms under the schemes should be framed in such a way so that a large number of the petty traders may be benefited with the scheme.

Co-operative societies for petty traders in the district should be developed which may provide loan in the need of vendors on easy conditions and at the reasonable rate of interest.

It is the normal complaint of the sample petty traders in the district that police harasses them for getting 'Hafta' or 'Suvidha Shulk'. Those who deny to pay it, will have pay its price. It is, therefore suggested to keep the strict vigilance on police and if somebody is found

harassing any petty trader he/ she should be punished and penalised under the law.

The trade union should be formed and strengthened to safeguard their interests. It will safeguard from the notorious customers on the one hand and from the harassing element like police on the other. The present paper hope and effort that these changes will have a positive impact on petty traders lives.

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