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## *Social Entrepreneurship: Opportunities and Challenges during Covid 19 Wave I & Wave II*

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**Abstract:** *At a most fundamental level, social entrepreneurs step in where markets and governments are unable to provide instant relief to populations in need. From guaranteeing access to credible information, services and care for the most vulnerable, to launching substantial initiatives to support individuals and communities during their collective and individual troubles, the work of social entrepreneurs became all the more critical and irreplaceable during the COVID-19 pandemic, as they reached those who the market and governments were unable to account for. Because of their flexibility as businesses and their commitment to a social purpose, they have been able to be active and practical on the ground and have revitalized the security people could expect and need in dire times. From the immediate impact of the viral spread to the tertiary, cascading repercussions on employment, mental health, education and other domains, social innovation has shown the way for bouncing back.*

**Keywords:** *COVID-19, vulnerable, initiative, social purpose, healthcare.*

### **I. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

- 1) To ascertain the role and importance of social entrepreneurship in context of onslaught of COVID-19 Waves.
- 2) To know the roles of social entrepreneurs, as growth catalysts.
- 3) To understand and seek the new arenas of growth for Social Entrepreneurs.

### **II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY USED**

- 1) **Primary Research:** I spoke with several leading social entrepreneurs, all of whom are incredibly enthusiastic about what they do for a living because it allows them to live their passion, embracing a career with meaning. Tried to understand about their work during Covid-19.
- 2) **Secondary Research:** Also this study is based on secondary data. Secondary data is collected mainly from the articles and related websites.

### III. BACKGROUND

I am one of the founder members of a non-governmental organization called "Sahyog Pratishtan". The organization deals primarily with higher education for young people, especially skill-based programs. I personally know the challenges facing our organization which is operating in the domain of Social Entrepreneurship which motivated me to select the topic: "Social Entrepreneurship: Challenges and Opportunities during COVID-19 Wave I & Wave II ". I decided to approach to Prof. Shree Ravindra Patki to be Co-Author of this research paper as he is always enthusiastic about the concept of Entrepreneurship which also happens to be his academic subject.

### IV. LITERATURE REVIEW

Achieving economic sustainability is the path to successful social entrepreneurship that is not financially reliant on outside sources. (Scheiber, 2014) Such a perspective of social entrepreneurship is very prevalent in developing countries. Such a view of social entrepreneurship is prevalent in developing countries. They came to a consensus on the hybrid nature of social enterprises with a dual purpose of adding social value and wealth. Millions of people have been displaced as a result of the dangerous social and economic consequences of Covid-19 (Kuckertz et al., 2020). Entrepreneurial researchers have never seen a virus as dangerous as Coronavirus. However, the well-being of society is an important aspect of social entrepreneurship.

Roy and Karna (2015) highlighted the importance of creating a social fund for the success of social enterprises in order to avoid hardship.

One of the additives for the success of social enterprises is the group of rich social capital (Goyal and Sergi 2015). Social capital is critical in the generation of systems in any type of business. (2012) (Lehtimaki and Karintaus)

Policy and decision makers at the regional, district, and national levels should identify all social enterprises, NGOs, and voluntary organizations active in the healthcare sector, and the resources available to them should be aligned with resource sparse areas. Ambulances, doctors, paramedics, oxygen generators, data analytics, mental wellness counsellors, and, in some situations, hospital beds could be among the resources. (Verma 2021).

### V. INTRODUCTION

In comparison to traditional or commercial entrepreneurship, the concept of social entrepreneurship is relatively new. Despite the risks involved, social entrepreneurs identify suitable opportunities to develop social values. In collaboration with partners and stakeholders, a successful social entrepreneur attempts to establish a relationship between consumers and the social mission.

A simple definition of social entrepreneurship is the intersection of commerce and social well-being, an effort to develop solutions to existing social, environmental, and cultural issues while participating in the economy. Social entrepreneurs, with a focus on solutions, are the engaged and realistic leaders the world will see rising and leading us to better, hopeful, and secure futures.

The sole goal of social entrepreneurs is to make money and then use it to help others. Scholars have been pulled to the pro-social mission of social entrepreneurs. The concept of entrepreneurship has evolved over the years of academic research into various forms that are still in the early stages of research, such as social entrepreneurship, women entrepreneurship, education entrepreneurship, governmental entrepreneurship, global entrepreneurship, and cultural entrepreneurship.

In India, social entrepreneurs are rapidly expanding in sectors such as financial inclusion, livelihood, education, affordable housing, sanitation and healthcare, renewable energy, education, affordable housing, waste management, water, and so on. The

number of lives saved or the quality of healthcare services reveal the social impact of healthcare. Globally, India is regarded as one of the most dynamic countries for social entrepreneurship, with the highest number of enterprises.

