

# **Social Entrepreneurship and Social Inclusion: A Study of a Rural Social Enterprise**

**A thesis submitted to the University of Hyderabad in partial  
fulfillment of the requirement for the award of the degree of**

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

**IN**

**THE STUDY OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION AND INCLUSIVE POLICY**

**BY**

**K. RAMA KRISHNA REDDY**



**CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION AND INCLUSIVE POLICY**

**SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**UNIVERSITY OF HYDERABAD**

**HYDERABAD- 500046**

**AUGUST 2011**

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**DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that the work embodied in this thesis entitled “**Social Entrepreneurship and Social Inclusion: A Study of a Rural Social Enterprise**” has been carried out under the supervision of Prof. G Sudarshanam and Dr. J Rani Ratna Prabha, and has not been submitted for any degree in part or in full to any other university or to this university.

Date: 22nd August, 2011  
Hyderabad University

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**CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION AND INCLUSIVE POLICY**  
**SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**  
**UNIVERSITY OF HYDERABAD**

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**CERTIFICATE**

This is to certify that the thesis entitled “**Social Entrepreneurship and Social Inclusion: A Study of a Rural Social Enterprise**” submitted by **K. Rama Krishna Reddy**, as a part of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Centre for the Study of Social Exclusion & Inclusive Policy, is original and the work has been carried out under my supervision.

Date: 22nd August, 2011  
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K Rama Krishna Reddy

## **Acronyms and Abbreviations**

WB	:	World Bank
SE	:	Social Entrepreneurship
BC	:	Barefoot College
SE	:	Social Enterprise/Entrepreneurship/Entrepreneur
NGO	:	Non-Governmental Organization
VEEC	:	Village Energy Environment Committee
VEC	:	Village Education Committee
BSE	:	Barefoot Solar Engineers
VDC	:	Village Development Committee
CP	:	Children Parliament
WEG	:	Women Empowerment Group
SWRC	:	Social Work Research Centre
RWHT	:	Rain Water Harvesting Tank
RRWH	:	Roof Top Rain Water Harvesting
ISDS	:	Innovative Service Delivery System
CASE	:	Centre for Advancement of Social Entrepreneurship
EU	:	European Union
CASE	:	Centre for Advancement of Social Entrepreneurship
JAR	:	Joint Action Reports

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## CHAPTER - I

# INTRODUCTION

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*Exclusion is a tragedy and inclusion is a bliss; everything is human cultivation.*

Recent developments over the concepts of social exclusion and inclusive growth have opened up intensive debates and discussions on the role of various factors in the developmental discourse across the globe. Global experiences show that the tragedy of exclusion is not limited to any single issue or area. For instance, starting from Europe, the deprived and downtrodden were brought under one umbrella and termed them as 'socially excluded' through opening up a new era of 'social exclusion' where all the deprivations are seen from one vision. In United States, the outer class where certain sections are pushed away from the mainstream societies and termed them as 'outer class' has proven that even developed countries are not exempted from the magnitude of exclusion (Silver 1994). One doesn't need any introduction to explain the sorrows of the Africans, who are often excluded from basic access to the minimum needs. Last but not the least, the Indian experiences of exclusion is stratified on the basis of caste and class. With these examples, what emerges is that, on the one hand, some of the exclusions on the global scale have been attributed to historical formation of societies; while, on the other hand, most of them have roots in the modern developmental discourse.

From global experiences, it is found that the *tragedy of exclusion* is expanding to every corner of the world. Various Welfare States'/Governments' failure to address the needs of the entire population, on the one hand in various parts of the globe, is the biggest cause for this predicament, which should not be overlooked. On the other hand, increased population across the globe especially in the developing countries, should also be held responsible for the aggravation of the problem. In the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century, the total population of the globe was little over 1800 million, whereas by the end of 20<sup>th</sup> century, it has reached 6400 million which is more than three and half times that of the previous century. The United Nations has estimated that the figure would reach 9000 million by the end of 2100. This is a sharp increase of four

hindered percent from that of the earlier Century (United Nations 2004). Increase in population, as it stands, never creates a problem. The problem gets manifested only when the state fails to recognise the increased population with reference to resource allocation, providing basic amenities and opportunities to excel their capabilities. Unfortunately, the same discrepancies of exclusion are aggravated because of the policies intended to benefit only certain section of people and the discourse surrounding policy.

The overall scenario of the excluded and deprived section of population is best summarised as “... half the population on the planet struggles to survive on less than a \$3 day and half of them live under harsh conditions of extreme material deprivation and food insecurity” (Davis 2002: 9). The sad part is that this over 3 billion people around the world are poor even though they work full time and most of them live in the developing countries. Apart from their unemployment and low income figures, their adverse socio-politico-economic condition and cultural exclusion are uncannily endangered and unhealthy.

Again, it is believed that the modern technologies, which have made life very easy in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, have also contributed to the economic and environmental collapse. Added to them, there are terrible diseases such as swine flu (H1N1), HIV, war, terrorism, etc. So, hand in hand with the human civilization and development, the human habitat does have a series of social drawbacks that serve as threats to human life. In this regard, there is a lot to do to promote the basic human survival. Unfortunately, market, which need to be inclusive, has failed to address the social inequalities and they have further aggravated the ill effects of exclusion among the masses.

With increasing population, there is an uneven distribution of welfare benefits and facilities which have made the lives of the people vulnerable in the global scenario. This situation has the widened disparities between the rich and the poor. As more people come and join the pool of poor, then the state's failure to accommodate the demands of all those who fall under the realm of exclusion, state would not have any role to offer except ignore the poor or to depend on charities in order to entertain

them. Due to this turmoil, sometimes people may get re-excluded<sup>1</sup> (Reddy KKK 2008) as they are not in a position to articulate their problems as and when the state acts against the interests of the excluded. Since several decades, various civil society organisations have been working to sort out different social problems. However, such efforts have not given rise to a progressive social structure. The areas of exclusivity are widening along with the technological development, globalization, etc., in the recent years.

In this regard, since centuries NGOs have been playing a predominant role for the upliftment of the downtrodden sections in order to bring them into the mainstream. Such roles of NGOs are possible mainly because of the changing nature of civil society, especially in terms of donations and funding offered by the funding agencies located across the globe. Though the NGO sector had seen tremendous successes in the initial times, as the days pass by, the significance of NGOs and their role are in the a decline mode. In recent years, a large numbers of NGOs have been established. India alone has 33 million NGOs, which constitute one NGO for every approximately 400 people which is an indication of increase of NGOs in multiple folds (Indian Express 2010). Whatever changes the NGOs try to bring about in the society are tremendous in nature and should not be ignored at any cost as their place in the socio-economic development of the country is immense. The main intervention of NGOs is to serve or to train the deprived in order so they can cope up with various circumstances. In order to facilitate their day-to-day activities, these NGOs depend either on charities or funding under Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)<sup>2</sup>, donations from individuals or organisations. On the one hand, it is good to know that the number of NGOs have increased to serve the needs of the ever increasing

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<sup>1</sup> Social re-exclusion is seen as a process whereby the excluded sections, which are in the process of inclusion, are again excluded through deliberate or non- deliberate social processes or state policies.

<sup>2</sup> Many commercial enterprises often claim that they do support social change, but indeed their version of support falls under corporate social responsibility. What makes social entrepreneurship unique is that the socio-environmental centrality of their mission. Social entrepreneurship redefines market and its impact on society. In general, in any given society, certain sections are adversely excluded from enjoying the fruits of the social life. However, in the present approach, markets have been used to bring inclusion in the lives of excluded. Further this advocates the social and other allied inclusion which the social inclusion theory as a whole speaks about. Corporate Social Responsibility is extremely different which must be termed as a for-profit business pursuing social returns as one of their objectives which is not a primary objective. They do a lot of charities, and form NGOs in order to support their social cause. Traditionally, people believed that the non-profits and for-profits are to create social value and profits respectively. But the new breed, i.e., social entrepreneurship is the combination of both the objectives. Here, value addition is entrepreneurial nature.

population. Unfortunately, on the other hand, there is no increase in the funding that is available to these NGOs.

Simultaneously, whosoever receives the funding from various charitable organisations find that the terms and conditions of their activity are dictated by the funding agencies. The donor organisation would be holding the final decision whether funding has to be released or not based on the satisfaction it gets out of the reflection of NGOs. So the NGOs have no opinion but to agree to the terms and conditions of the donor organisations. Donor institutions may be public sector/governmental, UN agencies, the European Union, Charitable trusts, and other NGOs. So far, it has been evidenced that NGOs have been competing for the limited financial resources available from the funding agencies. Wallace and Chapman have elucidated that the competition among the NGOs “leads to the mushrooming of claims that NGOs make about what they can do with relatively small amounts of money” (2003: 8).

At this juncture, the notion of social entrepreneurship has taken roots. An important effort of civil societies has been to develop entrepreneur capabilities to resolve some major social issues without depending on external agencies. It could be termed as Senge, *et.al.* (2004) rightly mentioned, ‘awakening of a new future’. Therefore, the state, from one side, and the social entrepreneurs, on the other, could effectively address complicated problems very easily. Social entrepreneurs/enterprises identify social problem and thinks innovatively to solve the problem with the help of the local community. “Social entrepreneurship extends the definition of entrepreneurship by its emphasis on ethical integrity and maximising social value, rather than private value or profit” (Davis 2002: 7).

In general, any economy is divided into three categories. First is the private sector which is privately owned, involved in trading, market driven and profit centric. Second, the public/government sector is publicly owned, non-trading and the intention is service facilitation. Third, community or voluntary sector which is socially owned and orientated towards non-personal profit, self-help, mutuality and social purpose (Pearce 2003). Social entrepreneurship falls under the third sector. It has brought value addition to the third sector as it is believed that social enterprise is about offering passionate, dynamic and innovative solutions to the problems.

With a positive note, they have redefined traditional service delivery system into Innovative Service Delivery Systems (ISDS)<sup>3</sup>, where the inclusion is guaranteed in more substantial ways. Unlike earlier model, this model has given space to stakeholders to empower their potential through which they learn skills that are needed in order to acquire decent employment in the societies where they live for the sustenance of their families and communities. Further the earned incomes are being used to participate in the markets, in order to facilitate the right-to-live with dignity.

Many third sector or citizen sector [A citizen sector can be defined as citizens utilizing their skills to make a change to the wider community, as Sabrin Rahaman mentioned in Ashoka (2009)] or voluntary sector organisations are aimed at reducing disparities within and among the communities and tries to derive communities from the concerns of exclusion. Kevin Carter's, Pulitzer Prize winning starving photography that shows a child with a vulture had also tremendously contributed to understand the changing nature of deprived people (Carter 1994). The initiations adopted by the voluntary sector for the mission may differ, but not the intention. Some may choose to provide goods at cheaper rates to the disadvantaged section of people, whereas some others may employ the disadvantaged in certain ventures for redistributing the surpluses. In order to achieve the mission, some may start a for-profit or a non-profit venture and proceed towards hybrid ventures or/and some others may choose directly to start hybrid ventures. Social Enterprises are considered as hybrid organisations.

In a way, the failure of welfare state, in general, has given birth to the new concept called social entrepreneur(ship), whose primary aim is to solve the social problems through voluntary participation with new business models. The concept of social

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<sup>3</sup> The Innovative Service Delivery System (ISDS) refers to a structural change in the service delivery patterns through which the empowerment of the poor and deprived is made possible in a sustainable mode. It could also be seen from the lens of any non-traditional service delivery. Even centuries after it has been adopted the traditional structure of service delivery, the result has been so embarrassing where people have been pushed towards more vulnerable and exclusionary levels. Their capabilities have been misestimated and they have been surprisingly underused for centuries, it has resulted in clustering them with the multi-dimensional patterns of exclusion. This scenario has brought a sea change in the behavioural aspects of some individuals whose aim is to dissolve the social problems and further promote social cohesion. This structural change in the service delivery is the result of the efforts from social entrepreneurs who starts elevating the capabilities of the deprived through which employment/job are provided. With the help of the earned job, the excluded gets a chance to enter into the markets where he/she enjoys ultimate privileges through successful participation in the markets. So, this later model has been called as innovative service delivery system.

entrepreneurship is relatively new and the phenomenon and practices are not yet clearly formulated. This new type of leadership has led to the emergence of new role behaviour of leaders. Social entrepreneurship, in its current concept, consists of two notions: one is entrepreneurship which describes management innovation and second is social concern. While the concept of entrepreneurship is a management concept (coined 250 years ago) which speaks about innovation in the business sector, the social entrepreneurship is a societal concept (coined 20 years back) which speaks about social innovation for the welfare of socially excluded communities. Social entrepreneurship has emerged as a biggest social and business concept after the 1990s.

“Social entrepreneurs apply business thinking to community needs and bring together local skills and resources in innovative ways to achieve both business and social missions” (Jeff 2001). It may be conceptualised that a social entrepreneur is a person who identifies the present social problem and searches for an innovative solution for that. There is no doubt that the existing social sector has contributed significantly in addressing some major social problems, but the intensity and complexity of social problems continue to be delay a lasting solution. Solving these problems is not just a matter of mobilizing resources to the field. It entails developing new models and ways of achieving sustainable mission impact altogether differently. This reality of *achievement* makes social entrepreneurship a better leverage on resources (Skillern, *et.al* 2007). Social entrepreneurship is emerging as an area for academic inquiry, which must be pursued to find its position to successfully address the phenomenon of social exclusion.

Unfortunately, so far, social entrepreneurship is poorly defined, widely misunderstood, and even controversial. There is a lack of proper understanding of the term social entrepreneurship. Many scholars from various disciplines believed that the concept simply represents business, capturing social agenda, or NGOs using public funding for welfare activities. And, apart from it, there is a great threat that the concept has undergone, as it was believed by many civil society organisations that the new concept would destroy all the existing organisations and their ideologies. Even some have advanced by proclaiming ‘beware of the social entrepreneurship: a wolf in sheep’s clothing’! (Nicholls 2006) In this regard, it is believed that in order to combat

exclusions, the notion of social entrepreneurship must be understood in a modest way. Both, social entrepreneurship and social inclusion are some of the most potential areas where extensive research is needed.

So far, social entrepreneurship research has tended to focus on the personality of the social entrepreneur, on particular behaviour or process involved, or the social opportunity in order to emphasise the entrepreneurial nature of the phenomenon and failed to locate their capabilities from their perspective activities. At this juncture, it is very important to study the most renowned social entrepreneurs for a theoretical understanding of the concept. According the then president of the World Bank, Wolfensohn, the contemporary world is full of excluded sections/communities, whose problems sometimes appears as if they could not be solved at all. Most of the problems are highly complex in nature, where solutions to curb them might harm some other sections. In fact, all those excluded are eagerly waiting for someone who can bring them out from their misery and exclusion/re-exclusion (Wolfensohn 2000). Social entrepreneurs can rescue them from these grave situations. Entrepreneurs commit quickly, but tentatively, to be able to readjust as new information emerges.

Since the notion of social entrepreneurship is an innovative area to the research database, social scientists are often confused with this term on whether it is a social or a business term? Lack of proper research in this field from the social sciences point of view is the main reason for this confusion. As already discussed, it is very essential to undertake more research in various disciplines from social science to strengthen this topic for a better understanding of society. In the following section, there will be a discussion on social exclusion and social entrepreneurship business.

### **Social Exclusion**

Social exclusion is a reverse practice of social inclusion. Though there is not much debate/research focused on social inclusion, there is lot of research as well as policy implications on social exclusion. Since these two terms are opposite and inter dependent to one another in nature, disabling one automatically uplifts the other. From the huge research that is being done on social exclusion, it is quite clear that discussion and deliberation on policy and process in relation with social inclusion is

highly useful to understand the crux of both the domains. Considering the limited area of research on social inclusion, more emphasis in the thesis, too, has been given to social exclusion and its practices.

Though the concept of social exclusion is a new phenomenon, the practices are not. Social exclusion basically speaks about denial of basic needs to an individual or community. Because of its variedness owing to various circumstances, various scholars define social exclusion differently. If we take European Union's definition of Social Exclusion, "It is a process whereby certain individuals are pushed to the edge of society and prevented from participating fully by virtue of their poverty, or lack of basic competencies and lifelong learning opportunities, or as a result of discrimination. This distances them from job, income and education and training opportunities, as well as social and community networks and activities. They have little access to power and decision making bodies and thus feel powerless and unable to take control over the decisions that affect their day to day lives" (European Union 2004: 10).

Poverty and low income, unemployment, poor educational attainment, poor mental or physical health, family breakdown and poor parenting, poor housing and homelessness, discrimination, crime, and living in a disadvantaged area are some of the main reasons for social exclusion. The risk factors for social exclusion tend to cluster in certain neighbourhoods, but not everybody at risk lives in a deprived area and is exposed to the causes and consequences of social exclusion (Social Exclusion Unit 2004).

One should not simply reject that natural process does not have any relation with social exclusion. Natural causes such as famine, floods, and tsunami disrupt the lives of people from their social bonds. Such an upheaval ultimately leads to exclusion of those sections from the mainstream as they are usually deprived of their capabilities to exercise their legitimate political, cultural, social and economic rights. Some studies argue that disasters are simply not natural, they are socially structured. There are plenty of arguments, which say that society's failure to include the excluded people due by natural disasters is more exclusionary than the earlier one.



Silver (2006) elucidated that Sociologists classify disasters by type and often distinguish them between natural, technological and political. Floods, earthquakes, tornadoes, hurricanes, wildfires, eruptions, droughts, plagues are considered as natural disasters. Explosion, breakdown of dams, blackouts, oil and toxic spills, fires, genetic mishaps, mad cow disease, Y2K and computer viruses, and accidents at nuclear power plants, chemical plants must be considered as technological disasters. Unlike discussed above, riots, revolutions, and terrorism are considered as political disasters. These three categories also create certain section of people and community which can be called as excluded people/community.

### **Social Inclusion**

Social inclusion has never been an independent concept. It is constantly linked with the notion of social exclusion. Social inclusion can be achieved broadly by ensuring participation of the people in all the activities in which their participation is needed. In general, it is meant to address the multidimensional deprivations that are caused by social exclusion. Though the meaning of social inclusion is dependent upon the conditions and circumstances, it ultimately seeks secured social settings in which everyone is guaranteed basic rights to sustain his/her life in a prerogative mode. In some places, poverty alleviation is considered to be a process of social inclusion, whereas in some other places, annihilation of caste is considered as social inclusion. Inclusion may change as per the grounds that we critically examine. One might be academically included in the mainstream with a Ph.D degree yet due to lack of employment opportunities might be excluded from the job markets.

In a more elaborative way, “Social inclusion is a process which ensures that those at risk of poverty and social exclusion gain the opportunities and resources necessary to participate fully in economic, social and cultural life and to enjoy a standard of living and well-being that is considered normal in the society in which they live. It ensures that they have a greater say in decision making which affects their lives and access to their fundamental rights” (European Union 2004:10).

Thus, social inclusion is a systematic process that rescues a person/community from the risks of uncertainty and exclusions. It uplifts the living conditions and thus, in the

process, all the options are exposed and tested to attain social inclusion on a permanent basis. One of the approaches to understand social exclusion/inclusion phenomenon could be to employ 'rights'. One may, in order to define what social inclusion is, refer to the rights that are available in that particular territory. Rights may include the constitutional safeguards necessary for social inclusion. Hence, the state provides certain guarantees that would allow a systematic inclusion of those excluded community/people. However, social inclusion is a much broader concept than the rights approach. Social inclusion approach needs more welfaristic policies in order to support the causes and consequences of social inclusion. Even there are quite a few number of scholars who argue that the notion of social inclusion is born in order to accommodate the growing demands of the postmodern society (Nagaraju 2011)<sup>4</sup>. The acceptable part is that the concept of social inclusion could accommodate all kinds of demands that the modern society raises.

In a more simpler way, social inclusion means attainment of basic needs for those who fall below the poverty line; it is also the attainment of luxuries of those who are above the poverty line and ensuring them their participation in all the fields where their participation would not harm others. On the other hand it would engender overall social growth.

### **Social Entrepreneurship**

Bornstein (2004) perceives social entrepreneurs as transformative forces in today's world, "People with new ideas to address major problems who are relentless in the pursuit of their vision" (quoted in Schwartz 2010: 80). On the other hand, Lindsay (2006) perceives social entrepreneurs as the social architects of a new social economy. Various developed countries like United Kingdom, Ireland, Canada, Australia and the United States of America have used the services of social entrepreneurs to reduce social disparities and to overcome economic and employment barriers among the disadvantaged sectors.

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<sup>4</sup> Discussion with Dr. Nagaraju Gundimeda, Associate Professor, Dept. of Sociology, University of Hyderabad on 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2011.

Self-sustainability and innovation are the beauty of social entrepreneurs and what keep both social entrepreneurship and charities distinctive. Boschee and McClurg (2003:3) opine “As long as non-profits continue to be dependent on contributions from individuals, grants from foundations, subsidies from government and other forms of largesse, they will never become sustainable or self-sufficient”. Unless a non-profit organisation generates earned revenue from its activities, it is not acting in an entrepreneurial manner. It may be doing good and wonderful things, creating new and vibrant programmes. We can call such an NGO as innovative but not entrepreneurial.

Social entrepreneurs can enter into any area as per their interest and attempt to solve the problems of society with their entrepreneurial skills. There are many social entrepreneurs across the globe working on ways to impart various skills to individuals and to empower them to enjoy their rights in a meaningful way. Especially, in India, where more than half of the total population lives in rural areas, social entrepreneurial activities are highly necessary due to the absence of social inclusiveness. Rural India has become the topmost priority area for the social entrepreneurs to start their ventures. Rural social entrepreneurs have emerged to mitigate the problems of the excluded sections in rural areas through innovative service delivery system and employment generation.

Social entrepreneurship is one of the ways our society adapts and learns. Social entrepreneurs are not the results of brainpower of the university, bureaucracies, and global companies, but are ambitious and self-appointed leaders. They are linked with social mission and benefits, and not averse to in risk taking, if it is necessary.

The core idea of social entrepreneurship is to do business with a significant social mission or to start a venture for a social purpose. The goal would be limited to benefiting the target community or the deprived sections, rather than doubling the founder’s economic benefits. Social enterprise offers social, economic and ecological returns. So far, social entrepreneurship reportedly represented an exciting and emergent set of new models which offered hope for systemic, positive, social and environmental change that seeks everyone’s inclusion (Nicholls 2006).

Social entrepreneurs work in the public, private, and social sectors alike, employing for profit, not-for-profit, and hybrid organisational forms (or a mix of all three) to deliver social value and bring about change. Such ventures can variously be incorporated as : charities, cooperatives, companies, limited by shares or guarantee, community business, development trusts, as well as more conventional private limited companies” (Nicholas 2006: 12). Thus Leadbeater (1997) argues that the presence of the social entrepreneurship across all the sections could be seen in the Public sector by adopting business skills e.g. Self-help groups, socially affirmative business or business focuses on social ends, the voluntary and not-for-profit sector adopting more entrepreneurial approach.

Entrepreneurship is not the monopoly of any particular community or cultures. Entrepreneurs are diverse, could be found in every culture, class, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, physical ability and age. Ronstadt (1983), on the other hand, attempted to demonstrate the age related factors of entrepreneurs, in which he found that most entrepreneurs initiate their entrepreneurial careers when they are between 25 to 55 years of age. They are like youth, more passionate about their aims and goals always see the problem as positive asset to solve it (Davis 2002). Volunteers have been playing a predominant role in maximising the efforts and success of the hybrid ventures and social entrepreneurs across the globe. Their role is immense in nature, without whose support the mission that the social entrepreneur carries on would not have so much effect and might not have opted a successful path. One of the volunteer at Iona Senior Service feels, "I volunteer at Iona because I like the environment and the people we serve. This opportunity helps me to help others." Antoni Blanco, Age 18 (Blanco ud).

Yunus (2006: 2) opines that, “Social entrepreneurs are not interested in profit maximisation. They are totally committed to make a difference to the world. They are social-objective driven. They want to give a better chance in life to other people. They want to achieve their objective through creating/supporting sustainable business enterprises. Their businesses may or may not earn profit, but like any other businesses they must not incur losses. They create a new class of business which we may describe as 'non-loss' business”. Further, he adds that social entrepreneurs use money to achieve their objectives; some just give away their time, labour, talent, skill, or

such other needed contribution. Those who contribute money are classified into four types (i) no cost recovery, (ii) some cost recovery, (iii) full cost recovery, and (iv) more than full cost recovery. Those who seek more than 100% cost recovery should not be considered as social entrepreneur, as it should be believed that they have entered the entrepreneurial world (Yunus 2004).

Tony Blair, the then Prime Minister of UK, disclosed in his Cabinet Office (2006) that social entrepreneurs are much needed in his administration in order to create innovation that supports social outcomes. Further he added that "In the years to come, I believe we will see more social enterprises, making greater strides towards social justice, working more easily with conventional business and the public sector. We will see social enterprises thrive" (Cabinet Office 2006: 2). On the other hand, Tyler (2006: [www.telegraph.co.uk](http://www.telegraph.co.uk)) contradicts Tony Blair's view by referring to David Cameron, the Prime Minister, who says, "It's not just about helping to tackle social problems at the community level; it's about mainstream businesses delivering public services with a distinctive focus on quality, serving the community, and employee pride". Social enterprises are not just about creating social good, but creating jobs and opportunities.

Just as entrepreneurs redefine the perception of business now and then; social entrepreneurs are the change agents of society, they seize opportunities that others have missed, improve systems, invent new approaches, and create spaces for change in society. While a business entrepreneur might create an entirely new industry, a social entrepreneur comes up with new solutions to social problems and then implements them on a larger scale. Social entrepreneurs play the role of change agents in the social sector (Dees 1998) by: a) adopting a mission to create and sustain social values; b) recognising and relentlessly pursuing new opportunities to serve that mission; c) engaging in a process of continuous innovation, adaptation, and learning; d) acting boldly without being limited by resources currently in hand, and e) exhibiting a heightened sense of accountability to the constituencies served and for the outcomes created.

Social entrepreneurship is an "innovative and social value-creating activity that can occur within or across the non-profit, government, or business sector. While virtually

all entrepreneurs, commercial and social, generate social values, the fundamental basis of the definition is that the drive for social entrepreneurship is primarily to create social value, rather than personal or shareholder wealth” (Wei-Skillern, *et.al* 2008: 132). Social entrepreneurs provide outstanding leadership towards a social end and have the ability to see opportunities where others only see hurdles. Hence, social entrepreneurship can be broadly defined as any venture that generates social value in a creative, innovative and entrepreneurial fashion. Simply whatever organisational form – for-profit, not-for-profit, co-operative, Public Limited Company- it adopts is irrelevant (Nicholls 2006).

Thus, social entrepreneurship is a best available option to empower individuals or communities to achieve their own inclusion. Social entrepreneurs explore new avenues in the field of social innovations by employing enterprises/ventures that can scale up their social mission. They might, in this regard, employ for-profit, not-for-profit or hybrid ventures which will be further used to maximise social development. Now, let us observe the relationship between social exclusion and social entrepreneurship in some more detail.

### **The Relationship between Social Exclusion/Inclusion and Social Entrepreneurship**

Very interestingly, both these groups, i.e., socially excluded and social entrepreneurs work together in order to attain what is called, social inclusion. Failure of the state to empower the deprived is the main reason for the birth of both these concepts - social exclusion and social entrepreneurship. These two concepts have a very interactive relation. This relation can be studied as primary and secondary relationship. At the primary level, social exclusion describes and studies the miseries of the excluded in an innovative mode. However, in the secondary level, social entrepreneurship tries to solve the problems of the excluded in an innovative mode. Social exclusion is described as lack of proper participation of any individual or communities in such activities where their participation is needed for their personal growth and social development, whereas social entrepreneur ensures the same by adopting an unconventional mode: market models and inclusive participation.

Social exclusion explains a person’s inability to do certain things when a person or a community is stricken with a set of problems. Since social exclusion is a

multidimensional concept which creates allied deprivations, hence the excluded sections will be more affected and will find it difficult to come out of their exclusions. Either the NGOs or the welfare states, as discussed, have to take care of these kinds of individuals' special needs and have to create special provisions. When the welfare state and Non-Government Organisations fail to address the social problems, then there is scope for social entrepreneur to emerge in order to fill the void left by the state and its allied institutions. Unlike welfare state and the NGOs, entrepreneurs have a mindset that sees the possibilities, rather than the problems created by the change (Dees 1998). Even, their presence changes the whole scenario towards an inclusive one. They see the population and untapped local talents as resources, rather than as beneficiaries or burdensome. In other words, social entrepreneurs are “people who realise where there is an opportunity to satisfy some unmet needs that the state welfare system will not, or cannot, meet, and who gather together the necessary resources and use them to make a difference” (Thompson *et. al* 2000).

The trail of exclusion has been, and can be, handled by the social entrepreneurs as Peacock (2008) says that social entrepreneurship is commonly described as having more than one bottom line or as many as three. For example, in addition to financial performance, a firm's environmental and social effects are also measured. To put in simple words it's not just about the money. Lowry (Skoll University) emphasises “Social entrepreneurs don't want to give a man a fish or even teach a man to fish. They want to change the fishing industry” (Ransom u.d:).

Social entrepreneurs, in the first phase, identify social problems that are capable of excluding certain sections or group of people. After that, social entrepreneurs start dealing those kinds of problems in an innovative mode. The problem may be handled in different ways: a) initially, entrepreneur may simply want to start a voluntary organisation or NGO which he/she finances from charities and benefit. They usually employ those underprivileged or those who are affected by the social problems; b) later, once they feel comfortable with the existing set up of their organisations, which is based on donor – service delivery system, might start an entrepreneurial venture to support their social mission, during the time line, he/she can start ignoring the finances that have come in the form of charity; c) while the enterprise starts working better, the same may be replicated/scaled for a more substantive work place or to

several other ventures; d) in due course, the whole benefits out of the venture/mission may not be accredited to the most needy, i.e., disadvantaged target population. They may employ different kinds of options which may include either providing services to the excluded at cheaper rates so that they can access them and live with dignity; or the services may be sold in open market with market prices where the profits will be used to solve the social problem. In order to do it so, they would employ the excluded in the given jobs where attractive salaries would be provided to lead their lives. Apart from the whole discussion, an entrepreneur might just want to start a social business after identifying the social problem according to his capabilities or the available resources.

So, the social enterprises, if properly understood, would work in a more prominent way to solve the problems created by social exclusion. They might benefit the society in various forms in their own capacity, but unlike the business ventures, their main objective should always focus on solving the social problem.

### **Social Entrepreneurship, Social Exclusion and Social Capital**

Social exclusion, social entrepreneurship and social capital are all interrelated processes. Social entrepreneurs are known for creating social capital among the excluded, therefore, is again related to the process of social inclusion. Social exclusion and social capital are the two most prominent terminologies that provide the framework for re-envisioning the interrelations between economy and society under the conditions of social change. They are influential in different locations. Social exclusion, in Europe and Latin America, is prominently discussed and debated, whereas social capital is the preferred framework concept in the United States and developing countries (Daly and Silver 2008).

Putnam's work, in the first instance, revolves around American social capital and its decline. He argues that the faith in the governments in America has declined several folds from 75 percent in 1950s and 60s to 19 percent in 2000s. This has led to a contradiction on whether the governments which are originally meant to protect the social harmony and network have failed to keep the faith reposed on it by its stakeholders. School performance, public health, crime rates, clinical depression, tax



compliance, philanthropy, race relation, community development, census returns, teen suicides, economic productivity, campaign finance, even simple human happiness are some of the important human quality indexes that have manifested deterioration over the years in America. Thus, he demonstrated the need to ‘build a bond of civic trust among Americans and their community’ (Smith 2007). It is quite clear that the lack of social capital certainly projects social exclusion.

Though the existence of social capital as a notion can be traced back to decades, it has got more prominent scholarship in the works of Jane Jacobs, Pierre Bourdieu, James S. Coleman, and Robert Putnam. Putnam describes the notion as: “Whereas physical capital refers to physical objects and human capital refers to the properties of individuals. Social capital refers to connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them” (*Ibid*).

Anirudh Krishna (2003) argues that caste role has been minimised due to the creation of social capital by the educated youth in the villages of Rajasthan. These young leaders, whom, Anirudh Krishna calls as political entrepreneurs, are deploying their capabilities, which, by and large, earn from their nominal educational standards, have been employed to create utmost trust and faith to the villagers based on the work that these ‘political entrepreneurs’ carry out.

They have been named ‘political entrepreneurs’ because political parties which, by and large, have top down approach in India have so far failed to locate their base in the villages where almost 70 percent of Indians live. So, during the elections, it has become vital to the parties to approach these political entrepreneurs to seek the votes. These non-caste based political entrepreneurs are more successful in delivering the economic benefits and offering ways for greater political inclusion through their participation.

These political entrepreneurs (*naya neta*/ new leaders) have no caste, they belong to the entire village and they help everyone in the village irrespective of caste “to scurry around from office to office, to fill out forms and lobby with governments, to work with officials on behalf of construction labour, to keep accounts, to arrange elaborate site visits when politicians or officials come to the village and to take a

sick person to the hospital (often at midnight) and to keep up one's contract among doctors, to have some one's government pension approved and paid on time, to know the associated rules and the people in charge in the Tahsil and block offices, to secure for someone a loan sanction from a bank" (Krishna 2003). Basically the work of the *naya neta* is to uplift the social capital and social bonding as well as networks among and within the groups in these villages of north India. And this form of social capital surprisingly doesn't operate on caste grounds. Once social capital is being created caste, class, gender do not become obstacles while pursuing the issues. Most of these new leaders believe that faith and trust becomes worthwhile in order to deal with wide range of people across the communities.

Evidences are not clear about how social capital grows. Some have proposed that it might even be an ephemeral concept, a consequence, rather than a cause, of governments' performance (Brehm and Rahn 1997). It has been seen that the building or collapsing of social capital is entirely due to a governmental or institutional policy.

The three frameworks delve into the density and quality of social relations, and they all stress the importance of active participation as against the contemporary tendency to social isolation, or *being alone*, so to speak. Beyond this, Silver and Daly (2008) argue that both the concepts, i.e., social exclusion and social capital, contain a strong normative element and are meant for social integration which would enrich social inclusion and upload social capital.

While the importance of social capital is discussed and dealt with, some forms of social capital are good in certain sectors, while, at the same time, are not useful in others. Robert Putnam, to whom the credit must be accredited, is the pioneer social scientist who had developed the concept. There is a clear assumption that the antidote to social exclusion is social capital and social entrepreneurship, and equally that social exclusion depletes the stock of social capital.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The conceptual differences have their own obligations because social exclusion, when compared with social capital and social entrepreneurship, is less researched and

investigated by researchers. That is the reason, today, though the concept seems to be more relevant to the developing countries in terms of articulating all sorts of deprivations under one unit rather than prioritising any single entity. But there are a lot of contradictions in the concept itself which the policy makers from the third world countries need to reconcile.

These three broad categories in discussion are very dynamic in nature and have interrelations within the framework of the social networks and social bondage. To demonstrate the relationship among these three concepts, the processes have to be described by disclosing the activities among the three notions. The process which weakens the social networks is social exclusion. In contrast, the process which strengthens the social networks is social capital, and social entrepreneurship is believed to be one of the ways which can facilitate creation and building up of social capital.

The prime task of social entrepreneurs is to facilitate the excluded communities to form social capital in order to strengthen their social ties. The enabled social ties/relations have to be very strong in nature and must not disconnect, even when the social enterprise no longer exists. The local community, with the help of social capital, should demonstrate that the initiation undertaken stands forever. Thus, it helps in social inclusion of the excluded groups in the developmental process.

### **Review of Literature**

In this part, some of the important writings have been reviewed. To start with, writings on social exclusion are reviewed, followed by social entrepreneurship.

#### ***Social Exclusion***

Silver (1994), in her article *Social Exclusion and Social Solidarity: Three Paradigms*, argues that mentally and physically handicapped, suicidal people, aged invalids, abused children, drug abuse, delinquents, single parents, multi-problem households, marginal, asocial persons, and other social misfits are considered as socially excluded. She mentioned that, though the concept of social exclusion has been in debate since

the 1960s in France, the concept did not gain much momentum till the economic crisis mounted and excluded many from their employment provisions. Further, the article emphasises that the discourse of exclusion has further spread across Europe, United States and rest of the World, where several policies were adopted to attain social inclusion. She also shares views with the European Union and maintains that defining exclusion is not an easy task. Though there are several definitions, none of them clearly points out the exact capacity of the notion of exclusion. Silver has points out that, in order to understand exclusion in a more prominent way, which she called as solidarity, specialisation and monopoly paradigms are needed to be properly understood.

Spicker (1997) in his article “*Exclusion*”, speaks about social Europe which is a key policy discourse of European Union. This article concentrates on how social exclusion may be addressed in order to attain the goal of social Europe. The social Europe in this particular context refers to a Europe which ensures the integration of its citizens in both economic and social landscapes. He argues that social exclusion is not addressed on a permanent basis; hence, it might worsen the present scenario of exclusion. A lot of sections of the society have been clutched with this degraded level of lifestyle. He views that the magnitude of social exclusion may affect certain individuals, groups and geographical areas. The central theme of the article highlights that, at any point of time, social exclusion must not be seen as income oriented; but it should be understood as a complex rubric which includes health, education, access to services, housing and debt, etc. As a whole, in his view, the concept of social exclusion deals with people who are unable to integrate into social networks which results in their limited interaction in social relationships.

Levitas (1999), in her article *Defining and Measuring Social Exclusion: A Critical Overview of Current Proposals*, deliberates that, though poverty and social exclusion appear to be treated as synonymous, there are many differences that need to be noted. For example, some Dalits in the Indian context, who are generally perceived to be poverty stricken, may be rich. Therefore, such rich Dalits do not go into the category of ‘included’. Levitas further clarified that the concept of social exclusion needs to be defined on proper lines so that it is more effective in helping the governments as far as policy measures are concerned.

Vobruba (2000), in his article *Actors in Processes of Inclusion and Exclusion: Towards a Dynamic Approach*, declares that the debate over the new dimensions of deprivation, i.e., social exclusion/inclusion is an innovative way of addressing the backwardness. He argues that it can be used to succeed in coping up with full-fledged social integration. He further emphasises that so far the research orientation is geared towards a single dimension of social problem, i.e., poverty and unemployment. Hereafter, with this new approach, the whole discourse would be changed. That's the reason he proclaims that the European research/policy discourse has been shifted from poverty alleviation to social exclusion/inclusion. Broadly, he speaks about social exclusion that can be understood in a much broader concept. For example, 'without work, no money; without money no home, and without home no work' will be handled carefully and immediate action may be deployed to provide work, rather than waiting for actions from policies and actions that are initiated to provide these in three different directions.

Stewart and Micklewright (2001), in their article *Poverty and Social Exclusion in Europe: European Comparisons and the Impact of Enlargement*, discuss the indicators that the European Union had projected to adopt in order to combat social exclusion. These indicators are instrumental in highlighting the processes of social exclusion, and thus used the anti-dose in order to enable social inclusion. They criticise the concept of social exclusion because of its lack of a permanent and an inclusive definition of its own. Their view is not because they have a critical outlook towards the concept, it is because they have demonstrated in the article very clearly that they have a good understanding of the concept of social exclusion. Unfortunately, the slipperiness of the concept may mislead and under - define the importance of it. They mention that exclusion in one country may not constitute the same in another country.

Lister (1998), in his article *Fighting Social Exclusion...with one hand tied behind our back*, argues that the creation of Social Exclusion Unit in UK with the objective of promoting education and employment as weapons to attack social exclusion is of no use as the policies are not in accordance with the aspirations of the poor and deprived. The basic issues like attainment of education are impossible unless they address the question of child poverty; and without basic skills development, employment

generation is not possible. According to him, some of these issues were ignored and the policies were framed by the Unit, and that without aiming on aspects like eradicating child poverty or attaining basic skills, government is worried about follow up sectors like education and employment.

Gayer's (1999), article *Can EU Social Policy Save the Social Exclusion Unit and Vice Versa?*, propagates that the creation of Social Exclusion Unit which has to work with other departments as far as social inclusion is concerned is a major step in the British policy discourse. But, he clarifies that unfortunately the Unit has failed in its objectives. Though the Unit is equipped to hold more powers as compared with other department in terms of contacting the head of the State, unfortunately the powers are not fully utilised. Hence, the objectives of the Unit are not fully achieved. The whole article has criticised the functioning style of the Unit. It is clear in this discourse that, though the UK has put one step forwards by creating this separate unit, the plan has failed due to the failure of the unit.

Chile (2002), in his article, *The Imported Underclass: Poverty and Social Exclusion of Black African Refugees in Aotearoa New Zealand*, specifies how internal displacement and cross border refugees contribute to the creation of social exclusion discourse. He further adds that Africa registered over 6 million refugees and 15 million internally displaced people in 1991. This displacement is because of multidimensional causal relationship: social, economical and political crisis. Though inclusive policies such as 'Refugee Settlement Programmes' were designed to bring back the excluded into the mainstream, their performance can at best be termed as nominal. He argues that the result of this trauma was indeed worst. Many have sentenced, tortured and lost their kith and kin, apart from their loss of cultures, beliefs, traditions, etc. Most have lost their employment, relatives, friends, possessions, self-esteem. The huge dilemma for them is that whether the new society would accept their effort to start a new life. He defines the concept of social exclusion as, "The process of social alienation or social disaffiliation whereby the individual is unable to effectively engage in functional relationship within and with the community and society" (p. 359).

Todman (2006), in his paper on “*Social Exclusion: Its Utility in the US Social Welfare Context*” , specifies that the concept of social exclusion has been emerging in a more substantial way to address the social exclusion process and the excluded communities. He posits that social exclusion, in general, refers to a situation where some people are not attached to institutions that have economic, political, cultural, legal and social outcomes. Thus, they are all restricted to participate in such institutions, and not allowed to claim entitlements, resources, freedoms and opportunities like the others. In this paper, he has deliberated on how the European society has transformed itself into a social inclusive oriented society from that of poverty ridden society. In the process, how, the European Union has developed various policies and strategies to accommodate new theory is discussed in this article. One significant point that he raises is that social exclusion is a cumulative process where one form of exclusion can lead to another forms of exclusion which would result in extreme backwardness of the individuals/community affected.

Halleröd and Larsson (2007), in their article *Poverty, Welfare Problems and Social Exclusion*, study the linkages between poverty and other welfare problems like employment, housing, health, victimization, etc., and they distinguish between cause and effect of poverty. They undertook an income based poverty measurement, as well as deprivation based poverty measurement. The conclusion drawn is that social exclusion is a wrathful measurement to understand social deprivations, because, for instance, socially excluded are excluded from the labour market and from ordinary consumption of goods and services and many other entitlements.

Krishna Reddy KR (2008), in his article *Rehabilitation or Re-Exclusion?* presents his assessment on internal displacement of tribal society due to the construction of dams in India. He argues that the tribals, who are generally excluded due to their isolation from society, have been further displaced and re-excluded from their habitats. This article focuses on how the Indian government has failed to at least pass a rehabilitation Act to protect the rights of these indigenous tribes. He concludes by saying that exclusion of certain sections must not be a way for inclusion of others.

The above studies on social exclusion and inclusion show that, social exclusion is a predominant way of describing the deprivations that the individuals/communities

face. Most of the authors discussed have proclaimed that the notion of social exclusion has a variety of meanings and forms, whereas social inclusion acts as a substantive cure for the discourse of the social exclusion. On the same lines, European approach has adopted several practices in order to accomplish social inclusion on a permanent basis.

### ***Social Entrepreneurship***

After reviewing writings on social exclusion/inclusion, here an attempt is made to review some of the important writings on social entrepreneurship.

Leadbeater (1997), in his book *The Rise of Social Entrepreneur*, argues that social entrepreneurs bridge the gap between private and public sectors, state and market, to develop an effective and efficient solution to our most complex and pressing social problems. He further notes that social entrepreneurs are most usually found in what is called in the voluntary sector. Certainly, they run hybrid organisations, which rely a great deal on voluntary help and effort. New social problems of single parent households, drug dependency and long-term unemployment have emerged which the traditional welfare system are not designed to deal with. These are the most resourceful areas of social entrepreneurship. These areas fall under the domain of social exclusion. Further, he clarifies that young people in the contemporary times, more passionately and morally, feel about a wide range of issues than ever before – from our treatment of the environment and animals, gender, race and human rights around the world. For many people, especially young people, the argument that we need to rebuild a sense of community is to restore a sense of social order and discipline from the cynical, hypocritical, sentimental or coercive world. In his work, he tries to argue that there is an inevitable need to strengthen the base of youngsters towards social entrepreneurship to provide leaders of our future society.

Dees (1998) in his paper *The Meaning of “Social Entrepreneurship”*, argues that social entrepreneurs are involved in for-profit activities, see profit as a means to an end - where the end involves triple bottom line approach<sup>5</sup>; whereas economic

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<sup>5</sup> Triple bottom line approach refers to achieve objectives related to social, financial and environmental returns. Though social objectives are seen as primary, both financial and environmental returns are



entrepreneurs see profit as an end in itself. Both social and business entrepreneurs work to fulfill their objectives. Whereas the objectives of the social enterprises involve satisfying the communities, the commercial enterprises are limited to satisfy the shareholders. Hence, he further argues, “Social entrepreneurs are one species in the genus entrepreneur. They are entrepreneurs with a social mission” (p.3).

Reis (1999), in her article titled *Unleashing the New Resources and Entrepreneurship for the Common Good: a Scan, Synthesis and Scenario for Action* opines that many of the new philanthropists are young ‘emerging innovators’ from diverse backgrounds, and are challenging old assumptions about charity. In particular, they argue that traditional philanthropy has focused too much on the satisfaction of the donor, but not enough on producing measurable results - either outcomes or impacts. That is the reason in the United States, federal and state funded not-for-profits organisations decreased to 23 percent in the 1980s, and continued to decline in the 1990s. During the same period, the number of non-profit organisations seeking funding increased exponentially. It is clear that the experience of such kind is not limited to United States or India. The same situation persists everywhere.

Prabhu (1999), in his article *Social Entrepreneurial Leadership*, argues that social entrepreneurs are distinguished primarily by ideology, which guides their choices of mission, means and ends, and thus, they are “...persons who create or manage innovative entrepreneurial organisations or ventures whose primary mission is the social change and development of their client group” (p.1) rather than pursuing for profit. This argument is seen as a prominent definition to understand social entrepreneurship, as many scholars have demonstrated the same. He further says that the core objective of such a mission or enterprise is that of social change, which includes a business model to accomplish their mission.

Sahlman, *et al.* (1999), in their book *The Entrepreneurial Ventures*, focus on various kinds of entrepreneurial ventures. In fact, it is concentrated both on the importance of enterprises in today’s context, i.e., commercial and social enterprises. The authors criticise commercial entrepreneurship and further strengthen the base for social

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value addition in order to see through that the triple bottom line is strictly maintained. All these three returns are interrelated in this approach.

entrepreneurship at research level. They say that unlike social enterprises, commercial enterprises work out to further the shareholders' values, whereas the primary work for them are social integration and community development. Hence, they support social enterprises as tools for social transformation. This entails supporting any business or product promoted by social entrepreneurship by civil society. In continuation to Sahlman (1999), Zadek and Thake (1997), in their article *Send in the social entrepreneurs*, explain the common thread across social entrepreneurship: to create social value, rather than personal and shareholder's wealth.

Adding to it, Appanah and Shresthta (2005) agree that the impact of social entrepreneurship movements lies in the youth. For instance, in Asia, young people constitute almost half of the total population. Young people have the passion and energy to make things happen, they possess strategic social positioning and the talent for addressing social problems in innovative ways. The active involvement of youth in the whole discourse would facilitate a meaningful settlement of the problems of the society. They further believe that the participation of young minds in the discourse of social entrepreneurship minimises the possible threat of evading the movement. They further argue that, simultaneously there is a significant need of financing, mentoring and incubating the emerging young social entrepreneurs to succeed in their field. As it is discussed young people might be more passionate, innovative and dynamic, they are also the least experienced on earth. Without good mentorship, their failure rate can be as high as their success.

Austin, *et.al* (2006), in their article titled *Social and Commercial Entrepreneurship: Same, Different, or Both?* view that although social entrepreneurship is distinguished primarily by its social purpose and occurs through multiple and varied organisational forms, there is still significant heterogeneity in the types of activity that can fall under the rubric of social entrepreneurship. Speaking on the differences between commercial and social entrepreneurship, they say that social entrepreneurs may respond fundamentally in different ways to adverse contextual conditions, rather than their commercial counterparts. They further reflect on social entrepreneurs' belief that their theory of change and organisational approach, often drives the organisation to pursue growth as a means for achieving greater social impact.

Mulgan (2006), in his article *Cultivating the Other Invisible Hand of Social Entrepreneurship: Comparative Advantage, Public Policy, and Future Research Priorities*, says, “At any one time, there may be many thousands who believe that they can meet needs that are unmet by the state or the market, and then struggle to find the resource – the people, money, buildings, customers – to put their insights into effect. Many are motivated by personal factors: problems, mistreatments and bad luck” (p.76). Mulgan's interpretation of a social entrepreneur is that only a particular section of people do not think about social transformation. There will be thousands of people and communities who think about social transformation and their contribution to this transformational system that could accompany everyone in the society. Further, he concludes by saying that “Many social entrepreneurs are stubborn, bloody-minded, and difficult to work with. But at their heart there is a moral commitment that is about giving a community with its needs, not what it expects or even knows that it wants” (p.77).

CASE (2006) *The Past, Present and Future of Social Entrepreneurship: A Conversation with Greg Dees*, in which it is argued that youth are keenly attracted to social entrepreneurship who are more aspire to become one. Further, Dees says that colleges and universities, as well as high schools, are using service-learning as part of their pedagogy/curriculum. The use of service-learning, youth philanthropy and other methods of engagement spread social and community awareness. It acts as an avenue for developing key social entrepreneurial skills, as well as accumulation of appropriate social and personal behaviour.

Nicholas (2006), in his book *Social Entrepreneurship: New Models for Sustainable Social Change*, mentions that “Yet, for all of this, social entrepreneurship remains as much as a movement. There is a great need for ongoing scholarship and publications that serve as a call to arms to current social entrepreneurs, as an inspiration to budding social entrepreneurs, and to document the field for institutions, academics, and legislators” (p.vi). Perhaps, he made it clear that, despite the efforts, the transformative movement remains stand idle, and there is a larger need to strengthen the concept on both research as well as practical level, where everyone gets to know the magnitude of social enterprise. He concludes by saying that in order to do so, there is an emerging need of contributions from all sections of society.

Dees and Anderson (2006), in their essay, *Framing a Theory of Social Entrepreneurship*, point out that social entrepreneurship is in the process of gaining momentum as an academic subject. Still, they are afraid that “even with this flurry of activity, social entrepreneurship is still in its infancy” as a field of intellectual inquiry. “We do not yet have the deep, rich explanatory or prescriptive theories that characterise a more mature academic field. (p.1)” Further, they believe that the university setting for research in social entrepreneurship still remains a challenge and it is incumbent on all those already engaged with the subject to strive to bring in new colleagues and work relentlessly to broaden and deepen the research base.

Bloom (2006), in his article *The Social Entrepreneurship Collaboratory: A University Incubator for a Rising Generation of Leading Social Entrepreneurs*, argues that the universities in the global framework, including Harvard, Oxford, MIT, have little or no opportunity to address and act upon social entrepreneurship led development in their curriculum. The reason for such voids is because “many humanities, sciences and public policy faculties suspect social entrepreneurship as a market-oriented of social justice and the public good; a wolf in sheep’s clothing” (p.5). On the other side, many business school faculties see social entrepreneurship as imprecise, compromised semblance of business practices, but not as part of their core mission.

Social entrepreneurial activity as discussed in Bornstein’s (2007) book *How to Change the World: Social Entrepreneurs and the Power of New Ideas*, includes : a) poverty alleviation through empowerment, for example the microfinance movement; b) health care, ranging from small-scale support for the mentally ill ‘in-the-community’ to large-scale ventures tackling the HIV/AIDS pandemic; c) education and training, such as widening participation and the democratization of knowledge transfer; d) environmental preservation and sustainable development, such as ‘green energy projects’; e) community generation, such as housing associations; f) welfare projects such as employment for the unemployed or homeless and drug and alcohol abuse projects; and g) advocacy and campaigning, such as fair trade and human rights promotion.

