

Poverty Alleviation Approaches In Globalized India

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Abstract

Globalization refers to integration of economies of the world through uninhibited trade and financial flows leading to mutual exchange of technology and knowledge along with free intercountry movement of labor. The Indian government has removed constraints and various obstacles encountered in entry of MNCs in India as well as allowing Indian companies to enter into foreign collaborations and encouraging them to set up joint ventures abroad. Even after more than 70 years of Independence, India still has the world's largest number of poor people. Globalization gives rise to creation, production, distribution and consumption of goods and services on an unprecedented scale, i.e., increasing economic activity for people, enterprises and countries through free international trade, direct foreign investment, and

capital market flows. Globalization has a lot to offer especially for the developing countries in terms of more job opportunities and international exposure. Countries, which take part in the global economy are experiencing more economic growth and poverty reduction than those countries which are remaining yet in isolation.

Key Words: Globalization, Liberalization, Poverty Alleviation.

Introduction

Today the entire globe has plummeted into a village without well drawn-out boundaries. What is happening in one part of the world is not only becoming known to all other parts, but is also influencing the ways of life and living of people throughout the world, which is only possible via rapid advancement in the science and technology and as well as globalization. Poverty has always been a great social and political problem for the world. Government has launched several programmes for socio-economic and cultural upliftment of people to eradicate poverty at world level. For emancipation of poverty usually three streams of thought have been in practice since last century among the three polar worlds, i.e., Capitalism (USA), Communism (USSR) and Mixed economy (developing and underdeveloped countries). After second world war, the conflict between America and USSR converted into the cold war. Actually, it was a cold war between capitalism and communism, in which capitalism won the war and communism was defeated, i.e., communism was dethroned and bipolar world was converted into unipolar world.

With the collapse of USSR (1990-91) and rise of uncontested and unregulated capitalism, unprecedented socio-political changes in the world scenarios have been marked through new technology and information revolution. America launched new economic and political processes, which was popularly known as liberalization, i.e., free economy and open market, thereby globalization came into practice. Capitalist countries began to advocate that poverty alleviation could be resolved through globalization and it must be accepted among all nations in public interest.

Globalization, which was started in the name of improving the world economy and to alleviate poverty, but in fact, capitalist countries want to expand their market and their economy. Thus, globalization is a political as well as economic and social process and all developing and under-developing nations have to accept this process. Today, globalization is affecting every aspect of human life and we can say that it is a double-edged sword, which has exciting possibilities for poverty alleviation as well as usher in unusual sufferings also, i.e., it has both positive as well as negative potentials.

Defining Globalization

Globalization is a complex process by which the world is becoming highly interconnected through economic, social, political and cultural contacts. It refers to the intensification of global interconnectedness suggesting a world full of movement and mixture contact and linkages, persistent

cultural interaction and exchange.

Globalization is the term used to describe the changes in societies and the world economy that result from dramatically increased international trade and cultural exchange. It describes the increase in trade and investing due to the falling of barriers and the interdependence of countries. In specifically economic contexts, the term refers almost exclusively to the effects of trade, particularly trade liberalization or free trade. More broadly, the term refers to the overall integration resulting in interdependence, among global actors (be they political, economic, social, or otherwise).

Globalization may also be defined as the integration of markets, finance and technologies in a way that is shrinking the world from a size medium to a size small and enabling each of us to reach around the world farther, faster and cheaper than ever before, i.e., inclusion of the integration of the world market, different economic, political and social institutions, multimedia, technology and culture and exclusion of the sovereignty of the nation, state and indigenous, etc.

The IMF define globalization as the growing economic interdependence of countries worldwide through increasing volume and variety of cross-border transactions in goods and services, free international capital flows and more rapid and widespread diffusion of technology. The World Bank define globalization as the freedom and ability of individuals and firms to initiate voluntary economic transactions with residents

of other countries.

Impact of Globalization on Economic Growth and Employment Generation

Globalization has many meanings depending on the context, i.e., in international arena, it refers to the integration of economies of the world through uninhibited trade and financial flows leading to mutual exchange of technology and knowledge along with free intercountry movement of labour. In the Indian context, this implies opening up the economy to foreign direct investment by providing facilities to foreign companies to invest in India. It also involves massive import liberalization programs by switching over from quantitative restrictions tariffs and import duties.

Globalization has become a major factor behind high economic growth of the country. The favorable economic conditions of the government have put a positive impact on the overall standard of living of the country, but still certain scholars argue that globalization, as such, does not have any such significance in improving the alarming poverty situation in India.

Characteristics of globalization

Globalization includes international movement of commodities, money, information and people, development of technology, organizations, legal systems, infrastructures, etc. Various characteristics of globalization are –

1. Globalization allows free trade between countries without government interference.

2. Freedom of business firms or corporates or industrialists or companies, to incept / establish a business firm or performs business activities anywhere in his country or different country abroad, i.e., liberalizing peoples to start their business in different geographies.
3. People throughout the world are connected, which provides a platform for free exchange of ideas, technology, cultural knowledge, information, etc. Thus, connectivity affects the society directly in raising their standard of living as well as changes their lifestyle.
4. Economic globalization, i.e., aims at reducing trade barriers and economic reforms leading to exchange of services, goods, technology, capital, raw-materials, etc.
5. It provides an opportunity for every individual to prosper by sharing technological advancement, knowledge, experience, etc.
6. It opens doors for abundant knowledge and experience among different countries.
7. It ensures production advantage for companies, i.e., companies can set-up their manufacturing plant where labour and land availability is relatively economical which brings production cost down and company may have a competitive advantage, which is the primary goal of any business.

8. Increased role of international organizations such as WTO, WIPO, IMF, etc. that deal with international transactions.
9. Greater international cultural exchange, spreading of multiculturalism and better individual access to cultural diversity. Individuals may have greater international travel and tourism, which may leads to greater immigration including illegal immigration.
10. Development of a global telecommunications infrastructure and greater transporter data flow, using such technologies as the internet, communication satellites and telephones.
11. Increase in the number of standards applied globally; e.g., copyright laws and patents.

Impact of Globalization on Poverty Alleviation

Poverty is the lack of basic human needs, such as clean and fresh water, nutrition, health care, education, clothing and shelter, etc., because of the inability of an individual to afford them. Poverty is additionally seen as a state of mind and a lifestyle- more than just a lack of materials. It is a state of deprivation and insecurity. There are two types of poverty viz., absolute and relative poverty. Absolute poverty quantifies the number of people in a certain population below a fixed real poverty threshold, i.e., it is a level of poverty as defined in terms of the minimal requirement an individual needs to afford food, clothing, health care and shelter. Relative poverty is the condition of

having fewer resources or less income than others within a society or country, or compared to worldwide averages. Poverty is not limited to low incomes, inability to acquire the basic goods and services, hunger and malnutrition; ill health; limited or lack of access to education and other basic services inadequate housing; unsafe environments and social discrimination and exclusion, which is necessary for survival with dignity in the society.

Economic liberalization policy was initiated by the then Finance Minister Dr Manmohan Singh in 1990's, to encourage globalization, which led India to become one of the fastest growing economies and 4th largest economy in the world in terms of its Purchasing Power Parity (PPP). High economic growth brings about rapid progress in the standard of living of the peoples, which reduces the rate of poverty in the country. Such policies have made India a consumer-oriented market due to which more and more job opportunities are being created leading to increase in per capita income and thereby a positive impact on the overall poverty situation of the country. Due to high demand more and more industries are being introduced in the market to fulfil the consumers' needs and desires.

For upliftment of the poor, the Indian government has launched several poverty alleviation programmes for systematic economic growth, vis-à-vis changes in land and tenancy reforms, participatory and empowerment based approaches and providing of basic minimum services. Such

efforts reveals that the incidence of poverty declined during 1973 - 2000. In terms of GDP, globalization had made a favorable impact on the overall growth rate of the economy, since there is major improvement in India's growth rate from 3 percent to 5.9 percent during 1970 to 1980's, but it was still lower than the growth rate in China. This pickup in GDP growth has improved India's global position from the 8th position in 1991 to 4th place in 2001, when GDP is calculated on purchasing power parity basis. However, 1991-92 was the first year of the reform program, when India's economy grew by 0.9 percent only, but achieved a growth rate of 8.0 percent during the year 2003-04.