The COVID era has revealed a plethora of domains in which social entrepreneurship has provided much-needed relief. This development is an important vantage point from which to analyze the future of social entrepreneurship, its vast potential, and the transformational benefits it can bring to the world.

## VI. DISRUPTIONS BY COVID WAVES & EMERGENCE OF SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS AS MESSIHAS DURING COVID WAVES I & II

Covid-19 negatively impacted and hit all the sectors of the economy that is manufacturing & services. However, service sector took a worst hit and continues to face its aftermath. This is because the wave has still not subsided.

The Indian government extended its help to migrant workers who returned to their native places during the second wave of the corona, apart from just setting up a digital-centralized database system. The second wave of Covid-19 has brutally exposed and worsened existing vulnerabilities in the Indian economy. The new digital culture was not for majority as many people residing in far flung and remote areas still face connectivity or zero connectivity issues.

Several state governments have already permitted the easy passage of fruits, vegetables, milk, and other commodities. Due to unclear limits and the blockage of logistics vehicles, online food grocery platforms have been severely impacted. The Reserve Bank of India and the Finance Minister announced measures that will benefit the industry and employees in the short term. Enclosing rural food production areas to provide an excellent response to the macro implications of COVID-19 on the Indian food sector as well as the larger economy.

Below are the few examples of Social Entrepreneurship ventures who helped extensively during Covid waves.

**Taru Naturals:** Social enterprise 'Taru Naturals and the restaurant chainAmericano' established the 'Farm to Table' fund to purchase food kits directly from poor farmers and distribute them to underprivileged communities in cities (comprising labourers). The initiative was conceived by Chef Alex Sanchez and Mallyeka Watsa, co-founders ofAmericano, and was achieved by the Taru team, led by CEO/Co-Founder Ruchi Jain, which was entrusted with the logistics of transporting food kits from farms across the Western and Southern parts of the country to Mumbai via truck. Each kit containing 4 kgs of wheat, 2 kgs of rice, 3 kgs of Dal, half a litre of oil, and half a kilo of fresh vegetables, sufficient to last a family of four for fifteen days.

**Mann Deshi Foundation:** 'Mann Deshi Foundation' Maharashtra based organization worked around the clock with the health system to provide oxygen beds, ventilators, and proper medicines to high risk patients. In collaboration with the district government and HSBC, they provided 20,000 food packages to families, 25,000 meals to migrant workers, and supplied 5,000 masks and PPE kits. They have also adapted & converted an unused rural hospital in a remote part of the state into a free 300 Bed COVID-dedicated facility with advanced medicines.

**Sai Sewa Sansthan:** Founder Sharad Singh and Secy Nikhil Singh from trust narrate as the Covid-19 pandemic hit the country, the trust stood firm and provided food for over 2000 migrants. From supporting those in need of groceries to ensuring people returned safely to their hometowns and raising awareness for the massive immigrant worker vaccination drive. Sai Seva Sansthan Trust made certain that everyone around them was handled of well. During the lockdown, Sai Seva Trust members went above and beyond to assist trapped labourers and migrant workers. The Sai Seva Sansthan Trust provided meals and shelter for migrant workers, allowing them to remain in their homes during the lockdown. During that time, trust members made available food packets to the needy and poor in and around the area.

**Upaya Social Ventures:** Upaya Social Ventures is a Businesses in their early stages with the greatest potential for economic growth in the highly vulnerable communities. Upaya helps enterprises grow their businesses and create jobs that lift

families out of extreme poverty through investments and accelerator programme. In April 2020, Upaya launched a three-wave strategy to combat the pandemic's devastation. Biggest priority is to keep the jobs that our portfolio companies have created. These jobs provide a lifeline for low-income families and must be retained. Following that, we will invest in new businesses that are creating dignified jobs in order to lift people out of extreme poverty. The recovery of COVID-19 will be fueled by new dignified jobs. In result of extreme and unimaginable second wave in India in April 2021, Upaya launched a specific fundraising campaign to send emergency funds directly to its partner entrepreneurs in India so they can address the most critical needs of their jobholders and businesses.

**Jan Sahas:** To assist those directly or indirectly affected by the crisis, a multi-faceted approach was required. In partnership with relevant partners and government officials, the Jan Sahas team made a number of approaches aimed at providing both short-term relief and long-term benefits. Jan Sahas implemented approaches such as dry ration support, cooked food for migrant workers, mobile recharge, cash transfers, and helpline support that connected people to help from concerned authorities over the last 100 days (March 25th to July 2nd, 2020). Jan Sahas collaborated with various institutions and associations to support front-line workers in their on-the-ground activities, as they played an important role in managing various important activities such as health facilities and proper implementation of social distancing.