Daniel Truran’s (u.d) *The Meaning of Social Entrepreneurship* denotes that one drawback of the very generous and well intentioned actions of philanthropists and

donors are that all too often the resources are just given to the needy. The action is purely and only that of giving without any challenge or development linked to the individuals they attempt to help. The hands will be put forward by the needy; their faces often hidden in the misery of their situation, but once the money or resources increases, they shouldn't be able to pick themselves up again. Truran's statement is not to criticise the importance of donations and philanthropists who have rendered a lot for the upliftment of the excluded. Perhaps, he strengthens the notion of social entrepreneurship which has its own values.

Ashoka's impactful study *Ashoka Fellows Changing System* (2010) emphasises that 93 per cent of whom they support continue to remain focused on their goals even after the completion of 10 years of their venture. It is also said that 80 per cent of them have become leaders in their respective fields in due course; whereas more than 90 percent of the total ideas are replicated across the globe. The study further mentions that Willy Pessoa's waste management venture in Brazil has succeed to bring about an inclusive strategy into the lives of several thousand excluded people. "Willy is reducing the wastage in the system of how food is produced, processed, distributed and sold in rural Brazil, leading to a viable economy that creates jobs throughout the production and marketing system" (p.8). The franchisee model has been employed by this particular venture to scale up their initiatives.

It is also believed that there has been a lot of development when compared with the past in recognising the social entrepreneurs across the globe. Media attention to this new sector is also one of the causes for such a development. In addition, the recent Noble Peace Prize conferred on Mohammed Yunus, a social entrepreneur from Bangladesh, in recognition of his micro-finance, has captured the attention of all sectors. This should not detract from the even more recent adverse news about the activities of Mohammed Yunus.

The above review of literature show that many studies have found that the social entrepreneurial characteristics among individuals could be recognised in his/her young age. Because young age is the time for innovative ideas, and finding the sources and solutions for the problems. Any country that develops social entrepreneurial characteristics among the youth would help the entire nation to protect

the cohesive social structure. This is the reason numerous organisations often extend assistance to young social entrepreneurs, through networking, funding, granting scholarships and sharing information. A recent survey of social entrepreneurial activity in the UK suggests that new youth based on 'social start-up' are emerging at a faster rate than the conventional and commercial ventures (Harding and Cowling, 2004). Other researchers also demonstrate that employment rates in social sector ventures are significantly outstripping those in the business sector in a number of developed countries. Today, social entrepreneurs are attracting a huge numbers of new stakeholders (Anheier and Salamon 1999). For instance, we can cite a live example from Bangladesh, the Grammen Bank which was established basing on the principles of trust and solidarity. Now it has 1,084 branches with 12,500 staff serving 2.1 million borrowers in 37,000 villages.

### **Research Gap and Need for the Study**

From the review of literature, it is found that the concept of social entrepreneurship is a new induction in the academic/research discourse. Nicholls (2006) has clearly mentioned about the emerging need for promoting social enterprise research/education in academic institutions and universities across the globe because the void in the realm of academia. Social enterprises are very unique because they have handful of innovations to offer for social transformation. However, the concept of social enterprise is inadequately covered in the research discourse despite their heavy contributions in social transformation. Even social enterprise, in general, has very less number of impactful studies registered. These kinds of studies are indeed needed to carry forward social enterprises. With this background, the present study is carried out with an intention of studying the impact of social enterprise, in particular, and to know the importance of understanding and encouraging the innovative business plans which aim at social transformation. The present study fills the research gap in terms of characterising the importance of social enterprise in various countries like India; it further focuses on how innovation can be employed to bring about social transformation.

Barefoot College, located in rural Rajasthan is a significant example of a successful social enterprise in India. Though it was started as a voluntary organisation four

decades ago, through mobilisation of local resources, it has been gaining the status of a self-sustained one. This college has been a role model for several innovative practices since its inception. Training rural illiterates to emerge as Barefoot Solar Engineers, doctors, teachers, architects etc., is one of the innovations being practiced at Barefoot. In order to do so, community participation and decentralised decisions are made vital. Barefoot college works on two parameters: i) providing services to the needy at cheaper/nominal rates; and ii) employment generation to the poor rural illiterates following a need based approach. Working within these two parameters, Barefoot has been evolving as a social enterprise through mobilising local resources. Having this background of enterprise as a secondary objective and reaching out to the poor as a primary, Barefoot has demonstrated that a social enterprise can succeed. That's the reason why Barefoot College has been chosen as a site of field work study for the research.

#### **Research Questions:**

1. How far it is true that social entrepreneurship emerges as a strong idea to eradicate exclusions?
2. What are the dialectics of social entrepreneurship that make the notion unique from other social firms or entrepreneurships?
3. How Barefoot approach can solve the rural problems?
4. How did Barefoot emerge as a social entrepreneurial initiative?

#### **Objectives of the Study**

- To conceptualise economic entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurship, not-for-profit and for-profit models of organisations.
- To study the role of social entrepreneurship in contemporary society in the context of social exclusion.
- To understand the Barefoot approach to eradicate rural poverty and its significance in social entrepreneurship with reference to a selected social enterprise .

- To study the transformation from exclusion to inclusion in the lives of the people employed by Barefoot approach.

### **Rationality of the Chosen site for the Field Work**

The Barefoot College, which was selected for the purpose of the study is a hybrid form of social enterprise located in Tilonia, Rajasthan, India. It has been chosen for the field study in order to study the above mentioned objectives. Barefoot College was initiated by its director, Mr. Bunker Roy, way back in 1972 to eradicate rural poverty and to assist the rural poor to be able to earn their bread. There are several reasons for choosing Barefoot for this unique study. The prime reason as pointed out by the literature review is that, Barefoot College in India is considered as an ideal institution as far as social enterprises are concerned. Firstly, its impact is immense in nature; and, Mr. Bunker Roy is listed among the 100 most influential persons by Time in 2010. Secondly, the innovative quality of the college, which has drawn researchers to undertake Barefoot for the field study. Thirdly, Barefoot is one among the very few organisations in India which have started as voluntary organisation and is now evolving as a social enterprise.

### **Methodology**

This study is structured in such a way that both secondary and primary sources of data collection have been used. For secondary data, the study is based on books, articles in refereed journals, reports prepared by different organisations as well as various governments. For primary data, a field work has been carried out using qualitative data collection method.

The researcher believes that a quantitative study may not allow going into each and every corner of the broad areas such as socio, political, and economic aspects of the respondents. Thus, it is observed that information related to these issues may be obtained using qualitative methods. It is believed that understanding the life patterns of the respondents over a period of time using impact study be attained using the qualitative methods.



More particularly qualitative research results in comprehensive descriptions as well as explanations of processes, and allows to preserve the chronological flow, assess local causality, and derive fruitful explanations (Miles and Huberman 1984). Many of the issues used in this thesis call for qualitative approaches, e.g., case study analysis, narratives, discourse analysis, or ethnography that are aimed at understanding the meanings behind Barefoot (Hammersley 1992).

Field work was conducted in four phases. The first phase of the field work took place between 7<sup>th</sup> December, 2008 and 17<sup>th</sup> January, 2009. The second phase of the field work was between 17<sup>th</sup> December, 2009 and 24<sup>th</sup> January, 2010. The third phase was during 4<sup>th</sup> September, 2010 to 19<sup>th</sup> September, 2010. The last and most crucial phase of the field work was between 7<sup>th</sup> November, 2010 and 4<sup>th</sup> December, 2010. During the field work, the researcher stayed in a friend's house for some time and later at Barefoot Guest House.

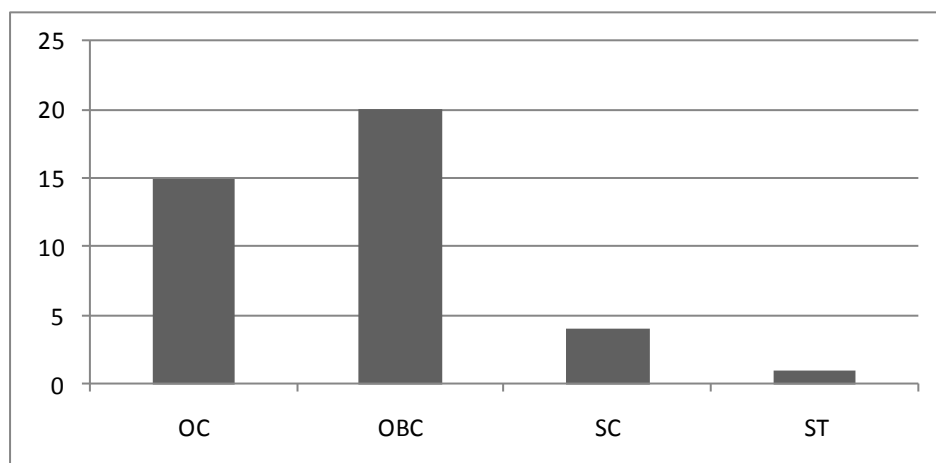
The total universe of the study is 250, out of which, 40 in-depth interviews were collected. Apart from them, group discussions were carried out with the villagers, where several men and women in the villages were interviewed on the usage and impact of the services that are being delivered by the Barefoot College. Unstructured interview pattern has also been used while collecting the data in the form of interviews. All the interviews were held at the work places, and their respective houses. During the interviews, detailed notes were prepared from each respondent. Apart from these in-depth interviews, the researcher spoke to several villagers who are actively involved in Barefoot activities. All the interviews were recorded and then noted in the field notebook.

Observation method has also been used while collecting the data. Both overt (everyone knew they are being observed) and covert (no one knew that are being observed and the observer is concealed) methods have been employed while collecting the data. Also both direct and indirect approaches under the observation method have been used in terms of observing the interactions, processes and behaviours that occurred while dealing with direct approach whereas the improved lifestyle has been measured in the indirect observation method.

### ***Respondents Profile***

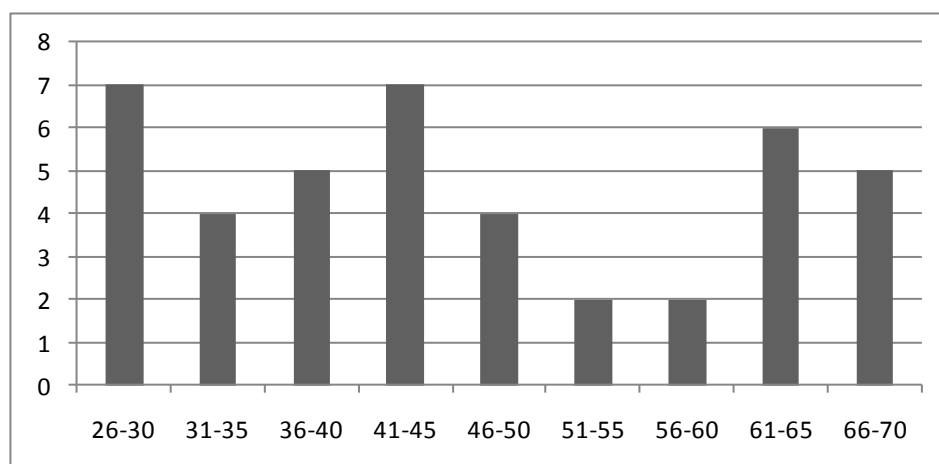
Total 40 interviews were conducted on case study basis. As discussed, apart from the case studies, the researcher cross-checked the impact as far as services are concerned in the villages. These 40 cases were selected randomly with at least one each from the activities that they carry out. These 40 respondents are the employees of the Barefoot, who hail from different local communities. These respondents were tested over the issues of transformation of their lives from that of the excluded to that of the included. The community, age, gender wise classification has been made and diagrams drawn in accordance with the data collected.

**Diagram No. 1.1**  
**Community Wise Distribution of Respondents**



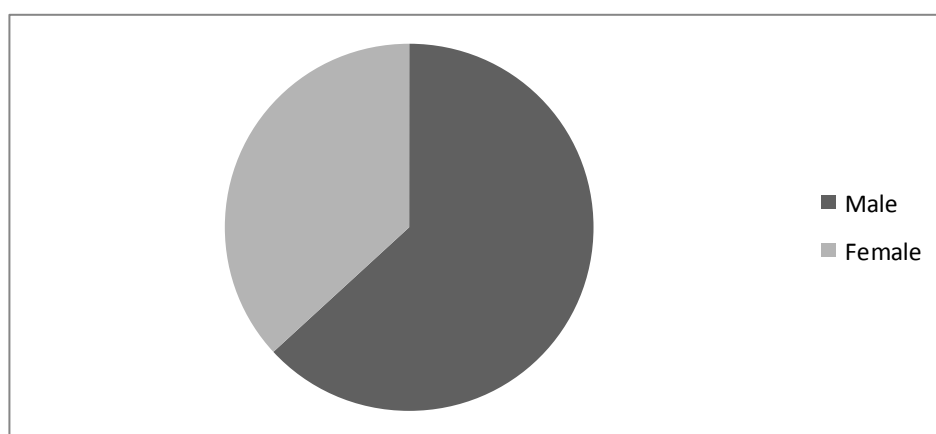
The universe of the study was 250 in which field study was carried out based on the case study method. Case studies reflect the total universe of the population. The percentage of the case studies from different backgrounds is strictly maintained with that of the total universe. Out of the total 40 case studies, OBCs constitutes half (50%) of the total respondents. Others include: OCs 37.5 per cent, Scheduled Castes 10 per cent and one respondent hails from Scheduled Tribes (2.5 per cent). Only one case study was carried out from Scheduled Tribe because there was a very small Scheduled Tribe population in the universe.

**Diagram No. 1.2**  
**Age Wise Distribution of Respondents**



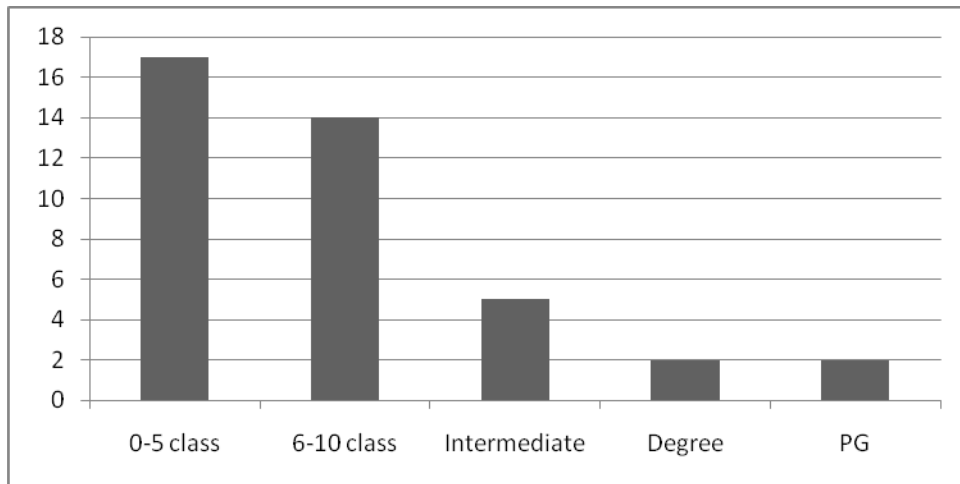
Total respondents belong to different age groups. Some of them are above 25, while several of them are in their mid-age and some are even above 65 years. Seven respondents each represent the age group of 26-30 and 41-45. Four each represent 36-40 and 46-50 age group. Two each also represent the age group of 51-55 and 56-60. Apart from these three, five, six respondents represent the age groups of 36-40, 66-70 and 61-65 respectively. Hence, most of the respondents belong to both 26-30 and 41-50 age groups.

**Diagram No. 1.3**  
**Gender Wise Distribution of Respondents**



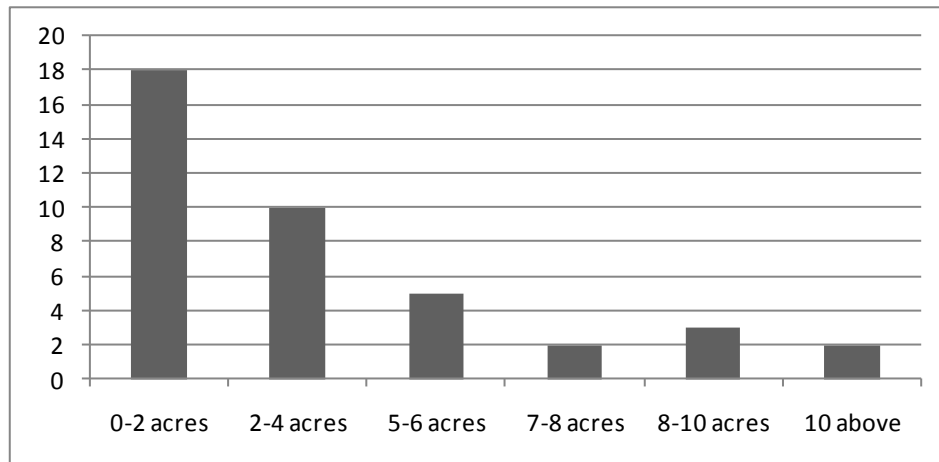
Total respondents pool includes 26 males and 14 females. Apart from them, six out of forty are differently abled. Most of the respondents own land, but because of the lack of water resources, nothing can be produced out of the land. The amount of rainfall is very low for cultivation.

**Diagram No. 1.4**  
**Education Background of the Respondents**



Most of the respondents have less than 10 years of formal schooling, whereas they believe that all of them are well educated, considering the educational resources and other factors. Their educational background in an informal environment helps them to gain respectable jobs. A total of 31 out of 40 interviewees studied below 10<sup>th</sup> standard, and five of them passed intermediate, whereas two each have earned degree and PG respectively through distance mode after joining Barefoot College. Thus, it shows that most of them whom Barefoot employ hail from poor educational backgrounds. They always claim that here most needy, who live on less than \$1 a day will be provided proper training and employment, which is, in fact, found in the field study.

**Diagram No. 1.5**  
**Land Holdings of the Respondents**



Very interestingly, it is found that all interviewees have land of their own. But it varies from 17 persons having 0-2 acres to 10 persons having 2-4 acres of land; five people are holding 5-6 acres; two of them 7-8 acres and above 10 acres whereas three of them have 8-10 acres of land. But the sad part is that, none of this land can be irrigated without the help of seasonal rainfall. There is no canal or bore well facility to irrigate this land. Rainfall is very scanty. Hence, most of the land remains uncultivable throughout the years. This situation keeps them always under the specter of exclusion.

### **Chapterisation**

The present thesis is divided into eight chapters.

The first chapter is an Introduction of the thesis in which the importance of the present study is discussed. Apart from that, it also covers the significance of concepts like social exclusion/inclusion and enterprises/ social enterprises. After steady review of literature, the chapter comes up with the view that, there is a dire need to promote social entrepreneurship research in social science disciplines.

The second chapter 'Understanding Social Exclusion/Inclusion' broadly speaks about three issues in general: a) it explicates the concept of social enterprises and various definitions proposed by various scholars; b) the concept's ingress in European policy

discourse has been discussed in detail with the attributions for social transformation; c) the importance of the concepts in the Indian context has been discussed in the third section. The chapter concludes by positing that the concept of social exclusion has a greater role to play in countries like India by bringing all kinds of marginalised under one umbrella.

The third chapter 'Social Entrepreneurship' broadly speaks about the concept of social entrepreneurship and its relation with the concept of entrepreneurship. The chapter is divided into two different sections in which: a) the importance of the concept; and b) the transformation that has been attained by various social enterprises are discussed. In addition, various models and types of social enterprises are explained.

The forth chapter 'Barefoot College – A Profile' is devoted to a discussion on the profile of the state of Rajasthan, Ajmer district and Kishangarh sub district, as well as Tilonia village. Finally, the profile of Barefoot College is discussed in detail. It is described in this chapter that, having seen extreme exclusions in some of the rural areas of Rajasthan, Mr. Bunker Roy started the Barefoot College which aimed at enabling the illiterate poor villagers to earn capabilities with which they could be included in the mainstream society.

In the fifth chapter, 'Barefoot Approach and Its Practice', the practices of the Barefoot College, in terms of providing various kinds of services to the communities in the villages, have been discussed. The beneficiaries'/ villagers' views on the services that they receive from Barefoot College are also highlighted. It is described in the chapter that, the communities feel quite happy about the services that they receive from Barefoot College.

In the Sixth chapter, 'Implications of the Barefoot Approach on the Rural Poor', a process of inclusion that is focused at the most disadvantaged target population is discussed. Field data has been used to study the transformation in the lives of 40 persons interviewed and their families from that of excluded to included. The field data brings that inclusion of the respondents has been guaranteed in various forms.

The seventh chapter, 'Barefoot as a Social Enterprise', discusses how a volunteer organisation is being transformed into a social enterprise. Around 30 characteristics are tested in order to see whether Barefoot falls under social enterprises spectrum or not. It is found that, though the Barefoot College was established as a voluntary community based organisation, over a period of time, it has been transforming as a social enterprise with the help of resources that it mobilises locally.

In the last chapter, findings of the study, as well as issues that need a critical outlook are discussed. Thereafter, several suggestions for improving Barefoot are made.

### **Summing Up**

Since the notions of social exclusion/inclusion and social entrepreneurship are relatively new to Indian research terrain, the next two chapters are shaped to discuss in detail the theoretical understandings and the kind of impact that they have shown on various societies and further what they could offer to the society is also discussed. They also discuss how social inclusion and social entrepreneurship could ingress in Indian policy discourse and Indian practical discourse.

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## CHAPTER - II

### UNDERSTANDING SOCIAL EXCLUSION/INCLUSION

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After discussing about the linkage between social exclusion/inclusion and social entrepreneurship which are quite unclear for the social sciences research discourse so far, there is a need to understand the multiple issues related to the notions of social exclusion and inclusion and social entrepreneurship in order to better understand these concepts. Hence, the present chapter is devoted to discuss in detail the theories of social exclusion/inclusion, whereas in the next chapter, the discussion would be on social entrepreneurship. The present chapter is divided into three sections. The first section describes the theoretical analysis of social exclusion. The second section aims to address the inclusive processes in European Union where the notion originated, and how it has been potentially used in the policy discourse within the framework of Open Method of Cooperation (OMC)<sup>1</sup>. The third section studies the overall purview of the concept in the Indian context and discusses some of the policy dialogues.

#### Section - I

##### **Social Exclusion and Its Origin**

Social exclusion is a wider concept developed within the framework of the European Union (EU). It was first coined in 1970's France when the country was facing a high unemployment rate. Weak growth rate, high unemployment and persistent inequalities were the major concern of EU for overcoming social disadvantages in various European countries. Thus, in the post 1980's, the concept was taken into consideration in European Union's social policy discourse. This trend raised concerns about the deprived sections of the given society in a holistic way. This approach is meant to solve the multidimensional deprivations of the people who are in the clutches of poverty and generally considered misfits for inclusion in the mainstream.

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<sup>1</sup> Discussed in detail as the chapter progresses.

One should go back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century to trace the roots of social exclusion and its literature. The earliest reference of this concept is attributed to Max Weber. He described society as 'Social Closure' in which, one group "... secure(s) for itself a privileged position [in society] at the expense of some other group through a process of subordination" (Lynn 2006). After the Second World War, industrialisation and globalisation created a new type of social exclusion. It majorly affected the middle class and working class enormously. In Europe, specifically in France, it produced widespread unemployment which was often neglected by the 'welfare' state. It is also recognised that the unemployment is one of the reasons for poverty and is not just about income, but also about social network. Exclusion of this unemployed section of population gave birth to the concept of 'social exclusion'. The first use of the term is credited to Lenoir in 1974 (*les exclus*). It was also recognised that the popularity of the new term was partly due to the unpopularity in France of the (British) concept of 'poverty' (Haan 2001). The term 'excluded' was originally coined to describe those who fall outside the contributory 'safety-net' (Brien, *et al.* 1997).

### **What is Social Exclusion?**

Social exclusion, in general, is a static situation where it speaks about the individuals/community who are placed 'away from the mainstream'. Social exclusion need not to be seen only on social lines. Indeed social exclusion is a holistic concept which brings political, cultural and economic exclusions, in addition to social exclusion, under its noble magnitude. Hence, facing any of the four exclusions in any form should be seen as social exclusion.

Social exclusion is a process where certain sections of the people push the other sections away from the mainstream society. The dominant section pushing 'others' could be either deliberate or non- deliberate where sometimes the direct acts of the primary could cause the exclusion of the latter such as caste untouchability in India. On the other hand acts that the primary takes up may not intended to exclude the latter, but still as a result the later will be placed under the magnitude of the exclusion. For instance, exclusions caused by the construction of multipurpose dams which adversely affects the lives of the tribals could be placed under this particular category.

### **Exclusion as a Process**

As the gamut of social exclusion occupies a broad area, almost all the people could be considered 'excluded' in one way or the other in their life time. However, it is noticeable that some people may get excluded for a long time or for whole life, but most of the people get excluded for a short period of time. It is also one of the important factors that social exclusion is an endless process. It may disappear here and appear in some other areas. Because it is an endless process, governments should draft clearly thought out policies and implement them to provide space for the excluded sections to find ways through which they could come out of the exclusion.

### **Exclusion as a Product**

As social exclusion is an endless process, so the the processes of exclusion. By and large exclusion is a product or act of the dominant groups over the disadvantaged. Exclusion may happen in several forms, for ex. exclusion of people from land or housing by landlords; politically weaker sections from legal rights by politically powerful groups; priest in India may exclude Schedule Caste from temples; de-recognition or misrecognition of minorities' identity; labour markets and trade union's exclusion of people (non-members) from getting jobs and so on. Exclusion may happen at any level of society (Haan 2001).

Acts such as abandonment, ostracism, discrimination, shaming, marginalising, segregation, confinement, imprisonment, exile and pathologizing, extermination and genocide are the methods for social exclusion (Lynn 2006).

### **Elements of Exclusion**

Exclusion basically is of two kinds. One is a permanent exclusion, whereas the other is a temporary. The kind of exclusion that the Physically challenged come across could be brought under the permanent exclusion category where the remedy to cure the problem is almost non-existent. On the other hand, poverty could be seen as temporary exclusion which, if proper provisions are laid out, could be easily tackled. So, the change makers or the forces which are intended to promote inclusion need to

keep in their mind before preparing the policies or acts regarding the kind of exclusion they would like to address, so that the process would become much easier and the result could be more positive.

### **Products of Exclusion**

Exclusion is a continuous process which may affect other domain of concern. Exclusion has the potential of either being the cause or the effect. For instance, if unemployment is considered as a cause for exclusion in one's life, then poverty, hunger, lack of house, clothes could be seen as the results of exclusion. Several forms of exclusion can be observed daily in one's own life. It is very difficult to identify the cause of deprivation and how social exclusion operates, but we can identify the agents of deprivation. Agents such as governmental and other institutional practices, cultural values and beliefs, demographic shifts, globalisation, technological innovation and organisational transformation are the agents to activate exclusion (Lynne, *op. cit*). As a whole, dominant classes in a particular spectrum which play a game of exclusion in which they act as dominators could be considered as agents of exclusion.

### **Areas of Exclusion**

Exclusion may be effective because of one or a few acts, but, over a period of time, it affects a variety of issues in human life. So, when any individual/community is socially excluded, it is very difficult to discern the overall causes which prompts exclusion and deprivation because it is highly contextual in nature, for example, consider exclusion from education, housing, property ownership, democratic participation, health services, public goods to name but a few (Nayak 1994). In addition to these, one may witness exclusions in terms of gender-based exclusion, exclusion of the old and infirm, exclusion of widows, and exclusion of the physically handicapped. This single particular cause which leads to exclusion will have its effectiveness in other areas too, which plays havoc with the lives of the victims of exclusion.

### **Sources of Exclusion**

Voluntary social exclusion also leads to the destruction of social bonds. For example, young man may voluntarily join a gang engaged in crime but ultimately it ruins other people's life and welfare (Grand 2005). There are possibilities to illustrate that voluntary exclusion is not simply voluntary. It perhaps holds lot of social, political, cultural and economic connotations, which often cannot be ascertained from a superficial study. For instance, if a Dalit boy encounters discrimination and aggression whenever he enters into an upper caste society, he may decide not to enter that society anymore. He may thus refuse a chance to go to school which finally ruins his life because of the lack of proper education. His refusal is related to the larger structural social problem that is prevalent in Indian society.

It is noticed that globalisation as a phenomenon, in most of the developing countries, has become a big threat to poor and vulnerable sections. For instance, information and technology boom in Indian cities swells commodity prices, which affects the major section of the population. Earlier, the middle class used to lead a comfortable life with what they had. But, with the growth in Information Technology sector, now they no longer lead a comfortable life with their income. In brief, the middle class in cities have been pushed down to poor grade. Whereas the poor remain poor not because that their lives are not changing, but because there is no such term to call them as 'below poor'. Significantly, globalisation serves the elite like the government does. For instance, in the process of globalisation, 'Reliance Group of Industries' has become one of the richest in the world. Globalisation helps them to grow their market too. With this initiation, they started 'Reliance Vegetable Outlets', and, therefore placed the street vendors' life at stake, who are already excluded through unequal inclusion in the informal sector.

One of the noteworthy issues in this regard today is, that in most of the developing countries, GDP and per capita income are increasing very swiftly, but the living conditions of the poor and middle class are simultaneously declining. Government policies, as one of the means for social exclusion, could also be seen in wider range. For instance, in India government stores a lot of food in godowns while people are dying of starvation.

When Bill Clinton stated, “It’s not an underclass any more, it’s outer class” (Silver 1994: 535), it gives a new dimension to the existing term ‘under class’. It has created a separate group of excluded people who are ‘outside’ the ‘class’, and they, in turn, become social misfits. Bhalla and Lapeyre further agrees that the problem now is not just about the disparity between the top and the bottom of the social scale (up/down), but also between those comfortably placed within the society and those on the fringe (in/out) (Bhalla and Lapeyre, 1997).

### **Various Arguments related to Poverty and Social Exclusion**

In view of the importance of the new concept ‘social exclusion’, it is very essential to describe the differences between the terms poverty, deprivation and social exclusion. United Kingdom identifies social exclusion beyond the economic factor. Both poverty and social exclusions can also pass from one generation to the next. Australian Social Policy Research Centre clarifies the differences among the three concepts in the following way (Saunders, *et al.* 2007).

**Table No. 2.1**  
**Difference between Poverty, Deprivation and Social Exclusion**

<b>Poverty</b>	<b>Deprivation</b>	<b>Social exclusion</b>
<i>Poverty</i> is a situation in which someone’s income is so inadequate as to preclude them from having an acceptable standard of living. It exists when people’s actual income is below a poverty line.	<i>Deprivation</i> exists when lack of resources prevents people from accessing the goods and activities that are essential. Following international convention, it is defined as an <i>enforced lack of socially perceived essentials</i> .	<i>Social exclusion</i> exists when people do not participate in key activities in society. Whereas deprivation focuses on what people <i>cannot afford</i> , what matters for exclusion is what people <i>do not do</i> .
Poverty, deprivation and social exclusion are distinct but overlapping concepts. They cover what most people understand by the term ‘social disadvantage’, which involves restricted access to resources, lack of participation and blocked opportunities.		

*Source: Saunders, et al. (2007)*

Europeans conception of social exclusion is distinct from income related poverty. Poverty is a distributional outcome, whereas exclusion is a relational process of



declining participation, solidarity and access. For some scholars, exclusion is a broader term encompassing poverty. For others, it is a cause or a consequence of poverty (Silver & Miller 2003). Here, the paradox is that people who are socially excluded need not be poor, but all the poor are socially excluded. It shows that poverty is one of the means within the broader concept of social exclusion. Notion of vulnerability is closer to the concept of social exclusion. If poverty is defined narrowly in terms of income or consumption outcomes, then social exclusion clearly provides value-addition (Haan 1997). Aalbers (2005: 101) posits, “The concept of social exclusion which is more dynamic in the sense that it does not describe a condition (like poverty) but rather a process, provides an alternative, but is also a contested term”.

Poverty may occur because of shortage of income which would have resulted from unemployment. Indeed, poverty is largely due to one reason: low income. However, social exclusion could be because of multidimensional deprivations. Sen (2000) welcomes the social exclusion framework, because it has its roots in social deprivation. He believes that social exclusion is an ideal measurement to understand poverty as a factor for deprivation. Sen’s attempt to prove poverty as a capable factor for deprivation could also be experimented in case of social exclusion because poverty is one of the reasons for social exclusion. Thus, social exclusion is also termed by many scholars as ‘new poverty’. Lack of access to resources is the main cause for poverty, but social exclusion can occur through any of the deprivations. United Kingdom’s Social Exclusion Task Force discloses that tackling social exclusion is about tackling something more than poverty. It is about having personal capacity, self confidence and aspiration to make the most of the opportunities, choices and options in life that the majority of people take it for granted (Social Exclusion Task Force Report 2003).

Like poverty, all other deprivations also have related deprivations which may have resulted from other sources, i.e., caste, race, gender, disability, etc. Social exclusion deals with all these sources and related deprivations to bring about an inclusive space. Thus, poverty is only one of the related sources of deprivation which enforces social exclusion. For example, being excluded from the employment sector may lead to other related deprivations. As Adam Smith opines, failure of society to accommodate

any individual or community in mainstream society itself should be seen from a social exclusion perspective. In this regard, he reflects on the incapability or inability of a person to appear in public because of the infinitive feeling of shame (Smith 1977), because sometimes social exclusion creates certain situations where the affected people may not feel comfortable to appear in public. Casteism in India and racism in USA are two parallel structural forms of discrimination to understand the effect of social deprivation and shame associated with it. Both the cases are not necessarily related to poverty, but they create social exclusion. Thus, all these deprivations, which aim to exclude certain individuals or sections, are within the realm of social exclusion.

Poverty is the lack of proper economic sources to do certain valuable things, whereas social exclusion is the lack of proper social participation to do so. It is very essential to combat relative poverty to eliminate poverty related social exclusion. The new literature of social exclusion has many positive links which will help us to go into the source in order to solve them from the beginning itself. Studies on exclusion should not only scrutinise the degree of poverty of the person, they must also study the allied deprivations, i.e., lack of education, housing, market integration, etc. But, there is a relative advantage in social exclusion over poverty in terms of fighting against social oddities. For instance, anti-poverty programme may only aim to eradicate the poorness, whereas fighting against social exclusion entails a crusade against all forms of deprivation.

### **How about Social Inclusion?**

Social inclusion is about social well-being and combating social exclusion. It is about building participation. Like exclusion, inclusion also means different things for different people. Different nations conceive different agendas to build social inclusion policies. But still, despite their different stand on the social inclusion, everyone's inner meaning is to promote social networks and social harmony.

### **What is Social Inclusion?**

In general, social inclusion is about providing all possible opportunities to an individual in order to participate in his/her civic life. The developed regions like European Union, United States, Australia and now third world countries have been actively enacting policies in order to ensure that all its population fall under the purview of social inclusion. Though social exclusion means different things to different people, social inclusion is about facilitating participation through enhanced capabilities. Though it is about participation, various national governments have adopted different models in order to do it so.

In addition, social inclusion is all about providing opportunities to those who are 'misfit' in the society. The opportunities provided to the excluded must demonstrate enhanced capabilities to bring about inclusion for such excluded population. The inclusion so achieved must have the voices of these excluded heard, rather through the policies made out of the whole spectrum. As a whole, social inclusion is about addressing combination of issues that include income inequality, education, skill levels, housing affordability, health inequalities, and work-life balance. First of all, let us see what exactly constitutes the agenda of social inclusion for different nations.

For the European Union, social inclusion is about creating ways for the poor or have other problems, to take part in the life of society. It is also about taking decisions that concern their lives. On the other hand, it is also about claiming their own rights (European Union 2004b).

For Australia, social inclusion is about a) learning through participating in education and training processes; b) working through participating in employment both in paid as well as voluntary work and in the family; c) taking an active part in social activities through connecting with people and using their local community's resources; and d) have the capacity to influence the decisions which influences their life (Govt. of Australia u.d). For Ireland (u.d), social inclusion is about ensuring to see that the marginalised and those living under the miserable conditions affected by poverty have greater participation in decision making which affects their day-to-day life, allowing

them to improve their living standards and their overall well-being. ([www.cpa.ie](http://www.cpa.ie) accessed on 24/05/2010).

And for India, it is about inclusive growth in the face of economic inequalities. The financial growth that the sub continent witnessed in the recent past greatly widened the gap between the poor and the rich. So, due to the increased gap between these two sections, the government has proposed the idea of inclusive growth, where everyone is made a partner in the financial growth that it is undergoing and further the fruits are equally distributed among the members. However, for any country, social inclusion is about improved lifestyle where all are provided the capabilities to influence their day-to-day life.

Inclusion is an instant result, when exclusions are taken care of. Various national and state governments across the globe have started adopting several forms of welfare activities in order to make sure that the exclusions are tackled on a permanent basis. Though the programmes/ policies do not directly fall under the notion of social inclusion, they have been operated with a view to eliminate exclusions. Though the language of inclusion is missing in those policies, still they tackle exclusions and pave the ways for the inclusion.

United Kingdom has developed a social inclusive strategy which includes i) making a positive contribution towards economic, social and environmental well-being of the local population (make a positive contribution to those economic, social, and environmental factors which contribute to social exclusion); ii) reducing inequalities of opportunity and poverty within the district; and iii) increasing tolerance of difference and celebration of diversity (Social Inclusion Unit 2004).

Social inclusion must happen as a process on a continuous basis. In the words of its advocates, “Social inclusion is based on the belief that we all fare better when no one is left to fall too far behind and the economy works for everyone. Social inclusion simultaneously incorporates multiple dimensions of well-being. It is achieved when all have the opportunity and resources necessary to participate fully in economic, social, and cultural activities which are considered the societal norm” (Boushey, *et al.* 2007: 3). Further, it is argued that, the process of social inclusion allows us to focus

on research and policy implications which recognise getting a job simply may not be enough in order to ensure that families escape problems and can fully participate in the social and economic life of their communities. Thus, social inclusion must be a process of not simply an economic facilitation, it is also about having fully vibrant social, cultural and political life also.

With this background, it is quite clear that, inclusion is possible only when exclusions of communities/individuals are taken care of. Now let us see how social exclusion is taken care in the European Union in order to enable its population to enjoy the freedoms under the broader social inclusion outlook.

## Section – II

### **Social Exclusion in the European Context**

The present section deals with two important aspects. i) the efforts that the European Union has put in to ensure that the exclusions are properly tackled and more ways are laid to promote inclusion and ii) Some of the efforts made by United Kingdom as per as social inclusion is concerned. United Kingdom is one nation which has given high priority for the social inclusion in its policy discourse.

### **Efforts of European Union**

Europeans recognise combating social exclusion as a worthy tool to create a more cohesive society for a stronger Europe. Thus, EU extend its welfare programmes towards ‘combating social exclusion’ to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion. There is strong convergence among the European Union nations towards recognising people's rights to play an active role in society, and this has to be supported for their definitive active inclusion. By the 1970's, references to the ‘excluded’ were growing, especially with reference to the disabled. But after the oil shocks, unemployment began to mount, especially among youth, older workers, and immigrants. In the 1980s, as the problem groups were excluded from economic growth and had multiplied the ‘exclusion’ discourse, it

helped cement a national movement, demanding France to launch a comprehensive war on exclusion. Social exclusion obtained more conceptualised framework in the 1980s Europe because of the social integrated welfare policies in France which had started from the 1970s. Homeless activists won a legal right to housing in June 1998. French law of prevention and combating social exclusion guaranteed universal access to fundamental rights, employment, training, social minima, social service, social enterprise, citizenship, culture, housing, health and education were mandated to its people (Silver & Miller 2003).

One can say that social exclusion has been in European Union discourse from 1989, when the Social Rights Charter of 1989 sought to guarantee minimum standards of social assistance within the EU. European Union grasped the 'exclusion' approach to combat against all the disadvantages throughout Europe. Thus, the third European Union 'poverty programmes' was turned into a war against social exclusion. Silver & Miller (2005) noted that the number of unemployed workers in European Union soared from 14 million in 1992 to 16.5 million in 1998. This deprived condition, which raised poverty related deprivations, pushed the EU to recognise that, market integration had a 'social dimension'. Thus, policies were taken up to improve employability and to develop entrepreneurship.

March 2000, Lisbon Council was one of the significant achievements in the battle against social exclusion and its member agreed to coordinate their policies to combat poverty and social exclusion on the basis of Open Method of Coordination (OMC). OMC is a coordinating tool of EU's employment policy. The method has expanded to a large number of areas of welfare policy afterwards. The intention to adopt OMC was to work in a collaborative mode across the EU level. In other terms, all EU nations aimed to work collectively to eradicate all forms of social disadvantages. In the European Union own language, "The OMC is helping to deepen mutual learning and to widen involvement of stakeholders at national and European levels. "It has increased awareness of the multi-dimensional nature of exclusion and poverty and forged a shared approach to social protection reforms based on the principles of accessibility, adequacy, quality, modernisation and sustainability" (European Commission 2007: 8). OMC helps nations to get resources from other nations within the EU community, when they are running out of resources.

One of the remarkable achievements in this discourse occurred in 2000 with a policy framework in which separate provisions are made available to fight poverty and social exclusion separately. Then it is also instructed to all the member states of EU to produce ‘National Action Plans’ for social inclusion for every two years. These National Strategic Reports focus on activities related to inclusion, pensions, health and long-term care. Joint reports on social inclusion are being adopted for every two years, based on the national strategic reports. It is observed that, starting from 2001, EU came up with four joint action reports (JAR) by updating its aims and objectives as per their resources and abilities. Table 2.2 shows the aims and objectives of all the six joint inclusive reports.

From all the national inclusive policies, it is drawn that all the European countries (irrespective of their economic position) have been investing huge amounts in the field of social development to achieve their overall strategic goal by 2010, i.e., ‘social exclusion free zones’. Unfortunately, the same couldn't happen as expected due to the peeling trends in the most of the nations. In 2003, all the member states spent, on an average, around 28 percent of their GDP (including 13 percent for pensions and 8 percent for healthcare) in gross terms for social protection (European Union 2004a). EU identified knowledge based society would disallow any damage to social bonding. Knowledge and lifelong learning have been given priority in the Joint Inclusion reports as crucial factors in the war against poverty and social exclusion. Involvement of the entire family in the realm of education would enhance their self inclusion in the labour market. Thus, lifelong learning is aimed to provide a chance for all age groups, particularly for those who left schools at a relatively early age.

**Table No. 2.2**  
**Aims and objectives of Joint Reports on Social Protection and Social Inclusion**

<b>Joint Action Report</b>	<b>Aims and Objectives</b>
<b>2001</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognised the fact that participation is the ultimate remedy for this multi-dimensional social ill. The report of facilitating participation in employment and access to rights are given priority.</li> <li>• Enlistment of the most vulnerable.</li> <li>• Mobilizing people to participate in their own terms of inclusion.</li> <li>• Avoiding exclusionary sources in its policies.</li> <li>• Strengthening employment opportunities.</li> <li>• Social affairs and equal opportunities.</li> </ul>
<b>2003</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting investment in and tailoring of active labour market measures to meet the needs of those who have the greatest difficulties in accessing employment.</li> <li>• Ensuring that social protection schemes are adequate and accessible to all and that they provide effective work incentives to those who can work.</li> <li>• Increasing the access to the most vulnerable and those who are at the risk of social exclusion; to decent housing; quality health and lifelong learning opportunities.</li> <li>• Implementing a concerted effort to prevent early school drop outs and to promote smooth transition from school to work.</li> <li>• Developing a focus on eliminating poverty and social exclusion among children.</li> <li>• Making a drive to reduce poverty and social exclusion of immigrants and ethnic minorities.</li> </ul>
<b>2005</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing labour market participation.</li> <li>• Modernising social protection systems.</li> <li>• Tackling disadvantages in education and training.</li> <li>• Eliminating child poverty.</li> <li>• Ensuring decent accommodation.</li> <li>• Improving access to quality services.</li> <li>• Overcoming discrimination and increasing the integration of ethnic minorities and immigrants.</li> </ul>
<b>2007</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthcare and long-term care.</li> <li>• Guarantee a safe and high-quality care.</li> <li>• Managing introduction of new technology for health and independent living.</li> </ul>
<b>2008</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child poverty.</li> <li>• Promoting longer working and privately managed pensions.</li> <li>• Health related inequalities.</li> <li>• Long term care.</li> </ul>
<b>2009</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustaining household incomes and preventing job losses.</li> <li>• The European Social Fund should be used to alleviate the social impacts of the crisis.</li> <li>• Member states should strive to improve the value of money for healthcare and reduce health inequalities by increasing attention to primary care, prevention and health promotion.</li> </ul>

*Source: Compiled by the researcher using European Joint Action Reports*

The above table indicates that, starting from the first JAR to the latest one several policies are adopted by the member states to promote social inclusion at different levels. After identifying participation is an inevitable tool in order to achieve social inclusion, everyone's participation in the socio, economic, political and cultural



spheres are promoted. Various welfare activities against several social ills such as child poverty, health related issues, poverty, lack of employment and discrimination etc. are tackled carefully. In addition to them much broader policies are adopted in order to promote long term health care, preventing job losses and reducing health inequalities etc. As a whole, JARs proclaim that with this social inclusion approach which is capable of enhancing the capabilities of deprived and excluded are being achieved smoothly.

Concurrently, EU adopted 'one of the national median disposable household incomes' as a poverty indicator. Outstanding issue is that it would elevate when Europeans grow richer. European Union adopted a new policy in order to include a possible number of more people in the list of excluded whose equivalised income is below the threshold of 60 per cent of the national equivalised median income. Through considering them poor they are entitled to enjoy more fruits of the welfare policies (Haveman 2009). The intention of EU is not to show that the Europe has good number of poor people, but to increase the number of people in the category of poor. It wants to give more benefits to the poor. In 2003, EU announced that though 60 percent of the population belong to the median income principle, 16 percent of its citizens (around 72 million) are living at the risk of poverty. With the above approach, percentage of people to be considered as poor in various nations are, Slovakia, Ireland, Greece (21 per cent) followed by Portugal, Italy, Spain (19 per cent) and the United Kingdom and Estonia (18 per cent). At the other extreme, the share of population at the risk of poverty is close to 10 per cent in the Czech Republic (8 per cent), Luxembourg, Hungary, Slovenia (10 per cent); followed by Finland and Sweden (11 per cent), Denmark, France, Holland (19 per cent) and Austria (13 per cent). The remaining countries face intermediate poverty rates close to the EU average. If we take the overall income inequalities between the wealthiest quintile and the poorest, the wealthiest quintile in 2003 has 4.6 times more income accumulation than the poorest. Ratio differs from 3.0 in Hungary to 7.4 in Portugal (European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions 2007).

Basically the EU strategic policies have been aimed to achieve the active inclusion of most disadvantaged groups. EU not only engaged in providing just employment, it also facilitate healthy and sound working conditions which allows people to continue

with the job for more time. EU identified disabled people labour market participation as one of the best means for their inclusion. Ethnic minorities, migrants and women have been fixed in the EU agenda to support them to overcome from their 'misfits'. In 2005, employment growth in the EU27<sup>2</sup> continued to recover gradually from the low growth in 2003. The Employment growth rate average 0.8 per cent of the year 2003 is a slight increase from the previous year's average of 0.6 per cent. The employment rate of the EU27 increased to 63.8 per cent, mainly driven by the growth in the employment rate of women (from 54.3 per cent in 2001 to 56.3 per cent in 2005) and of older workers (from 37.5 per cent to 42.5 per cent). The share of part-time employment (including involuntary part-time) have risen from 16.3 per cent in 2001 to 18.4 per cent in 2005. Also the share of fixed-term employment (from 12.9 per cent in 2001 to 14.5 per cent in 2005). In the second quarter of 2007, employment reached the mark of 222 million, with the annual increase of over 3 million and an increase of 1 million from the last quarter (*Ibid*).

One of the challenges addressed by EU is, eradication of child poverty<sup>3</sup>. Every third child in EU countries suffers from child poverty which threatens social cohesiveness and sustainable development. Because of this cycle of disadvantages, especially children have been missing the opportunities because of their multi-dimensional problems. Recognising the fact that cycle of disadvantages can pass from one generation to the next, EU is committed to give a right start in the life of these children. To avoid this cycle of disadvantages for generations to come, United Kingdom follows a policy measure to protect children from various social disadvantages by implementing such policies from their mother's womb. Against child poverty, EU nations recognise the need to adopt an integrated long-term approach to rapidly and significantly reduce child poverty through offering equal opportunities to all children, irrespective of their background. Pre-school, adult education and promoting parent's labour market participation are two dynamic approaches for achieving a full-fledged school attendance. From another side, their common programmes for social inclusion is worthy of a strong concern. For instance, the United Kingdom initiation dropped their child poverty rate to 17 percent (1999-

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<sup>2</sup> European Union is an economic and political union of 27 member states. That is the reason it is being called as EU27.

<sup>3</sup> Child poverty, in general, refers to a situation where a child lives in poverty. A Child who fails to receive standard life of the children in any particular nation is considered under child poverty.

2006) by empowering 700,000 children from poverty; while the child poverty rates in United States is alarming because of its increase of 12 percent which is nearly 13 million (Vaitilingam 2000). EU Council in 2006 committed itself to reduce child poverty through enhancing quality education and training to maximise the knowledge of the children which will help to flatten the deprivation cycle (Euro Child 2007).

The Amsterdam and Maastricht treaties were two significant treaties in terms of offering proportionate importance to social exclusion. The European Union's anti-exclusion policy is also one of the achievements against social exclusion. On 20<sup>th</sup> June, 2000, EU adopted a directive principle "implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons, irrespective of racial or ethnic origin". This directive is enforced from 2003. Simultaneously, in 2005, joint report on social inclusion took more sensitive steps towards social integration of minorities (European Parliament 2007). With all these efforts throughout Europe, several policies have been promoted by different nations, because of which sign of social inclusion is witnessed across the Europe within a short time. Now let us discuss the efforts that are taken up by United Kingdom, one of the EU countries that has given policy priority for the social inclusion.

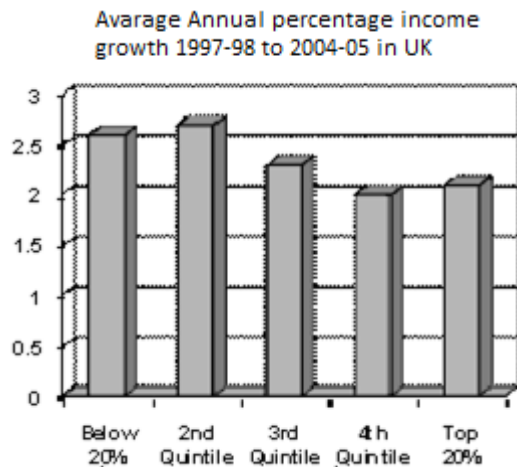
### **Efforts of United Kingdom - Social Exclusion Unit**

Since 1997, social exclusion has become the central objective of British policies and debates. During the Conservative government regime the notion did not find entry into policies and political debates. Social exclusion's debate became dominated when the new Labour Government's initiated steps to establish an interdepartmental Social Exclusion Unit in 1997. The main objective of Social Exclusion Unit was 'to promote interdepartmental cooperation, develop new initiatives and shift the focus of government programmes towards preventing social exclusion'. When linked to the performance on income growth for all groups, over the last ten years the United Kingdom has made good progress in tackling poverty with the help of the unit thus :

- i) only 2.4 million people now live below the poverty line; ii) the number of people experiencing absolute poverty has decreased by half; iii) 700,000 children have been lifted out of relative poverty since 1998; iv) one million pensioners have been lifted out of relative poverty; v) households are on an average £1,000 a year better off; and

vi) families with children are on an average £1,550 a year better off (Cabinet Office u.d).

**Diagram No. 2.1**



compared to 2.1 percent of the top 20 per cent earners. It is an incredible change from 1979-1997. Within these 18 years, the top 20 per cent of the population witnessed their average annual incomes grown at three times than the rate of the bottom 20 per cent (*ibid*).