Due to globalization and liberalization policies export growth and foreign direct investment have reduced the poverty situation in the country. Globalization has also positively affected the overall health care situation in the country. More and more medical innovations are improving the health situation in India, due to which the infant mortality rate and malnutrition rate have significantly come down during the last decade. But India remains conservative in respect of banking, fiscal, monetary and international trade policies and its negotiations with WTO on subsidies will continue before opening all sectors of the economy to global competition. India remains vigilant in negotiations on intellectual property rights issues. Various sectors of the Indian economy such as insurance, reform in labour policy, banking and foreign investments, etc. have yet to be initiated as per international

standards. The rate of foreign investment in India was also slower initially, but its rate of economic growth has remained almost stable and is now rising. India thus has been able to avoid the social cost of structural adjustment in its economy, which almost invariably worsens the conditions of the poor and weak in society.

Strategies for Poverty Alleviation

Globalization as such does not hinder, but may help in reduction of poverty. Since globalization is not a single process nor is it a phenomenon, but it is a collective process of evolving its own strategies to interface globalization through pursuit of a coordinated and conscious policy of globalization that may not only help in reduction of poverty but also in empowerment of the poor in all facets of life. Hence, the most effective manner in which globalization helps in poverty alleviation can be summarised as here under

1. Creating employment opportunities for the rural poor, thereby increasing their productivity and raising their standard of living.
2. Infusion of capital investment in rural areas leading to surplus creation of jobs, which can be attained through good governance.
3. New innovations and technological revolutions to bring about social, economic and political transformation of human societies.
4. The state institutions, civil societies and corporate bodies must establish synergies to convert the

challenge of globalization into a new historical opportunity.

5. Equal distribution of the basic factors of production especially land, labour and capital.
6. Improving the effectiveness of anti-poverty programmes especially the health and nutrition programs.
7. Revamping agricultural growth especially in the lagging regions through technological intervention, institutional and market support, increasing agricultural wages, promoting employment, etc.

Conclusion

Globalization is like influenza influencing everything it touches. It has been spreading fast like a virus but unlike any virus, its impact is not totally bad in most areas particularly economic and technological globalization is going to prove worldwide beneficial. WTO is expected to have far-reaching implications on Indian agriculture. The development of rural infrastructure is also crucial for globalization of India's economic growth and income generation is expected to be more pronounced in coming years. Poverty alleviation continues to receive greater thrust in the Indian economy and we may achieve success in poverty reduction via government policies with proper institutional support.

In the Indian scenario, the growth of the economy very much depends upon rural participation as 72 percent of the population still lives in rural areas whose livelihood mainly

depends on agriculture and allied activities. Globalization process has opened markets and reached the rural consumers since branded products, durable consumer goods, preserved food items have been offered in convenient small packs in rural India. Further they have been targeted as mobile consumers and attractive packages have been made available at their doorsteps. But until and unless the rural man-power is involved in the production process, as service providers, workmen, producers of intermediate goods, inputs for the production chain of multinational companies, etc., their poverty can only rise and may not decline, because we have simply to increase their earnings vis-à-vis along with their consumption demand. Otherwise, globalization will raise only GDP figures, but not affect the welfare of the masses.

On the whole, globalisation has a lot to offer especially for the developing countries in terms of more job opportunities and international exposure. Countries, which take part in the global economy are experiencing more economic growth and poverty reduction than those countries which are remaining yet in isolation.

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Microfinance Scheme in West Bengal and Bangladesh: A Venture for Financial Inclusion and an Inheritance of Tagore's *Cooperative Principle*

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Abstract

Tagore had started the 'Kaligram Krishi Bank' at Patishar village in Naogaon district of today's Bangladesh in 1905, but it was then in India. For millions, Rabindranath Tagore's literary greatness is unforgettable and especially for the Bengali population, the benchmark for everything and anything is still Tagore. However, the Apex bank in Bangladesh is now looking into the little known aspect of Tagore's life-as the founder of microfinance schemes in South East Asia, as is stated in their Annual Report' 2015-16. My attempt in this paper will be to discuss the role played by Tagore in pathfinding the journey of 'microfinance schemes' in West Bengal and Bangladesh aiming at inclusion of the marginalized section of the society into the mainstream state economy and to explore certain parts of his *Cooperative Principle* to bring out the theoretical premises behind this venture.

Keywords : Microfinance Scheme, Rabindranath Tagore, Financial Inclusion, *Cooperative Principle*, West Bengal and Bangladesh.

Introduction

Bangladesh's microfinance scenario faced a rough weather, leading to a change of guard at Grameen Bank, the country's leading micro- lender, as Nobel Prize winner Muhammad Yunus was removed following allegations against him for mishandling a Norwegian fund. There were legal interventions also when a Bangladeshi court commented on interest rates of Grameen Bank.

However, Atiur Rahman, governor of Bangladesh Bank, the country's central bank, says there's "no crisis in our microfinance sector." Rahman, who was here, told Business Standard: "After Yunus also Grameen Bank is performing well. What we are now trying to do is implementing the ideologies of Tagore in our existing micro credit mechanisms like Agriculture Bank and Grameen Bank."

"He is the pioneer and understanding the importance of that, I am working myself on implementation of his banking ideas in our system. In terms of financial inclusion, it is a perfect example on how to include farmers a part of the system," Rahman said.

Taking a cue from Tagore, Bangladesh's Agriculture and Grameen Banks have taken inclusive measures for the farming community. It is believed that Tagore even rolled his Nobel prize money of Rs.1,30,000/- for the microfinance

scheme. The highlight of Tagore's bank was its collateral-free lending scheme in about 600 villages, compared with the higher interest rates of Grameen Bank.

Tagore had selected three members, including a principal in each village, who used to distribute the money. "His ideas are something that can be modelled, even in this era," Rahman added.

Coming by all these in a leading Bangladeshi daily, *The Daily Star*, dated 16-02-2016, author became interested in venturing into the microfinance schemes, running in Grameen Banks and Agricultural Banks in West Bengal. In this venture the author would also like to relate Tagore's *The Cooperative Principle* as the connecting link among the presently operating microfinance schemes in West Bengal and Bangladesh.

Analysis

Tagore had started the Kaligram Krishi Bank at Patishar village in Naogaon district of today's Bangladesh in 1905, but it was then in India. For millions, Rabindranath Tagore's literary greatness is unforgettable and especially for the Bengali population, the benchmark for everything and anything is still Tagore. However, the Apex bank in Bangladesh is now looking into the little known aspect of Tagore's life-as the founder of microfinance schemes, as is stated in their Annual Report' 2015-16.

While looking into the landscape of microfinance in Bangladesh, the author found it dominated by a few large

players, notably the Grameen Bank, BRAC and ASA (Association for Social Advancement), each of which commands a vast hinterland of clients and also has a global presence. More recently, it is ASA that is often lauded by the microfinance industry as the Bangladesh success story, making it to the top of the “MIX Global 100” and “productivity” (Fernando and Meyer 2002). In 2008, ASA received the “Banking at the Bottom of the Pyramid” award of the International Finance Corporation and *The Financial Times*. In these global rankings, the Grameen Bank is recognized primarily for its ‘outreach’, in other words for the millions of borrowers that it serves, but it is rarely presented as a model of innovative microfinance. Instead, such praise is reserved for BRAC, whose innovations have been circulated by CGAP (Certified Government Auditing Professional, a U.S. based non-profit organization) and its experts. BRAC’s founder Fazole Abed has received substantial global recognition from the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation Humanitarian Prize to the first Global Citizen Award of the Clinton Global Initiative. Still then, the significance of the Grameen Bank in the context of financial inclusion is more significant than ASA and BRAC for its ‘outreach’, importance of which is asserted by Tagore in Lokahita and questions regarding it are raised and are suppressed not only in India and Bangladesh, but also in USA as without optimum financial inclusion and eradication of poverty success of microfinance scheme is absolutely impossible.

In 2007, in a meeting organized by the Microcredit Summit Campaign, US lawmakers met with World Bank President Robert Zoellick to double World Bank spending on Microfinance i.e. from 1% to 2%, to commit half of those funds to those living below \$1 a day, and to use poverty measurement tools to ensure compliance. But as Results itself reports: “all Mr. Zoellick could promise was more meetings” (Results 2008). Zoellick’s response to Results, that the poor require grants and safety nets rather than microcredit, echoes a poverty truth that is entrenched in the circuit of CGAP and Boulder. This truth, sketched by Marguerite Robinson, in that indelible line that she draws between the economically active and entrepreneurial poor and the economically inactive poor, seems impossible to challenge. It haunts the debates around the legislation, such that an unusual voice, Didier Thys (2004), serving then as executive director of MIX (Microfinance Information Exchange), asks somewhat angrily in a letter to the New York Times, also unpublished: “Why should a poor woman in India, stigmatized as an ‘untouchable’, be less worthy of investment than the landowner for whom she works? Can’t fifty cents on every dollar we invest in microfinance be used to help her and her neighbours? Does it all have to go to the landowner? I thought it was beyond that.”

