

Role and Impact of Profit and Non-Profit Social Enterprises in India

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Abstract

India is gradually making its presence felt across the globe. It is one of the fastest growing economies in the world today. India projects promising economic indicators in terms of rising GDP and per capita income, but has gloomy social indicators. There is a huge gap between the economic and social status of the nation. There is an urgent need to fill this gnawing gap and elevate the social scenario of the country. There are serious concerns relating to poverty, health, education, water, sanitation, food, housing, and environment in the society which need to be addressed. Profit motivated and not-for-profit social enterprises/entrepreneurs have taken giant strides in the social sector with an aim to fulfil basic social needs of the deprived masses. Social entrepreneurs may not be the complete solution to India's massive problems, but their intervention definitely facilitates in combating some of the critical social issues in the country. They provide innovative sustainable solutions to the nation's entrenched social problems and accelerate human development. In this backdrop, the present study endeavored to explore the different social entrepreneurship initiatives in the direction of bridging the socioeconomic gap. The study reviewed the role, impact, contribution, and achievements of these concerted efforts in the Indian social sector.

Keywords : social entrepreneurship, social entrepreneur, social enterprise, for-profit social entrepreneur, not-for-profit social entrepreneur, social entrepreneurship initiatives

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From being one of the poorest nations, India has emerged as the second fastest growing economy in the world. Over the decades, it has built a robust industrial infrastructure with significant presence in the field of steel, software, telecommunications, IT-enabled services, chemicals, mining, pharmaceuticals, and more. The Indian economy is characterized by a peculiar dilemma. Rapidly growing industrial and service sectors and rising prosperity of India co-exists with conditions of abject and widespread poverty and lack of even basic amenities for its population. Nearly 300 million people or about 60 million households are living below the poverty line (Sarin, 2013). There are serious problems pertaining to poverty, health, education, water, food, and global warming in the society. These issues affect the quality of life and are serious threats to the society at large.

A look at the social indicators in India vis-à-vis with that of other countries revealed the following facts:

↳ The average life expectancy in India was 65 and 66 years in 2011 and 2012 respectively. The same was achieved by other nations much earlier, such as Thailand in 1980, Philippines in 1987, and Indonesia in 1997; while, Sri Lanka reached the life expectancy of 68 years as early as in 1980 (Chakravarty, 2013; The World Bank, 2014).

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↳ The under-five mortality rate per 1,000 live births in India was 61 and 56 in 2011 and 2012, respectively. Philippines achieved this rate in 1989 itself. Sri Lanka attained the infant mortality rate of 46 in 1980, Indonesia witnessed the rate of 59 in 1997, and a country as poor as Bangladesh touched the rate of 61 per 1,000 live births 5 years ahead of India (Chakravarty, 2013; The World Bank, 2014).

↳ The Indian population that had access to improved sanitation facilities in 2010 was only 34%. Contrarily, countries like Vietnam, Bangladesh, Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Thailand accomplished the same by 1990 alone. Indonesia matched the 34% level in 1992, while China achieved the same in 1995 (Chakravarty, 2013).

↳ The literacy rate in India was 74% in 2011. Sri Lanka achieved a literacy rate of 87% by 1981; China was able to reach 78% in 1990; Indonesia 82% in 1990; Vietnam 88% in 1989, and Philippines 94% by the year 1990 (Chakravarty, 2013).

On one side, the economic status of India with overall rising trends in GDP and PCI has raised hopes for a bright and promising future for the people in the country. On the other hand, the social indicators are way back and beaten. The weak social scenario reveals that the country lags behind in social growth despite rising trends in economic indicators. In the given situation, it becomes imperative for individuals, groups, and organizations to take initiative to alleviate the social sector problems and participate in the development process.

Three pronged efforts towards social betterment have been witnessed in the country, namely, for-profit [P] social entrepreneurship initiatives, not-for-profit [NP] social entrepreneurship initiatives, and corporate social responsibility [CSR]. Unlike corporate social responsibility, which is an integral part of corporate and business entities; social entrepreneurship is a purpose-driven effort for the profit motivated and non-profit enterprises. For this reason, the present study focuses solely on the voluntary efforts of for-profit and not-for-profit social enterprises. The huge gap between India's economic and social status makes it all the more crucial to analyze the role, contribution, and accomplishments of social entrepreneurship initiatives towards social elevation of the under-served and deprived masses. It is essential to review where, how, and how much is the contribution of these concerted efforts in the social sector.

Against this background, the study aims at exploring the social entrepreneurship initiatives in India that are persistently striving to bring about social change and development. The study centres its objectives, discussions, and observations on the role, working, and impact of mainly the for-profit and not-for-profit social enterprises.

Types and Characteristics of Social Entrepreneurs

Social entrepreneurs are individuals who do business that aids in solving the most pressing problems of the society. This term has been defined differently by different researchers. For some, a social entrepreneur is any individual or institution working for a social purpose (Alvord, Brown, & Letts, 2004; Brinckerhoff, 2009; Mair & Marti, 2009; Marti & Mair, 2009; Thompson, Alvy, & Lees, 2000); for others, individuals undertaking non-profitable businesses are considered as social entrepreneurs (Austin, Stevenson, & Wei - Skillern, 2006; Boschee, 1998; Fowler, 2000; Frumkin, 2002); while another group of researchers emphasized that individual businesses done for a social cause and which are also self-sustainable are termed as a social enterprise (Alter, 2006; Dees, 1998; Dorado, 2006; Drayton, 2002; Jamison, 2006; Sharir & Lerner, 2006; Waddock & Post, 1991).