Active inclusion trends in United Kingdom have increased the income of the bottom 20 percent of the total population, which when compared with the top 20 percent is a great achievement. From the given bar chart, we can illustrate the overall picture of income growth. Since 1997, the bottom 20 percent achieved a good 2.6 percent average annual income growth, when

In the words of Tony Blair (the then Prime Minister of UK) unfortunately the excluded communities and individuals from deprived sections suffer from *market failure* from which neither the private sector nor government schemes can overcome the problems or address the needs of them. Even though considerable measures have been taken up by the EU to strengthen social solidarity, there are some drawbacks which need to be addressed by the EU. Geyer (1999) pointed out four lessons to be learnt from European Union in the perception of Social Inclusion policy:

- Do not rely on core political actors: they can create and promote, but they lack both the expertise to evaluate particular policy areas.
- Promote NGOs/VSOs involvement: these groups can provide key services to core bureaucratic actors. And it is also important to form partnership with these organisations because they are working with the excluded groups.
- Mainstreaming is problematic because the concept is overloaded and it has been demonstrated by various factors. The more the groups and areas that try to use the strategy, the less it will work. Mainstreaming a few groups means that others are being ignored.

- d. Despite its lacunas, mainstreaming is better than nothing.

On a whole, the European approach for handling social exclusion, after identifying it as one of the predominant areas that can decide the fate of the nation has been very intensive in nature and sustained with enormous results. States have become more welfare oriented and thus offered several policies and opportunities to their population to overcome the problems that impeded their growth towards inclusion. Europe, as a developed society has given ultimate priority to remove exclusion from their societies by looking at all kinds of exclusion from a single dais. As the debates about the concepts of exclusion and inclusion have mounted in the developmental discourse, now it is the turn of the developing countries like India to address the magnitude of these concepts. So, now let us discuss social exclusion and its implications in the Indian context.

### Section - III

#### **Social Exclusion in the Indian Context**

In fact, Social Inclusion not only speaks about improvement of individual capabilities, it also envisages overall capabilities development of the nation. Social inclusion not only uplifts the deprived, but it also works as a strategy for any country to utilise all its human resources. If more number of people are socially excluded in any nation, it would lead to exclusion of the entire nation from participation in mainstream global politics.

India has a large number of people living below poverty line. Total Indian population by mid 2006 according to World Bank reports was 1,109.8 millions. Out of this, approximately 321 million (This data have been taken from the official statistics, which always have gap between the given number and the actual number) people were living below poverty line. With the liberalised economy today, India has reached the stage of food-sufficiency, but unfortunately because of lack of proper inclusive policies, millions of people are still living below the poverty line and many are dying of hunger.

India has a wide range of socially excluded people within its geographical limits. These deprived groups experience discrimination and abuses in various ways on daily basis. Until now, India has viewed all the deprived communities from its limited perspective, but not from a broad global exclusionary perspective. But, with the present social exclusion approach, all the deprived, irrespective of their source of deprivation, will perhaps be considered under this broad realm of social exclusion. This kind of consideration would give a new definition to all the socially excluded by clubbing them under one category. Certain sections in Indian society experience systematic homogenous categorisation which often is done by the dominant main stream: Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribes and religious minorities. They face social marginalisation and discrimination everywhere in the society. Women are one of the most deprived sections in India. They are suppressed by layers of social restrictions. Women are behind men in many indicators such as life expectancy, literacy and nutritional standards. Scheduled Caste and Tribes may get equal respect in their respective societies, but women do not get equal position anywhere. A Woman always experiences social disadvantages from the wider society, from her community and from her family. Similarly, there are poor, child labourers, beggars, disabled people, and poor elderly people and so on lying on the edges of exclusion from the main stream and leading their life in pathetic situations. Unfortunately, these sections of people have been waiting for state's mercy. For them, India has not attained independence.

Beggars in Indian society have been neglected by both the society and the state. Their condition is more vulnerable than that of any other section. The condition of beggars is such that a common man has to completely ignore him and not look at him/her in order to avoid his own guilt feeling for not helping the same. No policy has been adopted to mainstream their lives and there is no research done which shows their acute vulnerability. The number of beggars has been increasing simultaneously with the development of the GDP of the nation. One of the biggest cities, i.e., Mumbai claims that at present the number of beggars living in the city is around 300,000 whose number was 20,000 only in 1963 (Times of India 2006). Their inability to participate in the political process, which does not give any representation in the government, leads to government's total neglect of this section. There are assumptions

that some beggars in India choose begging as a profession not because of their poverty, but because they find begging an easy way to earn their living. But, the fact here, irrespective of various causes, is that any person who has opted for begging to lead his/her life, leads to destroying social coherence and solidarity which ultimately leads to the exclusion of their lives from all the activities of a civilised Indian citizen.

If social exclusion/inclusion becomes important perspective in Indian social policy, the deprived sections' lifestyle might get changed. Recent initiatives such as Right to Information Act and National Employment Guarantee Act could play very significant role in terms of reaching the facilities to the needy. It can act as a participating medium for inclusion. Since participation is the only way to eradicate social 'exclusion', there is a need to introduce more participatory programmes. The above enlightened gaps among the individuals/groups are simply not economic, they are also based on caste, gender, political and cultural basis. Thus, all the poverty eradication policies must be transferred into social inclusion policies. To bring this new concept into the Indian social policy discourse, there is a need to develop a theoretical framework of social exclusion/inclusion which could be suitable to the Indian context.

### **Practices to Promote Inclusion**

Since independence, various national and state governments have been trying to implement several policies in order to tackle several forms of deprivations faced by some sections of the people. Though they are all aimed to include the excluded in the mainstream, the concept of social exclusion/inclusion has not been brought under the policy scanner. There are several programmes that are aimed directly to bring inclusion across the communities based on certain forms like poverty and other programmes that aim to merge some particular sections like Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribes. In order to facilitate planning and implementation, Five Years Plans have been started after immediately India attained independence. Under these plans, funds are transferred to various heads like rural development, education, welfare of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes, women empowerment, child development and so on. These plans allow governments to form clear objectives to be achieved by end of the plan and if still anything is pending from the objectives even

by end of the Plan, the objectives will be brought forward to the next Plan. Present the 11th Five Year Plan (2007-2012) is in operation.

As discussed, employment provision, through which incomes are generated, is always considered as a better option in order to tackle the relative deprivations caused by financial exclusion. Thus, several employment generation schemes have been introduced in the independent India. These schemes are:

Prime Minister Employment Guarantee Scheme (PMEGS): This programme has emerged after merging two schemes, i.e., Prime Minister Rojgar Yojana (PMRY) and Rural Employment Generation Programme (REGP). The main objective of the programme is to generate employment opportunities through establishment of micro enterprises in both rural and urban areas. Under this scheme, a beneficiary has to pay a sum of 10 per cent in case of general category and 5 per cent in case of Scheduled Caste/Tribe as their contribution and the rest of the money will be financed by the government in which 25 per cent and 35 per cent is sanctioned as subsidy ([http://msme.gov.in/guidelines\\_pmegp\\_24092008.pdf](http://msme.gov.in/guidelines_pmegp_24092008.pdf) accessed on 17/06/2011).

Swarnajayanthi Gram Swarozgar Yojana: This programme is intended to benefit selected women entrepreneurs in rural India in the form of self-help groups. This is about generation of self employment and is the most ongoing vibrant project. This programme is designed for the families which fall under Below Poverty Line (BPL). The main objective of the programme is to raise the poor families above the poverty line by providing to them income generating asserts through a mix of bank credit and governmental subsidy (<http://rural.nic.in/book01-02/ch-6.pdf> accessed on 16/07/2011).

Integrated Rural Development Programme: This is also a rural development programme intended to generate self-employment so as to enhance income-generating capacity of the target population. Costs of the programme are equally shared among state and centre. The target population of the scheme are the small and marginal farmers, agricultural labourers and rural artisans, etc. Subsidies are laid on different rates for people from different backgrounds. The main objective of the programme is



to improve the asset base of the poor and to involve them in the production/income generation activities.

**Mahatma Gandhi National Employment Guarantee Scheme:** This is a recent employment generating scheme introduced in 2005. The objective of the scheme is to enhance livelihood security in rural areas by providing at least 100 days of guaranteed employment through paying the wages in a financial year for each household. Since its inception, the programme is considered to be a boon in the rural areas (Ministry of Rural Development 2008).

In addition to these employment generation programmes, there are various other programmes such as Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana to provide good road facility for the villages in which at least 500 people reside. Samagra Awas Yojana to ensure integrated provision of shelter, sanitation and drinking water in rural areas is also in operation.

**Twenty Point Programme:** This programme was launched in 1975 as an integrated programme to eradicate extreme poverty, raising productivity, reduce income inequalities and removing social and economic disparities, etc. Under this programme, a) Poverty eradication, b) Local self governments, c) Kisan Mitra (support of farmers), d) labour welfare, e) food security, f) housing for all, g) clean drinking water, h) health for all, i) education for all, j) welfare of Scheduled Caste, Tribes, other backward and minorities, k) women welfare, l) child welfare, m) youth development, n) improvement of slums, o) environment protection and afforestation, p) social security, q) rural roads, r) energisation of rural areas, s) development of backward areas, t) IT enabled e-governance are set to be implemented/achieved at the earliest. Later, the programme has been restructured in 2006 by the present UPA Government as National Common Minimum Programme under which all above issues were brought (<http://delhiplanning.nic.in/TPP2006.pdf> accessed on 17/07/2011).

**Special Component Plan for SCs and STs:** With the view of developing the Scheduled Castes and Tribes on par with other sections, special component plan for SCs and STs have been introduced. Under this plan, interested, individuals/groups from SC/ST

population could operate small enterprises for which government will sanction finances with 60 per cent subsidy. In addition, drinking water supply and construction roads for SC/ST colonies on need based, nutritious food for children of these marginalised groups, supplying agriculture inputs, construction of a community hall in the colonies, etc. In addition various provisions like reservations in education as well as government jobs and political spheres are facilitated for the deprived sections in order to cope up with other sections. In addition, National Commissions for Scheduled Castes and Tribes respectively have been created in order to protect the interests of these sections (<http://rural.nic.in/book01-02/ch-12.pdf> accessed on 16/07/2011).

Women and Child Empowerment: National policy for the empowerment of women has been enacted in order to protect the rights of the women. For child welfare, Integrated Child Development Services Scheme is launched under which issues related to child welfare are taken care of. In addition, Right to Education is provided in order to see that all the children are properly educated. National Commission for Women and National Commission for Protection of Child Rights are created in order to promote the rights of the women and children respectively.

There are many other developmental activities that have been taken place since independence in order to see that the inclusion is broadly achieved. As discussed, the language of inclusion is not used in the implementation of the programmes which doesn't mean that the programmes are not on the inclusion orientation. Though significant transformation in social, cultural, economic and political orientations have been achieved, there is still a lot need to be done in this area.

So far, this is clear from the above discussion that the term social exclusion was coined due to the traumatic conditions in France. This has been adopted by European Union as a major policy discourse. In fact, European Union has been so impressive in terms of promoting social inclusion through various social welfare programmes and policies, especially the Open Method of Cooperation which is considered to be one of the biggest initiatives. Indian experiences, as far as social exclusion is concern, there are several sections or communities which fall under the realm of social exclusion. They need strategic policy implications towards social inclusion using the help of

various community developmental programmes. Various efforts from civil society in this discourse must be seen as obligations to attain the same.

### **Summing Up**

In this direction, social enterprises render their efforts to reduce the gap among individuals and communities. They utilise the untapped human and local resources in order to attain full blow of inclusion. Even countries like UK and Germany started promoting various social enterprises at the maximum extend because it minimises the role of the government in the welfare dialogue. India doesn't have any exceptions to such a move. India is a rich country with several indigenous talents which have been so far underestimated. In the process of modernisation these indigenous talents have been seen as obstacles, whereas social entrepreneurs across the country are rendering in one or other ways for the welfare of the deprived sections. So, let us see the magnitude of the concept of social enterprise in the next chapter.

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## CHAPTER - III

# SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

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*The pessimist sees difficulty in every opportunity. The optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty*

-Winston Churchill

After the detailed discussion on social exclusion/inclusion in the last chapter, it is felt that, exclusions can be tackled using a systematic operations of innovative practices. Social enterprises are one of the better options available in today's society in order to achieve social inclusion on a permanent basis. The present chapter aims to discuss the dialectics of the concept of social exclusion. In order to do it so, the objectives of the chapter includes i) to discuss different arguments linked with the notion of social entrepreneurship; ii) to distinguish the difference between social entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship; iii) also to know what keeps social entrepreneurs top on the list of social leaders; and iv) to understand various types of social enterprises. Great emphasis has been poured in order to bestow allied views on the chosen area. In addition, much more efforts are invested to link/de-link social entrepreneurship with other allied notions such as entrepreneurship, hybrid firm, for-profit, and non-profit. The present chapter has been divided into two sections. First section deals with the notions related to social enterprise whereas second section deals with the contemporary relevance and practices of social entrepreneurship. It is explicitly needed to know the philosophy of *entrepreneurship* in the first phase in order to understand the dynamism of the social entrepreneurship. Hence, here let us have a small breakthrough about the dialectics of entrepreneurship.

### Section I

#### **Entrepreneurship and Social Entrepreneurship**

One of the most influential economists, Baumol (2002), reports that from the ancient days to 1700 AD there was just zero growth in per capita income in the west. And then, suddenly over the next three centuries, it grew from 20 to 740 per cent, this

dramatic elevation was to the transcendental change in the whole concept of business to the entrepreneurship. Traditionally, entrepreneurship has been the basic engine that elevates new ventures- it is the driving force behind the dramatic growth and development of the business sector since the ages. Entrepreneurs recognise ways in which they can do business and mobilise resources to create new enterprises (Austin, *et al.* 2006).

One of the first and foremost features of entrepreneurship is, employment generation. The term entrepreneur originated in French economies as early as 17th and 18th centuries, but the practice of entrepreneurship can be traced since long back. Schumpeter (1961) denotes that “The function of entrepreneurs is to reform or revolutionise the pattern of production” (quoted by Dees 1998: 2). They do it “by exploiting an invention or, more generally, an untried technological possibility for producing a new commodity or producing an old one in a new way, by opening up a new source of supply of materials or a new outlet for products, by recognising an industry and so on” (*ibid*). Corporate sector has generated a lot of employment through its enterprises. But the enterprises that the corporate sector created and developed, on the one hand were able to provide employment, but failed to bestow a social vision for its firms, on the other. The centric aspiration of such firms is limited just to earning profits.

In most of the cases, employment has, just provided financial support to the employees but failed to offer social security. On the other hand, since the enterprise doesn't have any social mission, the whole structure of the enterprise has been questioned. Further, the investors in the enterprises have earned a lot of income which has distanced them from the 'others'. It also resulted in enormously increasing the gap between the rich and the poor. Simultaneously, vulnerability has become the address for several sections, whose welfare has been bypassed. This static situation has led to a lot of criticism on the behavioural aspects of the corporate/enterprise sector. This has resulted in the evolution of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) to meet their obligations in the whole developmental discourse.

Apart from a critical outlook in the enterprise sector which doesn't have any greater social outlook, as a whole the notion of entrepreneurship in other forms has a lot to

offer to the present society, in terms of addressing existing social inequalities and future challenges. Other than the entrepreneurs in business sector there are social entrepreneurs to handle the social problems and there are green entrepreneurs to address problems related to environmental issues. A green entrepreneur focuses on environment and supports a strong eco system and, in the process, he/she starts an enterprise. The green entrepreneur, “concerned with reforestation may launch an eco-tourism enterprise to earn supplemental income while also educating the public about conservation and employing community members in alternative low environmental-impact jobs” (Alter 2006). The success of the entrepreneurial era in the business has certainly asked the people having an aim of elimination of exclusions to seek the notion of entrepreneurship in the societal related activities and thus the notion of social entrepreneurship has emerged. People have become smarter than their earlier peer groups. They have identified the problematic areas and emerged as the concerned entrepreneurs, as mentioned above. With the entrepreneurial activities, the business sector has witnessed enormous innovations in the firms related to the for-profit but the ingress of social entrepreneurship has certainly facilitated innovations in the services that are provided under humanitarian grounds to the humanity who are in dire need.

Entrepreneurship itself is not a negative phenomenon. It has its own benefits. Because it provides employment opportunities to people and they take up several charitable activities through their initiations under Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Otherwise there are several social innovations which have their own say for the poor. For instance, the activity that eBay ([www.ebay.com](http://www.ebay.com)) caters is immense. It provides marketing facility to the indigenous people and provides services to the isolated home hobbyists. In this regard, the social entrepreneurship research at any cost should not be anti-business. Business, as it stands, not at all against the society. Business is a notion under which services are provided to the people in exchange for money. Sometimes business turns negative when the merchant insists on more profit. Unlike the prescribed, there are people who are certainly not doing business for the sake of maximising profits. The particular sections about whom we are discussing are the social entrepreneurs who do business for the social change and bring about social inclusion. So, the social sciences research in this discourse must follow some management principles, while pursuing the issues related to social entrepreneurship.



Economy has been seen from a critical perspective as it is believed that the economy segregates the society into poor and rich. Criticising economy would not yield any results for the sustainable societies. Because economy is needed to monitor and to mainstream societies, what lacks here is the business magnates' failure to address the social needs and social equilibrium. In the same way, entrepreneurship alone is not wrong until it destroys social values. Entrepreneurship is not simply about maximising profits, it's also about employment generation. But, the problems arise only due to extreme maximising of the shareholders' value. In this regard, a vital situation has arisen where people having the same capabilities question the prosperity of their entrepreneurial capacity and thus asked themselves to act upon to demonstrate them for well being of the society. This situation has given birth to the social entrepreneurs- the practical leaders- who have now become the central spread of the policy discourse. Competing with the business world is a difficult task in these days where Multi Nationals operate them; it's not easy, if not difficult. Social entrepreneurs have to render high quality services to clients, as well as realise significant social returns. And they should pursue their business as, if that fails they should believe that the whole venture including the social aspects would also destroy. The preference should be at any moment for the social objectives with earned income, and must not be social objectives with philanthropy.

### **Social Entrepreneurship**

One should go back to 1996 in the process of searching the literature roots for social entrepreneurship. The earlier reference of this concept must be credited to Robert Foundation of United States in its publication of New Social Entrepreneurs (Tan *et al.* 2005). Within a short period of time, the concept has been overwhelmingly studied by scholars across the globe and today this is seen as one of the interesting areas to undertake research.

In the earlier stage, social entrepreneurship was believed to be an innovative start-up initiation that was the product of extraordinary individuals and their personal character and qualities. However, the later stage witnessed social entrepreneurship

more as an action from collective groups, rooted in communities, and often innovating within existing organisations or institutional settings (Nicholls and Young 2008).

One of the virtues of social entrepreneurship is that it permits different experiments to be conducted in exploring better ways of serving social needs (Dees 2005). During the era of failures of welfare state, the welfare of the excluded could only be possible through social innovations by social entrepreneurs. According to international social entrepreneurship of nonprofit organisation, *Ashoka*, “The job of a social entrepreneur is to recognise when a part of society is stuck and to provide new ways to get it unstuck. He or she finds what is not working and solves the problem by changing the system, spreading the solution and persuading the entire society to take new leaps (*Ashoka* 2008). Dees believes that “Social entrepreneurs are driven by the desire to create value, a blend of economic, social and/environmental values.”, “....any person, in any sector, who uses earned income strategies to pursue a social objective, and differs from a traditional entrepreneur in two important ways: their earned income strategies and tied directly to their mission and they abide by a triple bottom line, which encompasses the social, financial and environmental returns”(Dees 1998).

Social scientists are often confused with the notion of social enterprise due to the lack of proper understanding of the notion from social sciences background. Lack of proper research in this field from social sciences point of view is the main reason for this confusion. As already discussed, the importance of the term and the notion, it is very essential to bring out more research in various disciplines from social sciences to strengthen this topic for better understanding of society.

Every scholar has agreed that the concept of social entrepreneurship means different things to different people and researchers (Dees 1998). Like entrepreneurship, which even today lacks a unifying paradigm (Shane and Venkataraman 2000), the term ‘Social Entrepreneurship’ has not taken on a variety of meanings. In fact, the concept of social entrepreneurship is still poorly defined and its boundaries to other fields are still fuzzy (Mair and Marti 2006).

Various scholars have tried to keep the place of a social entrepreneur on the top, as one who can bring creative solutions for the societal problems with his/her safe hands. The social entrepreneur's main aim is to create organisations that are financially independent, socially viable and environmentally sustainable. Returns of the investments both in social/economic dimensions that the social enterprise strive to distinguish them from other forms of organisations. His/her innovative way of working with the excluded sections certainly pushes them towards inclusion because of the trust that the excluded develop in the social entrepreneur. It is also noticed that the social entrepreneurial behaviour changes by the situation, which allows the him/her to think and act accordingly. As social entrepreneur is an ideal individual who never says 'no' to whatever project that he/she opts to tackle. He/she deals with the social problems, which others fail to handle (Austin *et al.* 2006, Johnson 2000, Nicholls and Cho 2006, Dees *et al.* 2001, Bornstein 2007, Dees 1998, Yunus 2008, Nicholls 2006).

### **Characteristics of a Social Enterprise/ Social Entrepreneurship**

Social enterprise is generally seen as an institution and social entrepreneur is an individual. Various scholars have drawn different set of characteristics for a successful social enterprise/ social entrepreneurship. Though they seem to be quite similar, they are different in nature. But as discussed throughout the thesis, both qualities of entrepreneurship, innovation and job creation remain continuous as the profound characteristics of any enterprise.

For some scholars, social entrepreneurship is a theory that creates various organisations/institutions/ ventures which brings sustainable social benefits for the overall development of the society, in general and for a specific target population of that specific organisation/institute in particular (Fowler 2000). For some others, social entrepreneurship means using entrepreneurial behaviour for solving social problems. It can be both for-profit and hybrid organisations. Even if it is for-profit motive, the profit that is created by the venture would be invested again for the weaker sections for their inclusion. In such case, it loses its credibility as a for-profit venture and remains as a hybrid organisation i.e. social enterprise (Hibbert, *et al.* 2002).

Social entrepreneurship generates innovative answers to various unsolved social crises at the practical level. They are the dedicated academicians at the practical level who dedicate their ideas, capacities, resources and social arrangements to bring about social transformation. Professional, innovative and sustainable approaches may be used while bringing the change to hitherto social market failures (Alvord, *et al.* 2004, Mair and Marti 2006). Many social entrepreneurs have professional backgrounds and are trained as teachers, doctors, nurses and lawyers (Bornstein; 2004). He/she is not the one who always shifts from one task to another, they would not leave the task until they revolutionise the task. “They combine innovation, resourcefulness and opportunity to discover new ways of doing things” (Wong and Tang 2006/07: 627). In addition, social entrepreneurs use business principles such as transparency, efficiency, market research and impact evolution while solving social issues in order to adopt proper measurements in accordance with the time and space.

Many studies have found that, social entrepreneurs process the following characteristics while pursuing the goals:

1. Enterprise orientation: they are directly involved in producing goods/services to markets for which they seek operating surplus while running the venture
2. Social aims: they have explicit social aims such as job creation and training the deprived by utilising local resources. They have ethical value which also includes a commitment to local capacity/capability building and they are accountable to their members and the wider community for the social, economic and environmental impact
3. Social ownership: they are autonomous organisations with governance and ownership structure based on participation of stakeholder groups. Profits are distributed among the stakeholders, or used for the benefit of the community.
4. Risk management: in pursuit of their goals, social entrepreneurs never compromise with risks that they might come across. Social enterprises also involve in less profitable markets/areas in pursuit of happiness for the disadvantaged sections. Accountability is given high priority in social enterprises, as it is believed that the social enterprise is entirely dedicated to the triple bottom approach which would be high useful for the local community and its stakeholders (Thompson and Doherty 2006).

A typical social entrepreneur responds in unique ways for the social dimensions. Social entrepreneurs must guide in a more sensitive manner towards the social problems. *I was raised in the spirit of charity and giving, I grew sensitive to other people's feelings, and I felt uneasy about the problems of the poor* are some of the typical responses of social entrepreneurs. This kind of behaviour indicates that social, moral and educational background play a vital role in forming entrepreneurial intentions (Bonbright 1997).

The idea of social enterprise neither comes from capitalism nor from corporate business models. Social enterprise was a term designed to replace the capitalist form of business, i.e., pursuit of profits. The social enterprise generates revenue in excess of the costs of production, but the main intention of the generated incomes is not of the profit making. Its fundamental organisational objective is to benefit collective good (Trexler 2009). With this background, social enterprise a) adopts a mission to sustain and create social value; b) recognise and relentless pursuing new opportunities to pursue that mission; c) generates in a process of continuous innovation, adaption and learning; d) acts boldly without being limited by resources in hand and finally; and e) exhibits enormous accountability to the constituents served and for outcomes created (Dees 1998).

In addition, Social entrepreneurs see promising opportunities where people only locate problems. Their intention is to see villagers as solutions, not as the passive beneficiaries. (Browne, *et al.* 2006). A number of authors have emphasised the hybrid nature of social entrepreneurial activities as incredible (Austin *et.al* 2006 and Boschee 1998) whereas, for others, social entrepreneurship can take place equally well on a not-profit basis or on a for-profit basis. In general, creation of social value holds the top priority of the venture, while economic value creation is necessary, but not simply enough (Mair and Marti 2005). Sometime social needs addressed by social entrepreneurs such as food, shelter or education, very often find it difficult to capture economic value because, even if the customers are willing to pay, still they are unable to pay even a small part of the price of the products and services provided because of their incapable financial stability (Mair and Seelos 2004).

Irrespective of the nature of social enterprise, social entrepreneurs are more flexible and always ready to self-correct. Entrepreneurs are not starry-eyed idealists as one might think, but pragmatists who get the job done by focusing on the goal, not on a particular approach. They are not bothered about the approach because, they want the ends to be as faster as can be, so that the excluded can be easily benefited. Social entrepreneurs are also willing to share credit. The social entrepreneurs described in this thesis invariably credit others with the success of their mission. Pay may not be great, but satisfaction and recognition rank well for the people who work in the social enterprise. Also, social entrepreneurs are willing to break free from established structures. Most enterprises are started from scratch rather than from within existing ones. This allows for the necessary innovations and the ability to see beyond the conventional view of a particular field. Social entrepreneurs are also willing to cross disciplinary boundaries. They are willing to work quietly. Most of the projects started by social entrepreneurs are not well known. They work in small groups and do not seek out publicity. In addition, they have a strong ethical motivation. Unlike other entrepreneurs, who seek to create success in the markets, social entrepreneurs are driven by their ethical vision (Bornstein 2007).

There are certain instructional studies which points out different set of characteristics to be suitable for the successful organisation of a social enterprise. The Tata Jagriti Yatra (2008) which is aimed at awakening Entrepreneurial Spirit among Indian youth after visiting several social/commercial entrepreneurs and their institutions in India identified the following ten themes as most noteworthy characteristics among social enterprises/entrepreneurs. a) Defined need, aligned with passion of the team, but driven by long term discipline to nurture a successful enterprise; b) Service is a choice, not sacrifice-passion for social change is itself rewards and motivates to create and scale enterprise; c) Focusing on a specific local need by using grassroots innovations and using world-class process techniques; d) Unrelenting focus on resource management, and often use resource management to create sustainable enterprise; e) People matter-focus on the human aspect of social change, and use empowerment and call for human dignity to sustain enterprise; f) Enterprises are built by strong collaboration gene with stakeholders around a local identifiable need; g) Enterprise require personal conviction and staying power; h) Successful enterprise are built by tapping into a certain inner unknown, be it a mission value or spirit; i)

Process and systems from the basis of the financial stability of a successful enterprise; and j) Scalable enterprises in India are often built collaborating with or serving the government (Jagriti Sewa Sansthan 2009).

For Skoll Foundation, social entrepreneurs are a) ambitious: Social entrepreneurs tackle major social/environmental issues; b) Mission driven: aiming at social value generation rather generation of wealth is the central objective of any successful social entrepreneur. Promoting systemic social change is the core objective. In case a social enterprise is operating in a for-profit mode, wealth creation may be a part in the whole discourse of social entrepreneurship but it simply won't stick to an end. The wealth created through the for-profit mission would be reinvested in social mission; c) Strategic: Opportunities to improve social system, create solutions for the unsolved social problems by the traditional attempts and invent new approaches that create social value are the strategic attempts need to be seen in any social enterprise; d) Resourceful: Resource management is one of the vital component of a social enterprise. Mobilisation of political, financial and human resources is one of the breakthrough processes that the social entrepreneur has to process in order to run a smooth enterprise; and e) Results oriented: at the end, social entrepreneurs are driven to produce measurable returns in terms of triple bottom line approach in all socio-economic and environmental aspects or any two of the same. These results transform the dreams into realities and make the lives of the vulnerable easier ([www.skollfoundation.org](http://www.skollfoundation.org) [online] accessed on 14th June, 2010).

The characteristics that are discussed show social entrepreneurship as an existing practice that has a strong social commitment to change the societies towards inclusion. One may be astonished to know that these characteristics discussed above are already experienced or seen in one or other places. Though there are different kinds of leaders who have the characteristics that we have discussed from both behavioural and practical versions differently, still what keeps social entrepreneurship very unique is that, their commitment to process all the characteristics at a time, unlike the other social leaders.

### **Differences between Entrepreneurship and Social Entrepreneurship**

Several decades ago, the personal profit motive was the central engine that powered private enterprise (Schumpeter 1934). Entrepreneurship is particularly productive from a social welfare perspective when, in the process of pursuing selfish ends, entrepreneurs also enhance social wealth by creating new markets, new technology, new institutional forms, new jobs, and net increases in real production. In other words, entrepreneurship as it stands is useful because of its productivity, which ensures wellbeing of the wealthy through its products, and sustenance for the needy through the generated employment. Hence, it is clear that both business and social entrepreneurs are needed in order to mainstream the individuals from various social problems from different perspectives. However, social enterprises demonstrate a strong will for social change, unlike their economic counterparts. Social entrepreneurship, like entrepreneurship in the business sector, cannot be understood in a purely economic sense, and that needs to be sustained with a social context, particularly with reference to the local environment (Jack and Anderson 2002).

Traditional entrepreneurs frequently act in a socially responsible manner; they donate money to the NGOs that are already established in the fields of upliftment of the deprived. Here, their efforts are not directly attached to the social mission. On the other hand, social entrepreneurs are mission driven and are well aware about what they intend to do for the society through their entrepreneurial activity. The efforts that are invested by the entrepreneurs in the business can be measured by financial returns. More profits to the owners or shareholders indicate more success of the entrepreneur as a business leader, whereas triple bottom line approach is the core for the social entrepreneurs.

Roles that entrepreneurs play in the economy and the social entrepreneurs play in social change are quite similar. They are the driven, creative individuals who question the status quo, exploit new opportunities, refuse to give up, and create a better world (Bornstein 2003). Comparatively, social entrepreneurship is seen as different from other forms of entrepreneurship in the relatively higher priority given to promote social value and sustainable development versus capturing economic value (Mair and



Marti 2005). Ironically, many commercial businesses consider themselves to have social objectives, but social enterprises are distinctive because their social or environmental purpose is central to what they do. Rather than maximising shareholder value, their main aim is to generate profits to maximise their social and environmental goals. The main difference between social and economic entrepreneurs lies in their ideologies which guide their choice of mission, means and ends (Prabhu 1999). There are four basic differences between commercial and social entrepreneurship: people, context, deals, and opportunity. As a whole, social entrepreneurs typically view growth in a strategically different light from commercial entrepreneurs (Austin, *et.al* 2003).

Very interestingly, social entrepreneurs provide services to the disadvantaged communities, on the one hand, whose benefits have been bypassed by the state, in general, and they aim at addressing market failures by providing access to goods and services where business does not operate because of the numerous risks involved. on the other hand social entrepreneurs have limited experience of the markets during the initial days, they tend to see their capabilities and firmly build peaceful and sustainable societies, where everyone participates inclusively in the activities that the social exclusion basically denies to many (*Ibid*). Now let us see the common difference between both forms of the enterprises.

**Table No. 3.1**  
**Difference between Commercial and Social Enterprise**

<b>Enterprise</b>	<b>Social Enterprise</b>
It aims at creating profitable operations - resulting in private gains	It creates social value for the public good
Profits maximisation	Social value maximisation
It is very easy to measure the performance of the business entrepreneurship	The purpose of the social enterprises creates greater challenges for measuring performance
The focus is on economic returns	The focus is on triple bottom line approach, such as social, economic and environmental returns
Commercial entrepreneurship focus on breakthroughs in accordance with the new needs of consumers	Social entrepreneurship often focuses on serving basic, long-standing needs more effectively through innovative approaches
For a commercial entrepreneur, an opportunity must have a large, or growing total market size and the industry must be attractive	For a social entrepreneur there is a recognised social need, demand, or market failure
Entrepreneurs are motivated by profits	Social entrepreneurs are motivated to improve social conditions
Maximising shareholders' investment (economically)	Maximising stakeholders investments (socially, politically, economically and culturally)

*Source: Austin et al. 2006*

The above table explains how both the enterprises are different from each other. The table elucidates that, the core of the enterprises is to operate in a profitable manner in terms of maximising the private gains whereas social entrepreneur strives to create social value through their innovative striates. For example, take a major social issue i.e. lack of sanitation and sewage, now let us see how these two sets of entrepreneurs behave to address the problem. Entrepreneurs view, what is the market that would pay for the solution? What is the highest amount I can charge for it? How low can my production and running costs be? whereas social entrepreneurs see, how can I solve the issue in a sustainable way? Who are the most needy people I can employ? How can I empower individuals in the area and educate them about the need for sanitation? How can I recycle the waste? How can I achieve maximum social impact?

Social entrepreneurs are different from other social leaders, having special characteristics which helps them in unique ways to solve the practical problems. The

researcher has classified social enterprises in two categories: i) area based social entrepreneurship and ii) issue based social entrepreneurship. The objective and mission of the area based social enterprise would be to empower people who reside in a geographical arena in which the social entrepreneur operates. Barefoot College in Rajasthan, India is a clear example how an area based social enterprise works, whereas the objective of the other is to provide services to the stakeholders in a single issue. It means, the enterprise only involves itself in a single issue/item. It allows the venture to get deeply into the magnitude of the issue. Aravind Eye care system in India is a unique example to elucidate the issue based social entrepreneurship. As described, social entrepreneurs possess special characteristics which keeps them distinct from other social leaders. Now, let us discuss what makes them superior.

### **What keeps the Social Entrepreneur on Top?**

Once David Bornstein asked a leading *Ashoka* fellow why he did what he did. In response, Fabio Rosso who has developed an extraordinary system for delivering electricity to people in rural Brazil, said, *I am trying to build a little part of the world in which I would like to live* (Bornstein 2004). His intention to build such kind of world is to guarantee social integrity and social inclusion. There are several such social leaders across the globe pouring efforts to transform their part of world like Fabio Rosso.

As discussed, social enterprises differ with other organisations primarily in two basic ways, one is through attaining innovative solutions, second and the most important is that of enterprising the whole venture. Enterprising the venture would yield financial stability and sustenance where the finances can be earned through marketing their products. Market participation and financial stability offers financial sustenance to the organisation. “The beauty of making a profit, as we’ve been able to do during the past 15 years is that, you can do a lot with the money, you can do what you want to do. You can do it how you want to do it for as long as you want to do it and you don’t have to make anybody happy except your own Board and staff. You don’t have to meet anybody else’s expectations. That’s a very freeing idea, and once you feel it, you don’t want to go back to the confines of any other type of funding” (Kathleen Buescher, President and Chief Executive Officer, Provident Counseling Inc., St.

Louis, MO). It's not about simply money or self-sustainability. Rather, it's about freedom to do things that are well suitable for the mission that they carry out. This is the essence of social entrepreneurship. You take any socially viable organisation. If the money is available to them to spend without relying on other bodies except the board of particular organisation, innovation and miracles can be practiced easily. Sometimes they may fail but it will show them the successful paths.

On the other hand, those who receive funding from various agencies have to work in traditional methods to show results to the funding agencies, unlike the social entrepreneurs who have an objective of 'slow and steady wins the race', and are not dictated by the funding agencies who demand 'lasting results quickly, rather than uncertain results slowly'. NGOs resist funder attempts to structure their behaviour, but in vain as contributions are important for completing the projects that the NGOs carry out (Ebrahim 2003). In such direction, individual donors' ample contributions should not be ignored as their hand is quite important in the whole process. For instance, in 2004, Oxfam GB a leading charity, working to end global poverty, received \$130.7 million in direct donations from individuals and \$68.8 million in grants from institutions (Jacobs 2006). Sometimes, pressures mount from individual donors too for rapid results. However, social enterprise cannot adjust with this kind of environment, where rapid results are expected. In this regard, Skoll Foundation (2004: 5) mentions "what a social entrepreneur needs and what a foundation provides is an almost perfect mismatch".

Vision and fortitude are necessary traits to implement a social venture. Social entrepreneurs are creative individuals with a 'powerful new, system change idea' (Drayton 2002). Other characteristics include the ability to recognise opportunities, a collaborative leadership style, a long-term community-oriented motivation, and teamwork capability (Morse and Dudley 2002). In addition, candor, passion, clarity of purpose, commitment, courage, values, customer focus, willingness to plan, ability to think like a business, strategy, and flexibility are required in social entrepreneurs (Boschee 1998).

Social entrepreneurs hold brand new social enterprises which are distinct from the traditional socially oriented organisation forms such as not-for-profits or

philanthropic foundations, the entrepreneurial dimension separates them from all other social firms. The difference between traditional social ventures and new social ventures can be derived from the question *how entrepreneurial the venture is?* (Nicholls and Cho 2006). The triple bottom line approach makes it different from other firms, i.e., environmental, financial and social returns. The field has crystallised thus far around the image of the social entrepreneur as a romantic hero, the creative risk taking actor who tackles social problems using new approaches, untapped resources, and sometimes with his or her bare hands (Dees 1998, Bornstein 2004).

Tony Wanger has been astonished by the resistance that he has witnessed from both for-profit and non-profit sector as his hybrid venture in Minneapolis, tried simultaneously to create a business and carry out a social mission by employing people who were economically disadvantaged (Boschee 2006). So a social entrepreneur must also process extreme patience and should be psychologically ready in order to face any extreme conditions from the distressed parties from the society. In the mid-1980s, the board of directors of a hybrid venture in Louisville offered a CEO job to Bob Russell. Mr. Russell realised that the existing set-up of the board worked against the spirit of the enterprise and agreed to accept the position only if every member of the board resigns. Finally, after some resistance everyone resigned as board members (Boschee u.d). This example elucidates that the entrepreneur must be more courageous and behave accordingly even if he knows it might jeopardise his position in the organization.

Social entrepreneur movement is being operated in two forms i) those who are working towards sustainability, which can be brought through a combination of philanthropy, subsidies, and earned revenue, and ii) those who are seeking self-sufficiency, which can only be achieved through earned revenues alone (Boschee 2008).

Innovation is not the whole and sole property of entrepreneurship. It could be seen in any firm or in any activity. So, the difference between innovation and entrepreneurship perhaps needs to be known in order to understand the basic characters of both. Unless an NGO is generating earned revenue from its activities, it is not acting in an entrepreneurial manner. It may be doing good and wonderful

things, creating new and vibrant programmes, then it is acting just as an innovative attempt, not entrepreneurial. Whereas Social entrepreneurs clearly differentiate between innovation (doing something new) and entrepreneurship (doing something that makes money) in their activities (Boschee 2006).

Thus, social entrepreneurs are those who hold separate set of characteristics, who act in accordance to the social needs. The characteristics that are discussed above keeps them apart from all other kinds of leaders. There are different kinds of organisations that have similarities in one or other way with the concept of social entrepreneurship, but altogether they do not perform all the activities that the social entrepreneur carry out. Let us discuss the difference between them.

### **Dilemma among Hybrid, For-Profit and Non-Profit Ventures**

The mode of operation of a social entrepreneur has to be hybrid mode. The triple bottom line approach (returns in socio, economic and environmental aspects) that they seek to achieve in order to characterise their mission is an unique attempt. The mode of operation, in fact, depends upon the particular business model and the specific social needs addressed. For instance, the business model that Muhammad Yunus developed for the Grameen Bank or Dr. Abouleish Chose for Sekem, on the other hand, fits perfectly with a for-profit scheme which later transformed into a social enterprise. Both the Grameen Bank and Sekem use profits generated by their main activities to engage in new social ventures. Grameen has launched ventures such as Grameen Telecom or Grameen Energy, while Sekem has launched several social ventures, including a university and a hospital. For the Grameen Bank, creating economic value is critical to ensure that it is able to continue with its mission. The same holds for Aravind Eye Hospital to continue providing eye care services and cataract surgery for the poor, for Sekem to continue building a better Egypt, and for IOWH (Institute for One World Health) to develop drugs to fight neglected diseases in developing countries. Thus, Mair and Marthi (2005) argue that in social entrepreneurship, social wealth creation is the primary objective, while economic value creation, in the form of earned income, is a necessary by-product that ensures the sustainability of the initiation and financial self-sufficiency.

However, it should be noted that as the intention and the objectives are the base for social entrepreneurial work, the for-profit feature was never born with regard to the social entrepreneurship discourse. The profits are made out of the ventures would be used again to utilise for the overall development of the stakeholders. Hence, it should not be termed as for-profit, because we have already identified for-profits as entrepreneurial ventures having the only objective of financial returns. So, at any juncture, the organisational firm that the social entrepreneur carries out must be a hybrid. It doesn't imply that a for-profit or non-profit must not become hybrid ventures. A social entrepreneur, in order to get proper financial stability, might start a for-profit business and then can migrate towards a hybrid firm. Like the same, a non-profit over a period of time can develop its own venture plan and emerge as a hybrid venture. A For-profit venture, seems to be for-profit in the initial stage of its business but ultimately the whole intention behind it is to reinvest its financial returns in the social mission. Hence, both for-profit and hybrid ventures reflect the same intentions that any social entrepreneurship shows. But, finally it has to emerge as an hybrid venture over a period of time in order to ensure credibility as a social enterprise.

Importance should be attributed here to 'income generating activity' of a social venture. The social venture's ingress in income generating activity is the base for social entrepreneurship. Unless a nonprofit organisation is generating its own income to sustain its mission, it cannot be called as a social enterprise. On the other hand, it may be doing good, but it doesn't fall under the category of a social enterprise. So, doing good is simply not enough to term an organisation as a social enterprise, it must generate its own incomes to support its initiatives.

The value addition generated by social enterprises would be reinvested into social mission. Doing business with social motives would definitely draw the attention of society towards this new social motive. It is not about simply creating just money, but it is about making money to strengthen a viable social mission. The ventures could include "Community owned business, credit unions, mutual's, not-for-profit business ventures, trading arms of charity, employee owned businesses, cooperatives, community housing associations, social firms, micro-credit schemes, some farmers' markets, community settlement associations, agricultural shows, arts festivals and indigenous arts groups" (Rengasamy u.d).

**Table No. 3.2**  
**The social enterprise spectrum**

<b>Motives, methods, and goals</b>		<b>Appeal to goodwill Mission driven Social value</b>	<b>Mixed motives mission and market driven social and economic value</b>	<b>Appeal to self-interest market driven Economic value</b>
<b>Key stakeholders</b>	<b>Beneficiaries</b>	Pay nothing	Subsidised rates, a mix of full payers and those who pay nothing	Market-rate prices
	<b>Capital</b>	Donations and grants	Below-market capital, or a mix of donation and market rate capital	Market-rate capital
	<b>Workforces</b>	Volunteers	Below-market wages, or mix of volunteers and fully paid staff	Market-rate compensation
	<b>Suppliers</b>	Make in-kind donations	Special discounts, or mix of in-kind and full-price donations	Market-rate prices

*Source: Dees 1998*

The above Table demonstrates that the four realms including beneficiaries, capital, work forces and suppliers have been discussed under the three goodwill mission driven social value, mixed motives mission and market driven social and economic value and further self interest market driven economic value. In the above model, self-interest market driven economic value holds every aspect under market dilemma which uplifts the self motives and it would not hold any social biases. Whereas goodwill mission driven social value entirely speaks about donations, charity, it somehow had made the globe prosperous but unfortunately it fosters dependency of the poor. Unlike these two, mixed motives mission and market driven social economic value speaks about hybrid form of organisations which foster capabilities of the deprived as a way to demonstrate their well-being.



**Table No. 3.3**  
**Difference among For-Profit, Hybrid and Non-Profit**

<b>For Profit</b>	<b>Hybrid</b>	<b>Non-Profit</b>
Earn profits for survival.	Earn incomes for survival.	Depends upon charities for survival.
The profits that are not reinvested in the organisation are handed over to the owners in the form of cash.	The profits must be distributed to the group of people that have helped to form the hybrid venture in the form of goods or services For example a community based organisation may use the profits to help its members or others to obtain food, medical care, education, etc.	There are no profits.
The employees are paid in cash.	The employees, apart from cash are paid in the form of gratification.	The employees, apart from cash are paid in the form of gratification.
The corporation starts when group of individuals transfer their assets and money and hence under the eyes of law take title and ownership of the assets. Hence, they receive legal ownership.	Here, though the individuals share their assets and money, they do not receive any legal ownership.	It works only when corporates/ philanthropy's or any types of donors are willing to donate.
Shares directs the function. Hence the most share holders (51%) can decide what the org. can do, you can have n number of votes based on your share value.	No shares, thus, no share value determines the functions. Each member-one vote, irrespective of the investment.	No shares, thus, no share value determines the functions. Each member-one vote, irrespective of the investment.
Only intended to earn money.	Intended to promote social value through its earned income.	Created to depend upon charities ex. a museum. It has no shareholders, may have paid staff, but mainly depends upon donations and grants.
Tax has to be paid.	Tax exempted.	Tax exempted.
Multi/National Companies, industries.	Social Enterprises.	Non-Governmental Organisations.

*Source: Compiled by researcher using some ideas of Chuch (u.d).*

Table 3.3. brings out difference among for-profit, hybrid and non-profit organisations. Apart from them, firms that are based on cooperative movement refer to such businesses where all the stakeholders or workers are partners of the business. Unlike

social enterprise, cooperatives are not meant to see the social value creation or solving a social problem, except job creation. Job creation and workers partnering the business are the very unique features of the cooperatives, whereas social enterprises hold a different set of ideology where social outcomes play a significant role. Cooperatives fall under enterprise realm rather social enterprise because of its lack of social outcome as the primary goal. Like all other businesses, cooperatives too may have been benefiting society (excluding the stakeholders) as one of the objective, but it doesn't determine the objectives of the whole venture. Hybrid forms which are basically social enterprises, can be operated in three styles, i.e., mission centric, mission related and unrelated to the mission.

### **Operation Style of Social Enterprises**

**Mission centric social enterprise:** for this model, enterprise is central to the organisation's social mission. Irrespective of its mission, the intention of a social enterprise, as already discussed, is restricted to generation of social value. Disadvantaged population would be given space under this model to get employment benefits.

Some parts in Haiti faces extreme food deficit due to the little sustainable farming knowledge, and the situation certainly makes the people to go hungry very often. In order to address this problem, Association of the Peasants of Fondwa (APF) initiated three steps; a bakery that makes and sells traditional Haitian flat bread, second, a store that sells agricultural and farm inputs, and third a farm. The first initiation provides twenty four job opportunities for the peasants and further provides reliable food supply to the community. The store assured sustainable cultivation and food production and hence, fosters self-employment through creating jobs. And the third, a 50-acre farm, growing produce and animal feed, and raises livestock, this has created around 100 jobs. As a whole, the APF has created around 200 jobs. Apart from that, basic infrastructure, health care, financial services, agricultural training, as well as primary, secondary, and university-level education to the residents of Fondwa, are guaranteed (Alter 2007).

**Mission related social enterprise:** under this model, commercialisation of social services is a way out for the sustenance of enterprise. The kind of commercialisation may differ, based on the target group. They might charge less for those who fall below the poverty line and collect more from their rich counterparts. The main intention remains to reach the deprived with the commodities that they produce and to change the social systems. Aravind Eye care in India is a unique example of mission related social enterprise. Elimination of needless blindness through comprehensive eye care services is the main objective of Aravind. Over last 30 years, Aravind has served 2.4 million poor with their mission related vision. They do eye cataracts, their services are either subsidised or free in case of poor. They never insist that the poor pay the bills, whatever the poor pay is acceptable. They own their own lens factory in order to minimise the hospital's additional expenses. They have commercialised the health care in case of rich people. They sell the services to the rich in order to sustain the system's financial viability. The services that the Aravind offers are not varied between rich or poor. They provide the same treatment for both the sections (Miller 2006).

**Unrelated to Mission:** under this model, social value creating ventures may not remain as enterprises. But still they get their part of the income from the collaborations that they seek from the external enterprises. 'Save the Children', is a hybrid venture, entirely dedicated to create real and lasting changes for the children who are in need. 'Save the Children' was started in 1999 in England. Today, there are various organisations partnering with the International Save the Children Alliance in over 120 countries in order to promote child rights. Apart from the fund raising and child sponsorship, 'Save the Children' has established a corporate licensing social enterprise. It is a social enterprise but having constant links with for-profits. They, create licensing with the for-profits through which they earn incomes. 'Save the child' logo and name are used by the corporate companies on their products and hence cash it in the market. Through the licensing, 'Save the Children' gets its share of the money from the corporate licensing (Sangawa and Segal 1999). There are several models of social enterprises that are discussed below in order to understand what exactly the purview of social entrepreneurship.

### **Social Enterprise Models**

Non-profits create entrepreneurial activities for the self sustainability of the organisation. Here, the entrepreneurial activity is part and parcel of the whole movement. Under a social enterprise, both the returns - financial and social can be achieved at a time. The operation is social and the facilitator is entrepreneurial activity. They are in general registered as non-profits but if needed there is also a possibility to get these registered under for-profit firms depending on local laws and governing rules. Various social enterprise models are discussed below ([www.4lenses.org](http://www.4lenses.org)).

**Entrepreneur support model:** This model sells business support and financial services to its target population such as self-employed individuals or small firms who then re-sell the products or services in the open market. In general, under the entrepreneur support model, they support small scale entrepreneurs or self-help groups with small scale financial facility. The nobility of micro-finance movement can be brought under this model. Their self-sustainability depends upon the services that they sell to their clients.

**Market intermediary model:** Its mission focuses on facilitating clients with financial security by helping them to develop or sell the products that the clients produce in a high rate market. They purchase the client-made products or opts for them on consignment basis and sell them in an open market. Ebay ([www.ebay.com](http://www.ebay.com)) is an example of a market intermediary model. They work as middle men, who conceive little margins over the purchase in the open market. The middlemen or their venture provide branding/label to the indigenous or these small scale enterprises and allow them to sell them for better profits.

**Employment model:** As discussed, one of the prime tasks of an entrepreneur is to generate employment opportunities. In case of entrepreneurs, they just provide employment for those who have better qualifications and in case of social entrepreneurs, those who are in drastic need will be facilitated with employment. Initiation under this model has a unique feature that provides employment opportunities and job training to the deprived such as disabled, homeless, at-risk

youth, etc. Creating employment opportunity for the clients is their objective. The financial stability would be obtained by the sales of their products or services. Those who are employed will be used to produce goods that will be sold in the open market through which the finances are obtained for the venture to run successfully.

**Fee-for-service model:** The fee for services model sells their services to the clients. The services are charged under this model. Fees charged for the services would be used to meet the expenses of the venture under this model. The income would be used only for the cost recovery. The services would be sold at the minimal prices. This type of social entrepreneurs can be located in the membership organisations and trade associations, schools, museums, hospitals, and clinics.

**Low Income Client Model:** This model provides an opportunity to the poor who cannot afford the real time markets in order to meet their needs. Hence, low income client model is meant to produce cheap goods to the low income clients. Aravind Eye care, which has been discussed in the mission related social enterprise exactly fits in to the low income Client model. Even Barefoot solar systems also fall under this initiation. Instead of paying \$ 10 for kerosene in a black market to light their houses, the Barefoot approach provides solar electricity with \$ 2.5. today, many social enterprises are aiming to locate themselves in the low income Client model in order to fall under triple bottom line approach.