The Annual Report’ 2014 of the World Bank deals with the present scenario of microfinance in South Asian countries like India and Bangladesh in vivid detail. The model

they present bears a close resemblance with Marguerite Robinson's diagram separating the bankable poor from the unbankable. Yet, against prevailing CGAP wisdom, he drew his arrows past the ultra-poverty line indicating how World Bank programs in South Asia and targeting the ultra-poor and seeking to harness their 'entrepreneurial skills'. It includes the need for 'flexible credit delivery mechanisms' for the bottom 10% of the poor, who are included in an ultra-poverty programme. It does also assert the need for introduction of a unified model of microfinance to fight against dense and extreme poverty to lead to a unique narrative of development where the emergence of poverty-focused institutions was embedded in the more ambitious enterprise of nation-building. In such a context the CGAP principles and mandates to grow large to play a significant role in the market and to invest in the infrastructure of the market seem irrelevant and strangely out of place. Size and scale, in this context are only elements of a distinctive ensemble of development ideas and practices. Led by charismatic men, these are 'home-grown institutions' (Bornstein, 1996: 249) that while different in methodology are united in an ideology of poverty alleviation and institutional practice without any conscious effort for commercialization and having focus on poverty-eradication instead of profit making, but following the 'banking' model instead of 'NGO' model.

The need for 'lump sums' of money (i.e. larger amounts than are normally available on a day-to-day basis)

for investment in economic and social opportunities, consumption, life cycle needs, and to cope with crises and emergencies is the starting point of any microfinance scheme. Poor people can obtain these lump sums through putting aside smaller sums of money when they become available – either as savings, as repayments for credit, or as investment in other financial services such as insurance. Credit for enterprise development continues to play an important role, but it is one of a number of dimensions to microfinance that supports poor people’s livelihoods. Noponen and Kantor (Noponen and Kantor, 1990) discuss the use of microfinance as one important component of livelihood support programmes. They highlight the way in which the financial services assist poor people in managing the predictable and unpredictable needs for money, and thereby reduce their vulnerability, increase their ability to take hold of opportunities, and contribute to a sustainable movement out of poverty. In a similar vein, BRAC has considerable evidence of movement in and out of poverty and cautions the view that access to credit leads to sustained income growth and underlines the importance of BRAC’s programme in reducing the vulnerability of clients to shocks which can precipitate a downward slide.

The social impacts that develop through the non-economic aspects of microfinance – ‘a social understanding of poverty takes account of... other “deficits” that matter to people, sometimes more than money’ are

usually discussed. Impacts take place in different areas. That of 'family and kinship' is the area most commonly examined in impact assessment. Beyond the household are 'community and civil society', 'markets and economy' and 'state and polity'. While recognising that these domains intersect and overlap, Kabeer focuses particularly on what she calls 'wider social' impacts which she defines as those that operate in 'domains of society beyond the household' or which bring the private into the public domain. Examples of such 'wider social' impacts are given by Noponen and Kantor (Noponen and Kantor, 1990). Noponen describes reductions in violence against women, as PRADAN (Professional Assistance for Development Action) members record incidents of violence against them in their diaries. She suggests that it is the public nature of this record that leads to the change in behaviour. She does also present evidence of the stabilising effect that micro-insurance services can have for MFO clients in Bangladesh and Uganda. The reduction of risk and vulnerability at an individual level creates wider impacts on the stability of income for the wider community. The resulting improvements in income security for the community as a whole then provide a basis for the strengthening of personal relationships and social capital.

It is usually suggested that the use of group-based methodologies in the delivery of microfinance has the potential to increase clients' knowledge of and participation in the wider world. However, while the use of groups has the

potential to build social capital, develop skills and empower clients, the way they are used varies considerably between MFOs. Some use them solely as a means for creating peer group pressure while others use them more deliberately as a vehicle for the empowerment and development of clients. Noponen and Dash discuss the role of Self- Help Groups (SHGs) in the Indian context, particularly in terms of their ability to take collective action on issues beyond the narrow confines of financial services in the wider community. These groups of poor women develop in autonomous, self-sustaining units which facilitate savings and credit, and are also a vehicle for the empowerment of the poor, both on an individual and community level. Noponen presents a framework for understanding potentially reinforcing processes in household well-being, economic empowerment, and social and political empowerment. This highlights the potential for SHGs to create benefits on an individual and wider level, in terms of a number of dimensions of income poverty, and social exclusion. For the 'new poor' in the context of high unemployment in the former communist states of Eastern Europe, vulnerability is created by the lack of the right social connections, particularly as sources of social security. Despite good education and a high level of assets, many people lack the resources to maintain their social connections. In this context microfinance groups have the potential to build social capital and Kantor concludes that microfinance has an important role in developing and strengthening informal social

connections. However, structural inequalities in society remain, and there is no evidence of increased participation in formal associations where most of the power within society lies.

The nature and extent of the impact of microfinance, particularly on poverty incidence, and the nature of the economic and social outcomes that microfinance is expected to have – particularly the impact on poverty – continues to promote lively debate. There is evidence that microfinance can have a positive impact on the economic and social situation of clients, their households and their businesses, as well as wider social and economic impacts, including changing social relationships and labour market effects (Morduch and Haley 2002). These impacts can in turn affect the overall incidence of poverty, whether defined in narrow income terms or more broadly. Hence, one important aspect of debate is the potential contribution of microfinance to the Millennium Development Goals (Littlefield *et al.* 2003). However, the potential impact of microfinance may go beyond these definitions of poverty. For example, impacts on gender inequality may relate to women above as well as below the poverty line (Jackson 1996). While working with relatively poor people, many microfinance organisations (MFOs) have explicit social goals that are not solely defined in terms of poverty. For this reason, the term “social performance” is used to cover the broad concern with social and economic impact (including poverty), which together with “financial

performance” constitutes an MFO’s “double bottom line”. Systems for routinely measuring social performance of microfinance are at an early stage of development. Until recently, most formal social performance measurement took the form of ad hoc impact assessment studies with a ‘proving’ objective (Hulme 2000), in other words, to justify donor funding. These studies were generally undertaken by external consultants, and often relied on formal sample surveys of clients and control groups. In recent years there has been a move away from this type of “donor-led” impact assessment towards work that is more closely aligned to the operational needs of MFOs. This orientation is intended to enable MFOs themselves to better understand who they are reaching, how they use the services available, and what change is occurring as a result. The intention is to ensure that findings about impact are useful in further developing the products and services on offer and hence improving both practice and future impact (Simanowitz 2001).

This impact was missing from the mainstream of the microfinance industry in the 1990s when financial sustainability became the key goal (Otero and Rhyne 1994). However, many MFOs have retained their concern to demonstrate their social performance. While the use of public funds for microfinance is one reason for donors to require impact assessment work, MFOs that are financially sustainable and do not require donor subsidies may have their own social mission against which they wish to measure

their progress. The *Imp-Act* programme developed from a concern that MFOs wanted to conduct impact assessment work to understand and report on the benefits and costs that their services provided to their clients. It has therefore built on prior work in the industry that emphasises the need for more timely and cost-effective data. Examples include development of “middle-range” impact assessment studies which could be carried out by MFOs themselves (Barnes and Sebstad 2000), as well as work on how to develop more client-focused products and services through “listening to clients” and through market research (Wright 1999; Cohen 2002). The work of *Imp-Act* has sought to further develop this agenda, with an emphasis on the development of impact assessment systems. This focus on systems recognises that MFOs have multiple stakeholders: boards, managers and staff, clients, investors – whose needs for information about social performance vary. It is then necessary to accommodate these needs by information collection, analysis and feedback mechanisms that are ongoing and dynamic rather than one-off events. In moving from a “proving” to an “improving” agenda for impact assessment, the programme seeks to combine a concern with credible analysis of information about the impact of microfinance on poor people’s livelihoods, with the need to ensure that this information enables MFOs to improve their services, and hence improve their performance in terms of both their financial and social bottom lines. The articles themselves are arranged into three groups under the broad

headings of “poverty”, “institutionalisation” and “wider impacts”. Rather than following this structure, the sections in this overview are based upon a distinction between the three components of a performance management system. Section Two reviews what the articles have to say about broad strategy and performance *goals*. Section Three considers performance *assessment*, and Section Four considers performance *management*.