Social entrepreneurship can be undertaken in different forms. First by non-profit organizations such as charity businesses which generally lack funding, face increased competition, and base their business on growing social needs; second are the independent entrepreneurs with a for-profit outlook, who are driven by the desire to alleviate definite social problems; and the third by commercial businesses that form a part of corporate social responsible practices (Seelos & Mair, 2004).

For the purpose of the study, the most preferred definition of a *social entrepreneur* states that a social entrepreneur is :

A mission-driven individual who uses a set of entrepreneurial behaviours to deliver

a social value to the less privileged, all through an entrepreneurially oriented entity that is financially independent, self-sufficient, or sustainable. (Abu-Saifan, 2012, p. 25)

The entrepreneurial activities undertaken by mission driven individuals or organizations can be carried out in three diverse ways. These three vehicles of change are not-for-profit social enterprises, for-profit social enterprises, and corporate social responsibility. The changes brought about by them will gradually bridge the socio-economic divide and provide sustainable solutions to the nation's massive problems.

Not-for-profit social entrepreneurs are innovators who form new organizations, develop, and implement new programs and methods, organize and expand new services, and redirect the activities of faltering organizations (Young, 1986). The non-profit social enterprises make use of entrepreneurial behaviour for social ends rather than for profit objectives; or they generate profits that benefit a specific disadvantaged group (Hibbert, Hogg, & Quinn, 2001).

For-profit social enterprises encompass activities emphasizing the importance of a socially engaged private sector and the benefits that accrue to those who do well by doing good (Canadian Centre for Social Entrepreneurship, 2001). Thompson (2002) identified social entrepreneurship as possibly occurring in profit seeking businesses that have some commitment to doing good, in social enterprises set up for a social purpose, but operating as businesses. A profit motivated social entrepreneur runs a business with a social purpose performing social and commercial activities simultaneously to achieve sustainability. The organization is financially independent, and the founders and investors benefit from personal monetary gains driven alongside by the desire to alleviate definite social problems.

Corporate social responsibility is a holistic concept which refers to a company's commitment to operate economically and socially for sustainable development, through which it can maximize the interest of the stakeholders, and benefit the society at large. The World Business Council for Sustainable Development (2002) defined corporate social responsibility as, "Corporate Social Responsibility is the continuing commitment by business to contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce and their families as well as of the community and society at large" (p. 3).

As the present study revolves around the role and impact of for-profit and not-for-profit social enterprises engaged in social sector development, it becomes important to conceptualize the similarities and differences between the for-profit and not-for-profit social entrepreneur/enterprise.

The Table 1 presents a clear distinction between the features of for-profit and not-for-profit social entrepreneurs. It also describes the unique as well as common characteristics of the two types of social

Table 1. Characteristics of Social Entrepreneurs

Unique Characteristics of For-Profit Social Entrepreneur/Enterprise	Unique Characteristics of Not-for-Profit Social Entrepreneur/Enterprise	Common Characteristics
Mission Leader	Charity	Innovator
Change Agent	Social Purpose	Dedicated
Strategic Thinker	Lack of Self-Sustainability	Committed
Visionary	Dependent on donation and philanthropic organizations	Persistent
Highly Accountable	Socially Alert	Initiative Taker
Self-Sustainable		Opinion Leader
Risk Bearer		Opportunity Alert
Holistic approach for development		

Source : Adapted from Abu-Saifan (2012) ; UNICEF (2007)

entrepreneurs. The for-profit as well as not-for-profit social entrepreneurs exhibit unique features and play equally important roles in social sector advancement. Just as the for-profit enterprises contribute to economic development, enable health benefits, or provide bare necessities of life to the poor at reduced cost; the not-for-profit enterprises take up projects for social purposes targeted at the general well-being of the society.

Both for-profit and not-for-profit social entrepreneurs are innovative, dedicated, and committed towards their businesses. They identify social problems and treat them as opportunities to minimize social problems. In the process, through their hard work and focused endeavors, they earn the position of opinion leaders in their fields. Although the social entrepreneurs share a universal mission of creating a better and sustainable society, their vision to achieve these goals is varied. Profit motivated social entrepreneurs work for others as well as for self, while not-for-profit social entrepreneurs work for others alone. The only aspiration of the latter being a genuine concern for the society and objective to promote and protect the essential human rights of the people.

Social Entrepreneurship Initiatives in India : Areas of Operation, Role, and Impact

Over the last decade, a string of social enthusiasts, organizations, and NGOs have taken decisive steps towards combating the ever-growing social sector problems. Efforts have been taken in different directions ranging from education, health, sanitation, and environment to energy, infrastructure, empowerment, and economic development.

This section cites some noble initiatives and drives undertaken by for-profit and not-for-profit social enterprises in various sectors of the economy. The discussion highlights the areas of operation of the chosen social enterprises - both profit oriented and non-profit, the activities conducted by these social enterprises, their roles, impact, and the extent to which they have been successful in filling the gaps in the Indian social sector.