**Cooperative model:** The cooperative members in the group or the organisation are the direct beneficiaries of the cooperative model. Self-help groups and Cooperatives in India are clear examples which fall under this typology. The rural or poor people form as a group and secure assistance (in any kind) from either government or donors in order to sustain themselves. They operate business in order to sustain their model. Through fruitful work, they then repay whatever they borrowed from the external sources. That's how the cooperative movement in India has succeeded through ensuring the participation of the deprived sections.

**Market Linkage Model :** Under this initiation, they link clients with the markets. The relationship and bondage is made between these two. *Tilonia Friends* works to link the handicrafts, leather items, and weavers products with the markets abroad

through its online portal ([www.tilonia.com](http://www.tilonia.com)). These weavers, artisans and leather workers earlier never had an opportunity to retail their products in the open market. Due to this initiation of Tilonia friends, today the buyers could directly purchase the products using the website from anywhere in the world.

**Organisational support model:** This helps to bring foundations like *Ashoka* under the realm of the social enterprise. They do sell some of their products in open market and with the money that they earn, they support the social entrepreneurs to realise their objectives. All the social enterprises fall in any one of the eight models discussed above. These models are classified after observing several social enterprises across the globe.

The first and foremost activity that any aspiring entrepreneur or social entrepreneur should carry out is *dreaming*. As already mentioned, social entrepreneurs are a separate set of human beings who have unique skills of achieving their dreams. Dreaming might be an easiest task that anyone can have, but realising the dreams are the toughest task that needs a lot of exercise. The social entrepreneurs never look back while doing those exercises in order to achieve their dreams. Committing mistakes in an entrepreneurial realm is highly acceptable, as it teaches many lessons to the emerging entrepreneurs. That's the reason more mistakes that you commit, more lessons you learn, more experience you gain and thus you would be eligible to the more success rate in the future as the lessons that you have learned from the failure would never asks you to commit the same mistakes that you have committed in the past. Age is not at all a hindrance to become a social entrepreneur. Some might become entrepreneurs at the age of 14 and some may become at the age of 60 years. Risks are common, which doesn't differ with the age factor. A social entrepreneur who enters into the realm in his 60s must try to commit fewer mistakes in the view of the time constraint, whereas a young social entrepreneur will be having a lot of time in the future, so committing mistakes would never deter him to try newer ways in the social innovation.

Social entrepreneurship is an objective which is open for the for-profits to transcend to hybrid mode in order to come out of the tough competition that the increased non-profits have created for the funding available for the charities. Sometimes, a socially

viable business can be entrepreneurial in the first instance in order to strengthen itself and then take u-turn in order to emerge as a social enterprise like Rountree and Cadbury confectionary companies in Britain which have poured efforts to uplift their employee housing, health and education. An NGO, over a period of time, can become a social enterprise.

Though the theoretical aspects of social entrepreneurship offers a basic understanding of the new concept, still there will be several lacunas that one might express, about the validity of the concept or the possibilities that could clinch in the social environments from diversified geographical backgrounds. In order to avoid such lacunas, some of the practical ventures that have made the differences in terms of transforming societies are discussed in the next section.

## Section II

### **Social Entrepreneurs in the Contemporary Context**

Across the globe, there are several hundreds of social entrepreneurs rendering their services to eradicate poverty related deprivations. In the initial stage of any social venture, the founder has to undergo a lot of difficulties in order to mainstream the venture. There is a lack of social networking of the social entrepreneurs in the earlier days of the venture. It is due to the lack of organisational support to bring all of them from diversified backgrounds on to a single dais so that they discuss what they need to do more effectively in order to scale down their initiations. After all, these social leaders are also human beings, they also need many forms of support in order to effectively carry out the work that he/she intended to do.

Though they are entrepreneurial, innovative and stand above the rest of the human beings, still they need many typologies in order to stand on their own in the initial stages. To overcome the lacuna, *Ashoka* (1980) was founded in order to support the social entrepreneurs. And then Skoll Foundation (1999), Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship (1988), Centre for Advancement of Social Entrepreneurship, Lex Mundi (1989), University Network for Social Entrepreneurship (2005), Social

Enterprise Knowledge Network (2001), Social Enterprise Coalition (2010), Social enterprise alliance (2008), Echoing Green (1987), LEAD India (1999), UnLtd India (2000) are some organisations which support the cause of social entrepreneurship. They finance, support, mentor and network the selected social entrepreneurs/enterprises.

There are social entrepreneurs spread across the globe working on all kinds of basic issues that can tackle the needs of the poorer communities. For example, people like Anshu Gupta works to provide clothing facilities to the street people in India, Big Issue in UK and Street News in US offers substantial employment to the homeless in order to support their needs. Landless labourers have been provided with employment in the form of Lunch box carriers in Mumbai (Dabbawala), whereas poor people have been provided with good health facilities by Aravind Eye Care in India. Women empowerment is also the base for several organisations including Noble Prize winning Grameen Bank in Bangladesh which has been replicated by several countries in the world and Lijjat Papad, based on Mumbai, whose main task is to provide employment for those women who are in need. There are social entrepreneur initiatives across the globe in almost all the aspects. What the rest of the world needs is to replicate the initiations carried out by those innovative leaders. What lacks here is the mentoring in a proper way and prior communication about the works that are imitated by a social entrepreneur somewhere in the world.

There are several organisations extensively formed to support social entrepreneurs at the global level. Some organisations may support social entrepreneurs since their inception. This support includes monetary alone and some may support only networking and some may fund while the initiation proven itself as a successful venture and the rest may provide all of them together. The guiding agencies follow their own norms and standards to choose/select the social entrepreneurs whom they should support. Apart from them, there are several national and local level social entrepreneurial competitions that are being conducted in order to support/fund in the initial stage to transform the idea in to an action form. As we have already discussed, the importance of notion at the theoretical level, let us now discuss the organisations/foundations that supports the innovative ideas at the practical level.



### **Ashoka International**

The whole idea of ‘supporting social entrepreneurship’ must be credited to *Ashoka, Innovators for the Public*. *Ashoka* is the first organisation that was started to support social entrepreneurs across the globe. *Ashoka* was started way back in 1980 in Washington DC, USA. So far, *Ashoka* has identified around 2000 social entrepreneurs from every part of the globe from areas like civic engagement, economic development, environment, health, human rights and learning/education. They not only select social entrepreneurs, but also people who have excelled in their area, and those who possess the qualities of leadership in variety of areas. The list also includes those who have the possibilities to become progressive social entrepreneurs with their already existed and much impacted ventures. Once selected as *Ashoka* Fellows, they will be provided with living stipends, professional support, and access to a global network of peers in more than 60 countries ([www.Ashoka.org](http://www.Ashoka.org)). Very interestingly, the first *Ashoka* fellow in 1982 was from India.

*Ashoka* provides a local salary for three years to its fellows; its more important role is providing international recognition, moral support, and access to networks of mutual support across issues, sectors, and countries. *Ashoka*’s philosophy is a more broader one where it believes that each and every one on the earth is capable of doing miracles; thus it believes that everyone is a change maker (Grenier 2006). *Ashoka* follows set of criteria in order to select social entrepreneurs for its fellowship, these include

1. Systems-Changing new idea: one who qualifies to be as an *Ashoka* fellow must hold and practice an effective system changing new idea that has capacity to influence the social settings.
2. Potential for social impact: while choosing an idea, *Ashoka* considers the idea’s potential to create significant transformation in social settings.
3. Creativity: creativity is always highlighted while choosing an entrepreneur as an *Ashoka* fellow, because *Ashoka* believes that creative innovations can always help existing social settings to transform into inclusive ones.

4. Entrepreneurial quality: entrepreneurial ability is the basic characteristic of a social entrepreneur, and thus, *Ashoka* always keeps in mind that without making own finances, any venture couldn't be termed as an enterprise.
5. Ethical Fiber: In order to bring about structural changes in the existing social fabric, social entrepreneurs may need to convince many people to alter their behaviour and become more helpful to the social entrepreneur.

The New York Times claims that "[*Ashoka*] seeks to catalyse the citizen sector by adopting the venture capitalist approach. The idea is to search for budding innovators, to supply them with seed money and to connect them in a global Fellowship" (The New York Times quoted in *Ashoka* 2007: 2). *Ashoka* claims that those who are elected so far as *Ashoka* fellows have brought tremendous changes in the systems where they live. *Ashoka* has found that supporting young social entrepreneurs would yield a lot of results as the young would be having a lot of time to work with their mission, compared to the aged. Hence, *Ashoka* youth venture programme has been created.

A continuous doubt and worth marking question arises whenever we are speaking about social entrepreneurship, i.e., what happens to the enterprise when the social entrepreneur is no more with the venture. The same question was posed to *Ashoka fellows*. In response 43 per cent of *them* made it clear that organisation or initiation or enterprise would continue even in their absence. This is possible with supporting or enabling others in the decision making of the enterprise. A total 63 per cent fellows have maintained relationships with three or more sectors among Government, media, business, academic and citizen sectors (*Ashoka* 2010). "*Ashoka* gave life to our organization. We were struggling between life and death. *Ashoka* is encouraging and helping me to identify my strengths and to connect to related organizations. It has guided us to take part in different competitions which are relevant to our work", Lucky Chetri, a Nepal *Ashoka* fellow described how the mentoring of *Ashoka* has helped him to strengthen himself in the field when his enterprise was struggling to create a base (*Ashoka* 2010: 30).

### **Skoll Foundation**

The Skoll Foundation was started in 1999 to pursue the vision of a sustainable, peaceful and prosperous world. It is based in California, USA. They support social ventures in order to go for “continuation, replication or extension of programs that have proved successful in addressing a broad array of critical social issues” ([www.skollfoundation.org](http://www.skollfoundation.org)). The areas that are covered by the foundation include the areas which must be covered by the leaders in order to bring social inclusion in deprived communities, i.e., human rights, health, institutional responsibility, peace and security, environmental sustainability, economic and social equity. The Skoll Foundation also manages Skoll Centre for Social Entrepreneurship at Said Business School, Oxford University. Since 2004, the foundation is also managing Skoll World Forum on Social Entrepreneurship where famous social entrepreneurs gather and discuss their social ventures. The main objective of this forum is to unite all the social entrepreneurs from across the globe to carry on collaborative activities for a better understanding of social entrepreneurship.

### **Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship**

Schwab Foundation is the base for the social innovations that have been trying to address the problems related to ecological, social issues under the realm of social entrepreneurship. Schwab Foundation is based on Switzerland. Identifying 20-30 social entrepreneurs every year from the pool of thousands of applications that it receives from all parts of the globe is the prioritised task that the foundation carries out. At present, the Schwab Foundation holds more than 150 fellows to whom “The Foundation fosters the peer-to-peer exchange of the social entrepreneurs and supports the replication of their methodologies among each other” (<http://www.schwabfound.org/sf/AboutUs/Whatdowedo/index.htm> accessed 18/04/2009). Regional and global meetings are being conducted by the Schwab Foundation in order to network the fellows. This provides an opportunity to all the social entrepreneurs to connect with corporate, political, academic, media and other leaders. This would also help them to generate solutions to the unsolvable problems through partnerships. The Schwab Foundation, as other foundations, focuses much on youth ventures and their attributions for the social change. It works with the forum of

young global leaders. Apart from all above, it also cooperates with universities such as Harvard, Stanford and INSEAD Business School to provide scholarships to the best executive educational courses in the field of social entrepreneurship (*ibid*).

### **Social Entrepreneurship in Global Context**

There has been an unprecedented wave of growth in social entrepreneurship globally over the last ten years (Bornstein 2004, Harding and Cowling 2004). From drug treatment projects in India to sexual health in Vietnam, environmental protection in China to job creation in US cities, almost all the needful areas are covered by the social entrepreneurs (Mulgan 2006). With the efforts that are put in by organisations like *Ashoka* and *Skoll* Foundation in support of social entrepreneurs across the globe, importance of these firms has been widespread and the activities of these firms are well received. In this direction, all the indigenous talents are searching for some other forms of support in order to establish their talents for successful transformation of the societies. There are quite a number of very successful interesting social enterprises spread across the globe, some of which are discussed below.

### **Initiatives**

#### **Grameen Bank**

*Grameen Bank* (Bangladesh) has earned enormous popularity due to its Nobel Peace Prize winning efforts. From the very beginning, the vision of Muhammad Yunus, founder of Grameen Bank (GB) was to help the poor to help themselves (Yunus and Jolis 1998), a vision that has kept him active, constantly searching for new ways to alleviate poverty has been yielded tremendous results. The objective of the Grameen Bank is to bring financial services to the poor-women and the poorest in particular – in order to help them fight poverty by establishing profitable business (Yunus 2004).

Muhammad Yunus, a Professor who teaches Economics at Chittagong University in Bangladesh, had visited a village under the field trip initiation to help his students to get to know the problems that were faced by rural Bangladesh at the grassroots level. During the trip, the professor came to know about the sorrows and pains that the local women were struggling with. Small business such as making chairs out of bamboo or

selling vegetables were the professions that the women use to carry out in order to earn their bread. Due to the poor access to regular loans, women had to depend on money lenders and pay exorbitant interest rates in order to get small amount of money to buy raw materials like bamboo. Apart from the high interest rate, the chairs they produced had to be given to the money lenders at the cheapest price which was well below market rates (Anne and Cagna 2009).

He finally identified that, total 42 women have caught into this vicious circle in the village and they need \$27 to come out of this money lender vicious circle and to start their own business (Mainash, *et al.* 2004). Unlike all other researchers who go to the field and teach the experiences to their students, Muhammad Yunus thought differently and wanted to extend loans to those poor women at a reasonable rate of interest. That's how the *Grammeen* Bank has taken an informal start-up in the Jobra village of Bangladesh.

Even single woman has not failed to repay the amount, which subsequently encouraged the professor to replicate the same approach elsewhere. This led to the establishment of Grameen Bank, which was dedicated to the poorest members of the society. As of 2004, Grameen Bank's micro-credit operation has made a cumulative loan disbursement of \$4.2 billion through 1,200 branches in Bangladesh. In 2004, Grameen Bank has 3.5 million borrowers, 95 per cent of them are women. The repayment rate is around a stunning 98 per cent (Yunus 2004). Surprisingly, the bank since 1995 has not been accepting any funding or donations from overseas sources, and operations have been run by the members themselves.

### **Foundation Paraguaya**

*Foundation Paraguaya* (Paraguay) is a social enterprise located in Latin America. From the year 1985, when the Fundaction was started, it has been working in the areas related to micro finance, youth entrepreneurship and rural high schools. In Latin America, almost, one in every three people lives on less than \$2 per day. Foundation Paraguaya has become a pioneer in a new kind of sustainable agricultural education, a model which provides 100 per cent employability to poor rural youth through a market-based curriculum in free, high quality, 100 per cent financially self-sufficient

schools (<http://www.skollfoundation.org/tag/fundacion-paraguay/> accessed 14/02/2010).

### **The Big Issue**

*The Big Issue* is an entertainment based weekly magazine. It was started in 1991 in London due to the increased rough sleepers on the streets. The magazine helps the homeless people to help themselves. Initiation of *Big Issue* has seen the light with the inspiration of Street News of United States, which is a daily newspaper sold by the homeless people. The magazine is prepared and published by professional journalists, whereas it is sold by homeless poor people based in eight countries, i.e., United Kingdom, Australia, Japan, South Africa, Namibia, Kenya and Malawi. *The Big Issue* Foundation links the homeless people with the magazine so that they work as sales representatives where they earn half of the total amount that the customers pay. The organisation is divided into two entities, one is the company which produces the goods (the magazine) and second is the registered foundation which identifies the homeless and provides them the work. The venture presently supports 2900 homeless households in terms of providing employment. The magazine has 670,000 readers ([www.bigissue.com](http://www.bigissue.com)). *The Big Issue* not only generates employment, but also income which has its roots in other dimensions of social life. The sellers (homeless) are not directly employed by *The Big Issue*, just they have been hired as ‘sellers’ who must undergo a rigorous induction. In doing so, the *Big Issue* has seen as one of the best social enterprises in the world. “I have been selling *The Big Issue* for four years. I approached *The Big Issue* after six years of sleeping rough and relying on begging. Selling The Issue is helping regain my confidence. I don’t beg anymore. And it just makes worth getting up in the morning” a seller of *The Big Issue* magazine mentions ([www.bigissue.com/Achievements\\_39.php](http://www.bigissue.com/Achievements_39.php)).

Apart from these few organisations discussed here, there are several 100s of social enterprises helping the marginalised in terms of providing employment through uplifting the capabilities and at the same time, providing goods to the deprived at cheaper rates. Now let us see how these social enterprises works in the Indian context.

### **Social Entrepreneurship in the Indian Context**

India is well known for its incredible social entrepreneurs in almost every area. Especially Indian rural sector has been considered to be one of the crucial hot spots for the emerging social enterprises. Thousands of innovations can be traced in Indian villages; so far they might not have been captured by the outer world. With a little mentoring, miracles can be brought out of these innovations. In the modern era, India is believed to be one of the fertile arenas for social entrepreneurship. Having some of the most influential and intellectual brains in the world, Indian society has seen a lot of efforts from the enterprise sector in the recent past.

In fact, historically India has experienced mixed responses from the corporate sector, it has witnessed various entrepreneurs investing in the fields of education, health for instance Jamshedji Jeejiboy, Jemshedji Tata, and Premchand etc. They didn't simply act as entrepreneurs but also showed their concern in social mission up to some extent. However, except some initiations by Tatas and Birlas such as Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR) and Birla Institute of Technology and Sciences (BITS), there were a lot of critics on the initiatives taken by the entrepreneurs by claiming that all the initiations were driven by selfish interests (Chand 2009).

After identifying entrepreneurship/social entrepreneurship as driving forces for the development in both businesses as well as social sector, the Govt. of India started promoting them at both legislative and executive levels. It has started fostering entrepreneurship in terms of creating Entrepreneurship Development Cells (EDC) to “Develop institutional mechanism to create entrepreneurial culture in academic institutions to foster growth of innovation and entrepreneurship amongst the faculty and students” (IEDC 2009). Around 38 EDCs are created by various universities and colleges across the nation. The objectives of EDCs include i) To act as an institutional mechanism for providing various services including information on all aspects of enterprise building to budding science and technology entrepreneurs; ii) To create entrepreneurial culture in the Parent Institution and other institutions in the region and to promote the objectives of the National Science and Technology Entrepreneurship Development Board, including programmes related to women and weaker sections of the society; iii) To inculcate a culture of innovation driven

entrepreneurship through student projects; iv) To catalyse and promote development of Science and Technology knowledge-based enterprises and promote employment opportunities in the innovative areas; and v) To respond effectively to the emerging challenges and opportunities both at national and international level relating to small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and micro enterprises. Altogether, EDCs are expected to foster vibrant academic and non-academic societies where entrepreneurship is seen as a divine.

Under the initiation of awakening entrepreneurial skills among Indian youth Jagriti Sewa Sansthan, a Mumbai based NGO, with the support of the Tata Groups, has been conducting a rail yatra (train journey) throughout India. For this purpose, the organisers select around 450 youngsters from across the nation, who have already showed their capabilities of doing some good work for the society. The main intention behind this yatra is to provide a chance to these youngsters to interact with various unsung heroes of the nation who have attributed to social change.

### **Initiatives**

#### **Dabbawala System**

*Dabbawala* (Box-Carrier) is a lunch box carrying system in Mumbai, initiated in 1890, whose primary task is collecting fresh cooked food (lunch) in boxes from the residences of the employees, delivering it to their respective workplaces and returning back the empty boxes to their respective residencies.

The main mission of Dabbawala system is to bring social change in the then existing system. In those days, employees working in various organisations/ companies had to go to various hotels/mess for the lunch. Due to the hotel food, the health condition of many employees had worsened. After observing the whole *lacuna*, Mr. Mahadeo Havaji Bachche, the founder of Dabbawala, initiated the present system with the notion of 'homely food is good for health'. This social entrepreneur system emerged because there was a social cause (Harding 2002).

Presently, a total 5,000 *dabbawalas* of the system serve to 200,000 employees daily, using several transport systems. The uniqueness of the system basically holds non-



strike policy since 116 years and without a single mistake for 600,000 lunch boxes in its delivery. Most of the Dabbawalas are uneducated and hail from Maharashtra's rural areas. When the scholar asked Mr. Manish Tripathi, honorary director of the Dabbawalas regarding the secret behind the success of the system, he responded that it is only because of their illiterate employees, their honesty and enormous cooperation (*ibid*).

### **Shri Mahila Gram Udyog Lijjat Papad**

*Shri Mahila Gram Udyog Lijjat Papad*, well known as Lijjat Papad, is a Mumbai based Papad Production Company, started in 1959. It strives to uphold women empowerment and self-reliability. As women are considered well suited to cooking activities in India, they started this organisation with the same for their sustainable livelihoods. The organisation started with seven women having per day Rs.80 turnover.

Now, there are 40,000 women working with the Lijjat Papad. Presently, it has achieved sales over Rs.300 crores, including Rs. 12 crores of exports. Smt. Jyothi K. Naik, President Lijjat Papad specifies that Lijjat Papad is a clear example for an entrepreneur led development which basically supports women empowerment. While answering a question raised by the scholar Smt. Naik responded “Though there are so many papad companies in the market, there is no competition to Lijjat Papad because of our belief in the core values of honesty, service and industriousness”. Self-confidence throughout the discussion showed her passion towards the mission as any social entrepreneur deserves.

### **Aravind Eye Care**

Another initiative, Pondicherry's Aravind Eye Care has become one of the learning experiences to these future entrepreneurs as good health has been seen as vital for the sustenance of the individual. Recognising the fact in 1960s that government alone cannot provide facilities to blind people, this proper social need has given a way to the establishment of Aravind Eye Care. Minimum fee structure is being introduced for the self-sustainability of the organisation and long run viability. Aravind Eye Care System, today, is one of the largest and most productive eye care facilities in the world. Though corporate treatment today has become out of reach for the poor, still

the poor are happy to get into the Aravind because Aravind has brought world class facilities to the poor at affordable costs.

*Goonj* (New Delhi), yet another initiative founded by Anshu Gupta in 1998. Making waste management is a real time achievement through helping the deprived sections with the waste of the other sections. Goonj is a social enterprise which basically collects waste clothes from across the country, further recycles them and provides clothing and sanitary napkins to the most deprived sections. Anshu Gupta the founder of Goonj believes that the biggest problem women face in India is not dowry or bride burnings, but lack of proper sanitary napkins, which fails to ensure proper health conditions to women. Goonj is presently operating in over 19 Indian states, mostly maintained by the youngsters who have just finished their college education.

The initiations are not limited to any single aspect, as we have already discussed both area based and issue based social entrepreneurs in the context of confidence building in business and social issues respectively as the way to foster the interests of the respective sections. As governments are keen in the entrepreneurial ventures they must also treat social entrepreneurship as a global phenomenon which can reduce the disparities among the people. Hence issues like mentoring, replication, scalability must be provided to those who are interested in the areas related to the social entrepreneurship.

### **Summing Up**

Now it is clear that social entrepreneurship is a successful concept that not only has theoretical strength, but also has lot of sanctity on practical lines. Thus, promoting social entrepreneurship always needs to be the objective of the both civil society and governments. The exclusions that are predominant in deciding the lifestyle of the people have been handled very carefully within the social entrepreneurial approach which intends to bring about social inclusion on a larger scale. Thus, both the sections discussed in this chapter have delivered fruitful deliberations as far as social entrepreneurship theory and practice are concerned.

Next chapter onwards the study gets involved with the field level data, collected from Barefoot College, Tilonia, a rural social enterprise in Rajasthan. Next chapter

discusses about the profiles of Rajasthan, Ajmer, Kishangarh, Tilonia and Barefoot College.

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## CHAPTER - IV

### **BAREFOOT COLLEGE - A PROFILE**

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So far, earlier chapters have offered glimpses of the theoretical framework of various concepts associated with the present study. In order to understand implications of the concept of social entrepreneurship and its attribution of social inclusivity, the present study has selected Barefoot College (BC), a rural social enterprise, located in rural Rajasthan for case study. In-depth interviews were conducted and information was collected to study the objectives discussed in the first chapter. The objectives of the chapter include a) to study the philosophy of the Barefoot College, b) to explore the history of the Barefoot College and the transformation that it has undergone, c) to see the administrative set up of the college, and d) to understand the whole leadership patterns under Barefoot approach. In addition, the chapter also tries to offer a clear understanding of the profiles of the selected area. In addition, an attempt has been made to highlight the background and basic facilities available and nature of total arena of the state of Rajasthan, Ajmer district, Kishangarh sub-District, Tilonia village, and finally Barefoot College.

Barefoot College is located in Tilonia village in Ajmer district of Rajasthan. Tilonia is a village situated 25 km away from Kishangarh near Ajmer; and 7 km off the Jaipur-Ajmer highway and 400 km from Delhi. Tilonia is rather known for Barefoot College which primarily works for the poor and has been striving for their inclusion in society for the last four decades. Before discussing about Tilonia and Barefoot College, let us have a clear understanding about Rajasthan, the state known for its backwardness in terms of human development index on the one hand, and its rich cultures on the other.

The present state of Rajasthan was formed on 30th March, 1949, after the Rajput princely states were merged into the Republic of India. The capital city of Rajasthan is Jaipur. Rajasthan is geographically the largest state in the Republic of India. It is located in the north-western part of the Indian subcontinent. Geographically, in the west of Rajasthan is Pakistan, Gujarat in the Southwest, Madhya Pradesh in the South, Uttar Pradesh and Haryana in the North East and Punjab in the North.

The Indus Valley Civilization was spread in some parts of the present Rajasthan. Rajputs, Yadavas, Jats, Bhills, Gujjars, Meenas, Bishnois and some other tribes are the main architecture of present day Rajasthan (Itihas1992). Almost sixty per cent of Rajasthan's land is drought prone.

### **Population**

As indicated by 2001 census, population of Rajasthan is 5,65,07,188; out of which 1,32,14,375 resides in urban areas, whereas 4,32,92,813 are in the rural areas. According to this figures, 3/4<sup>th</sup> of the population lives in rural Rajasthan. The total Scheduled Caste population is 96,94,462, out of which 77,39,926 and 19,54,536 live in rural and urban areas respectively. However, the number of Scheduled Tribes in the state is 70,97,706. There are 921 women for every 1000 men which is lower than the India's average of 933. Density of population (per sq. Km.) is 165, as against India's 325. According to the data of 2007-08 available with the government of Rajasthan, gross irrigated area is 80,88,455 hectares, of which 38,20,898 hectares are used for food grains; 25,75,439 hectares are for oil seeds; 3,53,821 hectares for cotton and 10,035 hectares are used for sugarcane production (Source: Census of India from <http://censusindia.gov.in>).

The total number of livestock available in Rajasthan was 54.35 million in 2000. The number of cooperative societies is 26,304 and total number of membership in these cooperative societies is 97,38,819. The total length of roads is 1,82,460 kms. There are 1,19,790 educational institutions and the literacy rate of Rajasthan is about 60 per cent, in which 75.70 males and 43.85 are females (in 1981, it was only 45 per cent among males and 15 per cent among females). It leaves out 18.15 million Rajasthanis from the education sector. It indicates that more than half of the Rajasthani women are illiterates. The rural literacy rate is 55.34 per cent of which 72.16 are men and 37.33 are women. Women literacy rate is so less in the villages where only one out of three attends school. In the urban areas, it is two for each three girls. The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes literacy have increased several folds over the years despite the existence of age-old practices such as untouchability and social isolation. According to NSS data, the school enrolment ratio of the children belonging to these



deprived sections has increased, especially in the case of girls. It has increased to 41 per cent in 1995-96 from a meager 14 per cent in 1986-87; whereas it is around twofold increase in case of the girls: 25 to 42 per cent. Like any other place in India, in Rajasthan also, not all registered students reach VIII standard. Only 60 per cent out of the total enrolled students reach VIII standard. The cluster of data clearly points out that there is a meager improvement in the literacy rate, but still there is a lot to be done in order to provide secure employment which can speak about social inclusion as a whole (*Ibid*).

“People have devised alternative additional strategies (with and outside agriculture) to sustain their livelihood since agriculture yields little in the face of repeated droughts” (Institute of Development Studies 2008). It has asked the state to implement several non-agriculture related livelihood policies through which the poor can be benefited. Apart from government’s initiatives, various well known individuals and organisations have also started several activities in order to uplift traditional skills among the masses towards their overall upliftment. Rajasthan has Entrepreneurship and Management Institute in Jaipur to equips the aspirant entrepreneurs into the market world with entrepreneurial skills.

It is significantly noted that, though, the state of Rajasthan has been listed as a backward state, people from rural Rajasthan consume the highest calories of food compared to their counterparts in any other major Indian state. Apart from that, in 2006, it is found that one out of each three women have been under the Body Mass Index (BMI is defined as individuals body weight divided by the square of his/her height). Forty four per cent of children below three years are reported to be underweight. In spite of highest calories of food consumption, these two underdevelopments have been registered. Child marriages are still predominant in rural areas of Rajasthan.

### **Basic Amenities**

According to 2008-09 statistics, in Rajasthan, there are 127 hospitals. And, there are 367 community health centres and 199 dispensaries. Out of the total 1,540 primary education centres, 1503 are located in rural areas whereas 37 are located in urban areas. There are 10,951 health sub centres in Rajasthan. Out of these,

Ayurvedic/Unani/Homeopathic and Prakritik institutions are 3,969. According to the available statistics of 2009-10, for every doctor there are 7,582 persons and there is a hospital bed for every 1,288 persons. The total numbers of villages which avail the safe water supply schemes are 39,739. There are 2,334 telephone exchanges, while the total numbers of post office is 10,136 of which 9,643 are located in rural areas and 784 in urban areas (Census of India *Op Cit.*)

### **Political and Administrative Structures**

The state is divided into 32 districts. There are 25 parliamentary constituencies and 200 assembly constituencies. The entire geographical arena has been divided into 241 *tehsils* (local administrative division), 231 *Panchayat Samities* (Local government administrative unit), 9,184 village *panchayats* and 183 municipalities. Since its creation as a state, Indian National Congress (INC) and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) have been playing a predominant role in the political arena of the state. The present INC government, headed by Ashok Gehlot, was formed in December 2008. Police administration of the state covers 39 police districts and there are 711 police stations, 172 circles and 788 out-posts. In addition, there are also 12 women police stations (Rajasthan Info line 2010).

### **Language and Religion**

The official language of Rajasthan is Hindi. Majority of Rajasthanis speak Hindi. Marwari is the other language that people often use. Urdu, Punjabi, Sindhi, Gujarati, Bhili/Bhilodi and Jaipuri are other important languages of the state (Mishra 2007). Eighty nine per cent of the total population are Hindus; eight per cent are Muslims and the remaining three per cent are made up of Christians, Sikhs and Jains.

### **Economy**

The economy is based on agriculture. Animal husbandry is another key are of income generation. Monsoon crops are produced in the dry western region, whereas winter crops are produced in the eastern belt, where there is heavy rainfall. Tourism is

another income generating source of the state. There are wide economic disparities among the regions in the state.

Rajasthan ranks fairly low in the human development index among the Indian states. Though, starting from 1990s the state has seen a lot of improvement in the human development index, the state has to do lot more to catch up with the other states of India. HDI of Rajasthan has developed from 0.3983 in 1991 to 0.5709 in 2001. It has brought Rajasthan to 9<sup>th</sup> position from 11<sup>th</sup> position among the Indian states (Planning Department, Government of Rajasthan u.d.). Developmental aspect, especially the use of technology in the agricultural sector, has made it possible to improve the HDI rankings of the state. Expansion of irrigated area with the use of technologies as well as increased availability of both ground water and surface water are also a value additions to the whole scenario. It is quite significant to observe that the gross irrigated area has increased from 37 lakh hectares in 1980 to 67 lakh hectares in 1996. As a whole, the state of Rajasthan has been witnessing a steady increase in its financial status which helps the government to plan several social welfare policies for the welfare of the deprived and needy.

With this background, it is clear that with various policies and programmes, the state of Rajasthan is witnessing steady development in major fields such as agriculture and education. It is also observed that basic amenities have been provided in several parts of the state. Now let us see about the background of Ajmer district, where Barefoot College is located.

## **AJMER**

Barefoot College is located in the Ajmer district. Total population of the district, according to 2001 census, is 21,81,670 out of which 11,29,920 (51.79 per cent) are males and 10,51,750 (48.20 per cent) are females. Out of the total population, 13,06,994 (59.90 per cent) lives in rural areas, whereas 8,74,676 (40.09 per cent) live in urban areas. Ajmer district occupies the 10<sup>th</sup> position (with 0.677) in the overall HDI of 2009-10 in Rajasthan. Total area of the district is 8,481 Sq. Km. There are a total number of 1,038 villages and 276 village panchayats. This indicates that, on an average, there is one panchayat for every four villages in Ajmer district. As per the

2001 census, the infant mortality rate in the district is 76 for each 1000 births, which is 37 less when compared to 113 in 1991. Gender ratio is also on the rise when we look at the 2001 census. It was only 918 in 1991, but in 2001, it increased to 931. There is no improvement in the female work participation of 21 percent from 1991 to 2001 (Census of India *Op Cit.*).

The HDI in 1999 was just 0.581 and has grown in a course of the decade pretty reasonably. Total population of Ajmer district, according to 2001 census, is 21,81,670 of which about 59.91 percent of the population lives in rural areas and 40.09 in urban. Male and female population ratio is 51.79:48.21. Total population of Scheduled Castes is 17.71 per cent, whereas Scheduled Tribes is about 2.41 per cent. Population density per sq km of Ajmer district is 257. Literacy rate is 64.65 - 79 per cent in the case of males and 48 per cent in the case of females. The disparity is not found in the male literacy rate from rural to urban which is 72 and 89. According to 2001 census, 98 percent of rural villages in Ajmer have been electrified. Nearly all the villages have been provided pure drinking water. However, employment participation rate has decreased from 39.6 in 1991 to 39.27 in 2001 (Department of Economics and Statistics, Government of Rajasthan u.d.). Now let us discuss about the sub district of Kishangarh, where Barefoot College is located.

## **KISHANGARH**

Kishangarh is a sub district in Ajmer and Tilonia is a village in Kishangarh, where Barefoot College was established. Total population of Kishangarh is 3,34,984 of which 1,73,796 (51.88 per cent) are males and 1,61,188 (48.11 per cent) are females. Kishangarh sub district comprises of total 162 villages. Out of these 162 villages, four villages do not have primary school, whereas the remaining 158 villages have; 66 villages do not have middle schools and the remaining 92 villages have. There are five senior secondary schools in five different localities of the sub-district. Adult education is given priority through various policies. 98 adult literacy centres have been established in 63 villages as of now (Census of India *Op Cit.*).

As far as health facilities are concerned, there are three allopathic dispensaries in Kishangarh town and 21 other ayurvedic dispensaries in 21 villages. There are only

two maternity and child welfare centres in two villages; four health centres, eight primary health centres and forty three primary health sub centres in the sub district. In addition, 22 registered private medical practitioners are offering small and emergency medical services to the villagers. The data also show that all the 162 villages in the sub district have drinking water facility (Census of India *Op. Cit.*).

## **TILONIA**

Tilonia is a village in Ajmer district. Barefoot College is located in this village. It has an area of 1,476 hectares with 505 households. According to 2001 census, total population of Tilonia village is 3225, out of which 1636 are males and 1589 are females. There are 706 persons belonging to the Schedule Caste category, out of which 352 are males and 354 are females. The Scheduled Tribe population is very less in the village, i.e., six persons, five out of the total six STs are women. There are three primary schools, one middle school and one secondary school in the village. Since the village is small, senior secondary school and college could not be established. For college education, students from the village have to go to Kishangarh, a nearby town. Apart from these levels of educational institutions, Tilonia has an adult literacy centre through which adults, if interested, are provided basic education (Census of India *Op. Cit.*).

Power supply is available in almost all parts of the village. Each house has been well electrified. Electric supply for all purposes, including domestic and agricultural, is provided uninterrupted by the district and state officials. Newspapers and magazines are available in the village. Several households buy their own newspaper and Barefoot College buys some magazines which are placed in the Community library. Total irrigated area is 132.08, hectares whereas unirrigated land is 830.06 hectares (Census of India *Op. Cit.*).

Hospitals such as Allopathic, Unani, homeopathic, allopathic dispensary, ayurvedic dispensary, unani dispensary, homeopathic dispensary, maternity and child welfare centre, maternity home, welfare centre, health centre, primary health sub centre, family welfare centre, TB Clinic, nursing home, registered private medical practitioners are not available in Tilonia. However, despite not having all these above

mentioned facilities, Talonia has one community health worker who provides good health facilities to the village. Unlike many other Rajashani villages, Tilonia is blessed with drinking water through various means. Though tap water, tube well, river, canals and lakes are not available in the village, a consistent water supply has been provided through tanks, wells and hand pumps.

There is one post office, along with a telegraph office, located inside the Barefoot College campus. There are around 33 Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) land line customers in the village. Transport connectivity (through bus) of the village is provided with the nearby towns, i.e., Kishangarh, Jaipur and Ajmer. Tilonia is located seven kms away from Jaipur-Ajmer National Highway. There are roads, mostly mud roads, footpaths, connected to the village from the NH. The village is also well connected by train. There is a railway station in Tilonia. Since Tilonia is not a big town, not all trains halt in the village station. There are some shuttle services that are allowed to halt in the station, apart from the train no 9656A which runs from Jaipur to Ajmer; and 9655A from Ajmer to Jaipur. The nearest airport is Jaipur, which is just 90 kms away. Due to the presence of Barefoot College, the village also has a commercial bank, i.e., Union Bank of India (IFSC Code UBIN0536385). There is no cooperative commercial bank within the range of 10 Km. The nearest cooperative commercial bank is located in Kishangarh. However, there is an agricultural credit society in Tilonia.

### **Barefoot College - A Profile**

With this background, now let us get into the crux of the present research. As mentioned earlier the Barefoot College is located in rural Rajasthan and it has been chosen for the study. Barefoot College was formally registered as Social Work and Research Centre (SWRC) in February, 1971 in Tilonia. The college was established by educationalists from different parts of India in order to bring about aspects of social work in rural India, which, by and large, was in the tight grip of urban social workers. Initially, the main purpose of the college was to listen and learn. Especially during the 1970s, the college was interested only in professionals and farmers, between whom there can be better exchange of ideas and experience. That's the reason why, in the initial stage, it was a joint venture of both literates and illiterates.

Its emblem: one person holding a book and the other a plant reflects this initiative. Later, the whole discourse has been transformed as they started to study various issues throughout the process. It has helped them constantly to construct an enterprise that has provided a lot of choices for the deprived. In fact, the term Barefoot has evolved when Chinese leader, Mao Tse Tung had launched a programme to train farmers to become health workers and replace the doctors in some way. Having opted to take inspiration from such an experiment, Barefoot College has evolved with much more activities in a more sustainable way.

### **Origin of the Concept**

The whole concept of such initiative started when Bunker Roy<sup>1</sup>, a social entrepreneur, came to Tilonia to study the village and the villagers. He studied the basic social structure of the village, way of living and their share of contentment. Roy had attained an extern expensive educational system from the elitist schools in India. Despite having such an elite profile, he still decided to go and work with the villagers. When Roy first entered Tilonia, the questions that he faced were, “Are you running away from the police? Did you fail in your examinations? Didn't you manage to get a government job? Is there something wrong with you? Why are you here? Why have you come from city to this village?” (Roy & Harigan 2008). It shows that the villagers didn't expect an educated person to come to their village to serve them. There is a strong assumption that educated people do not usually go or would want to go back to the villages. Even the government officials who are appointed in the villages are not willing to go there. Most of the questions came from women, adolescents and the young who are migrated to the nearby towns for livelihood.

The youths from the village who have finished certain courses from some of the institutions from the nearby towns are usually not respected by the ‘job givers’ because of the general perception and most often a fact that these institutions lack ‘quality education and good infrastructure’. Hence, this situation imposes on these youth, a forced exclusion from the employment sector. Apart from that, Roy was frustrated with the so called ‘ideal activities’ of these paper experts who were the

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. (Sunjit) Bunker Roy is the founding director of the college. However he is more familiarly known as Bunker Roy.

cause of slums in the cities. We can also see the same trend in our contemporary world: when village youth migrate to bigger towns and cities and they could not get jobs, they would never want to go back to their villages because of the fear that the villagers and family members would not respect them. So, the whole situations push them to end their lives in slums where even the minimum facilities are not available.

Apart from that, uneducated parents in the villages do not want their children to inherit their traditional jobs as they do not guarantee a stable income. Therefore, they send their children to schools so that their children can work in private corporations or in government offices. A farmer never wants his son/daughter to become a farmer; same may also be replicated in almost all traditional works, except the politicians, civil servants and movie actors.

### **History**

The original name of the college was Social Work Research Centre (SWRC) and it dealt majorly with the poor and excluded people who did not have any formal degrees and diplomas. Later, the college was named as Barefoot College. As mentioned earlier, the term 'Barefoot' was derived from Barefoot doctors in China. There is a general observation that poor and illiterate voices are always ignored by urban paper qualified experts. Often villagers are not encouraged to speak on certain issues where they do not have any expertise because they don't have any degree and they haven't done any research. They do not own the right to speak. *Illiterate can't compete with the urban educated* is the mind-set that has been questioned by Barefoot approach. Barefoot College has learned several issues from illiterate locals who possess traditional knowledge. "After speaking to them, we have gained a lot of knowledge and realised that this knowledge should be utilised to ensure their inclusion in the mainstream. After series of discussions and debates with the villagers, we have established SWRC. People were encouraged to share their experiences, ideas and knowledge through which many of the villagers were motivated to take part in the college activities. Following SWRC's philosophy 'learning by doing', people come here, learn and become professionals such as computer engineers, hand pump engineers, solar engineers, architects, masons, and many such others. Poorest of the poor, illiterates without any paper qualifications have been trained and given



knowledge to employ themselves. That's the reason why it is called as Barefoot College. Without formal degrees, diploma or education, they gained knowledge through mutual learning" Bunker Roy elaborates. That is how the concept of Barefoot has evolved and successfully implemented since decades. All the excluded have been given space to enhance their capabilities and further secure their life with dignity.

### **Administrative Structure**

The college is headed by its founding director, Bunker Roy. As discussed earlier, presently the college is working and spreading awareness to the masses on/about some of the issues/areas such as solar energy, water, education, health care, crafts, livelihood, communication and women empowerment. Though, Bunker Roy heads the enterprise as a director, various sections are created to deal with the activities that they carry out. Each section is managed by its coordinator. Each section works to generate employment. All the sections are self-sustained and all of them are given full freedom to operate their activities. Coordinators are responsible for representing their sections in the core committee meetings. All these coordinators are members of the core committee and they take key decisions of the enterprise. These classifications of various sections and employments are made only for administrative purposes. Otherwise, in general, no hierarchies are followed. Everyone working in the enterprise is treated equally, irrespective of his/her job. The salaries are equally paid irrespective of their work. With this administrative background, let us discuss more about the founding director and what made him to think differently to start such an inspirable initiation way back in the 70s.

### **During transition**

"The urban-educated professionals had to go through a deschooling process because whatever they have studied in their university education system was conflicting with what was happening in the field. There was a feeling of getting into a process of understanding the inherent value of human beings and working with them" (Brien, *et al*; 1997). Between 1975 and 1979, the enterprise faced various crises including the founder educationalists leaving the campus due to the problems related to ideologies, as well as decision making.

In the initial stages, the paper qualified professionals from urban areas were given utmost priority and paid high salaries which had resulted in the creation of a gap between educated professionals hailing from cities and illiterates from the villages. Very often, the rural masses were not allowed to speak freely in a gathering where the paper qualified experts were present. Thus, the social enterprise decided: To leverage the positions of everyone in the enterprise as equal, irrespective of their qualifications and thus, decreased the salaries of the urban based experts, in order to balance the salaries. Adding to this, lack of infrastructural facilities in remote Rajasthan where the college is located has pushed the professionals to leave the college. Therefore the college is only left with farmers. In the initial days, following the paper qualified engineers, the enterprise solely involved itself in digging up of wells in search of water for five years, but found no water. Then the rural masses suggested that trapping of water would be more effective in the rainy season. That way, they could locate ground water bodies easily. In fact, it is one of the most successful programmes run by Barefoot College. This scenario helps Barefoot to decide on the action plan to be taken up. Making beneficiaries participate in the decision making process of the project would produce better results, because they are the people associated with the problem and they know the problems better than any other expert.

"We have looked at the problems that the poor face from their point of view and not from the point of view of a so-called expert looking from outside," Bunker Roy clarified. He elaborated further "We have come to the conclusion that by using their own knowledge, skills and practical wisdom, it is possible for them to solve their problems themselves." (Coles 2002: 42). Today, as a result, the college has ninety five per cent of its staff from rural Rajasthan.

In the initial stage, the enterprise made the villagers aware of social evils such as corruption of the local political leaders, which was raised in the State Legislative Assembly. Due to the unexpected exposure of the political leaders by the college, a huge difference of opinion had developed between Barefoot College and the government. In fact, Barefoot College was situated in its old campus by paying a nominal rent of Rs. 1/- pm to the government. Naturally the government was so angry with SWRC that it consistently asked the college to vacate the land. During such

harsh times, the visit of Robert McNamara, the then president of World Bank and former security adviser to the US President, to Barefoot College helped them to get global support of the social causes that they were endorsing. He spent and participated for two whole days with the poor villagers in all their activities. After the World Bank President's visit, the government was left without any option but to support the college. These kinds of extreme crises which they had undergone made them to be stronger in their aim and goal.

With this background, Barefoot has taken a transcendental approach in which the poor were given priority both in decision making and implementation. In general, Indian villages are classified based on several identities; Rajasthan villages do not hold any exceptions. Caste plays a very crucial role in these villages. Hence, Barefoot was in dilemma whether its aspirations with this cultural background would succeed or fail. For example, while searching for water they realised that the caste hierarchy would never allow any SC/ST to draw water from open wells. Thus, after identifying this lacuna, they have decided that the Barefoot College must work only on the lines of poverty. Hence, the policies were made to decide which all groups must be included in the target groups. The groups include marginal workers, landless peasants, marginal farmers, rural artisans, women, children, Scheduled Caste, and Scheduled Tribes (Brien 1997). That is how caste hierarchy, which is one of the cause and consequence of social exclusion in India, has been tackled.

So, the entire structure of the social enterprise of Barefoot College has been now geared to help those who are excluded and need some assistance to lead their life in a peaceful manner. The Barefoot approach, hence, started adopting a bottom-up structure. The main aim of the Barefoot is to assist or guide the poor to depend on themselves, rather than on urban paper qualified 'experts' for their development. So here, an 'outsider' is termed as one who holds a paper qualification from urban areas. An 'insider' is the one who doesn't hold any paper qualifications and who is not aware much about modern tools but has traditional skills or talent which he/she gets from his/her families, communities and societies. Further, Barefoot wants to be an institution which is owned by its beneficiaries; the stakeholders are asked to be more active and take part in the construction and in the development of the college. It promotes reverse migration from cities to villages which gives a positive value to the

whole notion of 'village', and which can negate the notion of 'dead village'. As a whole, Barefoot in this crisis has learned a lot of lessons. Bunker (1997) claims that the social enterprise has undergone a sea change due to the crisis that it had faced. These are

1. It is only when an organisation is challenged that it knows how strong or weak it is. The Barefoot College survived the challenge thrown by a member of the State Legislative Assembly who publicly stated that he would finish off the centre, but he could not succeed.
2. This enhanced the image of the organisation in the eyes of the poor peasants in the area. They, in fact, approached Barefoot College later, after the inquiry was over, and asked why the centre was working through intermediaries. Why did the Barefoot College not establish a direct relationship with them? The Barefoot College had proved that those having political power would think twice before challenging the college.
3. Changes of any kind come from conflict. In retrospect, this conflict helped the Barefoot College immensely in changing attitudes about their work. The target groups for the first time started coming spontaneously to the Barefoot College; the very people whom the Barefoot College wanted to work with and reach became its strongest supporters.
4. It strengthened the Barefoot College members as a group. As a result, the management style became more democratic; decisions that were taken before 1977-79 by the director are now been taken by a group.
5. Barefoot College's objectives were redefined; Barefoot College decided to work only with the poor in order to increase their level of awareness and make them self-reliant; development services and training were to be used only to accelerate awareness and bring about social changes.

6. Dependence of any skills in urban areas was reduced drastically and more importance was given to education and literacy and use of technical and human resources from the village itself.
7. Organising farmers and mobilising women's groups to fight for their rights in courts and other forums were stepped up.

### **Post Transition**

Now the target group of Barefoot Approach is: the poor, the impoverished, the economically and socially marginalised and the physically challenged who earn less than a \$ 1 per day. Its main aim is to empower them to acquire skills to earn two square meals a day. The situations in the social enterprise are made accessible to the very poor for whom the college is built. All activities are made poor friendly. Everyone sits, eats and works on the floor. They have clearly differentiated between market wage and working wage and prefers only working wage. They have developed a policy in which they are described to take home very less and serve better for the poor. Because poorer sections in the grassroots level, on whose name they have been working, do not have anything. The employees are provided with every facility. When a member of an employee's family gets ill, a doctor is available on the Barefoot campus; schools are made available; for higher studies Barefoot College funds them in terms of educational allowances. For those who stay on campus, a house, electricity and water are provided on nominal rent basis. "We are experiencing about how to be more dignified and happy without having more money. That's why I always feel that one has to be happy with whatever he/she holds, and finance never remains a topic for discussion. I have lots of faith in the Barefoot system, because I am one among those who have framed the system", Ratan Devi reiterates.

Barefoot's success was not an achievement achieved overnight. It took more than three decades to attain its present standing. This is an expected one. The ideology of Barefoot College, as mentioned by Roy & Hartigan (2008), has four key components i.e. alternative education, valuing traditional knowledge and skills, learning for self-reliance and dissemination. In order to pursue them, the college adopts: i) training the deprived sections especially illiterate youth, women on solar electrification of the

night schools and the remote villages; further they are also trained to repair and maintain them; ii) provision of safe drinking water with continuous water quality tests and locating the hand pumps in needy areas and further maintenance and repair by the barefoot hand pump mechanics; iii) training and employment generation of artisan related items; iv) educating the children through night schools and pre-primary schools in the villages; training the semi-literate youth to become teachers in these schools; v) women empowerment by allowing their presence in all the initiatives mentioned above, and to ensure their participation in the movements against social evils; vi) to transform technologies into a rural friendly mode; vii) to promote traditional communications including puppet shows to spread awareness in the villages in the areas related to social and environmental concern; and viii) provision of basic health facilities through community health workers.

To achieve the above, Barefoot College has so far trained Barefoot doctors, teachers, health workers, solar engineers, hand pump mechanics, accountants, designers, communicators and architects. All these positions are held by the local youth, women, deprived sections who are illiterates or semi-literates. The selection process of such youths, women are held in a simplistic way.

Barefoot college, which has been working for the inclusion of the excluded into the mainstream since four decades, is managed, controlled and owned by the poor. This is the only college in India owned by the excluded. Paper degrees, urban expertise are made inappropriate and further made holders of the same ineligible to join the college for training. The thrust areas that one must hold before entering into Barefoot College is “honesty, integrity, compassion, practical skills, creativity, adaptability, willingness to listen and learn, and ability to work with all sorts of people without discriminating” (Roy & Hartigan 2008). The college cultivates humans to exist as a ‘Barefoot winner’ who strives to improve not only his personal life, but also his/her community as a whole. The college doesn’t provide any paper degrees after the training, because it believes that paper qualification would allow one to travel to the nearby towns for employment which is a self defeating action of the college. And thus, the College never provides paper degrees in order to make sure that the trainees are working with their communities to improve their living style. In this regard, Chota Singh says, “Certificates are not needed. Whoever comes here, they come for employment which

is always available, provided that he/she falls within our target group. For those who are uneducated and deprived, certificate are anyways not useful. What they need is mere support to get two square meals a day". It certainly promotes reverse migration, which, today, most of the developing countries need.