The microfinance industry is moving on from a predominant emphasis on financial sustainability to a renewed concern with social performance and the “double bottom line”. At the same time, MFOs are recognising the need to collect and analyse this data themselves in order to respond to the needs of their clients and improve their products and services. Key to the achievement of improved social performance are the generation of information that is credible, useful, appropriate organisational systems, and a commitment to learn and use the information generated. Client-led microfinance must be responsive, not only to the needs of clients evident from market research, but to a deeper understanding of the underlying social, economic and political processes in which an MFO operates. Finally, some form of standards or benchmarks will be useful, both to MFOs themselves that have a commitment to their social objectives, and to the industry as a whole in its search to ensure high standards of operation and secure subsidised funds. On this issue there is still further work to be done.

In this context the author fails to resist quoting Tagore, "The most precious wealth that man has attained is the consciousness of his fundamental unity, which is more and more impelling the human world to work together for the service of every individual born in it. This consciousness which is gradually gaining ground in our economic life, because it represents the highest truth of man, is the only means that can lead to the true wealth of the people, the wealth born of the fruitful meeting of an individual's will. The huge megatherium of capitalism with its stupendous tail of bought-up workers will naturally become extinct when individual men come to realize that their real well-being can be achieved, not through an exaggeration of their own exclusive wealth, but by the associated endeavour of their individualities, based upon mutual trust and help. It was a realization of this fundamental truth, as it seemed to me, that impelled the promoters of the Hindusthan Co-operative Insurance Society to make this daring experiment for which the country was then hardly prepared, to venture out into the open road in the face of all risks, determined to acquire and learn through their own experiences, rather than succumb to the timid counsels of worldly wise critics who believe it to be an advantage for a child to be spared the troubles and dangers of growing, and think it is a sign of prudent respectability to be content with a monotonously easy success depending on some hoarded patrimony of tradition. And it was, the author repeats, because lauthor had felt in my

heart the truth they sought to reduce to practice throughout our country, that I was impelled to give these venturesome spirits my blessing, and bid them god-speed.” (Tagore, 1963).

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Online Purchases are the new ways of Shopping During the Covid Period as a Necessary Activity : A Statistical Analysis

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Abstract

The paper articulates internet-based purchases (online) made during the Coronavirus time frame, the variables answerable for such movement in purchases. The factors are liable for such buying behavior from the physical model of buying transferred to the online purchase. The study is about this transformation & calculated statistically. Furthermore, pressures are applied by the situations, time needed, wellbeing-related rules, pay-based viewpoints, and online efficiencies. The review involves factors from different regions and makes factors answerable for such a change. The factor analysis acts as a tool for statistical analysis.

Keywords : Internet-based Buying, Variables, Covid Period & Statistical Analysis.

Introduction

The world is full of opportunities for making a person or business successful. During covid period when setting problems to countries & societies. The immense opportunities arrived and gave professionals innovative ideas to go for start-up and pushed many online retailers to generate new ideas and schemes to attract more customers and business in online mode. The covid period has been occupied with psychological pressure on humankind that changed the whole orientation of living and purchasing. Social distancing has given birth to a boost towards the online mode of operations. Online buying has taken place, and online retailers like Amazon, Flipkart & big basket have turned the course of business. The impact of this change is that the old traditional business blocks are broken, and a new business picture appears. The traditional shops changed to internet shopping stores. According to (www.oecd.org), the sale of grocery food products increased by sixteen percent in the United states. According to (www.fas.usda.gov), the Indian grocery market will experience eighty percent growth in 2020. As suggested by (<https://www.statista.com>), the main variables that influence the online grocery market are time-saving(28%), improved price options (22%) & convenience (14%). The customers who are buying online groceries and other items feel satisfied now. The concept of losing money and other

transaction-related problems is now solved & secured to a large extent by innovative IT-based infrastructure.

Review of Literature

According to (Huang et al., 2019), on behalf of illustration. A client can arrange snacks from an internet-based stock up for a societal celebration or open-air application. Clients regularly make connected buys and display various conditions in picking things of various classifications because of customer strength. According to (Voccia et al., 2019), The choice made is anywhere a means of transportation should go straightaway. According to (Han et al., 2021), Our involvement pushes that can impact the judgment course of the purchaser. According to (Jilcott Pitts et al., 2018), In calculation, the simplicity of internet food item buying for food could prompt over-buying and, in this way, over-utilization. According to (Huyghe et al., 2017), preceding these experiences, we suggest that the particular item introductions on the web and disconnected shopping conditions (i.e., emblematic in web-based channels, physical in traditional stores) are pertinent, particularly in shopping for cooking ingredients perspectives. According to (Pereira et al., 2016), online picture insight is in this way liable to affect e-consumer loyalty for online buys. According to (Saha et al., 2020), on top of the other, unique entry ease is indispensable for customers assessing a retailer's web-based buying comfort. According to (Lobschat et al., 2017), a recent study promotes internet-based deals on the web, both inside and

across promotions. Notwithstanding, whether or not diverse buyers, predominantly presently and old online shoppers of the prominent firm. Suggested by (Hansen & Møller Jensen, 2009), We anticipate that less sure apparel customers will be less spurred to buy clothing on the web. According to (Pires et al., 2004), Considering that apparent danger is hence portrayed as an estimation of procurement expectations, the purchaser's eagerness to buy should compare with apparent diminishing danger. According to (Kennedy & Wilson, 2017), The development of unapproved online commercial centers making these things available for purchase makes it hard to control who buys these items and incredibly hard to evaluate the nature of the merchandise sold preceding their deal. According to (Cardoso & Martinez, 2018), Along these lines, the fundamental commitment of this learning is to give internet merchants different purchaser points of view, to eventually pick the blend of web seal of endorsement and outsider installment supplier that best diminishes purchaser's trust and hazard discernment.

Statistical Analysis Tables

Kaiser Meyer Olkin and Bartlett analysis		
Kaiser Meyer Olkin Estimation of Sampling Satisfactoriness		.596
Bartlett Analysis of Sphericity	Approximate ChiSquare	724.819
	df	105
	Significance	.000

Communality Related Table

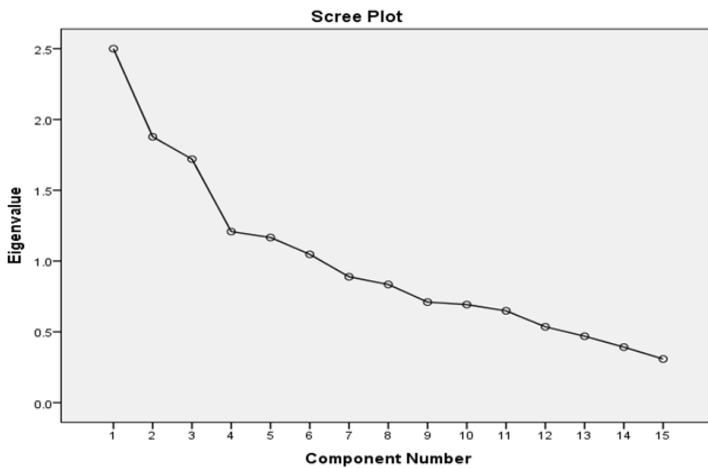
	Original	Extract
Online purchases are the only option left during the covid period	1.000	.628
Online purchases protect an individual from the crowded environment during the covid period	1.000	.581
Online purchases save unnecessary traveling to market during the covid period	1.000	.701
Online purchases give mental peace in purchase during the covid period	1.000	.577
Online purchases prevent individuals from becoming shopaholics	1.000	.720
Online purchases save time during the covid period	1.000	.674
Online purchases give better buying options during the covid period	1.000	.586
Online purchases with reviews guides online purchases during the covid period	1.000	.515
Online purchases fulfill the choices of every member in the house during the covid period	1.000	.695
Online purchases save money on purchases made during the covid period.	1.000	.626

Online purchases are made possible due to active websites during the covid period	1.000	.773
Online purchases and related payments are made easily during the covid period	1.000	.590
Online purchases are directly affected by the product presentation during the covid period	1.000	.651
Online purchases sales increases due to increasing the criteria of offerings during the covid period	1.000	.774
Online purchases increase the bulk buying practice by individuals during the covid period.	1.000	.429