Area of Operation: Energy Sector

Energy here means electricity and other fuel, which can be used by households as well as for businesses. The importance of electricity cannot be undermined in today's world. Apart from its extensive use in our day-to-day life, it is an essential component for growth and development. Still, in many parts of India, there is a tremendous shortage of electricity. This definitely limits the growth of industries and is a major instrument in creating and widening the gap between social and economic development. A number of serious efforts have been taken in this sector by SELCO Solar Pvt. Ltd., Orb Energy, Nirvana Foundation, SKG Sangha, Caktilika, to name a few. The present study shares the role and impact of two such initiatives in the Indian energy sector: Husk Power Systems under the for-profit social enterprise category and Avani Bio Energy in the not-for-profit category (Energy Map, 2014).

(1) For-Profit Social Enterprise: Husk Power Systems

↳ **Role :** Husk Power Systems is an energy generating enterprise focusing on inclusive rural development. It provides end-to-end renewable-energy solutions through its power generating plant using a biomass gasification process. It generates producer gas based electricity. The Husk power unit has helped in lighting up some of the poorest rural regions of India. Husk Power uses a technology which is cost effective and converts bio-mass waste like rice husks, mustard husks and stems, corn cobs, and some varieties of grass into electricity. In this way, Husk Power Systems is endeavouring to provide a solution to the energy problems in rural areas of India. Each 'mini power plant' of Husk Power generates 25 KW to 100 KW of electricity (Husk Power Systems, n.d. a). It also wires up the villages to enable the distribution of electricity to the people in the area. It delivers electricity to communities who pay for the services offered by the company. In order to make the distribution of electricity

cost-efficient, it uses insulated wires with bamboo poles. The aim is to reach each and every household, business unit, and farms in the villages and enable access to electricity at affordable rates (Husk Power Systems, n.d. b).

↳ **Impact :** In a short span of four years, Husk Power Systems has installed 84 mini-power plants, which are providing electricity to over 200,000 people spread across 300 villages in the state of Bihar. These power plants employ nearly 350 people in the villages of Bihar state. Each plant serves around 400 households and saves approximately 42,000 litres of kerosene and 18,000 litres of diesel per year (Husk Power Systems, n.d. c). This has also helped in significantly reducing indoor air pollution and improving the health conditions in these areas. Husk power plants have extended the village life of Bihar state beyond daylight hours. Businesses remain open after dark, and children can study at night. It has not only fostered economic development in these areas, but has also improved the quality of life and living conditions of the people settled there (Bornstein, 2011).

Besides enabling a continuous supply of electricity, Husk Power Systems has created a self-sustained ecosystem around each power plant. It facilitates in generating income to local farmers and entrepreneurs. Additionally, it has created employment through its livelihood programmes such as the incense stick manufacturing program, which largely employs women from the rural areas. Thereby, Husk Power Systems has been serving as a rural empowerment enterprise too (Husk Power Systems, n.d. c).

(2) Not-for-Profit Social Enterprise: Avani Bio Energy

↳ **Role :** Avani Bio Energy is a non-profit social enterprise that serves as the source of clean, reliable, and affordable energy solution in northern India. Energy access in the Himalayan region is a crucial issue. Over 80% of the villages in this region are deprived of an uninterrupted source of power supply. People use kerosene for meeting the shortage in their energy requirements, which is not only expensive, but highly damaging to health and environment. Moreover, the Western Himalayas are among the most vulnerable areas of the world to forest fires with expanding pine forests (Acumen, 2014). Avani Bio Energy converts pine needles to create electricity in the area. Thus, Avani's power plants have transformed the region's problems into an opportunity providing energy solutions to the people living in this area. It has dramatically improved the quality of life for thousands of low-income families (Chandra, 2012).

In the power-generation process, the pine needles are chopped into fine pieces, which are then used in power plants. This material is burnt with limited supply of oxygen, which generates producer gas, which is then cleaned and cooled to be used in a generator to produce electricity. After the entire procedure is complete, one-tenth of the pine needle pieces, usable as charcoal, are obtained as a by-product of the power plant (Khan, 2012).

↳ **Impact :** Avani's first gasifier plant was set up in Berinag, which has been succeeded by a number of such power plants to support and suffice the energy needs of the villagers in northern India (Khan, 2012). Avani Bio Energy has created a safe, clean, and inexpensive energy alternative for the people in the Himalayan region. Electricity is supplied to the villages which has greatly increased the productivity of the people living in the region. It has also helped to reduce the chances of forest fires, which is one serious problem facing the villagers in this part of India (Avani Bio Energy, n.d.). The relief from forest fires puts at rest the fear of 7,500 farming families in Uttarakhand (Acumen, 2014).

By supplying power in the region, the company has not alone solved the energy related problems of the people, but has also created livelihood opportunities for the communities there. Each power plant of the company employs more than 100 villagers for the collection of pine needles from the forests. These villagers are paid ₹ 1,000 for every ton of needles collected by them. The power plant set up by the company has a capacity to produce 100 KW to 150 KW per year. The electricity thus generated helps in lighting up nearly 200 houses in the area (Khan, 2012). The charcoal by-product of the plant is available as a cooking fuel substitute to village households, thereby reducing the consumption of wood and kerosene (Avani, 2012). The use of renewable energy and other technologies has enhanced the lives of low-income households in these regions.