In regard to the certificates, in modern society, everyone expects a certificate after the completion of any training. But people of Tilonia are entirely different and they merely argue on the futility of certificates to them. Bagchand argues, "Where individuals and communities matter, why do we need certificates? If you do not have any talent, certificates might be useful to you. When you are sure what you can do, no certificate is needed". Some others argue, "Certificates are necessary for those who want to go to the cities for employment. In our case, certificates may not be useful, I never thought of going anywhere. If at all I need to go somewhere, I must have a good education. I have just studied up to 5<sup>th</sup> class and I am now the in-charge of the whole section. Who would give me such an opportunity outside?" Badrilal shared his views.

Dorji responds that he does not need any certificate because Barefoot offers him a job not because he holds a certificate or talent, but because he was in need, and he is happy with Barefoot. Further, he states that he has learned several things in Barefoot College. He has also met ministers several times. Certificates are needed for those who work outside the village. He concludes by saying that they never bother about the certificates. Naru proclaims that certificates are needed in the outer world in order to sustain, but working under Barefoot, certificates never come as a matter of importance. He further avers, "We, the rural illiterates, have been respected here with a job, livelihood and work. If everyone on the earth could be given this kind of treatment, there would not be any hunger related death".

There is quite a lot to tell about certificates. The researcher was indeed surprised to know whether it is the college which has decided that the certificates should not be issued, or the people who work in the college decide not to go for it. The respondent, Satyanarayana has made it very clear by saying, "Why do we need certificates? Community recognition for work itself is a certificate. Even if the college wants to give us certificates, I don't need it."

They believe in Gandhi's saying that *the world has enough for every man's need but not for one man's greed*. Learning from failures and learning-by-doing are unimaginable phenomenon that these rural counterparts are experiencing in Barefoot College. Though it is a college, of course a typical one, there are no classrooms or lectures by experts or teachers; everyone present in the college is an expert, their philosophy is learning by doing. They are the teachers and they are the students. Significantly. Many of them are not even fifth class pass. The salaries are not much as well as not less. It is in accordance with Rajasthan Minimum Wage Act. Bunker Roy has got no exemption in this regard (more about the salary structure has been discussed in sixth chapter).

Taking risks, fails and then success are the unique experiences that the people staying on Barefoot campus have. This training and knowledge acquired over a period of time open up new avenues for the disadvantaged people. All the initiatives of the Barefoot College must be collectively accepted in the community meetings. In fact, to initiate the activity, it must be decided in the village level committee; and then the concern rural communities must endorse the action. Unilateral decisions are not encouraged. The village level committees are given full powers to administer day-to-day activities of the College, including the financial issues. Even they are given powers to decide to choose employees for different situations and demands.

### **Objectives of Barefoot Approach**

Barefoot College has adopted the following objectives:

- Provide sustainable solutions to improve the quality of life of the poor and rural communities.
- Reduce migration by generating employment within the villages.
- Provide vocational training to semi-literate and illiterate men and women, through the process of learning-by-doing.
- Reduce drudgery of rural women and girls by providing them access to education, vocational training, health care, etc.
- Empower rural women socially, economically and politically.
- Encourage community based, owned and managed initiatives.



- Demystify technologies and decentralise their uses to improve the quality of living of the villagers.
- Use and promote traditional knowledge and skills that have been passed on from one generation to another.

The above objectives highlight the intentions that an area based social entrepreneurship must foster. As we have discussed in the earlier chapter, advocacy of Barefoot has been divided into several sections that promise to empower or stand with the rural poor to sustain their upliftment. These sections are interdependent and support each other. For instance, the education section has been supported by the solar technologies via installing solar technologies in all the night schools and communication section has clear linkages with the women empowerment section.

### **Bunker Roy – The Founder**

Bunker Roy was born in 1945 in Burnpur in West Bengal, India. After having a very exclusive education, his parents expected him to take up a high-class job in any government or private enterprise. But when Mr. Roy took an active role in Bihar famine rehabilitation activities in post 1960s. His total behavioural aspects were transformed. He had seen people living in an extremely harsh conditions in rural areas and he realised that, it was not what he wanted to see. His participation in the post-famine family rehabilitation activities made him decide to work for these people and empower them to live a dignified lifestyle. Then, he had decided to live in the villages and do whatever he could in order to bring about the changes he had in his mind at that particular point of time.

When Roy informed his mother about his wish to go and stay in the villages of Rajasthan, she didn't talk to him for six months. She was horrified at the idea that her son has put forward, because, having given the most expensive and best education, she wanted her son to take up a reputed job instead of staying in a village. But Mr. Roy decided to take a different route after being greatly saddened and influenced by Bihar floods. After reaching Tilonia, he started unlearning whatever he had learnt during the school/college days, because he believed that it is only possible to

understand the knowledge and traditional skills of the rural poor when you start to believe in their habits. When he started listening to them, he felt that he had started learning for the first time in life. Here we should quote George Bernard Shaw's famous lines, "the reasonable man adapts himself to the world, whereas the unreasonable one persists in trying to adapt the world to himself" (Elkington 2008). Bunker Roy is one of such unreasonable person. Roy has been awarded Schwab Foundation Award. He was rated as one of the most influential 100 people of the world by TIME magazine in 2010. Bunker Roy is the source of inspiration for many young social entrepreneurs, not only in India, but also across the globe.

Bunker Roy has always been an inspiration to the workers in the college. Hence, he inspires them to go ahead in life. Kazzi Devi narrated about Bunker Roy, "He came to Kotadi, where I was working. He had come to visit Crèche School. It is located 7 km away from where we were residing. He had come there and asked me, Kazzi Bhai, could you prepare breakfast? I said, 'oh! I have cooked the breakfast', and he had walked along with us for seven km to see the Crèche School. In that mud road, he hurt his feet several times, his sandal was also damaged. But he never complained, he kept on walking. It was only possible to reach the school because of Bunker. No one else could do that. He was amazing. He visited all the crèche centres and spoke with the children, as well as with all the men/women present. His working style is down to earth. This kind of behaviour is so helpful to us to work better".

Bunker Roy had seen extremely horrible conditions of rural lifestyle. On the one hand, he had witnessed a decrease in community knowledge and cultural system because of the desire of the parents for their children to attain a formal education, instead of continuing their family jobs, to get a respectable job. Unfortunately, on the other hand, these successors (children) have failed to realise the dreams of their parents because of their poor educational backgrounds. Failure of civic administration in leading the rural development mission has constantly made them to explore other alternatives. In the end, youth migrate to urban areas in search of employment, failure of which leads to more urban slums. Hence, with such grave situations in hand, Bunker Roy had come up with an excellent idea to bring back the migratory village youth to their local milieu and excel in their traditional skills/jobs and values. Bunker Roy had seen the resources in extreme harsh and difficult conditions. Rather seeing

the youth or villagers as passive beneficiaries, they have been brought to the centre stage, where they have the power to decide their lifestyle.

### **Practicing the Innovation**

With this background, Barefoot College was started to promote and enhance indigenous skills and related activities. Skills of youth have been elevated using rural resources. Further, employment is generated for unemployed persons. Communities are made partners in the decision making process. With the help of such innovative steps, Barefoot doctors serve the needs of the villagers; teachers educate those who couldn't go to school to attain formal education; solar engineers electrify remote areas where electricity system is not managed properly; architects construct rural water harvesting systems. Apprentice youths undergo training programmes in order to become professionals, facilitated by those who have already undergone such training.

Another main factor that has helped them to work for such an innovative venture is that they have now an opportunity to remain in their village; and they conduct themselves in accordance with the needs of the village. Doctors, engineers, teachers trained by state neither stay in the villages, nor give proper attention to the rural areas. Neither the paper qualified professionals have respect towards the villagers nor do the villagers have any faith in these professionals. In order to deal with such problems, people in the rural areas are trained to become professionals to work for their own communities. Now they are not dependent on any urban experts. The main intention of Barefoot College is to provide villagers and communities ownership, and the control over the resources that are useful to them. The main objective of the Barefoot is: any problem in the rural areas must be tackled by the villagers. Barefoot College seeks to equip the villagers with the capabilities to solve their own problems.

Barefoot College was founded due to the failure of traditional ways of empowering people; traditional approaches and traditional organisations have failed to build their capabilities to empower themselves in the manner Barefoot has done for decades. Of course, it should be accepted that the traditional organisations so far have excluded

and marginalised the poor from the magnitude of inclusion somehow; they have failed to prepare the poor to stand on their own.

Thus, identifying all lacunas, Barefoot is strived for promoting education. Education here is not about mere literacy. It gradually makes an individual to make his/her life more secure; the whole notion here is based on Mark Twain famous axiom, “never let the school interfere with your education”. Learning by doing is the philosophy of the Barefoot. It instructs the stakeholders/beneficiaries not to learn anything unless they practice it. Each and every one working on the Barefoot campus has been given every right to claim or design, shape and build whatever he/she is interested in. Barefoot College undertakes a variety of tasks in order to make rural life dignified. A glimpse of them are: i) provision for running night schools for those who could not attend day school; ii) drinking water supply from rain water harvesting; iii) maintaining a clean environment by spreading awareness about environmental related issues to the villages; iv) empowering rural women through securing dignified jobs; and v) fighting of social taboos by performing communicative traditional puppet shows and propagation of the traditional communication system through the community radio.

### **The Working of the Social Enterprise**

The enterprise is headed by the director, Bunker Roy. All the activities of the enterprise have been divided into various sections, including education, groundwater, solar energy, health, women empowerment, communication, rural industries (Hatheli Sansthan) and accounts sections. A person has been appointed as a coordinator for each section to supervise issues and concerns. All the activities are decentralised; each section has its own budgets and accounts. Once in a month, review meetings are held with all the coordinators to know what has been done in the previous month and what needs to be carried out in the next month. These meetings pour light for brightening up the enterprise. Significantly, all the minutes of the meeting are recorded and are distributed among every person in the enterprise. Thus, transparency and accountability are made essential elements of the enterprise in order to build confidence and self-motivation among the beneficiaries/ workers for whom the college was founded. Barefoot is the only grassroots organisation in India that shares and shows each and every matter to its stakeholders. Especially financial matters are

given utmost priority under this transparency priority list. In fact, an interesting point of the school is that even the staff account statements are also made public in order to increase faith in each other.

The college has five field centres in Rajasthan and 17 sub centres in 13 states across India. Each field centre has a field campus. These field centres try to decentralise the working environment. Barefoot believes that centralized activities will not yield better results. Hence, in order to serve the neediest at door steps, field centres are created. Each field centre covers around 25 villages. Each village under the field centre has been maintained by a committee named Village Development Committee (VDC). At least twenty five villages have been allotted for each field centre. All the activities at the village level are controlled and coordinated by community based committees, and they make sure that the decisions are taken collectively on each and every aspect. Besides, there are other committees to look after various issues at the village levels, i.e., Village Water Committee (VWC), Village Education Committee (VEC), Children's Parliaments (CP), and Women Empowerment Group (WEG). An elaborate discussion has been given on these committees in the following chapter.

Deprived communities like Scheduled Castes and poor have been the targeted section of people for Barefoot to work since its inception. Barefoot has been working on water related issues, especially trapping ground water because of the importance of water in Rajasthan. They construct rain water harvesting tanks for the village communities. They are more into rain water harvesting. Public land issues also have been addressed. Waste land has been utilised and converted into nurseries for the villagers. Then, after 10 years it has been given back to the village panchayat. Barefoot College, with the help of the communities, planted many trees, and spread awareness about the need to plant more trees. Hansi Swaroop, coordinator of the Jawaja Field Centre, while speaking about the tasks that his field centre have carried out informs, "We also work on solar works; we are working in two/ three panchayats. We also worked with government and have solar electrified 15 panchayats. Accordingly, solar street light programme is another very important task that we have carried out. It lasts for 5-6 years. When there are problems in terms of maintenance, we return them back to the Panchayat. Now also we have received another project to work on solar energy. In some of the villages, where electricity is not available, we

distribute solar lights. We also have a solar energy workshop, and we have also installed solar lights in the night schools”.

He further narrated that night schools are being run for those who couldn't attend the day schools. They are provided education up to fifth class in the night schools. Based on the suggestion of *Gram Siksha Samiti* (VEC) teachers are trained and then placed in these night schools. Once the teacher is appointed, she/he will be transferred to the VEC, which takes care of the appointed teacher and pays the salary too. Barefoot College transfers a lump sum amount to the VEC and it is the duty of this *samiti* to check whether the teacher is attending the school or not. According to the attendance, salaries are being paid. So, this committee is empowered to play a vital role as a monitoring agency. The village has to provide space for the school. Such kinds of schools are located in 13 villages under the Jawaja field centre. In addition, they also work for women empowerment, NREGA, women health, and other women related issues. Community participation has been seen as a light of the day in order to sustain the activities that they undertake. “Unless we make the communities aware, it is highly impossible to bring, maintain and sustain the change” (Hansi Swaroop in an interview held on 18<sup>th</sup> November, 2010).

The Barefoot college campus has a history of demonstrating that it was built by the poor Barefoot architects. The twelve Barefoot ‘architects’, under the leadership of Bhanwar Jat, who can barely read or write, have made it possible by constructing a new fully solar electrified campus (Barefoot solar engineers installed a total of 40 kilowatts of solar panels and five battery banks). They claim that they didn't face any problem in constructing the campus, except spending money. Out of the total area of 35000 square metres, various buildings occupy an area of 2800 square metres. It was worth rupees \$21000 when it was constructed. It's not about constructing the buildings, it's about constructing a base for the poor to stand up on their own, “they measured the depth of wells and floor spaces using their arms and hands and a traditional measure called the hath” (the hath is equal to 18 inches, or the length of the arm from the elbow to the end of the middle finger. (Roy & Harigan, 2008). All the requirements are addressed while constructing the buildings in the new campus. Each and every one working on the campus was consulted, unlike the modern architects. As of now, the buildings on the campus have no problem. The solar energy programme

on the new campus provides power supply to 500 lights, fans, a photocopy machine, 20 computers and printers that work in various parts of the campus including hospital, pathology lab, marketing centre, library, a shop to sell handicrafts, solar electricity training centre, a traditional media centre which holds puppet shows, screen printing, a phone booth and a milk booth. The jury of Aga Khan Foundation Award (An award given to the best architect around the world) opined, “Augmented traditions and knowledge of a rural community, enabling untutored residents to design and build for themselves and the success of this approach is exemplified through the construction of the campus by an illiterate farmer from Tilonia along with 12 other Barefoot architects most of whom have no formal education” (Frontline 2002). First of all, let us see the historical evolution of the Barefoot College in order to understand the pitfalls that they have undergone in the process of emergence as a successful social enterprise.

### **How Employment is Generated?**

It is quite surprising and interesting to know about the recruitment process. “It is beyond expectations. See, a simple reason to work in Barefoot College is that, if you are poor and want to take home minimum wage, you can come here, there are no gates to prevent you from being with us. Of course, you can leave whenever you lose interest. It is also very simple. If you are so money minded, you are strictly advised not to choose this job, because it is not going to work out. If you really think to work out of your own interest, want to do some good work for the society, then you can be accommodated happily in our Barefoot family. We don’t need any paper qualifications, unlike any other place. We will trust you and respect your capabilities”, says Bata, an employee in the Audio Visual section. One may not find easier ways for inclusion than the approach adopted by Barefoot.

Barefoot College is a community based volunteer social enterprise. People come here voluntarily. For their voluntary services, a little amount of honorarium is paid. Ramkaran, who has been engaged with the College for more than 35 years, says that everyone here knows the principles and non-negotiable values that we respect. Whoever is comfortable with it, can come and join the Barefoot College. Lots of people come even from other states. They learn here and go back to their respective

places and start their work. Barefoot approach has been replicated by as many as 20 different organisations in 13 different states of India<sup>2</sup>. Slowly this approach is expanding globally. In order to get a job in Barefoot, applicants must agree to the terms and conditions of the college. Those who break the rules will be expelled. The main objective of Barefoot is to uplift the rural areas from the exclusions. If someone wants to take Barefoot as an easy route to get jobs, Barefoot will never open its doors. People also come to Barefoot from other countries to receive training. So far, Barefoot have produced teachers, doctors, architects, midwives and engineers who were once expected to work in the villages alone. Because, there are several problems in the villages, government appoints officials to look after the problems, but they never stay in the villages. Therefore, problems remain unsolved. So, Barefoot College trains interested people to solve their own problems. They prefer women because women stay in the villages with their communities. They would not migrate to other places or city for money. They will be available in the villages all the time. What makes these people, whom Barefoot trains, to remain with the villages? For this, they follow a systematic process while appointing employees for different jobs. Now, let us observe how the process takes place.

### **Appointment of the Employees**

Anyone will be astonished to learn about the procedure that the Barefoot follows for recruitment of candidates for various posts. There is a committee with secondary level leaders who can coordinate the activities of the organisation. If anyone is interested to work, he/she must write a letter to this committee and the committee will decide whether to take him/her or not. The committee meets twice a month and take such decisions. The appointments are entirely based on the need of the candidate, but not of the college.

“Before they handed over an appointment letter to me, we had an interview in which they have asked me questions like: what did you study? How much beega (beega is equal to 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the Acre) land you own? How many dependents do you have? What does your father do? Based on my answers, they realised that I was in need of a job.

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<sup>2</sup> Rajasthan, Sikkim, Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Bihar, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Assam, Orissa, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh.



This is entirely need based. They wouldn't have selected me if I was from a wealthier family", Naru shared his experiences. They follow a need-based approach in which only those who cannot survive without a job will be appointed. Capabilities, qualifications and backgrounds never become criteria for the selection of employees.

Living independently is an extraordinary living style which everyone aspires. Independent living is one of the sought after life styles of the modern world. However, in poor localities, the people do not even have the idea of living independently. Their entire capabilities have been underestimated by their communities, as well as by the governments. They have to depend on one or other for their daily activities which leave them on the fringes of exclusion. Barefoot works for those who are failed to recognise their latent capabilities and work for their own upliftment. They have all the rights to enrich their lives. Unfortunately they have not been guided properly as of now in many parts of the world. Facilities such as drinking water, lighting, education, health, employment, and housing can be earned by themselves without depending upon any external force. In order to attain it, they need proper guidance and mentoring. Hence, Barefoot provides the poor people an opportunity to realise their dreams by utilising their maximum capabilities in order to sustain their efforts.

The college, hence, decided not to allow any funding or governmental agency to pressurize them to adopt policies fixed or framed by such agencies. They believed that Barefoot College is a place build by the poor and owned by poor to address any problem. Nothing is negotiable in this direction. On the one hand, programmes are taken up by Barefoot College, and on the other hand, government policies and programmes help the deprived sections of people to attain minimum standard of life with dignity.

### **Community Participation**

Barefoot is a community based voluntary social enterprise. It works together with active participation from the concern communities. Barefoot College's main objective is that the control over the villages must be in the hands of the villagers, not outsiders. If any problem persists in the villages, the villagers have to come together and take a

feasible decision. Communities have to work hard on their own for inclusion. During the course, they might adopt some of the innovative solutions that the Barefoot has been familiar with or come up with an entirely new approach. Barefoot, as an organisation, facilitates their tasks and advises them how to go about it. “Whatever programmes that we undertake, everything must get approval from the community without which we will not initiate any work. With less money, we have to get the best. That’s the reason why we involve communities in their empowerment” Ramcharan, who is presently working in Harmada Field Centre expressed his views in this manner. Hence, community participation is identified as one of the best practices to make sure that they engage wholeheartedly in the process of their own inclusion. That’s the reason why community participation is ensured in each and every stage from proposal writing to the completion of the task. Villagers are asked to take active part in all the activities. Apart from that, they are highly benefited by many activities that the College carries out. “I have been staying in Tilonia since 55 years. We are familiar with the College since around 30 years. We are very happy with the services provided by Barefoot College. They give us solar energy, when there is no electricity. We are provided water through rain water harvesting method. They have been giving education to our children and our women have significantly benefited from their activities. As a whole, I can tell you that we are very happy about the services that we receive from the Barefoot College. What I like most from the College is that they provide us the best at the cost of the cheapest methods that they employ,” Shyam Karan a beneficiary from Harmada village gushed.

Before writing any proposal, they have a community meeting intensively, where, after deliberate discussions, they start writing the proposal. Community gives ideas and takes the role of a good community. The role of the Barefoot College and role of the government are all discussed within the community. After that only, Barefoot starts preparing the proposal. Once the grant is awarded, immediately the same will be transferred to the Village Development Committee (VDC) in accordance with the project guidelines. These committees are asked to open a bank account so that the money can be transferred into their account. Communities are not only responsible to control the work, but they will also have control over the money. For example, Barefoot runs 150 night schools in 150 villages in a sub district. Officials from Barefoot can’t go and check every day whether the teacher is present or not. Hence,

the power of control has been given to the communities themselves. On behalf of the community, Village Education Committee (VEC) has been formed. They supervise the school during its working hours. If a teacher is absent, VEC deducts the wage during the absent from his/her salary. Communities purchase the items, pay the bills and complete the construction. So, control is centralised within the communities. Here, though Bunkerji is the founder director, everyone here is with the director himself. The committee looks into the day-by-day activities, and tackles problem that may arise. “We have learnt several things from the communities; and, of course, we also taught them several aspects. Your capacity might be different from mine, but when both of us work together, wonders can be created” Ramkaran, coordinator of the Women Empowerment Section added.

Offering utmost priority in community activities offers an altogether unique style of operation. Promoting VDC in such a direction is a crystal clear example. Krupakaran, a beneficiary of the section, mentioned, “I am a member of the VDC in this village. I have been associated with this committee for the last 12 years. A school building, several rain water harvesting tanks and solar electrification of several households have been taken up so far. Everything has been done with total involvement of the community. I do not have any relation with the Barefoot except that I am a member of the VDC. I have been so inspired by the kind of working style here”.

Engaging communities in the activities that Barefoot propose is not an easy task. They have to be convinced. They might be having several questions about the activities that Barefoot College has come up with. Everything has to be clarified in a positive frame of mind. According to Sushila Devi, when she goes to the village, all the men and women are more particular about what she should teach them: whether she is going to influence them positively or negatively? Not everyone in the village thinks in a single direction. There are several women in the villages who have never been out of their houses so far. So, creating awareness among such women about their rights and entitlements are the biggest hurdle that she had encountered several times. They have to be made aware of all the relevant government policies and programmes. Lack of awareness among the villagers is the biggest obstacle that she faces. There are several doubts about her in the village. Question like her identity, what does she discuss with our women, what does she teach them, how does she develop them. All these

questions were once hurdles, but now there is a lot of realisation in the communities. Women have been participating in the day-to-day decision making, as well as political activities. They are now striving for empowerment at all levels.

Barefoot College is not dependent upon any single person. It is a community based social enterprise. So, everyone has to be a multidimensional and multipurpose worker. "We never compromise on our non-negotiable values like equality - equality in caste, gender equality, religious equality, and, of course, everyone is equal in work. Honesty is also a necessary quality of all the beneficiaries: honesty towards work, honesty while dealing with money, and honesty with the communities," says Ratan Devi. She further says that they are not depending on anyone. They have been sustaining the organisation by tapping local resources available in the villagers. They collect ideas from the communities and villagers so that the ideas could be implemented. It is all about establishing partnership with the communities for their own inclusion. Participation of the communities is given utmost priority and, of course, it could be seen as the basic foundation of Barefoot College. Problems are created by people, and the solutions also need to be explored by them. Without community involvement, it is quite impossible to eradicate the problem on a sustainable base. Collective decisions are encouraged. "For example, when you sent a mail to us saying that you are interested to do some Ph.D on Barefoot College, we discussed it in the meeting whether to allow you or not, and finally said yes. We don't negotiate with our non-negotiable values" Ratan Devi stressed.

They conduct a meeting in the village in which every villager is invited to participate. The VDC/VEC is selected in the meeting. VDC/VEC comprises 10 men and 10 women. Among them, a man and a woman are authorised to manage the financial transactions. "The account is opened in the nearest post office or bank so that they will not have to take a risk while operating their accounts. Money power plays a very predominant role. For example, village teacher has to stay in the village and has to listen to the communities. In order to do so, community must have control over the teacher. Hence, Barefoot has decided that the committee will pay him/her the salary based on his/her performance", disclosed Ramcharan, one of the respondents beneficiaries of the college.

If a school needs to have solar electrify, the money will be deposited in the concerned VDC's account. Labour comes from the community. Engineers also come from the community. What Barefoot College does is just to support financially and train the person that represents the community. Shama says that earlier, there was no electricity in her village. Her community in the village selected her and sent her to the Barefoot College to learn the processes and patterns of arranging light. She learned all the aspects related to solar technology. During her training, there was a training programme on solar cooking, and she was asked to learn the solar cooking systems also. In Rajasthan, generally woman do not work on welding related works, but she has worked on welding in order to manufacture solar cookers. In the earlier days, she was not so happy to work in the welding related activities. She stayed in the welding related activities for 15 days and went back to the village. After some time, she came back to learn the rest. Two persons along with her had undergone training and finally they all have prepared one solar cooker with lots of difficulties. With that effort, now she also trains the uneducated women. Now she is very happy about her work and attachment with the college.

In the process of mobilising money for the activities that are proposed by the community, Barefoot College approaches the communities to contribute for the proposed project. Hence, around 15-20 per cent of the total estimated budget is being collected from the community. Barefoot philosophy cannot succeed without the active participation of the communities.

Some will contribute in the form of labour and the others, who can afford will donate money. For example, as Ramkaran says, "We run crèche. If there is no nutrition to feed the children, we will collect grain from the community and feed them. People are always encouraged to donate whatever they could like fruits, vegetables or whatever". Any social entrepreneurial venture sustains on its own. If the organisation doesn't have any more funds to implement the programmes, the beneficiaries fund the programmes in order to complete them. He further adds that communities accept them because they now realise that Barefoot is working for them. He further says that they go to the villagers, listen to the communities since the problem is created by them. Therefore, without their involvement it is not proper to solve the problem. Terms and conditions that are fixed include: community must contribute for the completion of

the project. For example, in case of Rain Water Harvesting Tanks (RWHT), villagers are required to dig the pit, to lay concrete. In this way, 15 per cent of the total amount is covered from the communities. Apart from that, everyone is attached to the project in some form or the other so that there is a feeling of self-involvement and everyone works for the successful completion and maintenance of the project. This commitment has helped Barefoot to maintain the structure for a long period, according to Laxman Singh.

If funding for the projects are rejected by the agency, in such cases the contributions are collected from the communities and the task will be completed. So, here the completion of the identified task is important - not the finance. Barefoot just facilitates them. Self reliance is the preferred mantra for Barefoot. In general no one knows, how government will carry out certain activities; how one gets the contract; the extent of corruption and the quality of the work. But here, people are made partners in the completion of the project which is useful for them. Planning, implementation and maintenance is undertaken by the community. "Many governmental welfare activities have been failed because the significance of people's participation was ignored", says Ramkaram. Another example of active community participation is mentioned by Bagwanthnandan, the coordinator of solar section, "One of our field centres selected a village for solar electrification. It was an interior village and 200 families were selected by this field centre. They are provided solar electricity in Barefoot style. They are asked to pay Rs.3000/- as their contribution. They can also pay in installment basis. Whether the family should pay in installment or at a time is decided by the community. We do not have any say in it. We just listen to them. The proposals includes the terms and conditions of the communities too".

Ramkaran further discloses that today he receives order from villages for rain water harvesting tanks. In the first phase, he will go and see how it works. How people's participation is ensured is another important issue of concern. Suppose a family in the community does not have any labour to offer as contribution, then they are asked to hire labour and pay him/her the minimum wage. Purchasing committee is elected by the Village Development Committee (VDC) in order to purchase various items. VDC and Purchase Committee will be holding different accounts. Basically this work can be completed in a month's time. But the main aim is to motivate, involve, train people,

and teach them how to control. That's the reason why sometimes it takes longer than the stipulated time. Many of the members of VDC are illiterates and are not aware about the maintenance of the accounts. Therefore, Barefoot also trains them to run the whole process in a more transparent and accountable manner. After the completion of the construction work, there will be a village level meeting to discuss the finance of all the expenditures. This is called social audit. Everyone sits in the meetings and discusses how the money was spent. Every bill is validated in the meetings by each and every one.

### **Second Level Social Entrepreneurs**

When Barefoot College was started by Bunker Roy, it was envisioned to promote a decentralised system. No single person will take decisions unilaterally. Rather, everyone is encouraged to participate in the decision making process. Barefoot College believes in equality. Their jobs might be different, but everyone is treated equally. For example, one may be working in the mess, another might be a coordinator, doctor or director, but everyone is equal, irrespective of the nature of work. Decentralised structures are strongly considered. Decentralisation of power, decentralisation of decision making and collective decision making are some key elements of the Barefoot College. Those who have been with Barefoot College for long have been given the task to coordinate. These coordinators look after the activities of the concerned sections.

“The selection/election of the second level social entrepreneurs takes place democratically. We have a voting system which takes place democratically. Nominations are invited and voting takes place and we all are selected by everyone. Our 11 member group would take care of it. We have an entirely decentralised and transparent process” Ramniwas who works in the Communication section clarified.

### **Summing Up**

The organisation has been evolving from a traditional voluntary system to the modern social enterprise orientation. It is true that some of the projects such as training solar engineer would not be possible without funding from external agencies. The whole story is resolved here when the organisation becomes more entrepreneurial in terms of earning its own incomes which is a key for an entrepreneurial firm. With this

background, the study further drives towards finding the activities that they undertake and the kind of impact that it has made in the lives of the excluded. In the end, the study also explores ways in which Barefoot College, a community based organisation, is investing its efforts to transform itself into a social enterprise. All these are discussed in detail in the next few chapters.

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## CHAPTER - V

# BAREFOOT APPROACH AND ITS PRACTICE

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*First they ignore you, then they laugh at you, then they fight you, then you win*

-Mahatma Gandhi

This chapter deals with the activities that are being carried out by Barefoot College. Thrust areas of the college, such as education, rain water harvesting, women empowerment, communication and solar energy, are being discussed at length. How Barefoot College offers services to various sections of the society, using market driven models, are discussed in this chapter. Apart from that, the villagers' opinions on the services that they receive from the Barefoot College are also included, in order to balance the views of the College and the beneficiaries. The Barefoot approach falls under *area based social entrepreneur* realm, as discussed in the third chapter. The Barefoot College empowers the poor and marginalised by building their capabilities to ensure their inclusion in the mainstream society. The Barefoot approach has opted for a unique way which has feasible options to prepare the poor to fight poverty. It opts for training and educating the rural poor as a means of inclusion, which would ultimately bring employment and facilitate income generation, lack of which is one of the main reasons for social exclusion.

Unfortunately, most of the traditional organisations including various governments, opt for disempowering methods to build the families, communities and further societies, under the garb of empowerment. This is due to the option of providing goods free of cost causing the poor to depend upon these organisations, rather than standing on their own. Thus, they are denied their right to choose what they want and decide how they want to live. And thus, identifying these lacunae, Barefoot College was started as a tool to empower the rural poor to address their needs. It offers the poor the right to choose whatever they want to develop themselves. Roy mentions that resources need to be mobilised from within the community, no service need to be given free of charge. Charity should not be the focus of development. This view emerged from the deliberant discussions that Barefoot College members had with

communities, who specified they did not want to be seen as beggars. This self-respect viewpoint is too often ignored by urban based development agents (Roy 1997).

Today, many social entrepreneurs are of the view that, services provided free of cost have destroyed the capabilities of the communities, and hence, they have started breaching their own philosophy in which they speak about the Innovative Service Delivery System. Further, the policy makers, who develop policies that are being aimed at empowering the poor never approach the poor before drawing the policy. That's the reason this top-down model, where beneficiaries are not allowed to take part in the decision making, tends to fail because the solutions that come from 'other sections'. Top down model is "insensitive and expensive, thus disempowering the marginalised, the exploited and the very poor", says Elkington (2008: 95). For this reason, the Barefoot College has entirely believed in a bottom-up approach in order to provide space to the very poor in whose name the college is working.

Migration issue is one of the prioritised areas that have occupied a predominant role in the Barefoot approach. Reverse migration is made even possible with the Barefoot's initiations. Reverse migration in this regard reflects people coming back to their villages; for those, especially the poor youth, women and men, are given training in order to attain employment. If the employment is available in the rural area itself, migration can be easily tackled, which is one of the basic principles of Barefoot. "If we migrate to the cities, no one gives us jobs, we are not educated, and there is no guarantee that our choices would be respected. We are not even sure whether our lives are secured. They will certainly reject us because of lack of education." Kazzidevi, an employee in the Jawaja Field Centre, explained. Altogether, the Barefoot strives to render sustainable solutions to the seemingly unsolvable problems of the rural areas such as migration, lack of education, technological ignorance, and water problems. It is a movement that aims at maximizing rural capabilities.

Let's observe the kind of self-confidence that the Barefoot manages to bring to the illiterates who have never known about the technologies of today's world. Bhanwar Jat mentions that nobody in his family knows how to read and write. They were three brothers, all farmers. Together they have 15 acres of agricultural land. Now all their children go to school. This is the first time such a step was taken. He joined Barefoot

College twenty years ago in 1977. He used to take water to the houses with Kanaram. Because he was a farmer, later he was asked to work on the field to grow food for the College. At that point of time, he was working on the poultry farm, looking after chicks for one year with Vasu. It was also his job to take people from the Centre on a tractor to the night schools. In 1986, he was asked to build the New Centre. He was – and still is - an illiterate. But his illiteracy never worried him. By then, he had already done several jobs at the Centre. This was just one more. It took one year to dig the foundation. He was asked to supervise the work of about 50 rural masons and over 100 daily labourers. It took two years to complete everything. An architect tried to draft blueprints but they were changed so often, that they were useless in the end. The project was a joint effort; everyone who was going to live there was consulted. Everyone's views had to be respected. So the location of doors, windows, and roads changed every day. Rafiq, the Muslim blacksmith, made the doors and windows in his rural workshop in Tilonia (Roy & Hartigan 2008).

### **The Work Style**

Barefoot College is one of the very few places that follows and lives within the philosophical boundaries of Mahatma Gandhi, the Indian freedom fighter and Father of the Nation who propounded the very simple notions of non-violence, truth and *dharma*. Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy, Knowledge, skills and wisdom found in villages should be used for its development, before getting skills from outside, is duly followed under the Barefoot approach. They believe that the development programmes carried out by various governments do not need any urban-based professional to process them. Barefoot is not anti-urban, but feels that the villagers have a lot of capabilities which can be offered not only to their self but also for the wellbeing of the entire village. In that situation, there is no need for someone to come from an urban area and fix the activities or programmes in the villages which they are capable of doing by themselves. In order to avoid the urban counterparts in the developmental activates, Mr. Roy argues that these programmes have to be implemented in remote areas where the urban counterparts are not willing to go or is inaccessible to the urban population (Coles 2002).

Apart from that, Gandhi further opined that the sophisticated technologies should be used in rural India which are controlled and maintained by the poor communities, who must not feel that they are dependents on the technology which are fixed by the urban paper based technicians. This philosophy is followed strictly in Barefoot education and training patterns. Further Gandhi's views in distinguishing literacy and education have been identified as one of the thrust areas which need major concern. Thus, Mr. Bunker Roy believes that there is a difference between literacy and education. Literacy is reading and writing and what you pick up in school. Education is what you receive from your family, your community and your environment (Roy 2005). In Barefoot college, people work for themselves, they learn for themselves in order to solve their community problems and whenever they need some technical support, an outside expert will be called to assist. The assistance would be first adopted into the Barefoot Solar Engineers knowledge and then practiced.

Ramkaran made it clear that, compared with any other social enterprise, Barefoot College is safe, people are very comfortable and secure, throughout the year. They have four casual leaves a month. They are voluntary and do not have any formal structure. The working patterns and policies can be changed in accordance with the needs and aspirations of the communities for whom they work or for the welfare of the employees who work in Barefoot. They are not only entitled for four holidays, whenever they have a need. If an employee has a problem at his/her home, he can take leave. If there is no need for any leave, he/she can work without any leave.

Mangi Bhai recounted how her life was transformed through Barefoot college. She says that no one taught her how to use the Internet. Now she knows computers well because she has undergone computer training, but not internet training. Internet service was provided to her and she was able to manage it quite well. She reads daily newspapers on the internet. She reads *Rajasthan Patrika* through the internet. Earlier, when she first joined Barefoot, she used to work in the handicrafts section. Arunaji and she were very close associates and both of them have become friends. It was all in 1974. She says, "Aruna was like my sister or daughter. It was very hard for women to work in the society during 1970s, one has to breakdown traditional structures in order to work in the public". So, she said, they were many who did it. Her husband was not educated, she also never studied, not even a single member in her family studied

during those days. Then, slowly, she started working in Barefoot College. She has visited several places for work before joining Barefoot College. After joining Barefoot College, everything became different for her. When she was working in the handicrafts section, one day Arunaji told her to undergo a training programme on computers. She was trained for six months. She did have apprehensions about the training, She did not know anything more than mud in the fields. But after some time, she realised that life is something bigger than what she thought. She successfully completed the training. Later, she worked in women empowerment for eight years. Over a period of time, her children have grown, she was transferred to the education section. She worked there for 9 years; she also worked with night schools. Going to the field, acting according to the need, arranging the school committee meetings, training the teachers were some of the activities that she had undertook. Later, Bunkerji asked her to carry out a survey to know the whereabouts of the children who passed out from the night schools. After the survey it was found that, several students worked as labourers for whom they later conducted a training programme. Ratan Behanji, Naramji were associated with her in this work. They prepared the module and carried out the training. After the training, they were all provided jobs in Barefoot College. The whole trajectory has worked to ensure inclusion among those who work in the College, as well the communities, through the provision of basic services.

As discussed in the earlier chapter, Barefoot fulfills two important aspects of a social enterprise, i.e., service delivery and employment generation. Hence, it falls under Mission-related social enterprise category. So, let us explore the work that these sections advocate in order to fulfill their first obligation, i.e., service delivery at nominal or cheaper rates. First of all, let us see how renewable solar technologies have been used in the innovative service delivery paradigm.

### **Solar Technologies**

Usage of traditional knowledge and skills, that are being ignored in the technological era, are again brought to the forefront in order to prepare the rural masses to use the latest technologies with the help of their traditional knowledge. So far, just the technological inventories have been installed in the villages/rural areas by the urban experts, and, if any problem arises in the technological inventories, the villagers just

have to depend on the urban experts to come and repair. So, on the one hand, the technology has made the life of the rural people very easy and on the other, it has also made them depend on urban experts. Hence, identifying the lacunae, the Barefoot philosophy provides the education that helps the rural poor to understand the technology, in order to adapt these in their communities. The whole discourse discussed here certainly asks the communities to manage, own and control the technological innovations.

Just providing technological innovations to the rural people would not help them to overcome their problems. The needy among the rural i.e., poor, women, deprived communities, etc., must be given an opportunity to excel entrepreneurially. Besides, it also strives to provide education, vocational training, health care, etc., to rural women and girls. Learning-by-doing is the typical component of Barefoot approach. Unlike other organisations that are working for the poor, Barefoot permits the poor to commit mistakes under the learning-by-doing phenomenon. All those treated as part of the learning process.

Barefoot Solar Engineering has been owned by the Barefoot College since 1984. It started off with a small experiment of solar electrification of a community health centre. What they do under the solar system is to promote the use of solar photovoltaic cells on a massive scale. Barefoot disproves the notion that rural illiterate poor cannot become engineers. Lack of literacy must not be a problem to become an engineer. If we believe in the capabilities of the individuals everything is possible. What we need to do is, just believe in them. As of now, Barefoot Solar Engineers (BSE) have built solar electricity systems that generate power equal to that of the largest centralised solar power plant in India and the statistics of the organisation shows that it has benefited over 90,000 poorest households in India alone. Himalayan areas, which are well known for their coolest temperature around -40°F, are not at all covered by the modern electric system. These areas have been chosen by Barefoot to be solar electrified. Nominal contributions from each family for repair and maintenance are collected in order to sustain the venture. The BSEs experiment has altogether generated a lot of employment including for women from the rural poor. Apart from providing electricity to the unreached areas, it also led to decreased health problems and elevated the living standards. Their target population in this regard is

aged women who are to be trained and employed. Otherwise, if men are trained, they will immediately move on to the cities in order to place themselves in some companies for work. This would destroy the whole notion of Barefoot. Hence, Barefoot has been trying to get more participation from women, especially those who are old, who would not leave the rural areas. "Once a man gets trained or educated, he migrates to a town or city. This defeats our purpose." Laxman Singh, who has worked with Roy for more than two decades, says.

They have solar electrified several villages across the continents. Krishnalal, a beneficiary claims that, in the first phase, they ask the communities where they want to solar electrify, to select someone whom they could train so that he/she will be attached to the community and carry out the maintenance work in their absence. In most of the cases, it is the most deprived/disadvantaged who get the opportunity to become Barefoot Solar Engineers. To maintain the solar electricity equipment, in the first instance, each beneficiary household has to pay a small amount and then monthly installment in the later days to enable BSE to properly maintain them. In Village Energy Environment Committee (VEEC) has to be created to work as a mediator between Barefoot College and the community concerned. The collected money is deposited in the bank account which is managed by VEEC. At any cost, the money is not misused, several steps are taken to ensure transparency and accountability. The money has to be used for repairs, changes of battery and salary for the Barefoot Solar Engineer. As discussed, the fees are nominal. For maintenance, each household has to pay around Rs. 50-60 per month. In exchange, they will get two lights and one mobile charger.

Unfortunately, there are some areas where some of the beneficiaries have started violating the rules. It is the community which fixes the maintenance charges. In one village, they have stopped paying the maintenance charges, because, it seems they never had any problem with their instrument, so they have come up with a question: *why should we pay?* So, they have raised a new model for which only the needy would pay. Whenever there is a problem, then they will call the solar engineer and he/she can collect the charges from them. Because of this situation, the salary has become a problem to the BSE, Dorji who worked as a solar engineer in field mentioned this issue.

In India, as of now, 2 lakh people are provided with solar electrification. It includes fixation of 22,752 solar units for 22,752 households in sixteen Indian states. Apart from that, they have also fixed 5,220 solar lanterns for 5,220 households and 549 schools are also solar electrified. The total installation produces 5,69,647 watts of power. For this, 636 Barefoot Solar Engineers, which includes 184 women have worked for it. In abroad so far, the Barefoot Solar Engineers have fixed 4,967 solar units for 4,967 households in seventeen countries scattered across Asia, Africa and South America. They have also fixed 3,365 solar lanterns, reaching almost a total of 6,109 households, in which 60,486 people in 123 villages are benefited. The total installation in abroad produces 2,50,240 watts power. a total of 155 Barefoot Solar Engineers including 119 women have worked for it (statistics obtained from Barefoot College on 8<sup>th</sup> November, 2011).

Since the last 13 years, Barefoot College has trained women from other countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America to assemble, install, repair and maintain the solar photovoltaic systems in their own villages. Barefoot college offers not merely the training, but also promotes programmes to boost the confidence levels of the illiterate women as leaders who can also work in the other fields. Many women educated in Tilonia have made history through solar electrifying their own villages in their respective regions. The community in Jawaja village says they are very happy about the solar electricity initiative and they proclaim that a couple of poor villagers were given employment and the whole village is solar electrified including their school and some community buildings. So far they did not face any problem while using them.

Since 2003, the College is training people from other countries. In 2004, people from Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Afghanistan have come here to undergo training to become BSEs. Bagwathnandanji, the coordinator of the Solar section explains, “Now we are working in 35 countries in Latin America, Asia and Africa. Since 2008, Govt. of India has started funding the international training. Ministry of External Affairs has been taking care of it. Women have been exposed to external cultures. In some African countries, there are cases where one man has around 4-5 wives. In fact, when they come here, they realised that it is wrong. In a couple of countries, we have started Barefoot College’s associations. In 2007, two women from Sierra Leone were trained here and they have gone back and discussed with their government. Today,



they are fixing around 40 kw solar electrification equipments in villages. Govt. of Sierra Leone funds them and we are sending them the instruments. Electronics always get changes, we will have to be ready with updates. Otherwise, we will fall out of the market. We face several obstacles in the process, as we have only uneducated women and our system is *learning by doing*. Solar energy is one of the vital entries that we could get into the communities".

Solar usage has also resulted in reducing the emission of CO<sub>2</sub> and other greenhouse gases. Solar energy has been substituted for cutting the trees and shrubs for cooking, heating and lighting. Diesel and kerosene consumption have also been minimised. The massive installation of solar systems has certainly brought down global warming by reducing consumption of several thousand litres of diesel and kerosene. As a result, it is estimated that 1.2 million tons of carbon emission has been stopped from entering into the atmosphere. Cases of respiratory diseases due to toxic smokes, emitted while burning kerosene, coal and wood for cooking and lighting indoors, has also come down significantly. In Africa alone, an average of 1.6 million women and children die or suffer due to this problem. The *solar way* has been a prominent model to eradicate the said problems in the poorest African countries (Statistics obtained from Barefoot College on 8<sup>th</sup> November, 2011).

There is no problem at all in solar energy as it stands. But before installing a solar system, the community must be prepared in order to balance the task of maintenance and repair because it is the community which finally has to accept the initiation; they will have to pay for it. In this context, Lalita clarified, "For solar energy, except for the battery, you need not worry about anything else. Battery has worked for 11 years in some areas. So, we will have to be more careful. Two lights work for five hours in the night". Electricity has been provided with limited charges, which even the poor can afford. Poor and excluded communities have gained a chance to enjoy the electricity supply through social energy. Meghanath, a beneficiary, states that his village was not provided with traditional electricity supply. He hails from a very poor family where they had little money to use kerosene lamp. But with the help of Barefoot solar energy initiation, they have been using the solar energy for last 12 years without any problem. "The amount we have been paying for the usage is also

nominal, which is much lesser than what they used to pay for kerosene lamps", says Meghanath.

In some places, it worked well and in others, it has not. It depends upon the community's strength and their commitment. "I would not say that the solar venture is 100 % successful; there are some cases, which we need to critically examine. We have such villages in Sikkim, which are solar electrified, but they are not interested, because they have also got traditional electricity. They are not willing to return even the instruments," says Dorji, a solar engineer.

As a whole, Barefoot solar technological initiative has done a lot to solve several difficult problems such as dependence on kerosene, reaching the power supply to the remotest places and environmental degradation. During the discussions with the villagers, they claim that this innovative approach is very successful. Once the instrument is fixed in their houses, they need not worry about it.

### **Education**

Education is one of the major thrust areas of the College. The College runs pre-primary and night schools to educate the children. The youth selected as teachers must undergo a residential training camp for 30 days. The target group to become teachers is again those who are out of employment realm and the most needy. Curriculum in the night schools is decided by the teachers, based on practical learning, mostly fit for the local environment and local needs. The curriculum, for example, includes information related to common civic needs, such as how does a post office function, how to use a bank, a police station, etc. The Barefoot teachers are selected by the rural communities, wherever the night schools are operated. The target population is in most of the cases unemployed rural youth. The main intention to initiate the education patterns under Barefoot approach is to adapt the education system according to the needs of the learners. The schools are reoriented, in terms of mutual learning, where teacher learns from the children as well.

Ratandevi, who has been attached with Barefoot College for more than four decades, explained about the evolution of Barefoot schools in Tilonia: In the initial days, there

was the adult education programme, in which only children used to attend, and no one in the adult age group were present. Then they decided and changed the programme for the children by initiating experimental schools. Centre for Education Technology has funded the project, they have chosen three schools in Tilonia, where several villagers were selected and provided training in Tilonia in order to work as teachers in these schools. The project worked well for three years. Despite its success, political issues did not allow them to get extension. So, they had to handover the project to the Government. Having seen the success of the project, Government of Rajasthan adopted this pattern in all other schools in the state under the name, *Siksha Garmi Yojana*.

With this background, they have initiated night schools programme in 1975. They have provided inspiration to the villagers and parents, who were happy to see their children getting educated, besides helping them in the daily activities. So, during the night time, they have been sent to the night schools. Night schools run classes from I to V. After being educated in night schools, it is observed that most of them continue to the formal high schools, whereas some stick to the labour work. Those children who studied in the night schools have later earned jobs like police, army personal and some work as teachers and village secretaries. Night schools function from 7 to 10 pm in the summer and 6 to 9 pm in winter.

The night schools are one of the dynamic approaches to eradicate illiteracy. They are the solutions for the problem of child labour. So far, the governments and NGOs working on child labour issues have failed to address the lacuna between family needs and child labour. Hence, the whole approach that has been promoted by the Governments and NGOs in order to eradicate child labour has been criticised by the poor<sup>1</sup>. But here with the Barefoot approach, the night schools are organised entirely to provide education for the rural children who cannot afford the day time education, due to their poor financial condition. Thus, the Barefoot approach adequately addresses the problems of the child labour and the need for children education at a time. This provision of helping the families in the day time and studying in the night has been

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<sup>1</sup> Child labour has been abolished by the Government without showing any alternative to the families where children have been working for the family. That's the reason policies of the Government and NGOs against child labour have been criticised by these excluded sections.

highly appreciated by families of these children. For this reason, this particular venture has become one of the most successful activities of the Barefoot, reaching out to several thousands of the children every year. The success of the Barefoot night schools have inspired others to replicate the same in several other states too.

Motivating communities on these lines is not an easy task. Sometimes communities approach Barefoot College to open a night school in their respective villages. In such a case, the whole task becomes very easy. But the problem of motivating communities become little difficult when Barefoot approaches the communities. However, motivation part never created any obstacle to pursue their goals. Barefoot communication team works in a professional manner to motivate the communities. Before starting pressurising the communities, Barefoot communication team performs a series of plays to increase awareness in the communities.

As a result, Barefoot night schools have been set up in six states, viz., Assam, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Uttaranchal and Rajasthan. These schools have been maintained and educated by 714 Barefoot teachers, which includes 200 women. It is true that the parents based in cities would not agree that a child can do physical labour for the family while pursuing his/her academic goals. The efforts of night school-going children in this regard must be acknowledged since they are successfully balancing their roles as children of incapable parents (who cannot run the family without their support) and yet educating themselves to be responsible future citizens of India. So far, the education system has been found two kinds of children, in general: i) Children who attend school daily without fail, ii) Children who never attends the school and often becomes child labourer. Differing with this view, the Barefoot approach is unique which provides a chance to the rural poor children to share the work of the families right from the childhood. Nanda Ram, one of the night school's alumni specifies, "Children from poor and marginalised backgrounds have been provided an opportunity to study in the night schools. For them, the day time education is impossible, because of their ingress in the family activities. I used to take care of my livestock in the day time and attend night school".

Every year, more than 3000 children at a single batch in various schools attend the night schools in which 2000 are girl children. In general women have been ignored

from providing basic amenities like education. Such a situation is very alarming in tradition-bound states like Rajasthan. It is for this reason that, Barefoot prioritised women education and empowerment as its primary objectives in order to ensure social inclusion on a sustainable basis. Hansi Swaroop, coordinator of Jawaja field Centre clarifies, “Women are so backward in terms of education. That’s the reason, women education has been given top most priority in our night schools. As a result, most of the children in the night schools are girl children. This is because they will have to work along with their parents in order to help them during the day time. If not, they either have to take care of their siblings or buffalos during the day time. Now, the communities realise about the importance of child education. The prime motive of Barefoot is that, every girl should be given primary education at least. Later, it is up to the family to decide either to send her for higher education or not. The whole scenario has brought a sea change in the traditional outlook of the mothers. “With the help of the night schools, girls, as well as women, started studying and participating in the day-to-day social activities in a greater way. This has changed the outlook of men, family, village and society. These girl children who learn several things in the night school share their learning/experiences with mothers, who indeed realise that when the girl child is learning so much from the night schools, why can’t we also learn?” Benagal, one of the beneficiary, shared his views on the subject.