Overall Variation Explain

Variable	first Eigenva			E S S. load			R S S Load		
	overall	Perc. Variance	Cum. Perc.	overall	Percentage Var.	Cum. Perc.	overall	Percentage Var.	Cum. Perc.
1	2.500	16.663	16.663	2.500	16.663	16.663	2.274	15.159	15.159
2	1.878	12.517	29.181	1.878	12.517	29.181	1.894	12.629	27.788
3	1.720	11.466	40.647	1.720	11.466	40.647	1.499	9.995	37.784
4	1.208	8.054	48.701	1.208	8.054	48.701	1.418	9.452	47.236
5	1.166	7.776	56.477	1.166	7.776	56.477	1.254	8.360	55.596
6	1.047	6.983	63.460	1.047	6.983	63.460	1.180	7.864	63.460
7	.889	5.927	69.387						

8	.835	5.566	74.953						
9	.710	4.735	79.688						
10	.693	4.618	84.306						
11	.649	4.324	88.630						
12	.536	3.571	92.201						
13	.469	3.127	95.328						
14	.392	2.615	97.943						
15	.309	2.057	100.000						



Rotated Component Matrix

	Component					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Online purchases are the only option left during the covid period	.029	.711	.146	-.075	-.192	-.241
2. Online purchases protect an individual from the crowded environment during the covid period	.040	.032	.751	-.091	.029	.076
3. Online purchases save unnecessary traveling to market during the covid period	.817	.155	-.001	-.065	.067	.027
4. Online purchases give mental peace in purchase during the covid period	.061	.670	-.092	-.178	.117	.267
5. Online purchases prevent individuals from becoming shopaholics	.062	-.072	.114	.080	-.017	.831
6. Online purchases save time during the covid period	.185	.054	-.078	.110	.786	.024
7. Online purchases give better buying options during the covid period	.409	-.031	-.385	-.102	-.426	.280
8. Online purchases with reviews guides online purchases during the covid period	.492	-.046	.203	.002	-.479	.004

9. Online purchases fulfill the choices of every member in the house during the covid period	.801	.187	.021	.070	-.114	.032
10. Online purchases save money on purchases made during the covid period.	.699	-.215	.071	-.099	.275	.005
11. Online purchases are made possible due to active websites during the covid period	.064	.860	-.019	.061	.145	-.068
12. Online purchases and related payments are made easily during the covid period	.060	.154	.634	-.291	-.077	.265
13. Online purchases are directly affected by the product presentation during the covid period	.013	-.144	-.017	.776	.103	-.133
14. Online purchases sales increases due to increasing the criteria of offerings during the covid period	-.112	.044	-.155	.776	.022	.366
15. Online purchases increase the bulk buying practice by individuals during the covid period.	.058	-.195	.516	.181	-.206	-.216

The Table of KMO states that the worth stands critical (.596) and the sig(.000). The absolute difference clarified by the table is 63 % which mirrors the meaning of the factors and their six-factor arrangement. The shared traits table mirrors the importance of every factor aside from the Online purchases increasing the bulk buying practice by individuals during the covid period ((.429)), this variable shares less practically speaking with different factors. In the stir of dissecting every element of the tables, that stands significant. The rotated component matrix gives huge variables that can beget or named due to the analysis and perceptual orientation. The variable (3,9,10) articulates as the (*Achievement factor*). The variables (1,4,11) are communicative as (*Affect factor*), variables (2,12,15) outgoing with the name (*Applicability factor*), variables (13,14) they specified as (*Availability factor*), variables (6,7,8) acts as (*Assessment factor*)—the variables (5) as (*Attitudinal factor*). The six factors attained factor parameters. The recognized factor easily classified as customers & societal receives significance in getting desired products, relevant influence involved, the functional definition of variables, the presence & calculations when choices for product selection are executed

Conclusion

This study directs the mental and innovative mix of idleness for purchasing the item. During the Coronavirus time frame, the clients go about as indiscreet innovative keen people. The demonstration of techno skill and affirmation is

only an impulse by the climate. In this manner, each person reacts to the new shopping and installment techniques. The Coronavirus time frame likewise lets clients know that internet-based stores currently deserve shopping and installments.

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Mental Torture of Women At Workplace: Cause And Prevention

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"यत्र नारीयस्तु पूज्यन्ते रमन्ते तत्र देवताः"

Meaning of this very famous Sanskrit Shloka is very inspiring and beautiful. Gods dwell where women are worshipped. However, we have not lived up to the meaning of this shloka. Women have been considered second grade citizens all over the world. In the great epic of Mahabharata, Draupadi the wife of five Pandavas was put to gamble as a property in the game of gambling between Kauravas and Pandavas. In the Western world also, male domination over the society has been common and it still persists in various manners.^[1] In Muslims, men can marry with four women at a time but women have very limited space. Very recently the Indian Government legally banned customary 'Triple Talaq' in one go.^[2] However, our objective is not to highlight atrocities inflicted upon women. Through this article we wish to attract

attention of the masses in general and students, sociologists, politicians specifically towards the menace of harassment of women at places of work.

Men and women are equal partners in human society. However, news relating to harassment of women, eve teasing, sexual molestation, rape and murder of innocent women keeps pouring in regularly through almost all media. This menace has crept into the workplaces too. Women, who work hard to win a job, have to encounter mental torture and molestation at workplaces. They are considered easy targets, as it is a general view that women are physically inferior to their male counterparts. This article looks into this menace and proposes some solutions which may prove milestones when it comes to safety of women at workplaces. Root cause of the problem lies in male chauvinism. This article discovers the causes of the problem and finds various legal and social issues which are required to be addressed.

Cause

In the coming paragraphs, we will study the causes as to why this tendency against women began. What are the reasons which lead to molestation and harassment of women? Historically, our society evolved under male domination. The senior most man and not the woman was considered as the head of the family. Important decisions were taken by him. There was no involvement of female members of the family in decision making. In the present scenario also, Hindu joint families are governed by 'Karta'

who is the senior most member^[3]

This supremacy of male members of the society became the fundamental reason for women 's exploitation at various levels including workplaces. Unless it comes in public domain, they do not even wish to discuss the matter, let alone complaining to competent authorities. This timid nature of women encourages men to exploit them.

Men and women are two poles of a magnetic field and the rule of “opposites attract and similar repel” applies to these poles. It is common in every community that young ladies with fascinating looks attract men. This is quite natural. Nature has created this tendency in order to expand the species. It is true that it is this very attraction between men and women which leads to creation. However, uncontrolled attraction leads to uncontrolled behaviour and consequences of which have to be borne by the ladies who wish to work with their male counterparts shoulder to shoulder. What is wrong in it? Nothing. But these socio psychological reasons don't let her fulfill her wish.

At workplaces, women need to interact with their male counterparts. Obviously, they make friendly gestures like offering snacks, asking for tea/coffee and other similar things at places of work exactly as others do. They do all this as social mannerism. But instead of praising this good behaviour of females, men take it as an indication of intimate relations. This leads to various misunderstandings and ends more often than not, with undue misadventures.

When a man fails in his forward move to establish intimate relations with a female employee, he starts to spit venom in the form of baseless and frivolous rumours against the lady who withstood his invitation and did not heed to it. This leads to a bad name for the lady. Other employees look at her with disdain or try to take advantage of the situation. The lady gets in a fix. If she tells about it at home, her parents or husband (as the case may be) either ask her to quit the job or advise her to get silent over the matter. In either case, it is the lady who suffers.

Besides the above reasons, various social customs and traditions don't permit ladies to go out and work. Parents of young girls have their own fears and misconceptions. Daughters are taught by their own mothers that they have to work at home and their brothers have to manage assignments outside the home. Girls are discouraged to carry out higher studies. Parents do not like to spend much on girls' education as they have to marry and go to somebody else's house. Although UNICEF says that educated girls become productive members of the families and also help in regulating population and curbing inequality, yet it is regretful that they have to discontinue their education at the behest of their parents.^[4] Education is key to employment. But girls have to leave school. According to UNESCO, 13.2crores girls are out of school worldwide.^[5]

This question has haunted society. Internationally, it was discussed firstly in 1994 International Conference on

Population and Development, then in the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, and lastly at the 2000 Millennium Summit. ^[6] In India, girls have right to education in accordance with Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, (2009)^[7] But yet many girls leave school without completing their schooling. As a result, these girls have to compromise with petty jobs like domestic aids, sweepers etc., in order to get both ends meet. Those girls who somehow complete their education, get married and after marriage, the decision to work or not goes with the husbands. Hence, most girls, who can be productive members of families and can contribute in nation building, are left just to bear children and work for their upbringing.