The company has a future strategy to set up 20 new power plants, which can bring electrical and cooking energy to 250,000 people, can generate 2000 new jobs in power plants, and restore 4000 hectares of forest. This will assist the company in earning 60,000 carbon credits every year. The power plants have played a mammoth role by providing electricity and employment; using biodiversity; reducing carbon emission in the villages of this region and creating a self-sustainable system (Chandra, 2012; Khan, 2012).

Area of Operation: Environment Sector

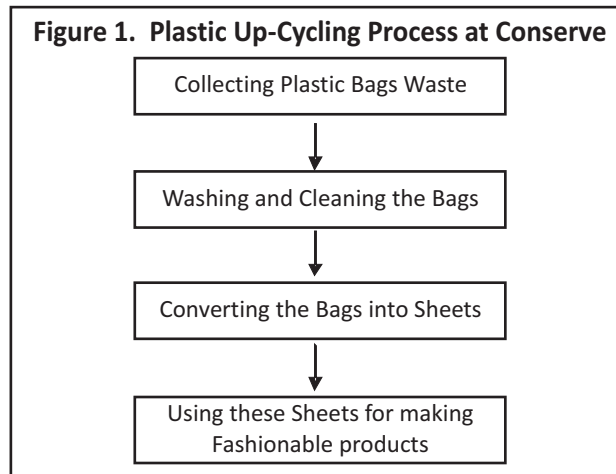
A country's environmental problems vary with its stage of development, structure of its economy, production technologies in use, and its environmental policies. Some environmental problems are associated with the lack of economic development (e.g. inadequate sanitation and lack of clean drinking water), or exacerbated by the growth of economic activity (e.g. air and water pollution). Poverty also plays an important role in influencing environmental problems for a densely populated country with limited resources.

India makes up to only 2.4% of the world's land whilst supporting 16% of the world's population (Foundation for Sustainable Development, 2014). The compounding result is a severely unsustainable use of natural resources for several generations. At present, India is experiencing rapid and widespread environmental degradation, which is progressing at an alarming rate. It is a matter of concern and ,therefore, it is crucial that people and the government participate consciously and constructively towards safeguarding and preserving the environment. It is not only essential for the present, but is paramount for the sustainability of future generations as well. Social entrepreneurs are determined to tackle the environmental problems through innovative waste management methods. Some of the notable initiatives towards environment sustainability include Waste Ventures, Eco Wise, and Saahas. In the present study, the case representing the for-profit social initiative in this area of operation is Conserve India, while GOONJ represents the not-for-profit social initiative.

(1) For-Profit Social Enterprise: Conserve India

↳ **Role :** Conserve India's mantra of 'fashion against poverty' began with an objective to reduce the huge mountains of plastic bag wastes in the city, make efficient use of energy, and lessen the economic problems of the poorest section of the society. In order to realize its mission, Conserve employed the very poor and the rag pickers from the slums of Delhi. To deal with the menace of Delhi's plastic wastes, Conserve adopted the process of up-cycling plastic bag wastes to create fashionable products like handbags, wallets, shoes, belts, and many more modern products. The manufacturing process involves recycling the plastic bags starting with washing, drying, and pressing the bags into sheets, which are then used to make innovative and useful fashion products (refer to Figure 1); thus, promising better lives for the poorest and a cleaner environment for all (Conserve India, n.d. a; Conserve India, n.d. b).

↳ **Impact :** Conserve India employs and trains rag pickers from Delhi's most disadvantaged communities to clear the streets of Delhi from the spate of plastic bag waste. Through its unique manufacturing process, this enterprise is able to manage recycling of nearly 20% waste in the city [Conserve India, n.d. c]. This is a substantial move towards waste management and reduction of plastic waste nuisance in Delhi city. It has greatly contributed towards maintaining and sustaining the environment. Conserve helps the most underprivileged layer of population in a multi-faceted way. It provides them with employment along with an opportunity to work higher up in the organization; an improved hygienic life and better environment; health care facilities for their family; access to education and training for them and their children. Conserve's mission has been to try and minimize two pressing problems of the society. First, it has made sincere efforts at maintaining a clean pollution-free environment for all and second, it has helped in poverty alleviation and economic upliftment of the rag pickers of Delhi city (Conserve India, n.d. d).



(2) Not-for-Profit Social Enterprise: GOONJ

↳ **Role :** GOONJ is one of the leading social enterprises in India and one of the largest non-monetary resource agencies. It is also noted as one of the largest civic participation movements. GOONJ was formed with a mission to make 'cloth' a matter of concern and to bring it among the list of subjects for the development sector (Mitra, 2012). With this initiative, GOONJ has been creating a mass movement for recycling and reuse of tonnes of waste cloth material by diverting them from cities to villages as a resource for rural development (GOONJ, n.d. a).

↳ **Impact :** GOONJ has contributed zealously in the maintenance of the environment and the economic development process by means of various social entrepreneurship programmes such as Cloth for Work Programme and Not Just a Piece of Cloth Programme (GOONJ, n.d. b).