VEC in the areas where the night schools are located coordinates the activities of the night schools with the Barefoot College, Tilonia. So far, as a whole, 2, 35,000 children (among them 1, 70,000 are girls) attended schools in six states and 714 night schools in 673 villages. Apart from empowering the children, night schools approach has been providing employment to 3140 Barefoot teachers. Badrilal, a Barefoot night school student confessed, “Knowledge that I have gained from the night school was excellent for me, whatever I have learnt has been used to earn a respectful job in society. Today, whatever I earn is only due to the Vth class that I have studied in the night school”. Those who work in the Barefoot as teachers are also very happy about their own empowerment, as well as about their task towards offering a better life for the underprivileged children. “I was a teacher in the night school. Many have studied further and some have stopped after night school. Some have gone to Mumbai for jobs and other are working in Kishangarh, some people even got government jobs and many are also working in Barefoot College itself,”

Gishalal, a teacher who teaches students in the night school, stated. Apart from educating these underprivileged children, Barefoot night schools have also become more famous for their 'children parliament'.

The role of VEC is highly acknowledged by the beneficiaries across the communities. Lakshmi, a 40 year-old respondent, who is also a member of the VEC, states that, earlier, she never went out from her house for any public meetings. But with the help of the Barefoot night schools, she has become a member of the VEC through which she came to know of several problems that school going children face. She believes that, if the concept of Barefoot night schools is absent from their villages, most of their children would not have earned the minimum education standard, especially the girl child, who might have lost the most. She further felt that the VEC which comprises representatives from all the communities in the villages, are given utmost freedom to decide the fate of the night schools in the villages.

Children's Parliament (Bal Sadan) is the landmark achievement of the Barefoot night schools. The Children's Parliament is meant to create awareness among the children of the night schools about the political aspects of democracy. Once in every two years, elections are held to elect the 'parliament' which has a 'cabinet' of its own. It has functions to supervise, monitor and administer night schools. Children in the age group of 8-14 are given the right to vote. The practical experiences of governance has been imparted to the children with the help of the Children's Parliament. In order to ensure that they are learning political aspects, 'parliamentary' elections are given utmost priority where aspects like voter ID cards, electoral committees, nominations, withdrawal, campaigning, no-campaign day, polling, counting, declaration of winners, forming the 'parliament', and then the 'cabinet', are duly followed. It characterises every aspect of a democracy. The ballot boxes are carried to the Barefoot campus after the elections, in order to count the votes and declare the winners. These Parliamentarians and the Cabinet make sure that the teachers are playing an active role in the classroom activities, and the basic amenities in the school are provided. About a couple of years back, a girl, who was elected as 'Prime Minister' who had to take care of her goats in the morning. In the nights, she acted as the prime minister. When talking about Children's Parliament, people might laugh at it, but it is working better than our conventional Parliamentary system to tackle the emerging problems

and decide on actions. The Barefoot College feels that some time down the line they might produce Barefoot politicians with the help of the children's Parliament approach.

Ratan Devi talked about the history and its working style of the parliament. She explained that when she was teaching for the third standard, there was a small lesson on *Chalo Panchayat Dekhiye*. In that lesson, there were a lot of pictures placed in order to create awareness among children about the political practice. She thought of teaching the same practically. Hence, an election in the school was planned in order to give a proper understanding about the parliamentary system. Her school has done everything as practical and she asked all the children to take part in the election. Their intention was just to give a practical turn to the lesson. In the process, they have observed that the children were so keen and participated in each and every activity. She was so happy. Further, she has brought up the issue in the weekly meetings, where another teacher also agreed to practice it. Then, it was practiced in other schools also. These elections have taught them about the real election system.

Slowly later, Children's Parliament was created. People came from all the night schools located in different states and decided to teach clean politics to the children, in the form of elections. When we speak about children's rights, we will have to practice them as well. Barefoot College has taken up Children's Parliament to the next level. Posts like 'prime minister' and several other 'ministers' have been created. Elections for the parliament are held once in two years. Bunker has clarified that all the section in charges in Tilonia are the secretaries to the 'Ministers' concerned. If there is no water in the school, RamKaranji, who coordinates water section in Tilonia, has to answer them as the secretary. 'Minister' will represent him, "I have visited many schools this month. These many schools do not have a proper water system. So, please fix the water problem." The villagers are responsible to pay for the repairs; repairs have to be undertaken by Barefoot College.

There was a 'minister' in one of the night schools, who insisted upon laying a pipe line in his village. Barefoot College told him, "Laying a pipe line is a big task, it can be done only through the Panchayat." There was a lot of debate. He said, "I will

collect a lot of *chanda* from public, they will listen to me, at any cost, Barefoot College must lay the pipe line". For 6 months, the struggle continued . Finally, he collected around Rs.10,000/- from the community. Then it was realised that the whole village has faith in this small kid. Why can't they have faith in him? Then, Barefoot College decided to get the pipe line. It helped to sensitise the children more towards a better tomorrow.

Once, one of the 'Education Minister' insisted, there should not be any wine shops nearby the school. Everyone thought it was correct. Then they had a doubt, how to support her, how to remove the shop? She said girls are scared to go to the school because of the wine shop located on the way. It used to create lot of tensions. Then, with the help from the Women Groups in the village, they approached the Sub Divisional Officer, and asked him to get the shop removed. Then, they were told that no license was issued to that particular shop by the Government. Then their task became easier and the shop was closed. In another incident, a *sarpanch* of a village had given a building to run a school, but in the next election he lost his post and another one came. He said he was not happy about the school, and wanted to close it down. Then the children asked him, "If the school is closed, where do we go? He said, "I don't know where you will go, but I need this building." Children carried out a *dharna*. Finally, these children approached the District Collector for a solution. He gave orders to reopen the school.

Once, a child gave a chocolate to another child during the campaign for election. The organisers came to know about it, they enquired, then he said, "yes, it is after all a chocolate," then he was questioned why the chocolate was given during the election campaign, whereas earlier he never did so. There was a lot of debate, everyone came to know about it, and the organisers thought of debarring the school from elections. But then, how to teach politics to the children in that school? So they cancelled the whole election process and initiated another election in the same year. Because of this, children got to learn a lot. It also allowed them to create a free and fair election.

Ones, there was a debate on an issue, in which a child was not allowed to take water from the pot by another child as he was from a lower caste. When the issue come to the notice of Children's Parliament, there was a lengthy discussion among them on



the issue, as it was very important and finally there was a clear verdict that *everyone is equal and must enjoy the same privileges*. As a whole, the Children's Parliament looks so small, but it is very difficult to operate it. Barefoot College has received an award for children's parliament in Sweden, Bunkerji, Tejaramji and the Children Parliament 'prime minister', along with two other 'ministers', went to Sweden to receive the award. When they were referred to as *bachha, bachhi*, a girl replied, "I am not *bachha, bachhi*, I am the 'prime minister' of the Children Parliament. Ask me, whatever you want to know about the children, don't think that I am small, I can respond to all your doubts," Ratandevi recounted this incident.

As a whole, Barefoot night schools and its allied initiations including Children Parliament, is altogether a success story, which has a great potential to be replicated across the globe. Night schools have helped these children from poor families to gain nominal educational qualifications on the one hand, and on the other, in addition to the education, they are also well trained in the political aspects to become responsible citizens in future. This particular venture has helped to raise the awareness levels among the children and families.

### **Rain Water Harvesting**

Being a land of desert, Rajasthan is always in tremendous need of water resources. Water is often a biggest problem for both drinking and irrigation. Thus, preserving, and developing water sources is a main objective of any organisation that works on water related issues. Thus, drinking water has been identified as one of the high priority areas for the Barefoot. Barefoot has promoted both piped water and hand pumps, as well as groundwater. Barefoot's experience in the initial days was that many engineers that Barefoot invited to tackle water problems insisted that problems of water shortage and portability could be solved only by digging big, expensive, deep wells or getting piped water supply from the areas where the water scarcity was not seen. In fact, Barefoot did try them in the initial days and in vain lot of money and valuable time was wasted. Fed up with the suggestions that the civil engineers from urban areas were giving, the villagers were asked to locate the solution. Then the villagers suggested that the rainwater harvesting was a better solution for the water problems. The Rainwater harvesting has to be operated through its Rooftop Rain

Water Harvesting (RRWH). The villagers were asked to trap the rainwater. Rooftops of the schools and buildings became the channels to trap the water in order to store it in underground tanks and use it when the water sources got exhausted. These RRWHs have been used wherever the night schools, crèche schools are located. Even community needs are also been met with the RRWHs. It has worked very effectively on a low cost and high benefits mode. And the whole system has been particularly useful for the communities when they are troubled by droughts. This credit must go to the villagers who have given the very natural and most viable idea.

The RRWHs also contributed to increase the children turnout in the schools. Various studies of the Barefoot College proved that the children percentage of attending the schools has risen after the RRWHs were introduced in the schools. Around 50 per cent increase in attendance has been found throughout the year. School buildings have been used to trap the water which will be used to fulfill the needs of the children in the school. Earlier, the lack of water in the toilets made children, especially girl children, not to attend the schools. All these RRWHs located in the schools have been supported by the local community. Neena, a beneficiary, says that, the concept of rainwater harvesting in the school buildings has motivated her to send her daughter to school. Earlier, her daughter used to just take care of the household activities in which bringing drinking water from 2.5 kilometers occupied most of the time. But with this initiative of Barefoot, her daughter has been sent to the school and instantly she was allowed to take water from the rain water harvesting tank in the school. She further claims that, as a result, her daughter need not walk for miles to get the drinking water and, more importantly, she has been given education. Now, she is the first girl in her family who has completed tenth class.

It is very interesting to note that all the Barefoot night schools have underground tanks in order to trap the rainwater to meet the needs of the children who attend the school. And even the children who attend the school are given water to take home as gift, which allows the parents to send their children to schools. It addresses the child labour, education and water problems. The approach has been turned down by many urban based engineers, including Sikkim State Chief Water Engineer (SCWE) once. But challenging the prejudice of the SCWE, the Barefoot architects have constructed one with a capacity of over 160,000 litres on a rooftop of a village school and the

Chief Minister (CM) and SCWE of Sikkim were invited to inaugurate it. Astonished at the construction, the CM approved 40 more rooftop rainwater harvesting tanks. As of now, a total of 1,000 RRWH's have been constructed by Barefoot water engineers in sixteen Indian states<sup>2</sup>, which altogether have a capacity of nearly 50 million litres of water. And unnoticed, 20,000 villagers have been employed to complete them (statistics obtained from Barefoot College on 19<sup>th</sup> November, 2010).

So far, around 3140 hand pumps have been installed through the Barefoot approach and 5000 water quality tests carried out in 3300 drinking water sources in 318 villages by 34 village technician in six Indian states. The hand pumps have been installed in almost 764 villages, covering seven states, through which, around 1 million people are benefited. Water quality tests by Barefoot technicians reached around 1.28 million. Piped water supply has reached 52,000 people and it is centralised only in Rajasthan. Devi, another beneficiary, mentioned, "The Barefoot rain water harvesting system must be prized a lot. Earlier I used to walk for miles in order to get drinking water because of which my health deteriorated and, most of the time I used to suffer from several health problems. But with the help of this particular approach, I am absolutely fine. Earlier I was of the view that, my health was not fine because of other reasons, but when I stopped walking for miles for drinking water, my health problem has been resolved".

Rainwater harvesting of Barefoot has reached 2, 30,000 people as of now. Apart from them, 1286 schools, collecting around 93 million litres of rainwater is providing drinking water to 5, 00,000 children going to schools in 16 states. Interestingly, with the use of rain water harvesting models, around 3,100 hectares of wasteland were developed in 77 villages in four states. A total of 1,686 toilets have been constructed in 1,286 schools for 2 lakh School going girls. (*Ibid*).

Practices of rain water harvesting have yielded greater results than merely solving water problems. Women and children have greatly benefited from this initiation as the time that they used to spend to carry drinking water from large distances earlier,

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<sup>2</sup> Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Bihar, Sikkim, Assam, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Nagaland, Manipur, Meghalaya and Jharkhand.

are now being utilised to find their livelihood. The replication of the method in other fifteen states itself show the importance of the initiative.

### **Communication and Crafts**

Various communication devices are being used by the Barefoot College to make the villagers aware about the social taboos. Communication is a key element to ensure transparency and accountability. In order to avoid any gaps, Barefoot College launched a communication section in 1981 using puppets to increase awareness related to several social stigmas. Social messages are made disseminated the audience through puppet shows, especially where the target groups are rural illiterate people. Issues of concern so far are child marriage, bride burning, the legal rights of women, Right to Education, Right to Information, exploitation of the poor, Equal Wages Act for both men and women and child education. Each year, they have a target of 100 to 150 plays reaching about 100,000 people in around 100 villages, which they would not miss. “The main intention of the communication section is about creation of a good world. We undertake activities on various social issues in order to create a better world especially in rural areas,” Ramniwas explained.

In 1985, immediately after a puppet show on *Roti* (Bread), about consuming liquor and its consequences in one of the villages, a person among the audience responded, “Did you listen to the play carefully? That happened to me. You all know how liquor totally destroyed me and my family. You have opened my eyes. Where were you all this time? I have a request to make. From now on, whenever you perform this play, please tell people that this is the real story of a man in the village of Chota Narena” (Roy & Hartigan 2008). This is the kind of response that the puppet shows evoke with their reality in order to motivate the illiterate and semi-illiterates.

There were even instances where the impact was so dramatic and result has appeared immediately. Ram Narayan mentioned, “Earlier I used to vote to those whom my parents voted. But after I attended the plays by the communication section on the importance of vote, I have realised the blunder that I have committed so far by misusing the vote. And from then onwards, I cast my vote to those who just work for

us.” That is how the villagers are made aware about various social issues like caste, dowry, importance of the vote, children’s education etc.

Ramniwas mentioned about the increase in awareness levels that he had witnessed, how communication always allows you to share with others whatever you know. He was asked to take care of women empowerment related activities, and he was sent to Tilonia to undergo training on the issues related to that. He claims opened up new vistas for him. He further claims that, he was much eager to eradicate untouchability practices, at least in his village, which still remains an unresolved issue. Then he asked himself, who was the untouchable in the house? Then he realised it could be mother, sister or wife. This thought led him to think differently, and he realised that in order to build a real India, in the first instance, equal opportunities have to be provided to everyone to excel. It’s about recognition and respect that we must offer to the women in our houses. So, he also learnt about women and their backwardness in the society. He used to tell the same in some of the plays, songs and dialogue that were performed in the villages. So, people started gaining knowledge about wages, political participation, village problems, women empowerment and student-teacher-parent relations, after attending the plays performed by the communication team. What exactly a teacher must do? Is it enough for him/her to just teach how to read or write? No, she/he has to create a better world where every child gets equal opportunities to attain their potential. She/he must work for the wellbeing of the society. A good house, good village, good society, good panchayat, and good state must be the objectives of any teacher. Education, of course, is the light to guide them. In such a sense, it allows them to create a proper environment in the villages, where everyone lives in harmony. This kind of attitude has evolved in Ramniwas’s behaviour after joining Barefoot College.

Villagers even pointed that the communication section has improved their awareness levels. Earlier, they used to practice several traditional practices that were harmful to social harmony. In fact, they further claim that, they practice them not intentionally, they have learned them from their elders and used to practice without knowing the cause and effect of that particular social evil. But the communication team has resolved all of them. Now everything is fixed, several practices including caste discrimination, gender discrimination have been minimised. When the researcher was

curious to know whether they have totally abolished in practice, the villagers admitted that, the practices are just minimised and not totally abolished.

Recently, about two years back, communication section came up with a community radio initiative. Community radio helps them to communicate with the villagers more systematically, at less cost. Though community radio is a technological adventure, these Barefoot professionals didn't leave this section to any outside professionals. They have learnt how to operate it, and they have proved their success through running various programmes on the community radio. Ramniwas shares his experiences while working with this new section. Community radio was initiated in 2009, but he was scared to work in community radio, because it was entirely different because of the technology involved in it. He is still not a technical man. If any rural development related issues happen, he will interview them and we will carry it on radio. He is like a content person, who needs to gather information and interviews and rest of the things are taken care by others in the section. The main intention of the community radio is about propagating rural culture among the villagers. It allows us to take pride in the village culture and ask the people not to destroy them. Any historically well-known songs will be used in the radio in order to give rebirth to the song. If any untapped talent in the villages is found, this will be popularised through interviews and performances.

As a whole, they use Community Radio as another set of communication section, which allows them to minimise their cost and experiment innovation more economically, and at the same time, attracting a lot of audience in a single programme itself.

### **Handicrafts**

Handicrafts section, under Hatheli Sansthan, deals with handicrafts production, selling them in foreign market, and organising stalls in the exhibitions to sell the products are some of the activities that the section is involved with. Around 18 people work in the handicrafts section. Apart from them, there are 300 part-time artisans. Marketing include establishing stalls in various exhibitions, maintaining a store in Tilonia and online business. The weavers, traditional craft persons and leather workers, have been

promoted under the Barefoot emblem. Though the crafts are traditionally made at homes, the Barefoot has trained 1850 women and made them specialists in the area. They have been provided markets in India and abroad with the help of friends of Tilonia. Friends of Tilonia is helping out the college to market the items in USA that the college produces. In order to facilitate that, a website [www.tilonia.com](http://www.tilonia.com) has been promoted. It is registered in US under 501(3) non-profit organisations. Craft industry in Tilonia often could be highlighted from the women's perspective due to the financial freedom that the crafts have given to them.

### **Women Empowerment**

Most of the activities of the Barefoot College have been managed and controlled by poor women. Women have been empowered to work as solar engineers, teachers and so on. Ingress in the area of solar technology itself is an unexpected development in any woman's life. Here, the rural poor, illiterate women handling such technologies is simply unbelievable. Women have gained the recognition and appreciations by the communities, which earlier never used to encourage women. Women have shown enormous capacity and confidence to render their services to their communities/regions, and, of course, it also helped these women to gain respectable position in the communities. Barefoot so far has made women solar engineers, women water engineers, school teachers, computer trainers, hand-pump mechanics, masons, architects and last, but not the least, fabricators of solar cookers. Illiterate rural women have been trained to handle computers to train unemployed youth in another application of innovation. In addition, rural women groups have been formed in many villages, in which the college is working in order to discuss gender related issues including rape and atrocities in the villagers concerned. Uma a respondent from the community, said that the women group solves several problems related to the gender discrimination in the society. They are very prompt and men start acting within their limits as the groups are active enough to take up *dharnas* to see that the culprit is properly punished.

Women empowerment has been seen as one of the inevitable source for the nation's development. Since independence, several policies have been taken up in order to strengthen the role of women in Indian economic development, but in fact, their hard

work which is domestic in nature has been underestimated and never measured by the male dominated Indian societies.

The Barefoot College has been working with various Government initiatives including self-help groups. So far, Barefoot has reached 62,500 people helping them in their 3095 rural women Self-Help groups, in order to fight against their exclusions related to poverty, dowry, domestic violence, minimum wages, bride burning and land ownership. Women have been given predominant position in order to make their lives brighter and sharper. Women were trained and made aware in order to fight against the social evils such as child marriage, dowry, minimum wages, etc. With the capabilities that they have earned over a period of time with the help of Barefoot, they have been training and awakening other women who never came out of their houses. The traditional knowledge has been employed where unemployment plays predominant roles across the globe.

In response to empowerment that the villagers have witnessed, Noori Bai, a 54-year-old illiterate computer expert on campus said, “In 1981, there was no question of girls going beyond the village for study. But, later, there was a transformation in the social settings, it all happened because of Mr. Bunker Roy who has dedicated his life to sustain our lives”. The whole task seems to be so simple, but is so difficult to replicate. If any task is simple which can bring a substantial change in the lifestyle, people will be more interested to replicate the whole procedure in order to attain the same as the original venture had. But it is so difficult in case of Barefoot College. “It is because we don’t trust communities enough. We do not think the youth have the ability and analytical skills to identify and solve their own problems” (United Nations 1999). But when we started believing in the capabilities of the villagers/communities, Barefoot structure can be well replicated.

Women participation in social movements is high in Rajasthan. Their active participation made the government to bend towards the needs of the people. That’s the reason, apart from their deprivation, women are so vibrant when it comes to social movements. Ramkaran mentions about women empowerment that, in Barefoot College, fighting for the rights of the people is given utmost priority. In Rajasthan all the movements are being led by women, Barefoot never get funds for doing social



movements. When they sit on strike or dharna, they need a lot of financial sources especially, food. Hence, all the women with whom Barefoot work have decided that, everyone has to donate Rs. 1/- and 4 kg grain per year. The grain is saved in the village itself. When they struggle and sit on strike, they use that grain. So, no one can dismiss or break the struggle because the dharna is self-sustained. So, this struggle stands very strong.

Lalita, in charge of the Water Testing section mentioned that women voices must be respected in the houses, and they should be given choices to empower themselves in the first, then their family, and later their communities. Barefoot has formed women groups to help others, and within a short span of time, they have learnt that women alone cannot protect the rights, because of rigid social customs and traditions. How to go to the police station, how to file a case and fight against those who violate women rights are some of the activities that are being taken care by women groups. Health education, legal education is an additional training that they provide to these women groups. These women groups comprise at least 15 members each. These women who take part in the groups hail from all social backgrounds like poor, rich, socially deprived, and everyone has to take care in the group.

Very surprisingly, women from upper castes fight for the rights of the lower castes and vice versa . They fight together irrespective of any classifications. “I belong to the Brahmin community. I always encourage women from deprived sections to fight against their deprivations. In my village, I filed the first case against the upper caste men who raped a woman from a deprived section. I became an enemy to others in the village. But I know whatever I do is correct, even my parents always have faith in me. People know fully well that Barefoot College only works for poor, that’s the reason the rich never approach us,” Ratan Behan who earlier worked with Women Empowerment section, said.

Ramibhai presently works with the women empowerment section and she clarified that, women group typically comprises around 20 to 40 women, the number may vary depending upon the population of the village. If it is a big village, the number would be around 40 and if it is a small one, the number is around 20. Every month, meetings are conducted to discuss the problems that they face. They also undertake several

Dharnas, mostly against social evils such as irregular or less wages, dowry and so on. The village level meetings are used to discuss matters related to the problems of the women like if any atrocity takes place in any village they will decide what kind of support they can offer to that particular woman in the meeting. If it is small problem, they solve it in the village level meeting itself, if it is somehow bigger, the issue will be resolved in Tilonia meeting, since around 5,000 women meet in Tilonia and almost all problems get fixed. These women are unpaid, it's a voluntary work.

Earning incomes have raised the living standards of the women; it has also resulted in raising respect levels in not only their families but also in the society where they live. Earlier, those who had seen women as incapable of doing many things, now realise that women are as equal as men, provided they are given equal opportunities to demonstrate their capabilities.

### **Physically Challenged under Barefoot Approach**

Physically challenged, in general, are deprived of education, knowledge and awareness. Due to this, they do not qualify for any government jobs. Their physical deprivation does not even allow them to go for any physical work. Hence, they have been neglected and underestimated by their families, as well as the society. Barefoot believes that every rural poor person, regardless of gender, caste, creed, physically disability, also has some knowledge which can be used for the upliftment of his/her personality/life. Barefoot has started investing its trust on PHC in order to uplift them.

The Barefoot through its dedicated surveys to identify the physically challenged in 190 villages of the Silora Block of Rajasthan, have identified more than 1500 physically handicapped men, women and children who are clutched in the deprivations. These surveys itself were conducted with the help of three disabled persons. It was found in the survey that all the disabled surveyed, are poor and disabled in several forms, not only in physically, but also economically and socially. With the sheer dedicated work style of Barefoot, so far they have trained 450 physically challenged persons for whom employment is generated. They were provided employment in several forms as Barefoot independent rural entrepreneurs, Barefoot teachers, pathologists, computer instructors, accountants, screen printers,

toy makers, recycling professions, and phone booth operators, as well as milk booth operators.

Jagdeesh, a physically challenged person, describes, “We, the physically challenged never get attention of anyone in the society. For that reason, our education, employment have been greatly restricted. Especially, differently abled persons from rural poor families are more vulnerable. I have completed intermediate, my father asked me to stop studies and start working. Hence, I decided to work but no one was willing to provide me a job. Then, someone told me about Barefoot College, which helps people like me in order to gain employment. In fact, it was all my fortune, people from Barefoot College started surveying in the nearby villages about the persons with disabilities. They collected data about physically challenged and, in the process, approached me too. That is how I could first become familiar with the people from Barefoot College. After observing my pitiable condition, they themselves came forward and offered me a job”. He further mentioned, “We work here very happily, we don’t have to fight with anyone in order to get two square meals a day and tea in the evening, we also get a chance to work and learn simultaneously”.

Jagdeesh further said, “My life has become so easy and happy, I started earning on my own. When physically challenged persons stay with the family, they will have to depend up on them, even for Re.1/-. But now, I am very happy because, I am sending some money even to my house. I have studied up to 12<sup>th</sup> class but no one was ready to give a job, we need house, money, but due to the lack of employment I couldn’t get anything, but after joining here, I got everything”. Gopal Suri, another physically challenged person felt , “I have witnessed a lot of transformation in my life. In fact, I used to be in sad circumstances before I came here, I was totally excluded from all the spheres, not only at the societal level, but also in the family environment. No one bothered about me. But, after becoming part of Barefoot College, everyone started respecting me, which I never expected. As a whole, I am very happy about what I am today. I learnt many things here”.

## **Summing Up**

To conclude, Barefoot approach is so innovative as far service delivery is concerned. Empowering the communities in order to fulfill their demands is a practice that has been successfully carried out for decades. With these innovative practices, lives of several sections have been transformed in two ways. First, the communities have benefited from this service delivery system in the process. Second, the most deprived in these communities have attained a dignified job serving their communities. The first has been discussed in this chapter, whereas the latter will be discussed in the next chapter. The next chapter *Implications of the Barefoot approach for the rural poor* aims at discussing the transformation in the lifestyle of those who have been provided employment in Barefoot, transporting them from the state of exclusion to that of inclusion.

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## CHAPTER - VI

### IMPLICATIONS OF THE BAREFOOT APPROACH ON THE RURAL POOR

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*Preparing the poor to face poverty is the best available options to eradicate poverty*

The exciting activities carried out by Barefoot College have transformed the lives of thousands of illiterate rural poor. The present chapter deals with the narratives of those, whose lives have been positively affected. It is believed that the Barefoot approach has been praised by the rural poor, but criticised by the urban educationalists. Irrespective of the variety of views, the true part is that it has helped several people to gain dignified employment even without having any prior educational qualifications or professional experience. Two kinds of beneficiaries of the Barefoot approach can be identified; first- those who are provided with services at cheaper rates and second- those who are provided with training and employment. There is a tremendous transformation that has been observed in the lifestyles of the stakeholders. Some work on Barefoot campus because they like the kind of employment provided to them, others like its philosophy and the learning pattern and the rest work because of the activities that they undertake in order to provide various services to the most deprived.

According to Mohanlal, who is working as an in charge of the Audio Visual section, altogether Barefoot approach is excellent; as he has learnt many things. He is not restricted to learn about only one issue, but he can go to any section and learn. In order to project an individual as a multidimensional person, there are frequent internal transfers which allow everyone to try every aspects of the college activity. “I was initially with the communication team; we had a field centre in Binjar Wada. It was 5 km away from my village. I was an actor in the communication team. After that, I worked with the mobile library. In the mobile library, we used to visit all the night schools in order to distribute books to the children. After that, I was with the education section, my activities included running a bridge course, night schools, training programmes to teachers and to arrange meetings, as well as visiting the night schools, and solving problems. After that, I joined the transport section as driver” Vishalal described his attachment with the college. In Bagchand’s view, “Barefoot

approach is extremely good. It gives importance to the individual, not to the qualifications. If the individual is interested, he/she can use his/her talents and transform the interest into wonders. After I came here, I realised my ability and learnt a lot”. “Barefoot experiments are great, because uneducated people get employment. More than that, they get opportunities to learn and speak with others, we discuss several things with people like you. My lifestyle has been drastically transformed. When I was in my village, I didn’t know anything. At the same time, when I was a housewife, whatever my husband earned, it was not sufficient to sustain the family. But now, we both earn and share the family expenditure. More than that, it is all about learning and sharing of knowledge with others, which I like a lot in Tilonia”, Rekha mentioned.

Barefoot has gained a lot of momentum in the areas where it works. People respect the college because of the ideal activities that they undertake. Badrilal reported that he knew Barefoot College because, there was a field centre in Kadampura, near his village. Everyone knows about it because they provide good health and education and other facilities to the deprived. In this sense, they approach every house in order to request the parents to send their children to school, if not day school at least to the night school.

### **Whom do they train and employ?**

Their target population, as discussed earlier, is the most deprived, who would be vulnerable if not trained and employed by Barefoot. The category is filled with poor, women, physically challenged, Dalits, Tribes and other vulnerable sections. The college tries to accommodate all those who fall under the realm of social exclusion. Let us observe the backgrounds of those interviewed.

Those who have been provided employment under Barefoot hail from diverse backgrounds. But once they were given employment, they are all leading lives with dignity and honour.

There were people who have joined Barefoot because they couldn't sustain their families. Couple of respondents have mentioned that they joined Barefoot because

their husbands had passed away when they were just around 20 years old. The whole situation in their house was horrible. In such circumstances, there was an unavoidable need for them to work.

### **Recruiting Night School students as employees**

Barefoot College, has implemented a policy through which they recruit some of their employees from the nights school alumni. A few respondents have said that, they studied at the night schools for four years and later attended day school for four years. After that, their studies came to an end due to lack of availability of a school in nearby towns. In view of difficult family conditions, they have approached Barefoot College and were provided jobs almost immediately. Barefoot has immediately provided them a job after came to know their problem. They believe that they are given an opportunity to give back to the organisation that has nurtured them and to the community by working in the organisation. One of the respondent further states that, he has been working in the college since four years on water testing. He goes to the villages and tests the water. Villagers tell him which part of the village is affected by diseases, then he tests the water in that locality. He is very well trained in testing the water.

Another respondent, who was also a night school student, narrated that, upon successful completion of his schooling, he had worked in a shop in Kishangarh. While working in the shop as labour, he met with an accident which rendered him physically challenged and could no longer lift any weights in the shop and became unfit for the job there. Hence, he has left the job in the shop and met Bajwanthnandan Ji, who was heading the solar section, and requested for a job. Bajwanthnandan Ji has brought Chota Singh's case before coordinators meeting. The committee decided to give him a job. Some other physically challenged respondents who have also studied in Barefoot night schools, they have been provided employment in the Barefoot system. The selection took place entirely on a need based approach.

Another respondent, Naurat, who was also a night school alumni, has a slightly different experience. He completed his schooling in Barefoot night school. Later he studied up to tenth class in Kishangarh. Poor financial background pushed him to

work immediately after completion of intermediate. He found work in Kishangarh and worked there for three years. Though he was working in a cloth shop, the financial situation remained bad. They used to pay him very little - Rs. 1500 per month. At that juncture, one of his friends told him about the importance of the Barefoot College here in Tilonia. Immediately, he approached the Barefoot College and requested them to provide him a job. They agreed up on the payment of Rs. 1800 pm (minimum wage) after completion of some formalities. His first placement was in a night school as a teacher. Later, he was transferred to Shingla field centre. He has now joined BA first year in Kota Open University.

### **Resistance from Villagers/ Communities**

According to some of the female respondents, when their family conditions were horrible due to either demise of the husband or due to indebtedness, there was a dire need for them to work. Exactly during then, they were introduced to the Barefoot College. Over a period of time, they have started working in the College, and later they faced strong opposition from the communities to which they belong because the male dominant social structure of these communities discouraged women going out for work. But since, employment was unavoidable for these women in order to sustain their families, they resisted the opposition and showed courage by working continuously in the College.

### **Other Adverse Circumstances**

Women who were earlier never been out of their houses are now empowered through providing employment under Barefoot approach. One of the respondent says that before joining the Barefoot College, she was just looking after her family needs as a house maker. After she came to the Barefoot College, she has become more independent. Earlier, she was only restricted to the kitchen, but now her sphere has been widened from that of family to society. She decided on her own to work in Barefoot College. Her husband used to work in Barefoot College. She went to the College just to see how it works. To her surprise, they asked her then work in the college, as they have found that she was interested in the philosophy of the college. She discussed the matter with her husband and both of them decided about her employment in the college. In her life, two men have played very crucial role. One is



her husband and another is Mr. Bunker Roy. Mr. Bunker Roy identified her skills and encouraged her whenever she was committing mistakes. Her husband has also been a great source of inspiration to her. He asked her to learn several things and advised her to take control over the issues in which she works. She narrates, “I was asked to undergo computer training. At that time, I neither had English knowledge nor knowledge of computer applications. I was first appointed in Audio Visual section. Later, I also worked in Accounts, and then administration. After that, I have been working here in the water testing section”.

Another respondent Punaram revealed that he traditionally hails from a musician story telling community, i.e., *Bhat* community. They traditionally write stories and narrate them. Even Chand Baradai who has written on Pruthviraj Raso was also from this community. The successors are not as intellectual like Baradai. Hence, people like him were not in a position to locate better jobs. Since, there was a lack of interest among public towards 'story telling', slowly the income levels of the respondent decreased. Apart from their community profession, he didn't know any other. After this turmoil, he got so involved in *bajan* activities at the local temple, due to the strong involvement in Bajan activities, that he was made a Baba (Sadu). Everyone used to offer prayers. It went so impressive, daily they used to come and offer prayers, free food, respect without any work, was altogether another value addition. But one day, he realised, that he should do something else. Then he has come across the Barefoot communication team in his village from whom he has been inspired and then on their suggestion he came to Tilonia for training.

Another respondent recounted, “We got scared on Punaram's arrival in the campus, after looking at his huge beard, he was treated as swamy in a temple before he came here. We were even not sure, how this chap would complete his training. But, today he is entirely different. Since our ways of working are different, I can say that he has adopted Barefoot philosophy and, of course, improved himself a lot. In response, Punaram said that, “The college has given us dignified employment, which we would not get anywhere else. Hence, I have developed a lot of respect towards the college, because of which I obey the college rules”.

All the respondents traditionally hail from different backgrounds but what keeps them together is exclusion that they had faced in one or other form. Most of them lack tenth years of formal studies. Their financial situation was bad and they had to find employment. Otherwise, they had continued to face extreme poverty and allied exclusions. In this situation, they have found Barefoot College and approached them for employment.

### **Financial background of the respondents**

Almost all the respondents had forced extreme adverse financial situations before being employed by Barefoot College. Earlier, some of them had some or other kind of employment which was extreme harmful or exploitative in nature, whereas others did not have any form of employment. Altogether, everyone had extreme difficulties in leading a life with dignity. For instance, before joining Barefoot College, Naru had worked in a marble factory for four months in the nearby town Kishangarh and earlier had also worked in a small store for 5 years. They used to pay him around Rs. 2000 per month both in the marble factory, and the ration store. In the Marble industries, he used to get Rs. 2000 per month, which was very less. When he approached Barefoot College, he was told, they would pay more salary than the Marble store and he would also get four holidays a month. He further narrates, “In fact, it was my dream to get a job in Barefoot College, when I first visited Barefoot College during my study in the night school, it was a tremendous feeling. Most reliably, what made me to quit the job in marble area was that the job use to be so boring, nothing special that I could learn from them, and apart from that I never used to have holidays and the salary was less. Here, in Barefoot College, I have everything. As days started passing, I have developed a lot of respect towards the organisation. There is no difference among the individuals in the campus. Everyone is equally treated, equally paid and equally respected”. Another respondent, Lalchand, was just paid Rs. 300 pm when he was working in a marble factory. Because of the low payment, he quit the job. After he quit, he was idle without a job for several years. After a long time somehow he managed to got to know about Barefoot College where he was paid a comparatively huge salary, i.e., Rs. 1200 per month.

Some of the respondents have joined barefoot College because their families were financially underprivileged. One of the respondent states that when he was in school, he used to go to the field and work along with his parents in order to help them. His father was a government school teacher. But, financially, they were not well settled, the government salaries were not so adequate. His parents asked him not to go to the college after his higher secondary, because it would lead to financial instability in the family. Through his uncle he came in touch with Barefoot College and earned a job.

Some of the respondents financial situation was bad due to lack of employment. The condition was such that they had to work at any cost. After learning about the activities of Barefoot College, They have approached the College. Ramswaroop was one of those who were given employment. When he first approached them, they said they would pay a minimum wage of Rs. 420 per month. When he earlier approached someone outside for employment, they said they would give him only Rs.300 per month, which is less than the minimum wage proposed by Barefoot. If he chose an outside job, he would have to pay the whole salary towards his train charges. If he joined Barefoot College, apart from the comparative high salary, he would also get a chance to learn several things. In the first instance, along with other illiterates, he was placed in accounts. There were seven people along with him in that section. He always feels that he is in the process of learning. He found everyone works very hard in Barefoot College.

On the financial lines, everyone provided employment by Barefoot College were in dire need of employment, without which their lives would have been horrible. That's the reason Barefoot follows need based approach, while recruiting the employees.

### **How is the Training?**

Learning by doing is the hidden mantra of the training in Barefoot College. Learning from others is one of the very admirable adventures involved under Learning by doing parameter. Very significantly, most of the times, the training is carried out by rural illiterates, who had undergone trainings earlier. One of the respondent says that, he had undergone intensive training. The work and training were interdependent. There was no formal training at all. He has learnt whatever he has seen. He was asked to

give medicine which he has learned from the doctor and started distributing medicines. Another respondent explored that in the same way, she had undergone computer training for six months, training had taken place in the Barefoot campus itself, Lalita, who works with the water testing section, had been given the training. She is also an illiterate woman who has never been to school, she learnt how to work on a computer and she taught the same to others.

Another woman respondent, who works in welding related activities mentioned that during the initial days she was scared, scared to work in the welding section because she thought society would not accept her as the work that she carries out is very new to the women community. At the Barefoot College, everyone has an attitude of 'why not'. When men are working, why not women? Why not women excel in their talents? Why should they not earn money? This has allowed her to stay with the welding section. This is all about innovative ways of involving in the inclusion process. Barefoot helps them to get empowered through utilising all sorts of environment, irrespective of whether it is positive or negative.

One of the most important aspects of the training is, those who are trained in Barefoot will train the next batches. Training allows them to gain access over the issues that are of concern for Barefoot College, as well it also allows them to have control over the local resources. Some of the respondents have stated that, they were in training for one year, it was great. They got to meet different people, and got to know different sections and it also helped them to work with people from different sections. One of the respondent has said that, earlier when he was in a ration shop in the nearby town, he was locked in the room, in the sense he didn't know anything whatever happened outside the shop. He was like a machine working from morning to evening in the shop. But now, he has learnt many things about society and the activities that the Barefoot undertakes. Here, he also gets an opportunity to go out and see the sorrows that the poor are facing. In fact, he has been to almost all the districts in Rajasthan so far, which he has never imagined. He has also gone in social audit workshops and prepared reports.

Some of the respondents believed that the training was quite tough in the initial days as they were never aware about the issues that they were trained in. It helped them to

grow social capital and get to know and learn about several other issues that the society faces across. Another female respondent has mentioned that, she felt very sad, she didn't even know how she would carry out her training, and she thought it was a foreign company. She had several questions like will they allow her to work? She had a lot of doubts, but afterwards she realised that this is going to really work out. Adding to that, Ramcharan said, "We didn't know anything before. Once we started learning in the training, we got to know the importance of the training. Those who do not know anything before, sit and learn from each other and from those who have learned in the same environment earlier".

Another respondent clarifies that, in the initial stage, the training was difficult, but afterwards, he understood it. Puppet show needs to attract public. It needs a lot of care, as well as smartness where they articulate their feelings. Sometime, they may even face a lot of crisis during the shows. Sometimes, people do ask him times to sing movie songs, which he never did, because it is useless, it never offers any significance.

### **Transformation towards Inclusion**

The lives of the people above have been transformed very positively. Their families have been sustained with secured employment. Their awareness levels have gained momentum with regard to many social issues, their children have been educated, their awareness of political, cultural and social issues have been elevated. In this regard, one of the respondent said "One thing I must tell you that I was two and my sister was four years old, when we came here. Environment in Barefoot College was entirely different, living style was different and it was a thought-provoking structure. Barefoot College works for women empowerment, girl child education, it asks people to step away from the faults and proceed in the direction of truth. Women have to wear veil, girl child should not be sent to the schools - these were the rules that occupied a predominant role in a woman's life during my childhood, but our parents questioned them and took a radical step, which resulted in our empowerment. They allowed us to be free from any chains and to enjoy ultimate freedom. I should mention here that if we grow in a good environment like Barefoot, our thoughts would be noble. We are four sisters, our marriages were not held when we are 14

years like all my friends. We were given total freedom to excel, and we have broken the rule of the villages, cultures and societies. My friends in the village who have grown along with me were married long back and they have children, they can't do anything except taking care of their children and family. They are totally disempowered. Their life was totally dictated by parents before marriage now by their husbands. Our life has been changed because we have grown up in such an excellent environment," Bata explained. In her view, the kind of environment that she has come across in the Barefoot structure has certainly helped her to gain access to the social structures which ultimately brought inclusion in several forms.

Children of those working in Barefoot College have been attaining good education. Parents concede that it is possible only because of the continuous support they receive from Barefoot College. Bata, the child whose parents work in Barefoot College, had her education totally supported by Barefoot College. Not only her, everyone whose parents work in the Barefoot College, if they want to send their children for higher studies, Barefoot maintains some funds to disburse scholarships in order to encourage the parents. When she was in school, Barefoot College helped Bata in terms of fulfilling her needs. Another respondent has mentioned that she has two daughters, both of them have finished M.A., B.Ed. with the extensive support that she received from the College. Without it, it would have been quite an impossible to give them a dignified education.

There are some people who have approached Barefoot because they have lost their livelihood due to adverse circumstances they had come across. One of the respondent has said that, he had become physically challenged while working in the industries. His wife was already working in the handicrafts section. He used to get a lot of support from his wife to run the family, even in the absence of his job. He has become handicapped and it was highly impossible to work outside the Barefoot structure. He felt very happy after he came here, because he got a chance to meet several kinds of people and to do entirely new work which he had not even imagined before. People in Barefoot are unique and noble. There are no disparities here. People can work whenever they have time, irrespective of day or night. It has opened a new space and new mode of working from which he has drawn much inspiration.

There are even cases such as the employment secured in Barefoot which helped some of them to have their own families. For one of the respondent, Barefoot is an institution which has given him a life. Earlier, he didn't have any family of his own. Because he got a job in Barefoot College, he was able to get married. Today he has a son. Earlier he was not at all sure to have a married life. It all happened because of the Barefoot College. He is physically challenged, and he challenges the status quo by asking, 'who bothers about the Physically Challenged in the outer society, whereas their welfare has been given utmost priority in the College'. He insists that, if he divides his life into two parts, the first part is before he joined Barefoot College where his life was not secure. Now in the second part after joining the college, he has attained everything which made his life so much happier.

Those who are not aware about the magnitude of the Barefoot approach became aware about Barefoot's philosophy once they are accommodated in the structure. One of the respondent said, he is very happy about his present work. It is a great opportunity to learn. He hasn't even studied tenth class, but got an opportunity to work in an innovative venture. Earlier, many people who studied with him during the school days have further completed their plus two and some of them have even completed their degrees, and got various jobs, but they are not as happy as he is now. They work in the marble industry, they do not even know what solar technology is, and there are friends working in police, he tells them, "See, you guys never get a chance to go anywhere. I have been visiting several places and learning several things." His friends daily ask him, where are you going today? The whole approach demonstrates that it is the duty of the fresher to the campus to adjust with the circumstances and adopt the structure.

The Barefoot philosophy helped them to even realise what their role should be in family, college and society. Ramswaroop, who presently works as an accountant in Barefoot College mentioned that, when he listened to Mr. Bunker Roy in a meeting about what Barefoot College was, he became aware of its ideology, its importance and how it offers its services to the poor and marginalised. Their words of inspiration have brought a realisation to him. Then, he decided to stick to the college. Today, he doesn't even know how much salary he has been paid. Starting from such a scenario where he thought of quitting because of less salary, he now never thinks of the salary,

a true transformation he could witness in his life. The salaries are directly credited in his bank account. He further narrates, "Several of my friends and relatives always enquire why am I still working here, what do I get? They always ask me to go along with them, so that a better job will be provided with better facilities and salary. One friend, who earlier worked in Barefoot College as an accountant, left for the marble industry because of higher salary offered there. He has asked me several times to join him so that I will get three times more than what I am earning now, but all are in vain, because I am not interested at all. I said whatever I get, I am satisfied. Frankly speaking, I did think a couple of times to leave because of the high salaries that I might get outside for my degree, but I couldn't due to the affection that I have towards the Barefoot College", he says. The innovative environment and learning-by-doing structure helps the employees to experiment innovatively.

Sometimes, this transformation has also helped them to successfully undertake some innovative experiments. One of the respondent, spoke about one of such innovative instrument that he has come up with. He has fabricated a very innovative instrument in LED lamps, which lights better and consumes less battery. He has given the idea and there are companies that manufacture the instrument. So, he met one such company in Delhi and explained the same. Hence, the instrument has been manufactured, based on his idea. Apart from that, the Delhi-based company also prepares several other new instruments according to the Barefoot College needs. These illiterate solar engineers have developed several new such innovative instruments. Technology changes rapidly, that's the reason everyone has to adjust accordingly. Barefoot College's innovations allow them to go for any modifications in the instrument in accordance with their needs. In such cases, even repairs are also very easily taken care. Earlier, he didn't even know how computer works. Now, he plays with it like a toy. He has studied only till 8th class. He works on PowerPoint and types in Word, and, of course, can do many things on the computer. This is all that he has learnt in Barefoot College. He has an email ID, and he gets daily approximately more than ten mails and he also replies to them. If he is working outside in any company, they would not allow him to work on the other areas, they would not allow him to touch the computer. But in Barefoot structure, everyone has been given all the opportunities to work on whatever they are interested in.



Another respondent mentioned that, earlier just she used to take care of kitchen and household activities. After she came here, she has learnt many things. She had never seen a computer before. In fact, now, she is a professional in the operation of computers. She has just gone to the school for six years, she barely knows alphabets, but now she can handle all activities of the office in regard to the computer work. It all started, when she has seen uneducated women working in the solar section and working on computers, she has realised that, she could also do it, like others. She was given training for some time by those uneducated professionals. Later on, she started practicing on the computer. After long hours of practice, she became a professional. Another respondent mentions that, earlier, she didn't even come out of her house, hence, she was not aware about her rights. Earlier, she was even scared to talk with others as she is doing now. She has even gone back to home several times during the training, because she was scared. Now, wherever she go, she handles the tasks on her own, she has received a big certificate by gaining a chance to work here. People sometimes wonder how she balance work and educational background. Some of them feel that she is lying to them. Everyone feel comfortable after listening to her, they say she speaks very confidently. Before coming to Barefoot, she never even thought of going out and speaking to men. This all became possible only because of Barefoot. In her entire family, she is the first woman to go out for work.

Transformation has been attained from that of the exclusion to the inclusion. There are many things that have changed in the lifestyle of the people. Many respondents have narrated that Barefoot College has given good education, good social settings and good environment in the villages. There is tremendous increase in the school going children, especially girls. In the night schools, almost 70 per cent enrolled are girls.

Transformation in the life patterns of the respondents have happened in more than one area. Their social settings, behavioural aspects, children education, health conditions have all been transformed. Respect in the society and empowerment in case of women and dalits have been attained. Employment and financial stability that they have attained help them to be more dynamic and to face exclusions bravely. Villagers who earlier treated them with disdain have now started respecting them. More than

anything else, social equity has been made possible among these excluded sections. How promotion of social equity has happened under this approach is discussed below.

### **Promotion of Social Equity**

Respondents say that they work in Barefoot College without any discrimination. Their intentions to offer ways to the poor to come out of their exclusions have been attained. Barefoot College never changed its services to look after the poor and marginalised in the post-transformation phase. Before they run a night school or install a hand pump or recruit employees, they look into the background of the problem, what adverse situations can be caused by the unresolved problem. Then, the most needy are provided with the services. Ramniwas hails from a Scheduled Caste community. He is traditionally from the sweeper community. After several surveys, in 1983, a drilling team from Barefoot College visited his village Akodia (40 km away from Tilonia). There was a huge caste problem in the rural Rajasthan villages. They came and asked him where the *harijan* colony was. He asked them, "What do you want, I am from a Harijan Colony?" Then, they have asked him whether there was any drinking water problem in the community. He told them there was a huge problem of drinking water. They assured him that they will fix a hand pump there, they just had to pay Rs. 300, through collections from his community.

He thought a hand pump costs around Rs. 10,000/- but they said, they would install it just for Rs. 300/-. How amazing! He just gathered everyone from the colony, the Barefoot College team asked them several questions, like from where do you get water, how far way it is And so on. What happens, if water is not there? The responses were, 'Even we will have to stay without water for some time because of the distance.' Then they asked, 'Ok, collect Rs 300 from the community, we will install the water pump.' But, in vain, after everyone contributed, the community could collect only Rs. 150 . They were all so poor, one can even imagine, how a *Harijan* colony is in terms of financial status, that's why they couldn't even contribute what the Barefoot team asked for. The community informed the team about the same. The team decided to install the pump set. Then the story started, villagers entered the scene, knowing the fact that the hand pump was being installed in *Harijan* colony. They asked the Barefoot College's representatives, 'Why are you fixing a hand pump

here. It would be wasteful. We would not allow this to happen.’ Because of the entire nuisance developed by upper castes, Barefoot College representatives told the Harijans, ‘We will come in the night time so that no one can obstruct us.’ They further asked us to give a request letter. That’s how they have installed a hand pump in the *Harijan* colony.

He was astonished at their work and asked who they were. They had come all the way and fixed a hand pump - that too in a *Harijan* colony! Then replied that they were from Tilonia. That incident was an amazing experience for him. Later, he cycled for 40 km to see how Tilonia was and what was there. He has seen how they work, and felt very happy. He was not at all aware about the values that they upheld, but he was very happy to see Barefoot College.

Caste disparities are tackled without hassle. People from both upper as well as lower castes, take equal part in the system that governs them. One of the respondents who hails from the Brahmin community, clarified that, his caste never became a hurdle for him to interact with others. He takes water from the same pot as other people. He further mentions, “We are like a family, if anyone has any problem everyone is concerned about it. If there is no food in my house, I approach others, irrespective of his/her caste. I invite everyone to the functions in my house. Everyone actively takes part in the developmental activities”.

Barefoot College is an ideal institution, as caste or religion do not matter in the College. Everyone has to follow the same procedures and work accordingly. All the social evils have been tackled with a positive outlook, change is compulsory for those who stay in Barefoot College and change is certainly towards progress. The campus environment allows them to be more social and progressive. While fighting against the social evils, Barefoot College has faced the hostility of several individuals across the villages where it works. Barefoot College always encouraged the poor and deprived and provided them with decent jobs. Because of its innovative experiments, several people in Rajasthan and elsewhere have developed a lot of respect towards Barefoot College. Physically challenged and those who are in deprived conditions, as well as Scheduled Castes and Tribes have always been encouraged.

**Satyanarayana**

I have been working here for the last 12 years. Initially, I used to fix tube lights in my village. Later, I joined in Kishangarh Marble area for job. I failed in IX class. Then, I stopped my studies and decided to work. In my village, I used to do electricity fitting and wiring work. There was a huge demand for Motor windings in the village. Hence I went to Kishangarh and learnt how to fix winding for a year. I was earning Rs. 200 pm. I used to go there on bicycle, Kishangarh is located 22 km away from my village. I go in the morning and come back in the evening, after working for the full day, I was just paid Rs. 7 a day, which was not enough to sustain. Though I was working throughout the day, my family had to face extreme exclusions due to lack of proper means to lead a more secure life.

They used to pay me very less apart from ignoring all my requests to increase the salary. Further, they also warned, "If you work on the same amount, you will have work. Otherwise, you will have to leave". In my village, there was no electricity at all in order to run the motors. Hence, usage of motors came down, and it resulted in decreased opportunities. Then I went to Jaipur. I worked in an industry where motor meters were manufactured. I used to get Rs. 700 a month in 1997. With Rs. 700 in a city, I got nothing to sustain. I searched a lot for a better job, but in vain and all my hard work was of no use. Then, I decided to go back and I never wanted to work in a city.