Many jobs are not considered good for women. Jobs like travel agents, journalists, nurses, etc. are considered as 'bad ones' by parents of girls. Fear of parents is not baseless either. Doctors have been found molesting nurses. According to 'Times of India' 11 Jul-2021, (Mumbai Edition, A doctor from Nalasopara was booked for allegedly molesting a nurse working in his hospital. ^[8] several of such examples can be cited. Likewise parents do not wish their daughters to become journalists ^[9]

Around two centuries back, women did not have voting rights. They got this right after much ado in the previous century in so-called civilized European nations. Let us be proud of our nation that India provided the same at the time of framing of our constitution and in India, women did not

have to fight for it.

One more issue needs to be discussed here. Our cinema and advertisement Industry presents women in a bad light. Women have to expose their body in order for the movie to do good at the box office. They have to expose themselves in order for the product to be sold. Newspapers present snaps of half-naked women in order to sell their newspaper. All this is very disgusting. Our entertainment Industry has presented women as a product which can be bought, used and disposed of. This is a pathetic situation. Songs like “Choli ke peeche kya hai”, “mummy papa hai nahi ghar men”, “Chikni Chameli”, etc., do not create a good environment for women to come out and work shoulder to shoulder with their male counterparts.

In the defense forces, paramilitary forces as well as in the police, the situation is no better. To find space in the police force and military forces, women had to undergo a lot of struggle and perseverance. Since 1992, women were first inducted into various branches of the Indian Army only in short service commission. In 2008, women were first inducted as permanent commissioned officers in the Legal and Education corps, in 2020 they were first inducted in 8 more corps as permanent commissioned officers. However, they are presently struggling to get permanent commission in the air force. Even after the supreme court intervention, all applications of women in this regard have been rejected on petty pretexts.^[10]

In sports, women have shown their skills and supremacy but yet matters of their molestation by their coaches and other male members keep pouring in.

Present status

Now let us look into the present working conditions of women. Let us analyse as to how safe are workplaces for women.

On a daily basis, we come across news of harassment of women at work places. Such complaints come not only from the ladies who work for the state and central establishments, but also from the female employees of multinational Companies, Bollywood, TV/news media etc. Various movie actresses had to commit suicide under abnormal circumstances. Very recently, a BHEL (Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd.) committed suicide as her employer wanted her to succumb to his wishes.^[11]

At workplaces not only in India but around the world the environment is against women. In the educational institutions also women students as well as women employees have to face harassment at various levels. Complaints of molestations from Ph. D. students against their research supervisors are common.^[12] Search for 'women molestation' and thousands of results will appear in any search engine. Therefore, the situation is very grim and we need to get quick remedies.

Solutions

As we have submitted earlier, this problem of harassment of women at workplaces is very deeply rooted and quick solutions are hard to even imagine, let alone implementation of such remedies. But yet we cannot sit silently and let all this happen. We have to get involved into it and take vital decisions which may give some consolation to working women who not only earn money for their families but also have to work tirelessly at home in order to satisfy needs of her kids, husband, in laws etc. it is a big irony that on one side, family wants women to go and earn some money for the family and on the other, she is not supported at home by sharing some of the domestic assignments by other family members. Sound of tinkling coins attracts women to leave the boundaries of their home and come out to work. She wants to guarantee a good future for her family and happily adjusts domestic assignments and office workload both. But in return, she is molested and harassed and above all her family thinks it is her mistake. At the time when she needs moral support and mental recognition by those whom she loves and for whose needs she tolerates these atrocities, they think it is the woman who is at fault.

In 1997, the Supreme court of India while hearing a case held that serious negligence has been observed when it comes to rights of women at work places. In this case, Vishaka and Others Vs. State of Rajasthan and Others ^[13] Supreme Court observed that human rights of women are not

adequately protected in accordance with the definition of 'human rights' as provided under Section 2 (d) of the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993, it is important to frame specific guidelines to be followed by the employers. Hence a committee was appointed to frame such guidelines as decided by the highest court. These guidelines were called as 'Vishakha Guidelines'.^[14]

According to these guidelines, at every workplace, where the number of employees is more than the number given in the guidelines (which keeps on changing as per the requirements), a committee titled, 'sexual harassment committee' has to be formed having sufficient female members. It is the responsibility of the head of the workplace or any person appointed by him/working under his instructions as the chief, that this committee will be constituted according to the vishakha guidelines.

Around seven years back, an act called THE SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF WOMEN AT WORKPLACE (PREVENTION, PROHIBITION AND REDRESSAL) ACT, 2013 (posh act) [15] came into effect. According to the act, it is mandatory for the employer that the Constitution of Internal Complaints Committee must be formed as mandated in section 4, chapter 2.

Unfortunately, after a long legal battle, it is the women and not the men who lose. Molesters enjoy whereas sufferer women undergo mental trauma along with social defamation. In fact, laws and law temples can suggest ways and methods

to stop the crime. At times, they punish criminals too. But they cannot change their attitude. They cannot mend bad habits of molesters and exploiters. It is through social campaigns, family support, socio psychological counseling that we can improve the situation. Government has come forward and amended the Central Civil Services (Conduct) Rules, 1964 to expand the definition of sexual harassment as well as that of a 'workplace'. This amendment came in 2018. [16]

According to the new rules, any implied or explicit promise of preferential treatment in employment or creating a hostile work environment for a women employee would now amount to sexual harassment, say a new set of provisions inserted by the government into the service conduct rules on November 19, 2018. But as we know, rules are not enough. Mentality of the molester needs to change. Parents can play a major role in it. Parents have to teach their sons to respect girls and their dignity. For every molestation of a girl, a boy is responsible. So if we can improve our boys, if we change the style of upbringing of boys, this menace of female harassment can be curbed. Whenever a son comes late at home, his parents should ask him about his appointments/assignments. They have a strict vigil upon their daughters but give full relaxation to their son. This is the fundamental mistake that the parents commit. They need to have a strict vigil on their sons too.

Secondly, sons should not be given preferential treatment in the family. When men and women are equal

before law, why to give weightage to boys and create inferiority complex in girls? We should change our mindset and recognize the equal status of boys and girls. Both need equal opportunities and equal treatment. We can do this and we must change our attitude. Service begins at home. Before teaching others about equal treatment towards women, we should begin the same in our families.

Moreover, social campaigns can be taken up. Electronic/print media can contribute towards this drive. All the legal provisions should strictly be followed. By all these measures, we can curb this social disease of women harassment at workplaces.

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Information Systems In Agriculture

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Abstract

Information is fundamentally a different commodity from normal goods. Because, information is costly to produce and cheap to reproduce. The economies new information economy highlights the conflict between efficiency and incentives. The central issue in agricultural development is the necessity to increase productivity, employment, and income for poor segments of the agricultural population of whom the small and marginal farmers constitute sizable portions. Timely and effective information on various activities and issues related to agriculture will help the farming community to reap the benefit for being in as a farmer. A timely, useful, quality information provided by various institutions would help to connect the farmers-institutions-research institutes and agencies involved in disseminating information to the rural people. The present chapter discusses the information systems in agriculture on the basis of available secondary sources of literature.

Keywords: Agriculture, Farming Community, Information, Knowledge System, Productivity.

Introduction

George J Stigler (1961) Nobel laureate in 1982 while recognizing the importance of information argued that once the real costs of information were taken into account, the standard result of economics would still hold. Information was just a transaction cost. In the approach of many Chicago School economists, information economics was like any other branch of applied economics. One simply analyzed the factors deterring the demand for and supply of information, just as one might analyze the factors affecting the market for what. For the more mathematically inclined information could be incorporated into production functions by inserting and / for the input “information” where/ itself could be produced by inputs live labour.

The information on improving agricultural productivity and protection of crops, livestock and natural resources from damages caused by disasters and unsustainable activities is focal to the rural farming communities. This would require access to a wide range of information on new technologies, alternate varieties of crops, improves breads of livestock, information related to soil, water quality, information on pesticides, farm implements, animal health, weather and other related aspects. Besides farm – activities, non –farm activities also constitute sources of income and livelihood for the rural farmers. Therefore, information is also required on the means

to produce food produce food products required by markets and ability to sell them as also the markets, cold chains, warehouses, processing and other avenue (ICAR, 2006).