Under the Cloth for Work (CFW) Programme, people are given old used clothes mobilized from cities as a reward in exchange for the work accomplished by them. The provision of cloth as a resource has enabled GOONJ to involve communities in rural development. A number of daunting tasks have been performed under this initiative by involving the locals. It was possible to clean and recharge the village pond in Churali village in Orissa with the help of 500 villagers. This program also led to the construction of a bridge over river Sukhsar in Sukhasan village in Bihar, establishing connectivity between villages. In Khandwa region in Madhya Pradesh, bunding of acres of land facilitated the villagers in getting a good yield of crop. In particular, this initiative has helped in addressing a critical issue of mal-nutrition among the village children. The entire drainage system was cleaned by the villagers in Muzaffarpur, Bihar. In Salidhana, Madhya Pradesh, a well was dug up by the villagers themselves in exchange for cloth. In addition to receiving cloth against work, these deprived villagers also received facilities essential for their own existence, basic amenities, and a hygienic way of life (GOONJ, n.d. c).

Under the *Not Just a Piece of Cloth (NJPC) Programme*, a truly novel initiative of GOONJ is to produce clean cloth pads that are bio-degradable and environment friendly from used un-wearable clothes collected from cities. GOONJ makes these available to women in rural areas who lack access to basic hygiene needs (Ashoka India, 2014; GOONJ, n.d. d). GOONJ manufactures more than 1, 50,000 sanitary pads every month by processing the used clothes and distributes them to interior parts of 21 states of India through its unique distribution channel (Krishna, 2014a, 2014b). In this way, the institution helps thousands of women in finding a better alternative to address their basic needs. The focus of this programme is on changing and evolving new practices, behaviour patterns, education, and its replication in the long-run. Moreover, GOONJ involves hundreds of women across states in making Sujnis from old clothes as a means of managing tonnes of recyclable clothing material. Sujni is a household product in rural India, which is used as a blanket in winters and as a mattress in summers. Many rural women owe a regular source of income to this programme, besides overcoming the environment hazard on account of tonnes of waste cloth (GOONJ, n.d. c).

Area of Operation : Health Sector

India has the second largest population in the world. The country's healthcare system is also developing rapidly. Going by the reports, its per capita healthcare expenditure has increased at a CAGR of 10.3 %, rising from \$43.1 in 2008 to \$57.9 in 2011 and is expected to rise to \$88.7 by 2015. The growth in healthcare expenditure in the country is primarily due to the rising incomes, easy access to high quality healthcare facilities, and greater awareness about personal health and hygiene. It has been forecasted that the rise in health expenditures will lead to the growth of the health sector from \$78.6 billion in 2012 to \$158.2 billion by 2017 ("India's healthcare sector to grow to \$158.2 bn in 2017," 2013). Despite the huge growth and spread in the healthcare sector in India across both the public and private sectors, many areas and communities still lack even basic medical facilities. In these areas, either the facilities are distantly available, or they are unaffordable and out of reach of the masses, leaving millions of people devoid of even basic healthcare facilities. This calls for a social initiative intervention which can fill the gap between the needy and the availability of healthcare services.

There are some well-known examples of social entrepreneurship initiatives in this sector. Life Spring Hospitals Pvt. Ltd. is a chain of hospitals that provides quality health care to women and children in the lower income group in India. Another example is that of Seesha (Samiti for Education Environment Social and Health Action) which caters to the poor and in need through their Karunya Community Hospital in Coimbatore, India. The Aravind Eye Care System provides solutions to eye-related problems to the poor in various parts of India. Among these initiatives in the health sector, there are other initiatives by Healthpoint Services India (HSI), a profit motivated social enterprise and Operation ASHA, a non-profit social enterprise providing health services to the poor. The present study reviews the role and impact of these two enterprises engaged in the health sector.

(1) For-Profit Social Enterprise: Healthpoint Services India

↳ **Role :** The study highlights this initiative as it is a unique effort in the rural health sector in India. Healthpoint Services India provides drinking water, medicines, comprehensive diagnostic tools, and tele-medical services in the remote areas of India through their E Health Points. E Health Points are units of Healthpoint Services India that serve the rural communities and arrange for doctors and modern healthcare facilities at the doorstep of villagers. The concept of E Health Point has proven to be a success as it has remarkably improved the health, productivity, and quality of life of the villagers. These rural clinics are unconventional and have adopted innovative healthcare distribution models for the health sector at large (E Health Point, 2014).

↳ **Impact :** Healthpoint Services India is operating in Punjab State. Its E Health Point centers have successfully conducted more than 19,500 diagnostic investigations, 33,500 medical consultations, 39,000 filled prescriptions, and Hepatitis B vaccination to more than 3000 rural inhabitants. It also provides safe drinking water on a daily basis to more than 5, 00,000 people in the rural and peri-urban communities (OneWorld Foundation India, 2012). This is how a small initiative has enabled access to quality healthcare and safe drinking water services in the remote areas of Punjab state. The E Health Point centers have also generated multiple opportunities for employment in the local areas. By way of its services, the organization has helped villagers cut down on expenditures borne due to water-related diseases. By bringing health services to the village doorstep, Healthpoint Services also saves on the travel time and costs in reaching out to urban centers for healthcare. Above all, it has resulted into better health and well-being of the people of this area by enhancing their productivity and standard of living (E Health Point, 2014).