So, I told my parents the same, who resisted me, but they also didn't have any other option. My uncle used to teach in one of the Barefoot night schools. He asked me what I can do. I said I am quite sound in electronics, then he brought me to the solar section. By that time, the solar section had projects from UNDP and European Union. He asked me Whether I can do it. I replied why not? I was surprised to see such kind of huge and costly projects being taken up in the village. Because I was from village, and not much educated, they thought that I would like to do something innovative, they gave me a job instantly. I was given training for six months here. Our solar electricity system in main campus which was depending up on 50 DC has been reinstalled to make it as strong as a 40 KW AC. We have undertaken changing of electrification of the whole campus. We have fixed 8 power plants, each five KWs. Now 24 hours solar electrification has been provided in the campus. Apart from a job,

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it also gave me several options to learn many things. I was sent to Nepal to give training on solar technologies. I got several chances to visit several Indian states; I have been to Sikkim, Assam, Andhra Pradesh, NIRD (Rural Technology Park), ITDA project in Paderu and Visakhapatnam.

Ramniwas's whole story must be narrated in order to form a conclusion about the status of the Barefoot leverage while dealing with caste related issues. He said that, he had finished his 11<sup>th</sup> standard, but due to the financial problems, he left his studies and took up employment. He went to factories in Ahmadabad city. There was no employment in the nearby villages, they couldn't open a tea stall, they couldn't do managerial things. If they don't tell the caste, they would not be allowed to open a stall. If they tell, anyhow, they would not be allowed to stay there. Due to this problem he had gone to Ahmadabad to work in a factory. There, two of his colleagues were killed due to gas leakage, then, he got scared and came back home, and nothing was fine back at home. There was an Adult Education Centre in his village, which was being run by some organisation based in Ajmer. Though it was an Adult Education Centre, a lot of children used to attend along with adults. He didn't go there to study, because if he went there to study, people would stay away saying he was a Dalit and would pollute them. Every Saturday, there was an entertainment programme like singing and storytelling for which he was hired. When he started working there for entertainment related activities, children started joining the programme in huge numbers, he used to tell them good stories and sing melody songs, though it was not his tradition. In this way, he has worked in adult education section for one year.

Later, he has decided to quit because they were not promoting equality; they were not implementing what they said. They used to practice a lot of caste discrimination. He got top rank in the children evaluation, though he was from a Dalit background. He had become a challenge to many of his colleagues. Having vibrant knowledge, he always stood top, he has started asking them why he shouldn't be allowed to take water from the same pot. Once he kept his hand in a pot through which they all used to take water. Knowing about this incident, they broke the pot, and when he touched the food that they were about to eat, they threw it to the dogs. Meanwhile they sent him to Tilonia for puppetry training. he knew Tilonia already because of the hand

pump experience that he has already shared. It was in 1986, he came for training. Ramniwas further clarified that, " Sankar Singh Ji was there in the section as an in-charge, he asked me to get water for him, I thought he was joking, because he was from warrior caste and I was from a Scheduled Caste, so there were no possibilities to drink water that we touch. Sometimes I felt that, he was joking as part of his upper caste arrogance. Out of fear, I brought the water, and he had taken it, it was a magic for me. I thought what this man was. He was a Singh, and I, a dalit, the deprived. This experience helped me to understand the situations in Tilonia, I stayed there for seven days. Those days were the most memorable in my life. We ate together, sat together and drank water from the same pot. It was entirely opposite to the experience in Adult Education Centre, where I worked earlier. They never used to give what they ate, I had a separate plate, and the food was also different, they never allowed me to be with them. Then I decided to quit Adult Education Centre and join Barefoot College, because I realised that this could be my real destination, I came here only because everyone sat together and ate together, that is what I liked most at the college".

"I enquired how I would get a job. Shankar Ji told to meet Mr. Bunker Roy with an application, so I wrote an application and approached Mr. Bunker Roy. Then he asked me what I wanted to do there. I replied, there is a huge untouchability practice in the village, there, I couldn't work. So what do you want to do here, Mr. Bunker Roy immediately asked back, I told I would become a helper/Peon. Mr. Bunker Roy responded, no no, there wouldn't be any peon in Tilonia. I thought he had gone mad, he immediately asked me, would you become an accountant? It was another shock for me. Because if a dog gets into house, it is not at all problematic, but if we go, it becomes a turmoil. I thought Mr. Bunker was also joking with me. I told how could I, I haven't studied much, an accountant must have coat, tie, shoe, and finally I said to him, I am interested, but I am scared. He observed that I am capable but scared due to the social evils hence, he had insisted that I be an accountant. I was astonished because of his belief in my capabilities and decided to join the training. Since I have a lot of interest in learning, I have learnt it very soon.

After spending three months in Barefoot, he was sent to the field centre for four years. He had worked there as a multipurpose worker. His colleagues in the field centre were not happy to work under his supervision, because he was a dalit. He has received

constant support from Tilonia during that particular time, which was beyond his imagination. Barefoot College had taken a decision several years ago that, whoever promotes or practices untouchability, won't be allowed to continue here. There were a lot of untouchability practices in the villages, but in Barefoot College, it was totally abandoned. Tilonia was daring enough to take up such a crucial step which has been ideal even today. Almost 10 teachers quit their job in the field centre. Their reason was how can a person from lower caste dictate to them. In the light of such situations, whoever quit his/her job, received a letter from Tilonia in which it was mentioned, *If at all you want to work, you work, if caste becomes your problem then it is always better to quit, in such situations, even we might file a case against you under SC/ST Atrocities Act. With this, finally, except two, everyone was back.*

He further clarified, "In the society, we are not allowed to sit with others on chairs, not allowed to take tea in the roadside shops in the villages, we are not permitted to be part of the social discussions in the villages, but Barefoot College never allowed any such activities. That's the only reason which has bonded me here for more than 25 years. If I go back to my home in the village, again I will have to face the same kind of untouchability which I have avoided while staying at Barefoot. Hence, I am not interested to go to the village at all. Equal opportunity in the Barefoot allows me always to be with the college".

Working against the caste hierarchies in Indian rural settings is not an easy task, it needs strategic attention. Barefoot has done the same since the beginning, in terms of not looking into the upper strata or rich populations, it has been very keen to promote solutions for the problems that the most deprived have been afflicted with. With their effort, Barefoot approach has provided space for the deprived sections such as dalits and women to fight against the social evils. Moreover, this attempt has allowed them to keep themselves away from the magnitude of exclusion. The nature of work that they undertake in the College is multidimensional in nature, where everyone is expected to participate in all other activities irrespective of their assigned task. There is a need to discuss how these unskilled illiterate people could undertake a variety of works is discussed below.

### **Multidimensional nature of Employment**

Everyone who works at the college is expected to play multidimensional roles. Everyone is trained in all the aspects that the college runs on. It helps the college to use the capabilities of everyone who works in the college in all the sections, if needed. It also helps the employees to be multi-knowledgeable. One of the respondent mentioned that, he has started his career with solar section, which was followed by, in a sequence; computer, NREGA, Medical, crèche, and education. Another respondent describes that he was working in the mess in the early days. Later, he also worked in transport section as a driver. He has worked with Balwadi. In fact, he was the in-charge, and he also worked with women empowerment and took care of night schools. Then, he has again gone back to the field and started working on Self Help Groups, rainwater harvesting and NREGA. Under NREGA, he used to conduct meetings and make people aware about the rules of the game.

Another respondent has shared his experiences, how he is useful as a resource person in activities, apart from his official task. Now he work as a driver, he drives for everyone. He is involved in all the activities, apart from driving. Whenever he visits night schools, he will immediately involve himself if something goes wrong. He will ask them to rectify that. That is why he feels very comfortable here. Anyone can involve in any activities, provided he/she is interested. Learning is not at all denied to anyone. Apart from the work, we can also help/improve other activities.

They believe that it is all about how multidimensional one is, “We are not government officials who just come to office, spend some time and go back. We work in the name of the poor, so we should not say that my expertise only in one particular area, so I am not ready to work on the other. I also worked in Singla and Chota Narena field centres. I was also so curious to go out and explore. I have visited places like Bombay, Hyderabad, Bangalore, Trivandrum, Delhi, Bhopal, etc. I have also been into several projects that Barefoot College has taken up, I was looking after the financial matters. Once I went to the field centre, I have never restricted myself to the accounts work alone, I also excel as a multipurpose worker. It is not money that decides our stay here, but what we learn and how much we could support the



communities are the two different dynamics that always keeps me going, ” Ramswaroop shared his experience.

People are happy to work anywhere under Barefoot approach because, there is no divide among the employees. Irrespective of the nature of work that one carry out, he/she is equally respected. Some of the respondent said that there is no difference among the employees, that’s the reason they love Tilonia. Everyone works equally and gets paid equally and, of course, respects each other. It’s all about providing opportunities to excel. He was in communication section for almost 10-11 years along with Punaram. Later, he coordinated Children’s Parliament activities. Report writing and singing songs during the meetings were the other tasks that he used to perform.

### **The Salary Structure**

Knowing about all these transformative stories, one might be wondered if the salaries could be high, because of which the lifestyle has changed . But the fact is that they have been paid less salaries compared to market rates. In fact, they never call it as salary - they term it as working wage or honorarium. Though the working wage or honorarium is paid in accordance with the Rajasthan Minimum Wages Act, it is felt that the salary is quite low. But the majority is paid in accordance to their needs. It allows them to lead a decent life. It also allows them to serve better their own communities, for whom the college is established. There was a small minority which says that the salaries are somehow less, and need to be increased in accordance with today’s wages. It is found that the salaries are paid in accordance with a democratic system, where everyone decides each other’s salary. Salaries are paid equally, except a nominal increase in the salaries for the seniors as they gain more experience.

For example, One of the respondent mentioned that Bagawath Nandan Ji and she get more than what Mr. Bunker Roy gets. Bunker Ji is just paid minimum wage. 1:1.5 is the salary ratio; I get Rs.4500 per month, excluding other allowances. There is not much gap between any two individuals working in the campus, the gap is always restricted to 1:1.5. the minimum wage paid is Rs. 3000 whereas the highest salary is Rs. 4500. Another respondent has says, “When I was working in Kishangarh, though I was paid Rs. 60 per day on paper, when there was no electricity, they used to cut

down the working hours and used to pay me only Rs. 30 . But here the whole situation is different, there is no comparison. Here I am paid 12 per cent DA. Apart from that, I get Rs. 3500 pm. It excludes all the facilities. If we include everything, we would get around Rs. 5000 pm. We never think that we are paid less. We have been paid whatever the minimum wage prescribed by the Govt. of Rajasthan. Barefoot College provides whatever we are entitled to”.

One of the very innovative answers that the researcher came across was, “See, if we compare our salary with high paid employees, certainly our salary is low. When we compare it with the poorer section, it is amazing. I am happy, I don’t need more money. I have been involved in Barefoot College, and I have developed a lot of respect towards everyone here, I am happy with what I get. Money doesn’t matter, working conditions matter,” Bata shared her views. Another respondent said that salary given here is quite enough to run a family in the villages. It depends upon the minimum wages Act of the Rajasthan. In the villages, no one gets Rs.3000 pm on a permanent basis. If they go to agricultural work, the work will be available only for four months, but here, work has been provided for all the 365 days in the year, so no worries.

Some other respondents said that, it is not the salary which keeps them attached to the college, it is the affection that they have developed for the College. In this regard, another pool of respondents stated that, balancing the family needs in accordance with the salary is a simple mantra that always allow them to sustain, irrespective of salary and increments. People asked them on several occasions, how they could manage so much of work on a low salary? They told them here they get food, shelter and clothes. They get them not only for themselves alone, their whole family is given the same. What do they need more than this? When they see people from poorer backgrounds, they feel that, they are in a better condition. In their case, both income and expenses are balanced. Another respondent said that, he is never bothered about money. He is happy with whatever he gets. If he has more money, he might be tempted to buy luxury items. So, today, whatever he takes from the College, he is utilising that for leading a modest, yet decent, life.

Some others say that they are in the remote locations, so, whatever they get is quite enough to run a family in the villages. Unlike cities, much expenditure can be easily cut down in the villages. He gets Rs.4,000 per month. It is the minimum wage in Rajasthan. They are happy with it. If they stay in the city, they have to pay for water, house rent and electricity. But in Barefoot College, they get every facility, apart from the salary, so they are happy. It helps them to provide employment to many people with the minimum wage. The salary is equally distributed. Everyone gets the same salary.

Very interestingly, some others have mentioned that it is the social capital which attached them to the college for such a long time. In one respondent's view, "Here I got a chance to meet several people, and worked in several sections. We never think about our salaries. Shall I tell you one thing, we have never studied, and we have nothing with us when we entered Barefoot College. But Barefoot has given us jobs, money and food. Apart from that, we get a chance to teach and learn through meeting several eminent personalities". Another respondent mentions that since the initial days of his association with the college, he knew that he will not be paid better salaries, but his family will be part of the better happiness. He never think that he is poor, or his salary is less. He get a lot of support from Barefoot College. If any of his children is not feeling well, Barefoot College has registered insurance for everyone in the family, just take out the file and put it forward, then get the money to get it treatment in a good hospital. Barefoot College pay for their children's education as well.

Comparisons also helped them not to lose the factual situations in the society, allowing them to further align with the College. Ramswaroop opined, "There are many people, who never get any salary in the society. Compared to them, we are far better off. Here, both my wife and I are working and are paid working wages, we are happy about it. Our main intention is that poor should be elevated above the poverty line". In addition to that, another respondent endorses the same view by saying, "My husband and myself work here. We get good food and our children are being sent to schools. There are people in my village who do not get any salary at all. When I was at my house, I never dreamt of any earnings. Now it has been materialised because of Barefoot College. So, I am very proud about the Rs.3,000 per month that I receive from the college".

Sometimes they are happy, because they are serving the poor and needy. As already mentioned in the earlier part of the chapter, they are interested in reaching the most. The minimum wage is around Rs. 3500 and of course they are happy with that. They are happy because they are also helping the communities and villages to empower themselves. So more than the salary, they are satisfied with the kind of work they undertake.

Though many respondents are happy about what they are earning, there is a small number of respondents who are unhappy about what they have been paid. Further they have shown their inability to leave the college as they would not get employment in any other place due to lack of proper background. They would not call it as exploitation because it is much bigger term to use for such kind of voluntary organisation, where everyone decides what others should get. A respondent said that salary has to be increased in order to improve the living style. Since he does not have a family of his own, the money is still okay, but for those who have to run their own family, it would be difficult. Another respondent held a different view that, as per today's markets, his salaries is less. People in government services are paid excellent salaries, but he is getting very low, at least it has to be increased to Rs. 5,000. One Kg sugar costs us Rs. 40. and everything costs much higher these days. For Government employees, they get Rs.40,000 per month. Fortunately, the happiest part is that, as they get more salaries, they also will be having much expense. In their case, our desires have to be balanced.

Ramibhai clarified that, there is no difference in the salaries structure. Age, education, caste, gender or religion, etc., never matter here. Everyone get the same salary, irrespective of his/her expertise. Even her section coordinator, or the director of the college, gets the same wage, which she is getting. That's what keeps them together in order to pursue their goals.

Ramniwas mentioned that there are several people who felt that working in Barefoot itself is a unique opportunity because it clears the way to interact with the communities. "It's great. To think about rural people, to work for them, to lead simple lives, this is all very innovative and great. Several people approached him to work in

their organisation with better pay scale, but he simply rejected them, because, in Barefoot College, he gets what he needs, apart from the salary. He can also stay along with his families in Barefoot College. It's not about money, but about living with the family with great satisfaction.

On the other side, there are a few people who have left the college to work in other places due to several problems. One predominant problem is insufficient salary to meet their family needs. Punaram mentioned, "Many have left the organisation, gates are always open for everyone to leave or enter. Most of them go on personal, as well as financial, problems. If they feel that the salary is very less, they will go away for any other work in order to earn more money. In fact, I myself left the College in 2003 for my village, because I thought I must do something bigger than this, I had developed a zeal to learn something more than this. There, I worked as a freelancer and created my own team with some of the youngsters whom I have trained. Whenever there was a programme, we were paid and in rest of the days we used to go hungry. Some months I used to get around Rs. 7,000-8,000, while some other months I received nothing. This has resulted in lack of proper stability in life. That's the reason I came back". On the other hand, Rekha feels, "We get less salary with which we couldn't sustain, especially when our children want to pursue professional courses. That was one such reason which pulled out my husband from here. He later joined employment outside. Now he works in the marble industry and earns a good salary".

The interesting part is that, it is a clear example of sticking to a policy which has a lot to offer to the needy. If they take more salary out of the projects, either the project costs go up or the quality has to be compromised. Rather than going for either of these, they opted to downgrade their salaries/administrative expenses, so that the best can be offered to the public. The insufficient salaries part also need to be addressed without fail as the market rates for every item is being increased. Though, the college offers them with all kinds of logistics, when the question arises in terms of savings, altogether there was no answer. Though there are no givers or takers in the whole discourse, their policy would not allow them to cross it. The good news is that the organisation, apart from other pressure groups, pressurised the government to modify the minimum wages act and increase the salaries in accordance with the present needs which, in fact, had taken place, and the salaries were increased to Rs.135 a day. A

respondent mentioned that he is paid Rs. 3000 per month, excluding other benefits. Fortunately, the salary will be increased from January onwards from Rs.100 to Rs.135 per day, because they have taken up a huge protest in Jaipur last month (October) in order to increase the daily wage, for which the state government has agreed. He will send some of the money home and will keep the rest with him, if anything is urgently needed and he might need money, he can use this. So, the small number of people, who bother about salaries, will now be happy with the increased salaries.

Barefoot College never pays anyone below the minimum wage, whatever they receive for full time or part timer, it is in accordance with the Government rules and regulations. When the minimum wages are revised, then, they will get revised wages. Generally, they conduct a workshop with every one working on the campus to decide the minimum wage. The State Government recently announced an increase in salaries. They will sit together and decide on that. Increase in salaries will be taken care of, irrespective of the tasks that they perform.

In general, there are three kinds of workers in Tilonia. One, those who have been working since 30 years. Two, those who have been working since a decade and others who have recently recruited, in the last 2-3 years. When the salaries are increased, the salaries of the most experienced will be increased less and the least experienced are increased more, in order to maintain the gap. It is all decided in a workshop. One decides or evaluates other's salary. There are altogether 230 full time workers and they sit together and discuss about all the 230, in relation to their capacity, loyalty, responsibility, relationship with the community and responsibility. Their involvement, capability to work, style of work and their relationship with others are some of the issues that are considered, while the salaries are fixed. So, they evaluate each and every one including himself/herself. In fact, they do not call it as salary - they term it as an honorarium. No one pays the rest, they pay each other, and they do not have any giver or receiver. Accounts are transparent, nothing is secret. Their aim is to let the communities take most part of their efforts. More money goes to the programme implementation, not towards salary or administrative expenses or transportation. Around 10 -15 per cent of administrative cost is allotted in each project. The administrative cost includes salaries of employees as well.

### **Financial Inclusion**

Financial inclusion of the beneficiaries is one of the key aspects that are dealt in this part of the thesis. Comparison with their earlier financial drawbacks allowed the researcher to come up with a structural synthesis on whether financial inclusion is made possible or not.

One of the respondent said that now she is not poor, but when she started working here, she was poor, because her husband had passed away, and she had to take care of her daughter. She was in a very pathetic situation, which she could overcome in the later parts only with the help that she has received from Barefoot College. In her family, she is the only woman who came out of the house and started working.

Most of the respondents said that they are not poor because they are earning. And they questioned the researcher how do we tag ourselves poor? "I am not poor. I am earning now, how am I poor? If I am not employed here. I would have been poor by now. Now I have every means to earn my food" Bata shared her views. Some of the respondents insisted that, they are not poor, because, poor means those who do not have any food to eat, do not have proper clothes to wear, and proper house to stay, those who do not have any work to earn money. They must be termed as poor. Another respondent said, "I am not poor, I have everything described above. I am very happy with what I have. I have employment, house, clothes and food. So, I am not poor".

Diversified views from the respondents were altogether interesting. Everyone has given one or other form of example to prove that they are not poor by any means. There are several people in the villages who are poorer than those who work in the Barefoot. For those who work in the Barefoot, at least, they have been paid minimum wages every day. Otherwise, "there are several families in the villages under BPL without any job and minimum means to sustain, if they could sustain, why not we?" Another respondent said.

Some other respondent mentioned that, his philosophy is that, whatever one earns, he/she must adjust with it. There is no end for human desires, so, he never think that

he is poor. There is no answer to a question How much money do you need in order to be happy? You have clothes, food and house, then why do you need more money? Money destroys the society, more than it develops. Be happy with whatever you have.

That's the reason, whoever works in Barefoot does not consider himself poor because, he/she has been blessed with a job. A job that he/she never imagined of. One of the respondent mentioned that she is not from a high profile background. Barefoot College provides employment only to those who are from poor families. She is not poor because she works in Barefoot. She is getting continuous employment, which make her distinct from the poor.

One of the respondent said he was poor, but not now. There were no rains and he was unemployed, so he was poor, but now he is like any other who is empowered, because he has continuous employment to earn a regular salary. With the help of the salary, he fulfill his family's basic needs. He is provided with a quarter, electricity, and water on nominal charges. Apart from that, he is provided with free medical care, scholarships for his children to pursue higher studies. What do he needs more than this to say that he is poor?

Some of the respondents have mentioned that, apart from the financial value addition that they have come across, they could also witness social aspects that they have been enjoying now. Their social status has been elevated. Who earlier never used to get respect from their peers in the communities/villages are now very happy that they have been ideally recognised by the communities. And they feel the social value addition itself is comparatively more important than the salary that they receive.

Another respondent, who is a physically challenged claimed that prior to his joining Barefoot, he was poor, not having any work to do, no one identified him, and he was just sitting idle at home. Then the situation was bad and he had to depend on others even for Rs.1. But now he is very happy because he is earning money which can meet his requirements.

Some of the respondents have also mentioned that there are so many people in the villages, who do not get food even once a day. Many among others have to go hungry



in the night. The respondents also used to be in such a situation, but not now. Now, they can take care of the hunger in their respective families with the earnings that they could accumulate with the help of the employment that the Barefoot has offered them.

In summary, Barefoot College has been so much of an inspiration to promote social inclusion among those who have been given training and employment. Everyone was found very happy working in Barefoot College. Moreover, they felt that they came out of the poverty trap in which they led their lives for several years. Before coming to Barefoot College, everyone was in a dire need of employment, without which their exclusion levels tended to be very alarming. Through securing employment in Barefoot College, they not only came out of the poverty trap, but also have been able to secure respect in the society, financial security, social security and social inclusion on a larger scale.

### **Social Capital**

Another very important aspect that is observed is the improvement of the social capital, in terms of strengthening social bonds, within the neighbours in the College and the communities where they work. In Meghraj's view, he is the eldest son in the family and rest of them were much younger. His family was facing lot of troubles in terms of financial and other aspects. After joining Barefoot College, he realised how to overcome these problems. He is given a chance to work for the society, family and others and whomsoever he knows. He got several opportunities to learn and to meet different people and had the chance of making friendship with different sections of the people. Altogether meeting people from several sections has helped him to improve the social capital which is of a lot of use to him. In general, Meghraj hailing from a Dalit background, earlier had never been allowed to take part in the village level discussions that were being taken up by upper castes. But when he started his career with Barefoot, they started recognising and respecting him. His participation in all the activities of his village was ensured. This is what social inclusion is all about.

Barefoot College has developed a lot of faith in the poorer communities of the society and they, in turn have a lot of trust in the college and its activities. Bagchand recounted how the College has helped him to include himself in the mainstream

society, when earlier, they were not happy to talk to him, as he is from the Scheduled Tribe category. But now, they are eager to talk to him. They spend a lot of time with him while discussing several issues.

Sushila Devi stated, “I take a lot of women to the hospitals and several times I have to fight with the doctors. Otherwise they would not properly treat them. During the initial days, we did not get enough support from the communities, but now, they have realised that we are working for them, they do not leave us. That’s what happened in my case”.

Social capital has been attained in two ways, i.e., both external and internal. Apart from the external factors that are being discussed, internally also, there is quite lot of interesting facts found in relation to the social capital. Lalita had three girl children, one had passed away due to brain tumor. During her last days, her family received enormous support from Barefoot College, which she said she wouldn’t forget in her life time. She got a chance to meet big doctors and Mr. Bunker Roy has helped her like a father. During the operation also, the college staff have helped through donating blood, and in other ways. The college has sent vehicles along with the people interested in helping them. Because of these reasons, she can never even imagine to leave the college. They have helped her like a family.

Another respondent said, “My brother just asked me to join Barefoot College. Though he was not aware about the significance of the College, he was just under the impression that I would get employment. Beyond our expectations, Barefoot College supported me in all my endeavors. Everyone is so supportive and cooperative here. The environment is so friendly. In villages, it is difficult to get at least 100 per day, but here we get 365 days’ work. I even take people in my villagers to the government offices in order to get their works done easily. I have built that rapport with all the sections in the government offices, on one hand, and people from the villages, on the other. Everyone whom I helped were with me when I contested in the elections. Because of the increased relationship with others, trust and faith has been built over a period of time, which has made me to associate very closely with all sections of people”.

Some of the respondents mentioned that the social capital, that has grown over a period of time due to their attachment with the College, has helped them enormously. The social capital has been helpful in a more reciprocal manner where the employees benefit the community and gain a lot of support from the community.

### **Inclusion on Political Aspects**

The environment in the college helped these people to locate themselves in a more civic and political culture. As they learnt about the new waves in the social dimensions discussed earlier, their political outlook radically changed. Earlier, they used to be as casual as others while casting their votes, but now they have realised the importance of utilising their votes in a more democratic manner. Social capital, that they have developed over a period of time during the constant interaction with the people, has helped the Barefoot College personnel to contest elections. Many have become political representatives at various levels and have shown their mark of change. One of the respondent mentioned that, she is enlightened by Barefoot. Her association with the college has increased her political power. She was asked to contest in the election for *Panchayat Samiti* because she was a well known to everyone in that *Panchayat Samiti*, due to her active involvement in the welfare activities. She didn't even vote for herself, because her vote was in the village from where she basically hails and she was contesting from another village. They didn't distribute any money or gifts to voters. Her campaign was so inspiring, they just met people from all the sections in the villages. Everyone in the campus helped her during the elections, they were with her during campaigns and during all other important activities. On the other hand, another respondent clarified that he never bothered about political aspects before. In his village, Nourathi Bai was there as president, she is from Barefoot College, she had resigned from Barefoot College and went back in order to become president in the Panchayat, they supported her a lot. She has been doing tremendous work as far as welfare activities are concerned. She has been with the deprived sections. She has got all the talent because she is a product of Barefoot College.

Another respondent stated that he was elected as a ward member in his village. He was an independent candidate in the election. Barefoot College experience has helped

him a lot to gain political power in the elections, and people from Barefoot College were so helpful for him in order to win in the elections. His *sarpanch* was also from Barefoot College. So it was so easy for him to work in order to realise the needs of the people. They also met the minister and district collector several times to represent the problems of the *panchayat*.

Their overall awareness levels have improved. Hence, they have started realising the need for democracy. Most of the responded have mentioned that they vote for those who project good work for the society. When they were at home before joining Barefoot, they used to vote based on the party symbols. Now they know how a vote should be cast. They taught the same to their families and the communities. They have spread the importance of voting across communities.

For some other respondents, before they joined Barefoot College, they were not much aware about political issues, they never even bothered about the character of the contesting candidates before they proceeded to vote. They just used to vote for those who are supported by their relatives and others in the village. However, now there is a lot of transformation and they vote for those who have a good humane background. Further, some other said they just used to vote for those who were rich and popular. Now the whole situation has changed. They vote for those who are good and have capabilities to work for the poor. There is certainly a change in their decisions.

Sushila Devi's story is a bit different. Knowing the fact that she would lost if she contest. She did it to just know the society's response towards the new aspirants. In fact, she has done it on her own, without any pressures from the husband or family. She narrated, "I have contested in the election once. Panchayat Samiti Cluster, Block Level Member (BLM) (equal to MPTC member in Andhra Pradesh), but I didn't win. We didn't spend a single paisa on the election. I had resigned my post at the Barefoot College job, and stood in the elections. I didn't win, because we can't do what others do. Still we did not get unduly upset. No one told me to contest in the elections, I was just interested. While filling the nominations itself, I knew that my contest was just nominal. But still I contested. It all happened 15 years back. Castes and money matters used to dominate most of the election processes. Other contestants spent around Rs. 5 lakh in the election. We didn't spend anything. We just used to walk down to the field in the morning and come back in the evening after the campaign.

We just offered promises like, *We will not rest, unless our promises are realised, and we would not steal your money. We will spend each paisa for your welfare and be accountable towards social audit. You can also approach us any time, about the accounts.* But people were not happy with us. I got 105 votes, ten women contested in the election, only one won finally”.

One of the main aspects that have been observed during the study is that everyone had developed an opinion that politics have been drastically downgraded by the cheap mentality of the politicians and their acts of corruption. A respondent said that politics have become worse nowadays. Politicians promise several things, which never materialise later. Corruption is a brainchild of these politicians. He attended several grama sabhas in his village where deprived sections like dalits are never allowed to represent their problems. He helped them to get what they could from the panchayat. He asks the *Sarpanch* and *Patwari* to let them get whatever they are eligible for.

Altogether, the socio, political, cultural and economic aspects of life have been elevated as their respect in the society, political awareness, cultural identity and economic freedom increased. All these aspects are helping them to interdependently secure what is called a dignified life and social inclusion on a much more broader scale, which they have never dreamt of. The present chapter helps us to understand the sea change that this innovative social enterprise has brought about in the lifestyle of these villagers.

### **Summing Up**

This is how social enterprises/entrepreneurs see the opportunities where problems persist. If anyone takes up any projects, it is sure that they will see these villagers as passive beneficiaries. But here, the entire spectrum has been changed by seeing them as active participants and potential beneficiaries of the project. Apart from that, whole projects have been run by them using the local technologies, resources and external funding. That's how they have made their lives more valuable. It is not the story of a Mr. Bunker Roy, it is the story of these villagers who have made history through marketing their lives more dignified through using the opportunities provided. Mr. Bunker Roy's role is just limited to facilitating the whole task. The next chapter shows us how Barefoot has been transforming into a social enterprise.

## CHAPTER - VII

### **BAREFOOT AS A SOCIAL ENTERPRISE**

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Discussing the explicit objective of Barefoot College's financial self-sustainability, the present chapter shows how a voluntary venture can transcend towards becoming a social enterprise. The organisation has been registered legally under the limitations of the Societies Act, 1860 and Income Tax Act, 1961 under sections 12(A), 80G and 10 (23C) IV. Hence, it is entitled to gain benefits such as exceptions from taxes levied on the funds received from the donors. The Act asks the organisation to use 85 per cent of the funds received in any financial year in the same year or at least must be reported to be used on the projects, which will be carried out in the consecutive years. And rest of the 15 per cent of the annual income can be saved for future sustainability of the organisation. Creation of corpus/reserve fund is one of the interesting factors that allow the enterprise to maintain well in future, when a crisis arises. Financial aspects here are the core of the social entrepreneurship. Financial sustainability always allows to project innovations with multiple outcomes where the target population will be benefited tremendously. If the financial aspects are not given prioritised elucidation in length, the present study might end up as any other organisational studies.

In order to receive funds from foreign sources, the organisation was also registered under Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) in 1976. Today, Barefoot College receives enormous funding from external funding agencies, as well as several government agencies within India. But the crux here is about generation of finances on its own or self-sustenance. As discussed in the first and third chapters, social entrepreneur firms should aim for triple bottom line, i.e., financial, social and environmental outcomes. Barefoot College achieves these bottom lines where it works for the environmental protection in terms of usage of solar technologies, attains financial sustenance through improving financial resources and entering into the markets as well as allowing the beneficiaries to take part in the decision making, implementation, contribution of the project and then achieve social benefits such as providing goods/services to the communities at cheaper rates, etc.

Though the college was established as a non-profit voluntary organisation, it is now in the process of transformation towards becoming a social enterprise. The Barefoot College is a semi-structured social enterprise, which is evolving as a full-fledged social enterprise by adopting more and more entrepreneurial steps of its own. The semi-structured firm denotes its capability: i) to have its own finances that have been secured through contributions from the communities, beneficiaries that are being empowered and the products that are manufactured in the Barefoot College, and ii) contributions from the funding sources. One of the very crucial aspects with regard to the contributions accepted by Barefoot College is that the terms and conditions are fixed by the receiving agency, i.e., Barefoot College, not the funding agency. It allows Barefoot College to work on its decided activities without any negotiations on its objectives.

As Bornstein (2007) specified, Barefoot College demonstrates their capabilities to realise its strong will towards projecting itself as a social enterprise. Further, it has broken free from established structures. Barefoot College is a unique example to realise how to chip into the social fabric of the village settings and stand up on its own capabilities. Its 'stand away' from traditional ventures certainly demonstrates innovation. Furthermore, Bornstein specified that social entrepreneurs are willing to share credit. Mr. Bunker Roy always concedes that nothing in Barefoot College is being done by him. Everything has been built and maintained by each and every expert on the particular field. As Bornstein further envisaged, salaries/payments are not so great, but the credit they get is immense under Barefoot approach.

The financial stability, fixing self-terms and conditions, non-negotiability and transcending towards a social entrepreneurial organisation as a whole demonstrates Barefoot as a successful venture as far as social entrepreneurship is concerned. Roy (u.d) maintains that "We never let an expert come into our organisation. We don't allow anyone from the World Bank, we don't allow any UN types to come into the organisation". He further mentions that, apart from the money, they don't have any quality offerings for the organisation; they don't have the humility; they don't have the patience; they are so arrogant, it is unbelievable. Hence, these kinds of stereotypes are not entertained. Another typical example in this regard is, Aga Khan Foundation which has awarded Aga Khan Award for Architecture under which the Barefoot

College received \$500,000, have been returned back due to the wrong citation (against the college's will) given by the awarding body, which undermines the work of the Barefoot Architects. Here Barefoot was daring enough to proclaim that, money doesn't matter when the terms and conditions are not acceptable to the college.

Every year Chartered Accountants (CA) prepare the accounts of the organisation considering a financial year starts on April first and ends by March 31<sup>st</sup> of the following year. The financial transference has been given utmost priority. CAs prepare details such as grants and donations received from various bodies including Government of India, individual donors, as well as international funding agencies, and income generated through own sources along with expenditure made in the financial year as a whole. In other field centres, it is the Barefoot Accountants who prepare the accounts along with assisting the CAs in the main campus (Tilonia). More than 30 Barefoot accountants have been trained to do the task, some of them also works to share the financial information with the rural communities in order to make communities aware about the transference. Barefoot is the only rural organisation in India that shares all the information related to the organisation with each and every one interested in it. The financial stability has to be understood through a look into the financial statements of the organisation. As per the available data of the financial aspects of the organisation, we take consideration the data from 1993-94 to 2009-10.

**Table No. 7.1**  
**Break Up of the Total Annual Budget in a Financial Year (1993-2009)**

<b>Year (%) (1)</b>	<b>Total Annual Budget (In Indian Rupees) (2)</b>	<b>Sources of Funding (In Indian Rupees)</b>		
		<b>Indian (3)</b>	<b>Foreign Sources (4)</b>	<b>Own Sources (5)</b>
2009-10	5,31,13,384	47,57,907	3,75,46,831	1,08,08,646
%	100	8.95	70.69	20.35
2008-09	11,39,71,384	96,67,234	87,156,786	1,71,47,364
%	100	6.01	54.21	39.78
2007-08	13,90,92,665	1,04,23,840	8,40,11,275	4,46,57,550
%	100	7.49	60.40	32.11



(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
2006-07	12,78,51,839	71,38,936	7,35,61,568	4,71,51,335
%	100	5.58	57.54	36.88
2005-06	12,17,59,637	1,84,73,461	5,62,20,703	4,70,65,473
%	100	15.17	46.17	38.65
2004-05	7,10,94,995	92,35,554	4,74,84,231	1,43,75,210
%	100	12.99	66.79	20.22
2003-04	8,05,08,175	79,36,028	2,26,22,835	4,99,49,312
%	100	9.85	28.10	62.04
2002-03	5,49,03,368	1,25,93,084	2,23,42,386	1,99,67,898
%	100	22.93	40.69	36.36
2001-02	10,74,70,462	2,90,52,481	3,87,10,842	3,97,07,139
%	100	27.03	36.01	36.94
2000-01	8,38,18,930	2,13,17,741	2,79,21,148	3,45,80,041
%	100	25.43	33.31	41.25
1999-00	6,05,73,770	3,97,80,077	65,44,200	1,42,49,493
%	100	65.67	10.80	23.52
1998-99	3,91,07,697	1,95,48,018	46,85,383	1,48,74,296
%	100	49.98	11.98	38.03
1997-98	3,79,76,044	1,13,67,682	90,14,443	1,75,93,919
%	100	29.93	23.73	46.32
1996-97	1,76,69,211	87,17,434	64,75,560	24,76,217
%	100	49.33	36.64	14.01
1995-96	2,13,41,681	1,07,53,103	95,36,415	10,52,163
%	100	50.38	44.68	4.93
1994-95	1,43,91,195	19,93,236	1,19,20,826	4,77,133
%	100	13.85	82.83	3.31
1993-94	1,89,98,840	72,25,259	1,14,68,971	3,04,610
%	100	38.03	60.36	1.60

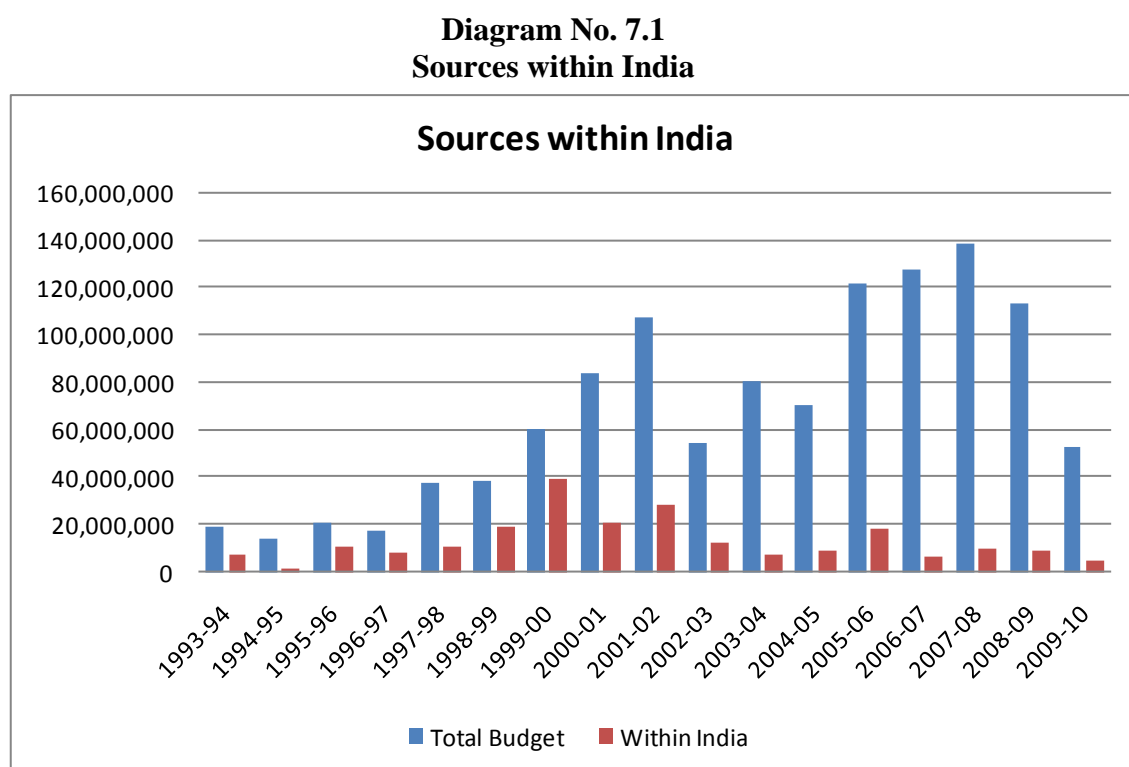
*Source: Annual Reports of Barefoot College 1993-2009*

It can be seen from the above Table that the organisation's annual budget has increased from Rs. 1.8 crore in 1993 to Rs. 14 crores in 2007-08. During 2008-2010, it

saw a setback, where the annual budget came down. In general, the source of funding for Barefoot College has been classified in three ways i) Government, ii) foreign sources, and iii) own sources.

### ***Sources within India***

The following diagram indicates internal sources of funding (within India) for the Barefoot College.



*Source: Annual Reports of Barefoot College 1993-2009*

Since the beginning, funding from the sources within India has been quite less. It is only in 1999-2000, that contributions within India have seen an increase. Within India, most of the contributions are made by Governments at both central, as well as state, levels. Government support is based on the projects that the College has undertaken. Various projects of the College have been supported by various ministries/departments at both central, as well as state government, levels.

Each project has to be separately notified. Ministry of External Affairs funds under Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Programme, as well as Special Commonwealth African Assistance programmes, in order to train African illiterate/semi-literate rural women on Solar Electrification and Roof Top Rain Water

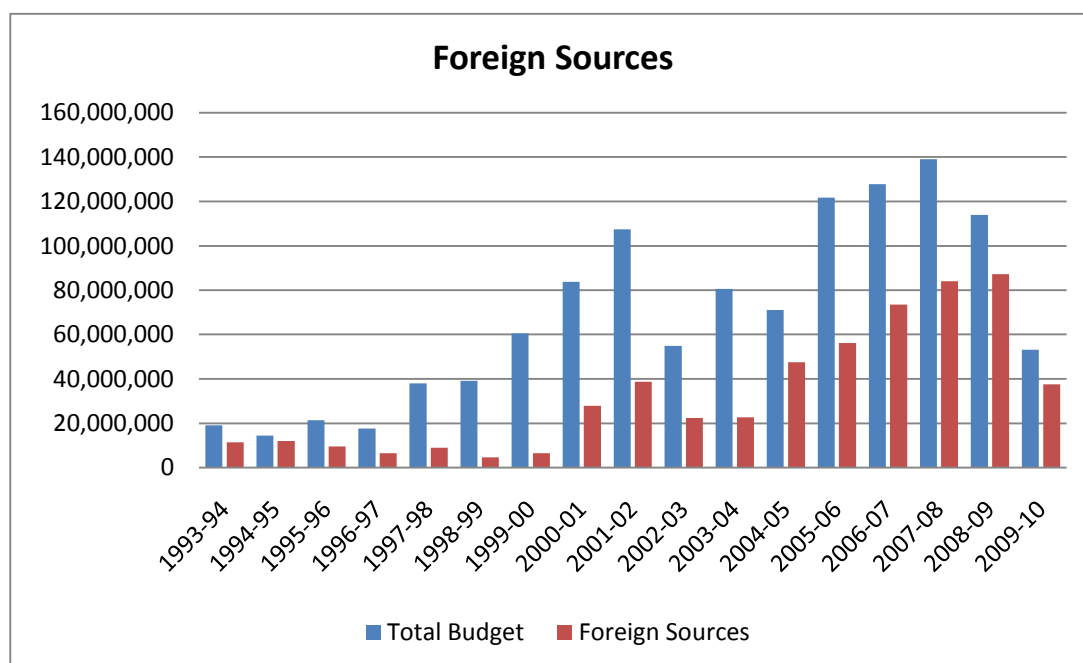
Harvesting. Rain Water Harvesting Tanks, as well as Fresh Water Campaigns have been funded by Ministry of Water Resources, Government of India. Apart from them, Ministry of Non-Conventional Energy Sources, Government of India promotes the usage of renewable energy. Crèche Schools have been funded by Central Social Welfare Board. If we see the private contributions, Sri Ratan Tata Trust, Mumbai, funds some of the Night Schools, in order to propagate the ideals of the Right to Information Act and Aid India offers financial assistance. There are several other organisations and funding agencies that are helping the College in sustaining their goal in accordance with the needs of the people for whom they are providing their services.

### **Foreign Sources**

The following diagram reveals the external sources of funding indicates external sources (excluding Indian sources) of funding for the Barefoot College.

**Diagram No. 7.2**

**Foreign Sources**



*Source: Annual Reports of Barefoot College 1993-2009*

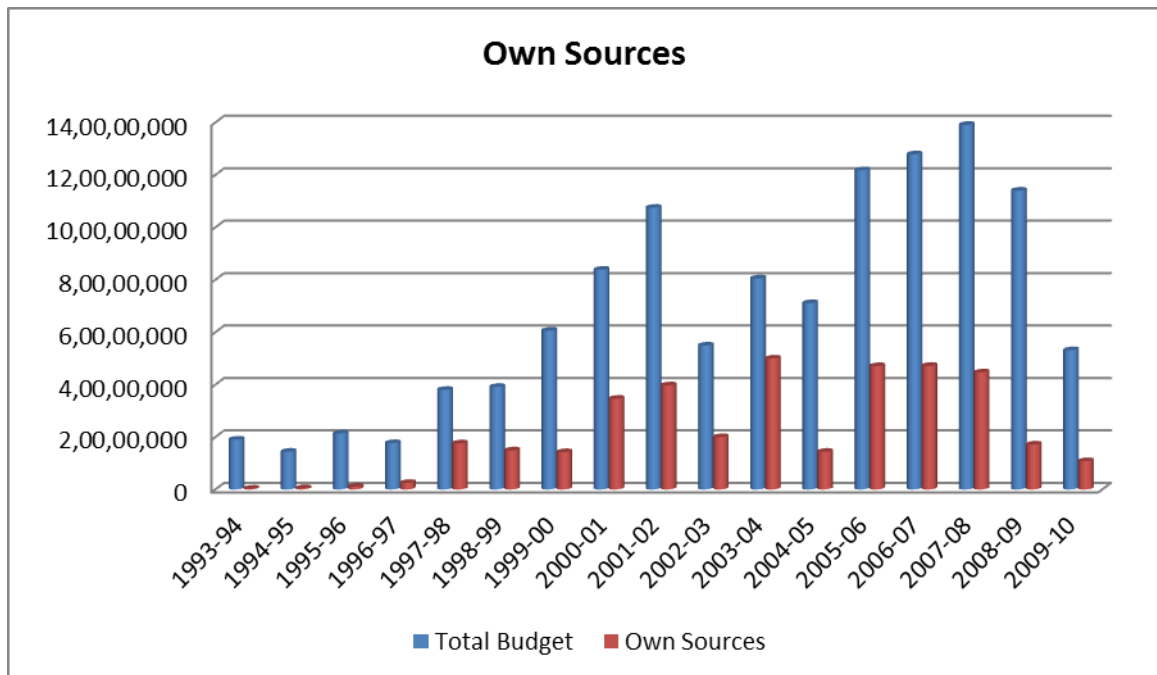
The above figure shows that the foreign funding is the core for the organisation to run its activities. Almost in all the financial years, foreign sources contribute, on an

average, half of the total annual budget. The funding ranges from 70 per cent of the total budget in 2009-10 and the lowest ever is recorded as 11.98 per cent in 1999-2000. Foreign funding is also made available, based on the needs of the project. Skoll Foundation, which supports social entrepreneurship and promotes innovations across the globe, provides funds to support Rain Water Harvesting, as well as to purchase solar equipment and to install them in remote locations. Asian Development Bank (ADB) also funds the same activities, i.e., purchasing solar equipment, as well as solar training for the marginalised poor and unemployed. Princes Charles Foundation supports RWH Tanks and Solar Cookers. Council for Advancement of People's Action and Rural Technology (CAPART) assists Solar Energy and Fresh Water related activities. European Commission and European Union fund to promote use of solar technologies in African countries. Alcan Award (Canada) was given to Barefoot College for promotion of Sustainability. Apart from these, German Agro Action, Germany, assists Barefoot College in its educational programmes. Plan International, a renowned NGO and UBS Switzerland (a premier global financial services) helps Barefoot College to run its night schools prominently. George Fisher Piping Systems, Switzerland, supports construction of Rain Water Harvesting Tanks in Sikkim. Apart from them, NCA, Afghanistan and UNDP, Ethiopia, have been offering funds for solar training and equipment to fix solar technologies in their respective countries. Apart from them, a small amount of funds are made available for Barefoot College by several other organisations.

### **Own Sources**

Whatever we have discussed so far has been about how to run an organisation with external support. But the most important aspect of a social entrepreneurial organisation is about its own financial stability, that it could gather from the local resources, communities, beneficiaries and business strategies. That is what keeps social entrepreneur institutions distinct from any other social firms.

**Diagram No. 7.3**  
**Own Sources**



*Source: Annual Reports of Barefoot College 1993-2009*

Very significantly, the happiest part is of a social enterprise, like Barefoot College, is that its own sources have been promoted at large and it has gained a lot of momentum. Own sources have increased from around 1 per cent in 1992-93 to around 40 per cent in 2008-09. Even it has seen its peak stage, i.e., 62 per cent in 2003. It is testimony to the increased confidence levels of the organisation. “At present, as it stands, the organisation can sustain itself without any financial support from any external sources. We have made enough to maintain the organisation without any support from other sources.” (Bunker Roy on conversation with the Researcher on 08<sup>th</sup> January, 2010). This is the pride that a social enterprise must build on. This is the way how the most crucial element of the social enterprise can be fulfilled. Hard work and self-confidence are the main components that the Barefoot has fostered throughout its history. By dealing with extremely difficult tasks with innovative approaches to those unsolved problems since decades, the College created history. The impossible has been made possible and even replicated in several areas, which has proved that Barefoot approach can be replicated anywhere else in the world.

The organisation has been evolving from a traditional non-profit to the modern social enterprise orientation. It is true that some of the projects, such as solar technologies,

would not be possible without funding from external agencies. The whole problem gets resolved when the organisation turns to be more entrepreneurial, in terms of earning its own incomes, which is the key for any entrepreneurial firm.

It has been shown that instant results would not be possible while working for the social change under the realm of social entrepreneurship. Mr. Bunker Roy was just digging the wells from 1967 to 1971 in Tilonia in order to just mingle with the people. He had spent a lot of sleepless nights while listening to the problems of the poor as well their capabilities, what they can do, and have done so many times. He feels that whatever he learnt over the five years while digging the wells is immense in nature, which cannot be even taught by any global university; “My real education started then,” says Bunker ( Roy 2005).

The essential aspect is that the social entrepreneur must hold the following characteristics that are going to be discussed in the following pages. In fact the Barefoot approach has all the characteristics that are discussed in the earlier chapters. Hence, today, Bunker stands one among the hundred most influential candidates in the world (Time 2010). His approach has been appreciated by all the world’s leading institutions, including World Bank, United Nations, Ashoka, Skoll Foundation, and Schwab Foundation. Now let us compare Barefoot approach with the characteristics that are framed to see a how social enterprise is. There are a set of 27 characteristic framed in order to term an organisation as a social enterprise. It is observed that all the characteristics are broadly fit into the Barefoot approach.

**Innovation:** Innovation must be one of the prime objectives of the social entrepreneur, without which the initiative would not fulfill its obligation. The mission of the social entrepreneur has to be extremely innovative in order to fulfill the needs of the excluded, or those who missed the markets or welfare safety net. The innovation must demonstrate entire distinctness from what is called the purview of traditional firms. In Bornstein’s (2007) view, social entrepreneurs are willing to break free from established structures. Most entrepreneurial organisations started from scratch, rather than from within existing ones. This allows for the necessary innovations and the ability to see beyond the orthodoxy of a particular field. Whereas Dees (1998) five characteristics to be social entrepreneur clarifies that, in order to

sustain the mission of the social entrepreneur, engaging in a process of continuous innovation, adaptation, and learning are a few significant aspects that any social entrepreneurs must adopt.

In the case of Barefoot College, it has embarked upon innovative solutions for the problems that the rural areas are facing. The whole course of the innovation includes in the “emphasis and respect it gives to applying the knowledge, skills, and practical wisdom of the rural poor” (Roy & Hartigan 2008). For example, their ventures, including night schools and transforming semi-literates into engineers are instances to elucidate their innovation. Innovation has been idealised and practiced through their aspirations under learning-by-doing parameters. Rural counterparts are always encouraged to be innovative, and, with the help from Barefoot, many changes have been taking place in social, cultural, economic, as well as political aspects of the people. Satyanarayana’s innovative instrument in LED (LED lamp works using light emitting diodes), which lights better and consumes less battery power is one of such innovation that has been developed in Barefoot College.