## VII. OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

During the pandemic, learners in India focused on learning and upskilling themselves says 'Eduvanz's – EdTech' Firm's Head Varun Chopra With lockdowns rendering offline education ineffective, adopting online modes to continue learning was the next logical step, designed to allow e-learning to garner a long-term prominence.

Hemkunt Foundation, a non-profit, has helped raise 150 million rupees (\$2 million), which it used to purchase approximately 2,300 oxygen concentrators, which it will distribute throughout the country, while also soliciting donations for another tranche of oxygen cylinders and concentrators.

Social entrepreneurs will be critical in channelizing in concrete ways to shift our daily socioeconomic existences in order to control the social good. Promoting positive social change is fitting for these enterprises because they are not bound by the constraints of the state and the market, but are motivated to improve the world place while making necessary profits. This leads us to new, realistic ideas of governance and transformation that have an immediate impact on people's lives in need and give humanity new hope.

**Challenge-** It is still a risk-averse culture in India. According to several reports, our Indian businessmen are less willing to invest in our country legal and regulatory environment and are more willing to invest internationally. Limited access to funding, cumbersome procedures, and poor infrastructure, among other issues, plague local entrepreneurs. (Sharma & Kulshreshtha 2014)

Covid-19 has exacerbated imbalances all over the world, presenting the flaws in health care structures. However, there is a lot more to come from the innovative solutions of social enterprises that quickly pivot when faced with new challenges.

## VIII. FINDINGS AND KEY SUGGESTIONS

1. **Create more Skilled Manpower in Medical Industry:** Pharmacists, radiographers and laboratory assistants must be reskilled so that they can execute the duties of nursing, testing, vaccinating, patient data maintenance etc.
2. **Department of Biotechnology under PMO:** India has to develop know-how in detecting eminent bio-warfare threats, pathological threats etc. This Department must be operated entirely by Technocrats. Or Solopreneurs from Medical space.

3. **Misinformation Control:** Vested interested created a campaign of misinformation which can be fatal. Steps must be taken to curb this menace not only on the ground level but also on a digital scale which is a widely used platform for spread of the information. What needs to be investigated is also the nefarious nexus that exists between vested interests and the perpetrators.
4. **Spike Capacity Addition:** Which means enlarging health services beyond their normal capacity in order to meet increased health-care demand COVID-19 cases expanded sharply, and there was a sustained increase in demand for patient care and admissions. The calculation of "maximal case acceptance capacity" takes into account not only the total number of beds but also the allocation of human resources.
5. **Vaccine & Medicine Reserves:** During pandemic suddenly the demand for essential drugs, vaccines escalates and any breakdown in supply chain may give rise to black marketing of life saving drugs. India is one of the biggest manufacturers of many medicines and therefore it is apt that India makes the provision for Warehouses to safely stock the essential medicines or the raw material needed to manufacture medicines as well as devices like ventilators oxygen concentrators, beds etc.

Native entrepreneurs with extensive experience in the areas have clear visions, discrete ambitions, and in-depth expertise to drive and implement new approaches. These entrepreneurs have been and will continue to be critical in bringing this pandemic to an end and ensuring a more equitable society in which everyone has access to the health care they require.

## IX. CONCLUSION

The situation on the ground is dire, with India witnessing the second wave of COVID-19 and one of the most serious health emergencies in history. The speed and reliability with which social entrepreneurs responded to the COVID-19 pandemic in India and its consequences has demonstrated one thing: their on-the-ground presence and ability to act as first responders in support of communities at risk are critical to global COVID-19 response efforts.

During the second wave of COVID-19 in India, social entrepreneurs were working to provide emergency disaster aid faced numerous challenges. This is due to the fact that local NGOs are unable to access the funds required to respond to new requirements for groups to obtain licenses before receiving foreign funding.

In the short term, COVID-19 first responders in India are in urgent need of versatile grant money. However, as the country evolves from relief to rebuilding and regeneration, there is opportunity for more innovative financing mechanisms. Catalyst 2030, a movement of social entrepreneurs focused on the Sustainable Development Goals.

Some Covid 19 variants, such as Delta, have extended the pandemic period and require constant preemptive measures to keep the disease from spreading. As a result, there is an urgent need for social entrepreneurs to work at the local level location to maintain people's safety and well-being.

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