(2) Not-for-Profit Social Enterprise: Operation ASHA

↳ **Role :** The objective of Operation ASHA is to provide high-quality healthcare services at affordable prices to the disadvantaged communities in India (Operation ASHA, n.d. a). The vision of the founder members is to free

India from the disease of Tuberculosis. To achieve this aim, the institution set out to provide medical services at the doorstep of the persons infected with tuberculosis ("2 Indian social entrepreneurs recognized by Schwab Foundation," 2014). This effort is often referred to as the 'last mile connectivity'. They provide free treatment and surgery for patients who cannot afford life-saving procedures. The activity undertaken by this doctor-run enterprise attracted people from around the world, who encouraged the foundation's initiative with generous donations. A major part of donations and funding is received from USA with an advising and fund-raising group working in the U.S. to form Operation ASHA, USA (Operation ASHA, n.d. b).

↳ **Impact :** Operation ASHA began its journey in September 2006 with one TB treatment center and enrolled 26 new patients in a span of 3 months. It became the largest non-profit social enterprise in Delhi for treating TB with 24 treatment centers serving 475 patients. Operation ASHA provides tuberculosis treatment and education services in 2,053 slums and villages in six Indian states and two provinces in Cambodia (Chitnis, 2014; Operation Asha, n.d. c]. With a successful model in India, Operation ASHA continues to grow and expand beyond India's borders to South-East Asia and Africa, where millions of more people are suffering from tuberculosis and lack access to such health services (Operation ASHA, n.d. b).

Today, Operation ASHA is an exclusive social enterprise project in dealing with the menace of tuberculosis in India. It has emerged as the world's largest NGO in tuberculosis treatment and prevention. It has brought tuberculosis treatment and health services to 4.37 million people living in India. This NGO has provided access to health services to the poorest of the poor living in India's urban slums and rural villages (Operation ASHA, n.d. d).

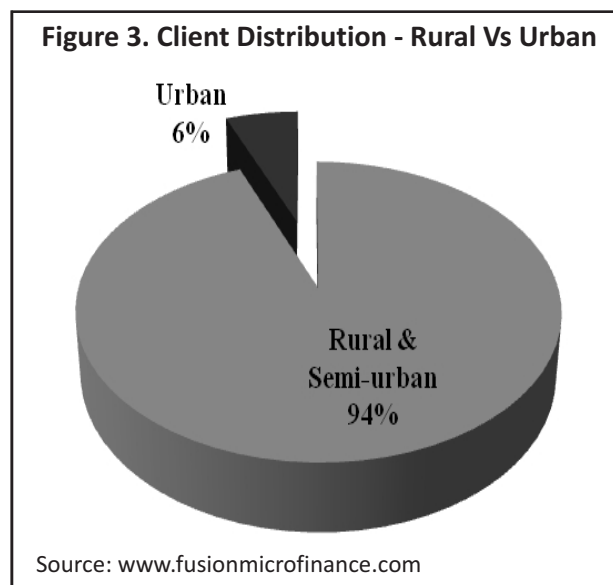
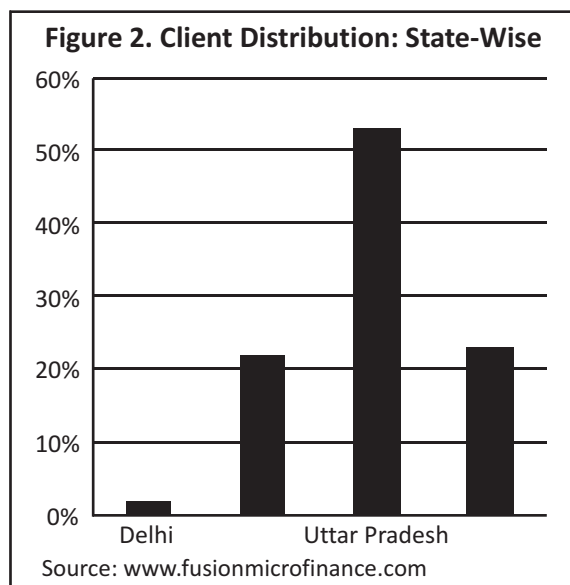
Area of Operation : Economic Development and Empowerment

Economic empowerment is an important pre-requisite to economic development of the nation. The trend in unemployment rate in India has been a rising one - from 3.5% in 2011 to 3.6 %in 2012 and 3.7% in 2013. The unemployment rate is expected to move up to 3.8% in 2014 ("Unemployment levels rising in India, experts say," 2014). Increase in unemployment hinders economic progress of the nation and widens the gap between rich and poor. To minimize this problem, there is an urgent need to create employment opportunities for the people. There are institutions like Srijan, Saath, Bandhan, Enable India, and I Create whose endeavors are aimed at providing employment opportunities to the bottom of the pyramid population. On one hand, they render economic empowerment by building up on employability, providing proper training, counselling, and education, and on the other hand, they enable lending and financial support to the needy and equip them to start their own businesses, thereby encouraging self-employment. The rationale is to encourage the masses towards an inclusive development process. Fusion Microfinance Pvt. Ltd. is a for-profit social enterprise, and Yuva Parivartan is a not-for-profit social enterprise working towards fostering economic empowerment and development (Fusion Microfinance, n.d. a; Yuva Parivartan, n.d. a).