**Revolutionisation:** Entrepreneurs, in general, revolutionises the industry which they opt to achieve the mission. It is certainly a way to eliminate general presumptions which the stakeholders come across while benefiting from the initiative. As Bill Drayton specifies, "Social entrepreneurs are not content just to give a fish or teach people how to fish. They will not rest until they revolutionise the fishing industry (Bill Drayton, CEO, Ashoka). Innovative ways to address the mission helps them to be revolutionaries. In fact, it helps them to be aggressive while addressing the social needs in order to face them with full commitment. They will have to be revolutionary because their mission addresses systemic change which, by and large, are not also possible when adverse conditions prevail. He/she has to see choices where others see problems, he/she must see the beneficiaries as stakeholders who can be empowered for their own inclusion, rather mere beneficiaries which the most traditional organisations do.

Revolution happen under Barefoot College in the form of proposing or practicing non-traditional or non-conventional aspects. Whatever they do, as discussed earlier are innovative and perhaps holds a key for revolutionization the whole industry.

Whatever they undertake, be it either solar technologies or night schools, they have been so useful for the rural masses, in terms of framing the objectives in accordance to the needs. Rural illiterate grandmothers solar electrifying their villages in African countries are certainly revolutionary in nature. During the transformation, the college has adopted revolutionary decisions with regard for whom the college must work. The revolutionisation was not limited to any single aspect, it also included all the areas, especially solar electrification, schooling, and healthcare.

**Social Change – System Change:** Social change is the ultimate goal of the social entrepreneur. He/she strives for the social change which includes excluded into the mainstream. The initiatives of the social entrepreneur is either to include the stakeholders partially if the initiative of the social entrepreneur is based on ‘issues,’ or fully in the case of area based needs. System or social change is not an easy task. It needs committed individuals with clear objectives and mission. Until the systems are changed, it is never possible to secure social inclusion on a permanent basis. In order to chip into the existing systems such as caste, poverty, patriarchy, a social entrepreneur has to demonstrate a strong will.

Social change is one of the core notions of the social entrepreneur. Because social entrepreneur’s prime objective is that of social change, either through providing employment to the excluded or allowing the deprived to take active part in the markets, etc., in order to accommodate revolutionisation, sometimes the existing systems have to be ignored. The target groups of the Barefoot approach are the illiterates or semi literates, dalits, women, children, tribes and Physically Challenged who have been sidelined in the technological adventures that have been brought to the forefront through systematic social transformation. Hence, the Barefoot approach redefined technologies through handing them to the said vulnerable groups, as a whole, it strived for social change. Barefoot, as discussed, is a classic example of an area based social enterprise. Social change in the case of Barefoot has been accelerated through attaining social inclusion. Empowerment of the dalits and women is assured, which was not the case in the traditional societies.

**Creativity:** As discussed earlier, innovation must be the prime focus of the social entrepreneur. Creativity is always a value addition to the discourse of innovation. The



creative ideas, social enterprise projects, must be practiced. Sometimes, creativity also involves innovative ideas, which allows innovation to take up on these creative ideas.

So far, many creative decisions made the organisation's presence fruitful in the villages, such as giving the opportunity to the poor illiterate who had never been to the schools to construct the new campus. Empowering the communities to manage the projects that are intended to promote their own welfare and community participation in the whole discourse is a very creative idea.

**Resourcefulness:** It is inevitable that the promotion of his/her own social initiative should be given utmost priority. At the same time, having work for social change, they must be ready to promote other initiatives launched by several other social entrepreneurs. They must have the links to deploy such knowledge from other social entrepreneurs. Failure of any one side, or both would allow a lot of discrepancies to creep in. In this case, the social entrepreneur needs to have resources to address the whole scenario. Even the networking of Ashoka or Skoll Foundation or Schwab Foundation makes sure that whoever present in the network of their organisation would be holding a minimum of resources in order to support or help other initiatives.

Always being promoted by Skoll and Schwab Foundations, Mr. Bunker Roy was able to network with several people, including pioneers in the realm of entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship. Resourceful in deploying social capital at the modest levels, Bunker Roy's attempt to hold the relationships with other eminent personalities always helped Barefoot to gain the most. This linkage has certainly helped the College to cross the critical times pleasantly, for example, the World Bank president's visit to the campus while it was in deep crisis. Apart from them, Mr. Bunker Roy as a global entity, could offer a lot of support to the emerging social enterprises. In India, he is one of the ideal social entrepreneurs for emerging social enterprises.

**Tapping Local Resources:** Local untouched resources need to be tapped into in order to make a difference. Resources like human, financial and natural from the local areas where they operate must be utilised. It allows people to work on more cost-effective approaches and gain the most for the communities. Local unemployed youth/deprived

communities must be used for the promotion of employment. Any natural resources in the nearby areas must be utilised, whereas the communities/beneficiaries must be asked to offer their part in the whole project in whatever capacity. On the one hand, all these initiatives help them to achieve their objectives easily, whereas, on the other hand, utilisation of each resource makes a lot of difference and promotes development at a larger level.

Unlike multinational companies, Barefoot works with the local available resources, including human resources. Hence, Barefoot has touched several hitherto untapped aspects like solar energy and night schools, where the local human resources are highly utilised. Local people, who have been ignored by traditional systems, have been used to make a difference. In fact, social entrepreneurship emerged in order to demonstrate or utilise the local resources through which they benefit local population and for whose benefit only they operate their mission. Barefoot, in this regard, has done pretty well. It saw positive aspects, where others find it hard to see them, and made it possible to transform a rural local illiterate to a solar engineer. 99 per cent workers in the Barefoot College come from the nearby rural areas.

**Pioneering:** The social entrepreneur, in general, would emerge as a pioneer in the areas which he/she enters. Such areas are often ignored by others. If he/she enters the traditional areas, he/she would be having his/her own innovation/creativity, in order to make the entry as a special occasion in the field. There are social entrepreneurs who have replicated the initiatives of other social entrepreneurs, in order to scale the whole discourse.

Though the area where Barefoot is working is well known to the globe, the approach which it adopts makes it a pioneer in its initiatives. It has evolved its own approaches which demonstrate its self-belongingness in several of the activities. Before it is being replicated in several parts of the world, everyone thought that it would not possible to do it, because it seemed like an arbitrary event. But with the pioneering experience in the activities that Barefoot carried out. It has been shown that such initiatives can be successfully replicated.

**Non Traditional:** Social entrepreneurs, as already discussed, are non-traditional. Their way of approaching the problems is entirely unique. They emerge to solve the problems where the traditional organisations have failed. Thus, they emerge as non-traditional in order, not to fight with the traditional markets, but to achieve whatever was not achieved by their traditional counterparts.

Failure of traditional organisations to promote literacy levels, employment generation and sidelining the traditional knowledge in these underdeveloped sections are the reasons for Barefoot to emerge. The idea of Barefoot approach is a breakthrough which has uplifted the rural people through its pioneering ventures. It's, in fact, a failure of the traditional firms in empowering the capabilities of the deprived. So far, the target population has been idealised as passive beneficiaries, rather than as solutions by the traditional firms. That's where tapping of local resources becomes crucial. Barefoot projects a non-conventional approach, in terms of empowering the marginalised.

**Market Failures:** One of the vital objectives of the social entrepreneur is to address market failures. The failed markets, as a whole, never emerge as sources for the deprived or marginalised sections to locate them in the mainstream markets. These markets never produce goods suitable for the excluded poor communities. As a result, their financial exclusion would determine their exclusions in the other realms. Challenging the whole scenario, the social entrepreneur creates new markets for the excluded sections, in order to meet their needs.

Markets have failed to provide electricity to these deprived sections residing in the poorer parts. Hence, Barefoot approach has addressed the market failure through the provision of Barefoot Solar Energy. Solar electricity has made lakhs of lives happy. Apart from them, in general, markets have failed to address the problems of the rural people as they are controlled and owned by urban-based rich people. To counter that, products of the rural craftsmen, weavers and artisans are promoted through addressing their needs -giving them a chance to ingress in the markets.

**Risk-taking:** The social entrepreneur generally adopts risk-taking as a profession, while pursuing his/her goals. The risk-taking path might be difficult to follow for their

traditional counterparts. The new market's creation itself is a risky path, because no one knows how the new markets will respond to their ambitions or goals. Thus, a lot of hard work has to be put into the initiative/venture, before admitting any success or failure. Apart from the change of the system, innovations are always risky tasks. Risk-taking is not a characteristic of any social entrepreneur, but they would not leave this option, even if it benefits more.

The operation style of the Barefoot is full of risks. They undergo unlimited risks, which makes them stronger. Preparing an illiterate as solar engineer or standing against the will of the caste system that the society is clutched with where the organisation located are some of the many risks that they have touched upon. In fact, it is observed that, without allowing risk factors in the whole discourse, it is quite impossible to reach their objectives. Risk becomes the inspiration for the social entrepreneurs.

**Earned Incomes:** Earned income has utmost importance in any social entrepreneurial venture. It decides the path and the initiative's stand. It makes the social entrepreneurial venture different from other traditional initiatives. Innovation or any other features would emerge as value addition to the earned incomes, but cannot be a substitute for this. The initiative might be excellent and innovative, but unless it generates income to sustain its venture, it is impossible to identify such initiative as a social enterprise.

It has been identified in all the works of the social entrepreneurship that, social entrepreneurs must develop a financial strategy that will allow them to carry out their social mission effectively. Their financial strategies could also include a mix of government, philanthropic, and earned income sources. In this regard, Anderson & Dees (2006) argue, "Earned income strategies should be presented, considered, and pursued within the context of an overall financial strategy for social impact". There are evidences that while many social entrepreneurs do adopt a hybrid form of organisation, they, and those researching them, should view the choice of legal form as a strategic decision, not a state of being.

As mentioned earlier, earned incomes are a crucial component of any social entrepreneurial firm, while Barefoot College demonstrated its ability to maximise the earned incomes, year by year. It has been projecting towards a 100 per cent sustainable venture. As of now, it is semi-structured venture, where, not only finance is accumulated from the funding agencies, but also is it made possible to collect from the beneficiaries. That's the reason the whole discourse about the financial sustainability has been discussed in detail in this chapter. Their percentage of earned income has been increasing in the total budget since its inception. As a whole, the organisation has been transcending towards SE from its original non-profit features.

In this regard, Figure no. 7.3 may be referred to see the increased income levels in several folds. These incomes are tapped from the local resources. Though there are little fluctuations, it is a very impressive picture. Commercial activities such as solar lighting, handicrafts, and sanitary pads, are a few things that are being promoted in order to project itself towards a self-sustained venture. Apart from them, collection of resources from the communities is another option, when earned incomes are concerned.

**Self-Sufficiency:** The earned income activity, in general, would provide self-sufficiency to the venture. Self-sufficiency here refers to non-dependency on other institutions. It might be, in general, monetary relations, but not limited to the same. The social entrepreneur, in order to make the organisation self-sufficient, must hold the ideal that the organisation would not depend on any other sources. Social enterprise may well depend upon stakeholders/beneficiaries for whom it has been evolving and this act would not harm this characteristic, as without the stakeholders/beneficiaries, you may not witness a social enterprise at all.

Earned income and usage of local resources always allows the College to be self-sustained. Though there is funding from external as well internal sources, the increased earned incomes helps to project the College as a self-sustained venture. Communities are asked to contribute their part in completing the project, and to nominate the most needy in order to provide employment to fulfill the project. The training has been provided/given by the local resource persons who had undergone training earlier. Minimising urban expert's role in the whole structure of the

organisation proves that the College is in a transformation change from a traditional non-profit to a social enterprise, transforming the organisation into a self-sustained one.

**Profound Vision:** A vision is a mandatory characteristic of a social enterprise, without which the basic emergence of such social enterprise is at stake. Profound vision of the social entrepreneur must direct the whole initiative towards success. The vision of the social entrepreneur must not be negotiable by any external or internal dimensions under any circumstances. To go ahead with this, he must be in a position even to face failures which would teach him how to succeed in future.

Since its inception, the vision of Barefoot College has never been compromised with. Bunker, in this direction, clarified his vision in terms of elevation of capabilities. His vision is of transformation of system, where everyone's capabilities are empowered. More than that, everyone is given an opportunity to excel in his/her capabilities.

**Non-negotiability:** It means sticking to the objectives that the social enterprise has embarked upon. In such direction, nothing should come in between which halts the whole task. The risk-taking behaviour, along with adjusting to the environment where the social entrepreneur is operating, always allows him align with the objectives. Funding should not be an entity to any social enterprise to ignore its objectives or vision. Stakeholder's welfare should not be compromised at any cost.

Barefoot College has never compromised on the non-negotiable principles or objectives. In such direction, fixing the terms and conditions from the receiving end are highly useful with regard to the funding concerned. Barefoot College has been doing exactly the same. It has never allowed any funding agency to interfere in its welfare activities. The funding agencies are allowed only to suggest their modalities, rather than simply pouring out its conditions. The returning of Agha Khan Prize itself is a dynamic example of its symbolic nonnegotiable values.

**Ideology/ Driving Force:** Ideology/driving force has been seen as one of the aspects of social enterprise, but not to a level of compulsion. For example, Aravind Eye Care, one of the prominent social enterprises in India, has idealised Sri Aurobindo as its

spiritual *guru*. Ideology rests not with religious faces, but in passionate individuals who have succeeded in their profound vision and who have taught how to act upon while addressing the social problems. For instance, Mr. Bunker Roy of the Barefoot College and Mr. Ramasami Elango of the Kutumbakam village of Tamil Nadu, are largely inspired by Gandhiji and his ideology.

Mahatma Gandhi is considered to be the spiritual *guru* of Barefoot. Gandhi's ideology has been given a predominant role and most of his ideas have been practiced, Gandhi's views are highly respected; everyone sit, eat and work together, no hierarchy is entertained, communities are made to take part in the decision making of the projects. These reflect some of the practices Gandhiji has expressed. Apart from them, decentralization and technologies in the hands of the villagers are other practices that are being respected by Barefoot. As a whole, it has identified Gandhi as a source of inspiration, especially during times of crisis.

**Triple Bottom Line:** the venture must hold triple bottom lines, i.e., financial, social and environmental returns. The second or third often emerges as alternatives in many of the social entrepreneurial ventures. But the first one is primary to the whole discourse as discussed already. Whether it is social or environmental, would be decided by the objectives and results of the venture. It doesn't matter; both of them are having equal importance, the primary alternative is needed, in order to realise the rest.

Barefoot approach demonstrates this feature in a unique way. Its social line is constructed with training and providing employment to the poorest of the poor, financial line can be demonstrated through its own sources of funding as per the organisation's ideals, through providing secure employment to the illiterates and last but not the least, the environmental line could be seen from decrease in the carbon emission which has been made possible with the help of decrease in kerosene use and deforestation.

**Mission:** Social entrepreneurial mission must not be earning incomes more than 100% of their investment. The mission must obviously be focused on the social or environmental returns largely, rather than financial alone. The mission may vary from

the initial financial returns to the triple bottom line in the long run, as already discussed in the chapter.

The vision that Mr. Bunker Roy had developed over a period of time has been the mission of his counterparts who started managing the Barefoot College. Barefoot never strives to earn money for its founder or the operators. Its mission is merely stabilised with the triple bottom line approach. For this reason, everyone is equally paid and equally respected, irrespective of his/her work.

**Survival:** The whole probity of the initiative is ingress in the survival of the initiative. Provided that all the needs of the organisation are taken care of, and thus ultimately, the survival of the initiative is made possible. The survival of the organisation also depends upon various other aspects, apart from the financial such as the status of social capital among the employees of the organisation, team work, etc.

As discussed, having several of these kind of innovative, revolutionising and profound missions, while challenging the traditional systems, it is quite impossible for a social enterprise to survive. But, against the odds, Barefoot College has survived for 38 years and has a great future to move on to, as it is increasing its self-finances through the earned incomes. Its replication in other places must also have to be seen as an example which demonstrates the viability of the idea.

**Core Team:** It is observed that the core team must give prior importance, while addressing the feasibility of the social entrepreneurial initiative. The teams have to be divided as per the thrust areas of the whole work of the venture. The thrust areas must be headed by a core team member, whose views in regard to the thrust area must not be overlooked at any cost.

Team work is one of the vital activities that the social entrepreneurs' initiative has witnessed for its success. Core team has been given utmost priority in the initiatives. Core team will be divided into the thrust areas that are carried out by the venture, and even the head of the venture should not take any steps with regard to that particular area, without prior permission of the head of that particular area. The success or failure of the venture must at the primary level be credited to the core team.



The core team, second level social entrepreneurs, are maintained and the decisions are always decentralised under Barefoot approach. All the in-charges of the Barefoot have been made part of this core team, irrespective of their educational background. The selection of core team happens in a democratic manner. This core team is empowered to take decisions on their own. The core team members are those who had been with the organisation since its inception, and are well aware about each and every aspect of the organisation. This core team approach addresses one of the criticisms of power as far as social enterprise theory is concerned, viz., *what happens after the social entrepreneur?*

**Opportunities:** Social entrepreneur see opportunities, where others see hurdles. That is the smartness of this new breed of social investors. Sustenance in the extreme conditions is the core of any social entrepreneurial venture. Opportunity to grow is one of the aspects that the social entrepreneur must think about. If the opportunities are provided, anybody would shine. It need not only be a social entrepreneur. But the social entrepreneur must be in a position to thrive in the uncomfortable areas and situations. Social entrepreneurs must not wait to get an opportunity to start an initiative or to run it; they must create the opportunities in the process.

Fulfilling its obligation, Barefoot has undergone a stage where extreme difficulties make the task very hard. Thus, it has created opportunities even when the circumstances were hostile, and provided space for to elevate itself further. All the opportunities have been utilised by Barefoot. It is an organisation that provided opportunities to those it had employed to excel in their abilities and provided opportunities to those who fell out of markets, in terms of providing goods or services at cheaper rates. It has given a way for them to enter into the markets, which have been so far been the arena of the rich.

**Freedom:** Freedom to excel or work on their objectives is one of the very important aspects any social enterprise must be equipped with. The social entrepreneur must not interfere with the decisions with regard to his initiative, but the opinions of the core team must not be overlooked (a good entrepreneur never commits this mistake). But as the pioneer of the initiative, he/she must not be left with the decision for any funding agency in the initial stage or in the progress of the venture. The terms of

agreement or the terms of conditions must not be ruled out for the donor agency, in case the funder is a partial supporter of the venture, it then must be decided by the social entrepreneur.

Without freedom, without choices, it is highly impossible to work in a democratic or decentralised mode where everyone's views must be respected. The terms of conditions or terms of references are fixed by Barefoot College in any case, and not by the funding agency. Barefoot College has even refused the funds which had conditions imposed by the funding agency. Thus, the freedom in choosing what they need to operate was made possible with the non-negotiable principle.

**Dreamers:** Entrepreneurs are dreamers in the first instance, before executing their ideas. Either their ideas must be tested in the dream drive or the dream drive must produce the ideas. Without dreaming, vision would not be conceptualised. Even the mentors elucidate that the dream is a continuous phenomenon for an entrepreneur, without which the initiatives would not be innovative. Dream more and do not rest unless you achieve, is one among several other aspects that the entrepreneur deals with.

Without dreaming, Barefoot would not have been in such a successful position. The founder, core team and each and every one dreamt that the organisation would excel and the lives of the trained and employed would be inclusive, and, of course, they have succeeded from counting stars under the moonlight to fixing the solar systems and teaching children in the night schools, etc. As discussed, it is highlighted that dreaming is the biggest task that any social entrepreneur must foster.

**Committing mistakes (opportunity to fail):** It might look silly, but it works. Committing mistakes are not at all encouraged in traditional work places/organisations; but in Barefoot College, committing mistakes are not looked down upon. When innovations are your thing, then mistake/failure would be the result in several cases. And apart from that, the social entrepreneur must be holding new markets and pioneering as well as having innovative ways to tackle the problems. Hence, failure might be inevitable. So failures have to be taken in the stride. Whoever commits mistakes would benefit more than those who never tried. They might fail

in the first instance and certainly they will learn from those mistakes, in order to excel towards their own empowerment.

Learning-by-doing method is a synonymous with the notion of committing mistakes. The traditional method, which differentiates between learning and doing, has been barred and this unique approach has been promoted. It is a common phenomenon to commit mistakes under this initiative. It encourages people to learn without fear. Ramswaroop shared his personal experiences, “I manage my tasks in Tally (a software package mainly used for creating vouchers, financial statements, and taxation in several industries) without any support. Whatever information is available in the software we learn. Of course still, there is lot more to learn. We have Dernaji, who have passed just V class but she operates Tally excellently. Nemach Chandji also has passed VIII class and works well with the computer. It is all about experience out of learning.” “They all, including me, commit mistakes, but learn several things out of the mistakes that we have committed. In fact, the mistake would never be repeated. They are all uneducated, we all have to work out Tally with codes. For me, it is difficult to remember the codes, but these uneducated people have these on their finger tips. They simply tell the codes”.

**Scalability:** Scalability is one of the very essential factors that can influence the social entrepreneurial activities in more than one place. Social entrepreneur, or his/her team, alone cannot take up the success idea across the globe. Based on the success stories, it is the duty of the citizen sector to replicate the idea under the notion of scalability across the globe. Mohammad Yunus, the Founder of Grameen Bank in Bangladesh also had the same kind of experience, where his notion has been scaled in several countries, without any help from Prof. Yunus.

Scalability always allows Barefoot College to serve more people. There is a huge need to start scaling up of such innovative, self-sustained social entrepreneurial firms across the globe and let more people get the fruits of such innovations. In such a direction, Barefoot approach has been replicated in 13 Indian states and 36 least developed countries. Having a bright future ahead, where it can stand as a full-fledged social enterprise, there are huge chances for BC to scale its innovations and attain greater heights.

**Employment Generation:** One of the inevitable roles that the social entrepreneur plays is that of employment generation. There are two kind of social enterprises, one where we could see as far as employment generation is concerned. There are social entrepreneurs who have been working to realise their goals and, in the process, they will have to generate employment. When other social enterprises are concerned, their first objective would be employment generation and goals realization would be followed by employment generation. A very interesting aspect is that, deprived sections, those who are often vulnerable, as defined by the poverty and social exclusion theories, are given employment. It has proven in almost all the ventures that those provided employment have been able to come out of the poverty trap.

Barefoot has generated enormous amount of employment that has been discussed in the chapter. Irrespective of caste, creed, religion and sex, employment has been provided. “The recruitment of the employees is entirely need-based. They need to show their interest in Barefoot philosophy. In the NGOs, in general, people are appointed, based on the projects. Once the project is done, people have to leave. But, Barefoot College never had such a situation. Once we recruit, they will be with us forever, because the communities are interested in us. Comparatively, they are not good facilities, we don’t want someone who is interested in money. We want someone who is interested to work for the villagers, despite less payment. He/she must be from a poor background also,” Ramkaran says. So far, Barefoot has generated enormous amount of employment, which helped in the socio-economic growth of the backward communities.

**Reserve Fund:** Social entrepreneurs must hold some of their revenue as *reserve fund*, in order to support their activities, while pursuing innovation. A failure must not be a sign of incapability. The failure would secure as an example not to replicate or commit the same mistakes again. And then, those who committed mistakes must be given a chances to prove their capabilities which can bring better results, having the experience of failure already. Every social entrepreneur has to learn from failures.

From the initial stages, the College has been gathering a lot of reserve fund, to sustain the organisation in crisis. In addition the College has received a huge amount of money through various awards that have helped to add on to the reserve fund. This

reserve fund is formally gathered with the help from the community donations, and the surplus of the items that the College sells in the markets. Reserve fund has occupied a great role in the Colleges' planning. That's the reason even Mr. Bunker Roy claims that without any donor's support, even today, the organisation can sustain itself.

With this, it is quite easy to mark Barefoot as a social enterprise than a not-for-profit organisation. All the characteristics discussed to be a successful social entrepreneur and the College's approach to foster them have been discussed at length. It is proven in the last that the organisation as a successful social entrepreneurial initiative has carried out a bunch of initiatives in order to attain social, financial and environmental returns. Thus, the organisation has made possible what has been deemed impossible in terms of addressing the social needs. Innovations with sheer hard work and belief in each others have made the task easier.

### **Summing Up**

Barefoot College, which was started as a not-for-Profit organisation, has been on the way towards becoming a social enterprise through the enormous increase in local resources. Since its inception, Barefoot College has been innovating and it has been dependent upon the communities whom it serves. It allows them always to approach the communities when they are in need of finance. It also allows communities to be the partners in their own inclusion process. Thus, the present chapter highlighted how Barefoot College has been transforming itself into a social enterprise. Twenty seven characteristics listed to understand any social enterprise were crosschecked with Barefoot College, in order to prove that the College fits in the social enterprise spectrum, which is a definite positive mark.

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## CHAPTER - VIII

### CONCLUSION

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This part of the research brings out that social entrepreneurship can emerge as an effective solution for the scourge of social exclusion. This chapter summarises the findings of the thesis. Apart from those, it makes suggestions for further work in the area. Entrepreneurship is all about doing business innovatively, whereas social entrepreneurship is about doing business for the well-being of society. It is about creation of employment opportunities for the deprived. It is also about providing goods to the deprived at the cheaper rates and about solving unsolved social problems. Innovations and earned incomes are core to the social enterprises. It will be seen that in due course, any venture, irrespective of its origin, can be transformed into a social enterprise.

In the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century, the world population was over 1.8 billion whereas by end of 20<sup>th</sup> century it has reached to 6.4 billion million which is three and half times more than that of the earlier century and the UN estimates that the population would be further projected to 9 billion million by 2100 which is again an increase of 400 percent to that of the earlier decade (United Nations 2004). Population growth, as it stands, never creates problems. Problems arise only when the state fails to recognise the increased population with reference to resource allocation, provision of basic amenities and of opportunities to fully utilised their capabilities. However, nevertheless, the state has failed to perform its primary responses as per as the provisions mentioned above .

The increased population and decreased welfare facilities have made the lives of many people vulnerable. Rather than utilising the increased human resources as a positive asset to build a nation, the state more often feels them as burdensome because of which the traumas of exclusion are increasing. Failure to utilise the increased human resources is often due to apathy. In due course, the capabilities of this increased population are highly underestimated due to their presence in the disadvantaged areas. Neither opportunities to fully utilise their capabilities are

provided, nor their voices are respected. In order to remedy the situation, NGOs have emerged. With a lot of hope, most of these NGOs have focused only on service delivery aspects to the deprived, rather than developing the capabilities of those, which would allow the deprived to become self-reliable. Though there are certain NGOs working differently in terms of elevating the capabilities, there is a dire instability as far as financial resources are concerned. The huge number of NGOs (India alone presents 33 million NGOs; one for each 400 citizens) and less charity have affected the effective functioning of the NGOs. Under this backdrop, there are two important issues that have to be shared: i) Innovative service delivery systems, which empower the capabilities of the deprived, have been ideal practices to achieve the desired objectives; ii) these innovative practices are not been respected by the funding agencies, as they have to carry out their practices in a certain time frame, these agencies want instant results, which may not be possible under innovative practices.

Hence, at this juncture, funding has been problematic for both the traditional and innovative approaches. On the other hand, the business section has witnessed an enormous increase in profits, because business has transformed into entrepreneurship. These entrepreneurs are very innovative and see resources, where others see hurdles. Entrepreneurs recognise ways in which they can do business and mobilise resources to create new enterprises (Austin *et al.* 2006). Schumpeter (1961) posits: “the function of entrepreneurs is to reform or revolutionise the pattern of production”. They do it “by exploiting an invention or, more generally, an untried technological possibility for producing a new commodity or producing an old one in a new way, by opening up a new source of supply of materials or a new outlet for products, by recognising an industry and so on” (Dees 1998). This approach results in enormous increase in the net growth of the enterprises.

### **Social Entrepreneurship**

With this background, on the one hand, we have unsolved social problems and institutions, which are established to solve these problems, but lack of proper means to do it have been acting as impediments to fulfill their institutional mechanisms. On the other hand, there is entrepreneurship that has taken new avenues as far as business



discourse is concerned. Very interestingly, this entrepreneurial spirit has spread into other sectors, apart from the business sector. Entrepreneurship simply isn't the monopoly of any particular sector or section; it is about the capabilities of the individuals to demonstrate their innovative ideas and put them to practice, to solve the problems in the sector where their presence is found. Even the social sector is no exemption to such initiatives. After the business sector, entrepreneurship has been highly attracted by the social ventures and social problems. Those who have moved to the social ventures are called as social entrepreneurs. They aim to solve social problems using innovative entrepreneurial approaches. A social entrepreneur shares a number of characteristics with his/her entrepreneur counterparts. What makes him/her distinct is that the entrepreneur's focus is to maximise the investment of the investors of the firm whereas the focus of the social entrepreneur is to maximise social good.

Apart from those, other characteristics of a social entrepreneurial venture include employment generation for the deprived sections, innovations in terms of service delivery systems and the revolutionisation of the whole system in which the problems persists in order to bring about social change. A Social entrepreneur attempts to strive for system change through creativity approaches to project new ideas which will be based on innovative practices. A social must be resourcefulness in order to help other ventures which aim at social good. Tapping local resources in order to work on cost effective methods is a value addition for the social enterprises. Social entrepreneurs are non-traditional because they have noticed that the traditional ways in most of the cases have failed. Thus, they pioneers in the areas where they undertake their work. Social entrepreneurs address market failure to locate the poor and deprived, while pursuing the goals, risk taking is often considered as a way out. Earned income strategies are investable in order to demonstrate self-sufficiency/ self-sustainability of the attempt. Profound vision, non-negotiability, while doing social good, are some other aspects that they are linked with many of the social entrepreneurs. They adopt the triple bottom line approach in the form of social, economic and environmental returns, in order to bring about social change on a permanent basis. A social enterprise can survive only when the social problem is addressed. However, committing mistakes is often generally treated as a learning experiences. The venture must have options to scale its impact for wider usage and the venture must hold reserve fund in order to offset its failures.

Social entrepreneurial ventures are classified in two forms: i) Issue based social enterprises; and ii) Area based social enterprises. The issue based social enterprise basically deals with a single issue and does not bother about other. Social problems can be tackled in relation to a single agenda like for example Aravind Eye Care, which fixes eye related problems. They work only on that single issue, serving the poor and marginalised, as well the rich. The issue based social enterprise doesn't have any geographical boundaries as far as their issue is concerned. Whereas the so-called area based social enterprise is related to the whole area, where it operates. It works to develop the whole area in almost all the endeavours. It works on more than one issue, and it's operation is restricted to a particular area unless it scale up the initiative to other areas.

The literature review has brought out that there is a dire need to promote social enterprise research/ education in the academic institutions and universities across the globe because its presence is significantly missing in the realm of academia (Nicholls 2006). So far, the concept of social entrepreneurship is inadequately covered in the research discourse, despite their heavy contributions for social transformation. Even so far, very few research based social enterprise impact studies are registered. With this background, the present study seeks to fill the research gap, in terms of characterising the importance of social enterprise in various countries like India; and further it focuses on how innovations can be employed to bring about social transformation.

The Objectives of the Study are: a) to conceptualise economic entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurship, not-for-profit and for-profit models of organisations; b) to study the role of social entrepreneurship in contemporary society in the context of social exclusion; c) to understand the Barefoot approach to eradicate rural poverty and its significance in social entrepreneurship with reference to a selected social enterprise; and d) to study the transformation from exclusion to inclusion in the lives of the people employed by Barefoot approach.

For the purpose of the study, a well-known social enterprise, called Barefoot College from Rajasthan was selected. There have been several reasons to choose Barefoot for this present study. The prime reason is that as the literature review has pointed out,

Barefoot College in India is considered as an ideal institution as far as social enterprises is concerned. Apart from that, innovative practices that the Barefoot College has taken up is another reason to choose Barefoot for the study. The third reason is, that the Barefoot is one among the very few organisations in India that have started as a voluntary organisation and now transforming itself into a social enterprise.

Both primary and secondary sources of data has been collected. For secondary data, the study is based on books, articles in refereed journals, reports prepared by different organisations as well as various governments. For the primary data, a field work was carried out in the selected social enterprise, using the qualitative data techniques. The total universe of the study is 250, out of which, 40 in-depth interviews were collected. Apart from them, group discussions were carried out with the villagers, where several men and women in the villages were interviewed on the usage and impact of the services that are being delivered by the Barefoot College. Unstructured interview pattern has also been used while collecting the data in the form of interviews. Observation method has also been used while collecting the data. Both overt and covert methods have been employed in addition to the direct and indirect approaches.

Rajasthan has been placed among the last positions of the human development index, compared to any other Indian state. Though, starting from 1990s, the state has seen a lot of improvement in the human development index, which was stagnant for several decades, it still remains in the lower rungs. Caste still plays a predominant role in Rajasthan villages. Women face several forms of exclusions, and generally tend to wear a veil when they are out of their houses so as not to show their faces to the men outside the family. Child labour is another issue that needs attention. The village Tilonia, where the present study has been conducted, had faced a lot of problems, apart from the above listed ones. Lack of employment has always been the biggest problem. Except a marble industry in nearby Kishangarh town, nothing can be found in order to gain employment. Whatever employment is available in the marble industry, it is highly exploitative in nature, in the sense that there is low payments for high work. Because of lack of employment in the nearby areas, family heads – particularly men – have been migrating to the cities where employment is available. Many who have gone to the cities for employment have come back because of the

lack of proper working conditions in the cities. Also, agriculture is not feasible to sustain the families, because of lack of water.

Due to the lack of financial attainments, the lives of the people were moving towards vulnerability. Their entry to the markets was restricted. Their political participation was at stake and their social life was horrible. Under these circumstances, the Barefoot College, a voluntary community based organisation, was established in Tilonia village of Kishangarh in Rajasthan, in 1971, by Mr. Bunker Roy. Though the College was started as a volunteer organisation, over a period of time it has been evolving as a social enterprise by adopting more self-sustainable methods. The term Barefoot has evolved when the Chinese leader, Mao Tse Tung, launched a programme where the Chinese government trained farmers to become health workers in order to serve in the rural areas of China where qualified doctors were not interested to work. Having drawn inspiration from such experiences, the Barefoot College has evolved with many more activities in a more sustainable way.

The main objectives of the organization are: i) provision of sustainable solutions to improve the quality of life of poor, rural communities; ii) reduce migration by generating employment within villages; iii) provide vocational training to semi-literate and illiterate men and women through the process of learning-by-doing, iv) reduce drudgery of rural women and girls by providing them access to education, vocational training, health care, etc.; v) empower rural women - socially, economically and politically; vi) encourage community based, owned and managed initiatives; vii) demystify technologies and decentralise their uses to improve their quality of living; and viii) use and promote traditional knowledge and skills that have been passed on through generations.

Skills of the uneducated rural masses have been elevated using rural resources, and further employment is generated for those who are unemployed and most needy. Communities are made partners in the process of decision-making. With the help of these innovations, Barefoot doctors serve the health needs of the villagers, Barefoot teachers educate those cannot attend school in the day times, Barefoot solar engineers bring solar electricity to remote locations where electricity systems are not managed and Barefoot architects construct rural water harvesting systems.

Barefoot falls under the classification of an area based social enterprise. It works on more than one issue and in more than one area through its scalable/replicated models. In order to work better on all the issues the members have divided themselves into several sections. Basically, the activities they carry out demonstrate social inclusion of the communities to whom they provide employment and services.

What Barefoot approach offered to the society is in two ways: i) In terms of delivering services for the people who have been deprived of basic amenities, this empowers them to take part in the market activities and ii) providing training to the rural illiterates in order to provide them employment to come out of the poverty trap, this training and allocation of employment is entirely based on a needs based approach. In order to get employment, he/she must demonstrate that his family is in dire need of a job.

### ***Service Delivery***

Most of the traditional organisations including the state, always try to provide services to the poor free of cost. It is felt that this approach certainly brings down the capabilities of those who are targeted by the state under this *free service schemes*. In this way, their capabilities are underestimated. Barefoot College hence, decided that the capabilities of the rural masses must be elevated in order to empower them. Barefoot approach hence decided that resources need to be mobilised from within the community, no service needs to be given free of charge. Charity should not be the focus of development. This view came from the extensive discussions that Barefoot College members had with communities, who specified they did not want to be seen as beggars. This self-respect viewpoint is too often ignored by urban based development agents (Roy 1997). Hence, they have taken a U-turn, as far as the service delivery is concerned, because communities are not interested in free services as it destroys their capabilities. What they need is to empower them to attain these services through participating in the market deliberations. In the same direction, Barefoot has provided solar electricity to the villages which were not electrified. In order to do so, they requested the communities to contribute some money from their end towards the maintenance and repairs. In order to centralise the whole process within the

community, they are asked to send someone (the most needy) to undergo training to become a Barefoot solar engineer, who can stay in the village and take care of the repairs and maintenance of the solar equipment.

Also, the communities to whom they provide solar energy are very happy because their houses are solar electrified with less amount, compared to the traditional kerosene lamps. Meghanath a beneficiary claims that his village was not provided with traditional electricity supply, many like them come from a very poor family where they didn't have enough money to use a kerosene lamp. With the help of the Barefoot solar energy initiation, they have been using the solar energy for 12 years without any problem. The amount they are paying for the usage is so nominal - being less than what they used to pay for the use of kerosene lamps.

In India, as of now, 2 lakh people are provided with solar electrification. It includes fixation of 22,752 solar units for 22,752 households in sixteen Indian states. Apart from them, they have also fixed 5,220 solar lanterns for 5,220 households and 549 schools are solar electrified. The total installation acquires 5,69,647 watts power. To achieve this, 636 Barefoot Solar Engineers, which include 184 women, have worked for it. In abroad so far, the Barefoot Solar Engineers have fixed 4,967 solar units for 4,967 households in seventeen countries scattered across Asia, Africa and South America. Apart from that, they have also fixed 3,365 solar lanterns reaching to almost a total of 6,109 households in which 60,486 people in 123 villages have benefited. The total installation in these overseas countries acquires 2,50,240 watts power. To do it so, 155 Barefoot Solar Engineers, which include 119 women have worked for it (statistics obtained from Barefoot College on 8<sup>th</sup> November, 2011).

The college runs pre-primary, night schools to educate the children. The night schools that are being run by the college since 1975 are very inspirational. Children who need to help the parents during the daytime, are provided a chance to study in the Barefoot night schools. More than 3,000 children at a single batch in various schools attend the night schools in which 2,000 are girls. As a whole, the Barefoot approach towards education (including pre-primary as well as night schools) reaches 8,000 children, including 6,000 girl students, every year. Altogether, so far, 2,35,000 (1, 70,000 are girls) children are attending schools in eight states in 714 night schools located in 673 villages. Badrilal, a Barefoot night school student, opined that, he has completed his

fifth class in Barefoot night school. Later, he has earned a respectable job in the Barefoot College itself. He further claims that, his night school education is very helpful to him in sustaining in his job successfully. Nanda Ram, one of the night school's alumni, specifies "Children from poor and marginalised backgrounds have been provided an opportunity to study in the night schools". For them, day time education is impossible because of their ingress in the family activities. He used to take care of his livestock in the daytime and attend night school.

Rainwater Harvesting System (RWHS) is an innovative solution that is being drafted for the draught prone Rajasthan. As suggested by the communities, Rainwater Harvesting Tanks (RWHT) have been constructed. Each Barefoot night school has an underground tank in order to trap the rainwater to meet the drinking water needs of the children who attend the school. Lack of water in the toilets prevented children especially girl children to go to the schools. The present approach addresses this obstacle. Rainwater has been used to fulfill the community needs. Rainwater harvesting of Barefoot has reached 2, 30,000 people as of now. Neena a beneficiary respondent says that the concept of rainwater harvesting in the school buildings has made her to send her daughter to school. Earlier, her daughter used to just take care of the household activities in which bringing drinking water from 2.5 kilometres kept her occupied most of the day. But with the initiation of Barefoot, her daughter has been sent to the school and instantly she was allowed to take water from the rainwater harvesting tank in the school. She further states that as a result, her daughter did not need to walk for miles to get drinking water. More importantly, she has been given education. Now, she is the first girl in her family who has completed tenth class education.

Communication section works to promote social change, in terms of creating awareness among the communities. Each year, they have a target of perform 100 to 150 plays, reaching out to about 1,00,000 people in around 100 villages. "The main intention of the communication section is creation of a better world, especially in rural areas" Ramniwas explained. In 1985, immediately after a puppet show on *Roti* (Indian Bread made from stone-ground wholemeal flour), about consuming liquor and its consequences, in one of the villages, a person among the audience responded. "Did you listen to the play carefully? It happened to me. You all know how liquor totally

destroyed my family and me. You have opened my eyes. Where were you all this time? I have a request to make. From now on, whenever you perform this play, please tell people that this is the real story of a man in the village of Chota Narena”, (cited in Roy & Hartigan 2008). The Barefoot approach clearly shows that, without gaining proper awareness, it is highly impossible to attain empowerment. Realisation and awareness within the communities must be brought accordingly. With the help of the communication section, the awareness levels of the villagers are much higher somehow. The increased awareness levels are helpful to work better on social, cultural and political dimensions of the villagers.

In almost all activities, issues of women empowerment are taken care of. Barefoot has supported women to become solar engineers, water engineers, night school teachers, computer trainers, hand-pump mechanics, masons, architects and last, but not, the least, fabricators of solar cookers. Illiterate rural woman have been trained to handle the computers training of unemployed youth is another application of innovation. Apart from that, several rural women groups have been formed in a number of villages in which the colleges are working, in order to discuss gender related issues, including rape and atrocities in the villages. Higher incomes have raised the living standards of the women. It has also resulted in raising the level of respect, not only within their families, but also in the societies where they live. Earlier women have been seen incapable of doing things. Now, a lot of people have realised that women are equal to men, if the same opportunities are provided to them, to equally realise their capabilities.

Empowerment of physically challenged and dalits is also sought and attained in the Barefoot practices. In general, earlier, no one bothered about physically challenged and dalits in the villages. Their role had been very marginalised. Barefoot has been passionate towards the empowerment of these sections since its inception. Both service delivery as well as employment generation have been prioritised for the marginalised sections. “My life has become so easy and happy, I started earning on my own. As a Physically challenged in the family, I had to depend up on others even if I needed Rs.1/-. But now, I am very happy because, I am independent and also sending some money to my house. I have studied up to 12<sup>th</sup> class, but no one was ready to give me a job, we need a house, money, but due to the lack of employment I



couldn't get anything, but after joining this programme I have been given everything", Jagdeesh confessed. In the process of providing services to the deprived, they have been realising the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of reaching out to the poor. In fact, the Barefoot approach best fits in the MDGs discourse as their involvement in the service delivery is so innovative and much beyond what is stated in MDGs.

It is mentioned that the Barefoot approach has been praised by the rural poor, but criticised by the urban educated. Because urban educated are not respected under the Barefoot approach, as it is believed that they are the reason for today's backwardness of the rural areas, Ramniwas mentioned. Whatever the urban qualified engineers constructed, whether roads or buildings, collapsed soon after their inauguration. Their administrative style is anti-poor, poor are never respected. Apart from that, the bureaucrats, who holds higher degrees, are arrogant and never respect the capabilities of the rural poor. Hence, Barefoot never allows any urban professional to become part of the Barefoot family. They do not even award any certificates to the villagers whom they train because of a kind of arrogant behaviours that the certificates create.

### ***Employment Generation***

Training, followed by employment is provided to those who process a need based dimension of the Barefoot approach. Poor, marginalised, dalit, women, physically challenged and other deprived sections are the most needy sections under this approach. In the first instance, communities have to recommend someone among them to undergo trainings before preceding to a task/project so that, the project would be controlled by him/her and the community. Training is entirely based on learning-by-doing parameters, where one learns from others. There are no experts present. Those who were trained in the earlier batches will train the fresh ones. "My family is very happy that both my wife and myself are working here. They respect the college a lot. Barefoot College has provided water to our villages. They have given education to our children through night schools. Hence, there is a lot of respect that the villagers have developed towards the college" Satyanarayana mentioned.

Those who have been employed by Barefoot College come from the excluded sections listed above. The field study, based on case study methods, clarifies that those whoever are provided with a job in Barefoot were in destitute conditions earlier. If the Barefoot College did not provide a job to them they would have remained in the same condition. Their economic conditions are now elevated. Barefoot is a different kind of voluntary organisation, where everyone decides what others should be paid. They are not being paid high salaries. They are just paid minimum wages in the form of a honorarium. Ramibhai clarified that there is no difference in the salary-structure. Age, education, caste, gender or religion, etc., do not matter in Barefoot College. Everyone gets the same salary, irrespective of his/her expertise. Even the section coordinator, or the director of the college, gets the same wage like everyone employed. That's what keeps them together in order to pursue their goals. Though the salaries are not high, the employees are very happy because, if work would not be provided at Barefoot, they would not get any job due to the lack of proper employment opportunities in the nearby towns. Very interestingly, all the respondents held land of their own, but due to lack of water facilities, the harvesting is at stake, which led to crisis in the families.

Family breakdown, starvation, lack of proper awareness and women disempowerment, etc., were just some situations that they had to go through earlier before they were empowered by Barefoot. They all are illiterates, hardly have ten years of schooling, hence, they are not equipped to work in any other formal organisation. But, with the innovative Barefoot approach, they have been provided with dignified jobs and pleasant living conditions. As a result, their lifestyle has been elevated, their living conditions have improved, their voices are being respected, their financial stability has been grown, and their awareness levels have increased as far as their political outlook is concerned. Altogether, they have been given space to include themselves in the mainstream society. They vote for those who stand by their word. In fact, many of the Barefoot employees have contested in the local elections and won several times, though many have lost the election also.

Transforming an illiterate's life in an innovative way, towards a professional, is not an ordinary task. This has been realised and materialised under Barefoot approach. What they do is, just believe in the capabilities of the communities. They have invested

strong belief in the communities and the results are so instant. The fate of these people has been drastically transformed from that of exclusion to inclusion.

In due course, since communities are given utmost priority in terms of decision making of the project, implementation of project, accountability, transparency, active community participation has been ensured with lot of respect. Community participation in their developmental process has added value to the whole discourse of service delivery. Space for the communities to decide and implement the programmes for their development has shown enormous change. Social capital has also increased among the communities and members who have been provided jobs.

Though the organisation started as a voluntary association, over a period of time, it has been transformed into a social enterprise, without compromising on its voluntary nature. The service delivery process that they are involved in is being supported by various governmental agencies, as well as international funding agencies. In this regard, community involvement and their contribution to complete the project is what makes them distinct from any other social firm. In the first phase, the community proposes a project for which they will have to tell their contribution. Then, it will be sent to various funding agencies for financial support. Communities, as monitoring agencies may contribute in the form of cash or some times in the form of labour or donating any other item that may be useful for the completion of the project. Then, with the help of the funding agency, they come together to complete the project. The communities are asked to form a Village Development Committee (VDC) in order to execute the task/project. VDC comprises of villagers from all the sections. The VDC, with the help of the villagers plan, executes and monitors the entire project.

The annual budget of the Barefoot College demonstrates, that over a period of time, after establishing the College, it has witnessed enormous increase in the finances that came out of its own/local resources. That is what keeps any organisation proud and self-sustained. Own/local resources are mostly attributed in various ways where community contribution and participation are given predominant positions.

As far as financial sources are concerned, the share of local sources have been increased from around 1 per cent in 1992-93 to around 40 per cent in 2008-09. Even it

has seen its peak stage, i.e., 62 per cent in 2003. In some years, there are less and some years, more local sources. It all depends on the kind of work they carry out. Their administrative cost remains below 10 per cent, which always allows them to give more to the communities. With all these efforts, today, the Barefoot College can sustain on its own, without any financial support from any international or national funding agencies. They claim that they would continue to depend upon the communities even more. The communities will be asked to contribute more in order to successfully complete the projects.

## **Findings**

The findings of the study include:

a) Underestimation of rural knowledge and skills often lead to the destruction of community ties and networks, which finally end up in social exclusion; b) Uneducated rural people can create wonders, provided that they are given space to demonstrate their skills; c) Communities must be approached in order to find solutions for the problems they face; d) Social entrepreneurship is definitely one of the better ways that today's world needs in order to solve the social problems; e) Self-sustainability always allows any organisation to go for innovative practices and the same happens in case of the Barefoot College. Inclusion of the excluded is guaranteed on a permanent base with the innovation that they have been practicing; f) Barefoot night schools address the need for education; g) People from upper castes have started fighting for the rights of the lower castes under Barefoot approach along with the lower castes; h) If the environment is clean, where one is born and brought up, automatically he/she grows with nobility; i) Community participation in the decision making process is highly appreciated in order to ensure empowerment and further social inclusion; j) The Barefoot model, which is unique and innovative in nature, can be replicated anywhere, provided that communities are interested; k) Once communities have realised the value, they would be happy to bear the costs in whatever capacity they could; l) Preparing poor to face poverty is the best available option to eradicate poverty and extreme exclusions, that's what proven in the Barefoot discourse; m) Depend more on communities, not the funding agencies, which would

make an act of a social enterprise easier; n) Barefoot's innovative approach has helped several hundreds of illiterates to get dignified employment through which social inclusion is assured; o) Because of the Barefoot approach, communities have realised the importance of their fair political participation; p) Any type of organisation can transform itself into a social enterprise; q) Children's Parliament approach helped children to become aware about the political participation right from their childhood; r) Barefoot solar energy has resulted in environmental protection.

### **Issue that Need a Critical Look**

The following issues need to be critically examined.

1. Though women participation at the grassroots level is very important, their role in decision making has been very less. Even Women Empowerment Section is headed by a man, which is quite unusual.
2. Greater Participation of Dalits and other deprived categories, such as tribes and physically challenged, in decision making needs to be encouraged.
3. The Core Committee - second level social entrepreneurs doesn't comprise of representation from all sections of people.
4. Salaries are very less. There are many who have left for roles offering better salaries.
5. Replication/scalability of Barefoot approach is not as easy, as advocated by Bunker Roy, unless a committed personality takes care of it.
6. So far, Bunker Roy is considered as an external face of the organisation, but in the absence of Bunker Roy, the College needs to struggle a lot for external support.

### **Suggestions**

The study comes up with some suggestions to improve the Barefoot approach, on the one hand, and, on the other, how to go about an innovative service delivery system.

1. More employment may be generated for those who are in need through scaling up of the Barefoot venture.

2. An amendment may be drawn in Right to Education Act, 2010, in order to give space for the Barefoot night schools approach, so that the balance between child labour and family needs would be addressed simultaneously.
3. Local resources, knowledge and skills must not be ignored before evolving a policy related to the rural areas.
4. Communities must be approached before taking any decision/plan on rural development related activities.
5. Having dynamic approach, Government's social inclusive policies must adopt promotion of social entrepreneurs with a prioritised focus.
6. State, if not the funding agencies, must promote innovative service delivery systems to the rural poor.
7. Community participation must be seen as an ideal parameter for the promotion of social good and the empowerment at the grassroots level.
8. Government should adopt the social entrepreneurs innovative ideas in order to protect the rights of the communities.
9. Never see the communities as beneficiaries, they must be seen as partners.
10. NGOs must transform themselves into social enterprises through developing their own strategies to finance their missions from the local resources.

Though, the thesis deals with several notions such as community participation, social capital, entrepreneurship, the central theme of the thesis is limited to social enterprise and social inclusion. In order to learn how social inclusion is possible under a social entrepreneurial initiation by name Barefoot College, several case studies were attained and analysed through which it is found that their life altogether is transformed due to their ingress in this venture. If they were not provided employment by the Barefoot college, they are not sure how vulnerable they might have been. Altogether, this thesis has attempted to prove that the social entrepreneurship is the best way of procuring local resources in order to empower the individuals, families, communities on political, social, as well economic lines, through attaining social inclusion.

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**Appendix - I**  
**Frames related to the Working of Barefoot College**



**Frame No. 1**  
**Illiterate Computer Experts**



**Frame No. 2**  
**Barefoot Women Solar Engineers with the Solar Lanterns**





**Frame No. 3**  
**A View of the Barefoot Night School in a Village**



**Frame No. 4**  
**A View of Children Parliament**



**Frame No. 5**  
**A Puppet Show Performed by Barefoot Communication Section**



**Frame No. 6**  
**Women at Welding Work**