Information: Meaning and Definitions

Information is one of several basic resources that are needed and utilized by human beings for their development and prosperity. The world has now moved from the industrial revolution into the information revolution. Technological advances have made information a new basic resource of matter and energy. Information is recorded or communicated knowledge gained by man through experience, observation and experiments. It has been growing in even increasing volume and role, particularly since the dawn of the 20th century (Prasad, 1991).

Webster's Third International Dictionary defined information as;

- a) Fact of figures ready for use as distinguished from those incorporated in formally organized branch of knowledge.
- b) The process by which the form of an object of knowledge is impressed upon the apprehending mind so as to bring about state of knowing.

Basically, there are three elements in the development of an information system. They are;

1. Creation of database and information source.
2. Creation of network and their improved speed; and
3. Extension of information terminals (Prasad, 1991).

Agricultural Information Systems

An agricultural information system is a system in which agricultural information is generated, transformed, transferred, consolidated, received and feedback in such a manner that these processes function synergically to underpin knowledge utilization by agricultural producers. In the concept of an information system the institutions generating, transforming, transferring and receiving information are emphasized as well as the information flows and linkage mechanisms between them. An agricultural knowledge system is a system of beliefs, cognitions, models, theories, concepts, and other products of the mind in which the (vicarious) experience of a person or group with respect to agricultural production is accumulated (Roling, 1987). The important elements of information systems are control, input, processor, and output.

At its simplest an information system can be viewed as consisting of three basic elements (Barnard, C S).

Input → Processor → Output
 Raw data → Process → Information

Adding elements like control and feedback, the information system now appears as follows.

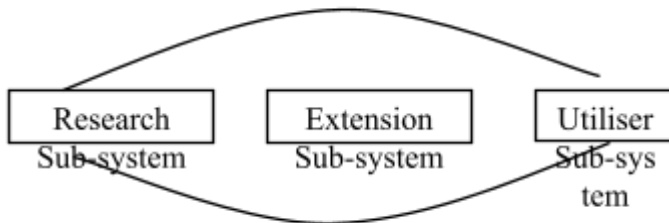
Input → Processor → Output → Control →
 ↑ Feedback ↑

Information of the required quality always has the potential of improving efficiency in all spheres of agriculture. The emerging scenario of a deregulated agriculture has brought in

a greater 'need' and urgency to make it an integral part of decision making by Indian agricultural community (Mittal S C,).

Below figure 1.1 illustrates a simple model of an agricultural information system (Rolling, 1987).

Figure 1. 1 The Agricultural Information Systems



Uwe Nagel(1980) was the first to use the concept of an agricultural information system as an analytical tool, though he acknowledges his debt to Havelocks (1969) linkage model. Research creates knowledge extension transfers it to farmers and farmers utilize it. That is the conventional wisdom and it underpins the policy models on the basis of which millions of dollars, be they from aid, hard, currency loans or national budget allocations, are spent on agricultural research and extension(1987).

The Dutch Agricultural Information System

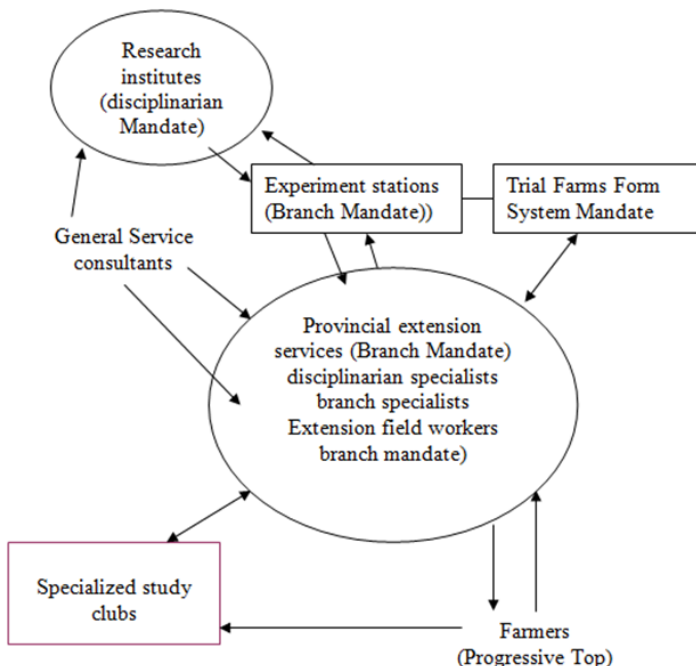
The below figure 1.2 gives a simplified picture of the Dutch Information System which was extensively used by Rolling (1987) in his agricultural extension related studies.

According to him it only deals with the government set up: extension by the farmer's organizations, the co-operatives, and commercial forms is not included. In the first place there is an interesting articulation of research in to 1) research institutes with a disciplinary mandate (e.g., histopathology, soil fertility, and so on); 2) experiment stations with a branch mandate (e.g., dairy production, horticulture under glass) and 3) trial farms with a farm system level mandate. There is a regular transfer of staff between the institutes and the experiment stations. Farmer's organizations pay 50% of the cost of the trial farms.

In the second place, the regional extension services are fairly autonomous and organized according to branch specialization. Thus, there are regional services for arable farming, dairy farming, mixed farming, intensive animal production (pigs and poultry), for horticulture and a few specialized others. Each provides management to 20 to 30 general field extension workers, specialized in the branch being served by the office. They focus on technological and economic aspects of farm management and are discovered from providing recipe extension, i.e., bring it back and call for every technical problem the farmer faces. They are specialists have an information like to the experiment stations serving their branch mandate. Each regional service also has some disciplinary specialists. They are linked in turn to the research institutes with a disciplinary mandate (Rolling, 1987).

An important linkage mechanism between the regional extension services and the research institutes and the experiment stations are roving liaison officers. The study clubs are usually set up by the extension works, but have grown into mutual interest networks (Beal, 1986). They consist of relatively small groups of farmers who regularly come together and study each other's farm management. There is an amazing openness with respect to the financial resulted and the exchange of technological information. The computer has allowed these networks from the book. Keeping office to which, they belong. The government employs some 600 field extension workers; there are 200 socio-economic extension workers employed by the farmers' organizations and 2500 consultants and technical advisors employed by commercial firms, including the co-operatives (Wielinga, H E, 1986).

Figure 1.2 The Dutch Agricultural Information System



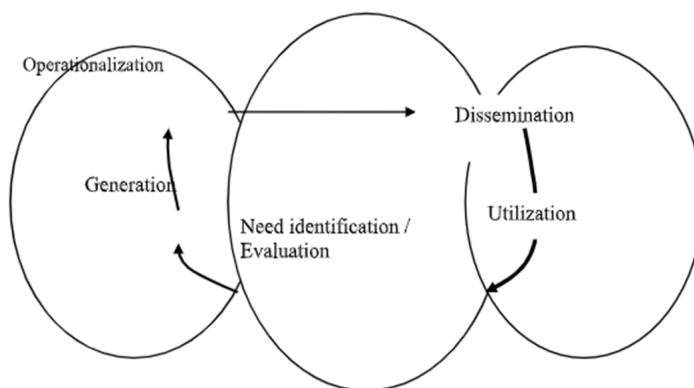
Source: Rolling, 1987 P. 196

UWE Jens Nagel of the Technical University of Berlin (1980) is the one who first introduced and elaborated the concept of agricultural information system for extension sciences. Nagel concept emphasizes its deliberate nature in the sense that its function is and here quotes Hayami & Ruttan “to establish viable institutions to produce and safeguard a stream of new technological knowledge and a flow of industrial inputs in which the new knowledge is embodied, complimented by investments in general education

and in production education for farmers and by efforts to transform institutions to be consistent with the new growth potentials(Rolling, 1987). The system is deliberately designed and includes 1) a research sub-system, 2) a dissemination sub-system and 3) a user sub-system the system must perform size basic function in order to ensure initiation and perpetuation of the information flow process (Nagel U J, 1980). Identification of knowledge needs at the producer level is;

1. Generation of innovations.
2. Operationalization for utilization.
3. Dissemination.
4. Utilization.
5. Evaluation of Experiences.

The basic model which combines the sub-systems and the six basic functions is given in the below figure 1.3.



Source: Basic Elements of the agricultural knowledge system (V.J.Nagel, 1980: P.34).

The above figure emphasizes the flow of information from users, both as needed for information and evaluation. The agricultural knowledge system is interactive, not a one-way flow. Nagel uses his model normatively (Rolling, 1987).

In other words, an elaborated, tested and shared model of the information system is a necessary tool for development.