(1) For-Profit Social Enterprise: Fusion Microfinance Pvt. Ltd.

↳ **Role :** Fusion Microfinance Pvt. Ltd. provides financial services to the underprivileged segment of the society for starting new businesses or for expansion of existing business. The loans provided by this institution range from INR 12,000 to INR 30,000 for a tenure of 1.5 to 2 years. The availability of loan enables families with the opportunity of self-employment, to earn surpluses, and to improve their living standards. Fusion offers life insurance for its clients and their spouses alongside micro-credit services. It also serves as a means of achieving economic inclusiveness of a larger disadvantaged section of the population (Fusion Microfinance, n.d. b).

A number of microfinance clients turn out to be true entrepreneurs who enjoy creating and running their own businesses while contributing to the country's economic growth. Others become entrepreneurs by necessity owing to lack of jobs in the formal sector. The female segment of the population forms 100% of clients of the institution. Economic support makes it possible for women to explore many options for self-employment. They work on small farms or establish self-made businesses such as vegetable selling, kiosks and small shops, fishing,



carpentry, transportation, and much more (Fusion Microfinance, n.d. c).

↳ **Impact :** Fusion Microfinance started its operations in January 2010. It is head quartered in New Delhi and is operational in the less penetrated North Central parts of India like Madhya Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, and New Delhi (Fusion Microfinance, n.d. d). The Figures (Figures 2 and 3) exhibit the share of client distribution of Fusion Microfinance Pvt. Ltd. in these four states of India and between the urban and rural areas, respectively. In a small span of 4 years alone, the institution has multiplied from a meager 13 branches to 41 branches in different states of India. It has increased the total number of its active loan clients from 21,494 to 1, 15,283. The cumulative loan disbursed has risen from INR 25 crores to INR 269.28 crores. A surge in the company's offices across the four states has led to additional employment generation for 238 people by January 2014 as compared to 2011. By financially empowering people in rural and urban areas, Fusion has not only involved a larger force of population in the movement towards an inclusive economic development process, but has also facilitated in improving the standard of living of this disadvantaged section of community (Fusion Microfinance, n.d. a).

(1) Not-for-Profit Social Enterprise: Yuva Parivartan

↳ **Role :** Yuva Parivartan is a non-government organization. It is the result of collective efforts of dedicated visionaries, change makers, corporates and benefactors in the Kherwadi region of Bandra, Mumbai (Yuva Parivartan, n.d. b). The objective of Yuva Parivartan is the betterment of the youth segment of the population. Their efforts are targeted towards supporting school dropouts from underprivileged families (which is a major cause of economic and social poverty), solving community problems, and extending livelihood support to the unemployed youth. The NGO runs an inclusive program with key features such as admission for anyone who can read and write even though lacking any formal education, vocational training, program for developing and enhancing life skills, basic courses in spoken English and computer operation, guidance, counseling and mentoring, job placements, and assistance for self-employment (Yuva Parivartan, n.d. c).

The objective of this enterprise is to enhance the capability and capacity of the less fortunate youth with vocational skills, guidance, and financial assistance to aid them in their growth and development. The uniqueness of the Yuva Parivartan programme is its ability to address the three important paradoxes confronting the livelihood space in the country - where 80% of the youth, who do not complete school receive only 20% of the attention; where 90% of the jobs are in the unorganized sectors, but only 10% of the attention and resources are

directed towards the unorganized sector; and where 70% of the population lives in the villages, but only 30% of the attention is directed towards rural India (Yuva Parivartan, n.d. d).

↳ **Impact:** Since over 15 years of its existence, Yuva Parivartan has shown tremendous growth with a network of more than 300 centers across 18 states of India (Yuva Parivartan, n.d. e). It has emerged to be one of the largest NGOs in the livelihood space in India, working for the benefit of the 'out of school' youth. The institution strongly believes that the nation's strength and future lies in the hands of its youth. Hence, to build the nation, there is a need to build the youth. Unlike the developed countries, where 90% of the youth opt for some or the other sort of vocational training, less than 5% of the youth undergo vocational training in our country despite the fact that India is a country with the largest youth population (Yuva Parivartan, n.d. f).

The Yuva Parivartan Model attempts to address some of the crucial problems plaguing the Indian youth. It focuses on 80% out of school youth, by trying to provide them a livelihood through its own centers, partnership centers, and innovative formats. In the organized sector, it provides placement to these youth through placement assistance programs; and in the unorganized sector, job opportunities are multiplied by setting up a Rural Employment Exchange. It provides training for sustainability through farm-based occupations and traditional occupations, available resources, and Self-Help Groups (SHGs) (Yuva Parivartan, n.d. f).

The Institute runs 50 livelihood development centers for skill development among the youth. It has organized over 2000 mobile rural camp centers to reach out to the remote areas of India. Through these centers, Yuva Parivartan has expanded its sphere of impact from 100 students to 4, 00,000 students. Every year, the institution empowers 1, 00,000 school dropouts from which over 60% get employment, including those who make a choice of self-employment. Yuva Parivartan embarked on two "Orbit Changing" initiatives between 2010 and 2015. The first initiative was taken to scale up its training provisions from 18,000 students per year to 100,000 students between the years 2010 and 2012. The second orbit change exercise aimed at scaling up the training of youth from 400,000 to 10, 00,000. From the violence affected tribal areas of Maharashtra to the snow-clad terrain of Kashmir, Yuva Parivartan has become a national movement, touching the lives of a large number of youth (Yuva Parivartan, n.d. f).

Observations and Conclusion

The scale of social crisis is enormous in degree and size and is spread extensively across the different regions of the country. It is a herculean task to be faced and dealt with. However, the heroic efforts of socially motivated individuals and organizations and the zeal with which they pursue their noble objectives is entirely laudable. Although this sector still needs much more attention and labour to fill the mammoth gaps, but the steps initiated in the right directions indisputably foster the movement towards a safer, healthier, and empowered India. The following observations are made regarding the magnitude of role, impact, and achievements of the social entrepreneurship initiatives in different sectors as discussed in the study:

(1) In the energy sector, Husk Power Systems, which is a profit led social enterprise, supplies electricity to more than 2, 00,000 people across 300 villages in Bihar state, employing nearly 350 people. It has developed a self-sustained ecosystem and has created employment through its livelihood programmes, particularly for rural women. Avani Bio Energy is a non-profit social enterprise that provides clean, safe, reliable, and affordable energy solution to the villagers in the Kumaon region. It has led to employment generation for the communities, has created a pollution-free environment, and a self-sustainable system.

(2) In the environment sector, the profit motivated social enterprise; Conserve India has recycled 20% plastic waste of Delhi. Conserve provides the most neglected segment of the society with employment, education, and training; better environment and healthcare facilities. GOONJ, a non-profit enterprise has snowballed into a mass

movement of recycling and reuse of old used clothes by canalizing them from cities to villages as a resource for rural development.

(3) In the healthcare sector, Healthpoint Services India, a for-profit social enterprise, has enabled healthcare facilities in the rural areas and villages of Punjab state through a network of its E Health Point centers. These centers provide safe drinking water on a regular basis and medical services at the village doorstep. Moreover, they have created opportunities for employment of locals in the area. The outcome is better health, well-being, and improved living standards of the villagers. Operation ASHA, a non-profit social enterprise, has become a dominant name in tuberculosis treatment and its prevention. It has provided tuberculosis treatment and health services to more than 6.1 million people, including the poorest of the poor.

(4) Towards empowerment and economic development, Fusion Microfinance Pvt. Ltd.; a profit oriented social enterprise has financially enabled over 90% of the rural and semi-urban population, giving them economic empowerment and support to participate in the development process. The not-for-profit initiative by Yuva Parivartan has more than 300 centers across India. It has emerged as one of the largest NGOs in the livelihood space in India and impacts nearly 4, 00,000 students. Of the 1, 00,000 school dropouts it empowers each year, over 60% get employed.

There are no physical or mathematical parameters to measure the performance of social enterprises as such. There are many dedicated mission-driven institutions making efforts to fill the gaps between economic and social progress. Nonetheless, every small step taken by any individual or institution furthers the national movement towards a better socio-economic future of the country.

The review of the cases of social entrepreneurship initiatives in India suggests that irrespective of whether the social enterprises are for-profit or not-for-profit initiatives; they have indeed instilled hope, changed lives, and promised better future by providing life changing services to the under-served population. They have created a world full of opportunities for the deprived masses either by enabling empowerment, employment generation, training and imparting of skills, or simply by advancing loans and facilitating them to play the role of entrepreneurs. Certain social initiatives such as Husk Power Systems, Healthpoint Services India, and GOONJ have played cherub in people's lives by improving their living conditions by making provision of safe drinking water, proper lighting, transportation, medical facility, good cloth, proper sanitary needs, and more. Irrespective of their ideologies, both for-profit and not-for-profit social enterprises can assist in combating the problems of poverty, health, education, sanitation, water, food, and global warming in the society; thereby ensuring the fulfilment of essential human rights for all.

Managerial Implications

The study focused upon the role and impact of 'for profit' and 'not for profit' social enterprises in India. The knowledge of the working and the impact of for profit social enterprises has paved the way for managers and young entrepreneurs towards achievement of dual objectives of engaging in business and attainment of social objectives simultaneously. On the other hand, the study of not for profit social enterprises will benefit people who want to bring about a social transformation and be future change makers in the society. The study would also be useful to those who are in search of innovative areas of business.

Limitations of the Study and Scope for Further Research

Social entrepreneurs deliver innovative products, provide essential services, and endeavor to involve the deprived, poor, and rural masses in the income generation and social growth process. In this perspective, research on social entrepreneurship efforts in the country becomes imperative. The present study highlights the initiatives

of some selected social enterprises. The study could be extended to include the experiences of a larger number and variety of social enterprises. The study focuses upon only four areas of operation of social enterprises. The further scope of research could be coverage of more such relevant areas of operation. Furthermore, a disaggregated regional analysis could be carried out. Foremost, an interesting subject of future research could be an empirical analysis of individual or multiple social entrepreneurship initiatives.

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