A shortcoming of Nagel's model is that it suggests, with Havelock for that matter, that solutions come from research and problems come from farmers, as if farmers so not carry out some of their own research and solve many of their problems themselves (Rolling, 1987).

Studies on role of information in agriculture

Farmer's reactions to the knowledge that the use of information will change output price depend on whether they act cooperatively or non-cooperatively. Monopoly models can be used to examine how farmers will use information if they cooperate in setting output levels. Such collusive behavior may characterize decisions by farmers' who grow crops covered by marketing orders that effectively control quantities, and hence, prices. However, most crops are not covered by marketing boards, and individual producers generally make their own supply decisions. Widely available information that is used by many producers can create a price externality (Malik et, als, 2000).

John et,als (1998) paper on information effects in contingents' markets reveals that perspective information and relative expenditure information were expected to increase comprehension of the valuation problem and lead to increased bids. Provision cost information was expected to counteract free-riding behaviour and also increase bids. Empirical result suggested that perspective, relative expenditure, and provision cost information each induced only small, statistically insignificant increase in bids. However combined effect of the three information types induced a desirable, statistically significant increase in bids. The way in which the firms in the cattle beef sector utilize information technology to facilitate supply chain functions' is considered in the paper of Victoria Salin, (2000).

In a study Malik et, al, (2000) reveals that the largest number of farmers gave first priority to the information related to product prices, improved variety and quality seed, sowing time .In order to ascertain the preference of different holding categories of farmers for different sources for information related to improved crop production practices, input dealers have emerged as the most important source of information to the farmers. DOA occupied second place. Radio was the third place followed by television and visit to Krishi Mela. In relation to the cost incurred by the farmers in acquiring knowledge of improved crop production practices, are input dealers. Followed by visit to research institute and Krishi Mela

Another study conducted by Vijay et, al (2000) during 1997-98 on factors influencing adoption of agro-forestry programme reveals that majority of farmers got first information about agro forestry innovations from the earlier adopter of the same village. Only 2 % of the farmers reported that research/organizations were the sources of first information to them. On an average all the farmers sought information more often from non-institutional personal sources information as compared to mass media and institutional personnel.

Table 1.1: Samples of key information and messages exchanged within the agricultural knowledge system.

<p>Agricultural Technologies Best practices Demonstration Results New varieties Technical Assistance</p>	<p>Natural Resource Base and Geography Climate and weather Soils Information Rainfall and water sources Physical Infrastructure (e.g., roads, irrigation, structures)</p>
<p>Policy Environment, Laws, and Regulations Land Titling Labour Laws Water Access Rights Arbitration and Dispute Settlement Environmental regulations Entrepreneurial Rules and Off-Farm Income Options</p>	<p>Market Information Prices, Quality Requirements Input Provision Credit Availability Selling Options Labour Supply and Demand Distribution and other Logistics</p>
<p>Others Communication with migrant family members remittances, etc.</p>	

Source: Source: Academy for Educational Development
"Future Directions in Agriculture and Information and

Communication Technologies (ICTs) at USAID” Winrock International, 2003. P.15.

Agricultural Resources Information System

Efficient information system will play a dominant role in sustainable agricultural production which depends on the judicious mix of natural resource (Soil, water, livestock, plant genetic, fisheries, forests, climate, rainfall and topography) in an acceptable technology management under the prevailing socio-economic infrastructure. In addition to the natural resource’s components, it is also essential to combine natural resources with capital resources, institutional resources and human resources for sustainable agricultural development. Agricultural resources components include;

1. Animal resources.
2. Capital resources.
3. Climate Resources.
4. Environment Resources.
5. Fisheries Resources.
6. Forestry Resources.
7. Institutional Resources.
8. Land owners Data.
9. Plant Resources
10. Socio-economic & Infrastructure data.
11. Soil resources.
12. Water resources. (Moni, 2003).

Sufficient and well-structured information system will strengthen the agricultural sector. At present the existing

agricultural practices profoundly affects many ecological, economic, social and human health systems. Negative effects of current practice include decline of soil productivity, can be due to wind and water erosion of exposed topsoil, soil compaction, loss of soil organic matters, water holding capacity and biological activity; and Stalinization of soils and irrigation water in irrigated farming areas. Economically, widening disparity among farmer incomes and escalating concentration of agribusiness industries involved with manufacture processing and distribution of farm products, in fewer and fewer hands. Market competition is limited. Potential health hazards are tied to sub therapeutic use of antibiotics in animal production and pesticides and nitrate contamination of water and food. Farm workers are poisoned in fields, toxic residues are found on foods, and certain human and animal diseases have developed resistance to currently used antibiotics. The agricultural information system must cover up overall components related to the agricultural productivity, marketing, expenditure, usage and availability of inputs, various online marketing channels, managerial, biological, and chemical related issues and cropping pattern and cropping systems etc.

Conclusion

The farmers need information for better farming and they depend on the information supplied by the various means such as research centers, agricultural universities, extension personnel, farmers organization, NGOs, websites,

pamphlets, posters radios, television etc., but the information which he receives may not be sufficiently for better farming. The type of agricultural information system, the source and availability of the information, quality and effectiveness of the information are crucial for the development of the farming sector. The agricultural information system will play a constructive role in linking the institutions and farming community to promote mutual learning and generate, share utilize agriculture related technology, knowledge and information. Enhancing the ability of farmers to connect with the knowledge, networks, information and institutions necessary to improve their productivity, food security, and employment opportunities is a fundamental development challenge.

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Women Entrepreneurship Development In India

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Abstract

Rural women are key agents for achieving the transformational economic, environmental and social changes required for sustainable development. But limited access to credit health care and education are among many challenges they face which are further aggravated by the global food and economic crisis and climate change. Entrepreneurship is a very important criteria for economic development. The role of women entrepreneurs cannot be ignored in this process. There is a significant contribution of women entrepreneurs in the growth of developed nations. The development of women entrepreneurship is low in India, especially in rural areas. Women entrepreneurs face a lot of problems right from the beginning till the enterprise functions. This paper focuses on the status of women entrepreneurs.

Introduction

This brochure describes the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) “Rural and Women Entrepreneurship (RWE) development Programmer”, which is managed by the Small and Medium Enterprises Branch. As a core contribution of UNIDO to poverty reduction, the program supports rural people and women in their aspirations for entrepreneurial initiatives. The program supports rural people and women in their aspirations for entrepreneurial initiatives.

People living in the rural peripheries, and especially women, shoulder the burden of the world’s poverty, particularly in the Least Developed Countries and sub-Saharan Africa. They have been deprived for too long from participating in the opportunities and benefits of economic growth and globalization. Reducing urban-rural disparities and gender inequalities is a crucial element for any poverty reduction strategy. Mobilizing the potential productivity of rural people and particularly of women is indispensable to achieve the resilient economic growth that will pull people above the poverty line.

Therefore, the RWE Programmed aims at promoting a conducive business environment and at building institutional and human capacities that will encourage and support the entrepreneurial initiatives of rural people and women.

Part 1 of this brochure describes the challenges to be addressed, followed by a description of UNIDO’s approach, services and methodologies for rural and women

entrepreneurship development in Part.

Part 2 Project experiences are presented in part.

Part 3 illustrating the results UNIDO has achieved through its technical cooperation projects.

Meaning of Women Entrepreneur

In simple words we can say that a woman entrepreneur is any woman who organizes and manages any business enterprise. According to J.A. Schumpeter & quote Woman who innovates, imitates, or adopts a business activity is called woman entrepreneur.

Government of India, defined women entrepreneur as & quotes enterprise owned and controlled by women having a minimum financial interest of 51% of the capital and giving at least 51% of the employment generated in the enterprise to women.

Thus, it is concluded that women entrepreneurs are those women who initiate, organize and run a business enterprise and provide employment to others.

Importance of Entrepreneurship among Rural Women

Empowering women, particularly rural women, is a challenge. Micro enterprises in rural areas can help to meet these challenges. Micro–enterprises not only enhance national productivity, generate employment but also help to develop economic independence, personal and social capabilities among rural women. Following are some of the personal and social capabilities, which were developed as result of taking up enterprise among:

1. Economic empowerment
2. Improved standard of living
3. Self confidence
4. Enhance awareness
5. Sense of achievement
6. Increased social interaction
7. Engaged in political activities
8. Increased participation level in gram sabha meeting
9. Improvement in leadership qualities
10. Involvement in solving problems related to women and community
11. Decision making capacity in family and community

Economic empowerment of women by micro entrepreneurship led to the empowerment of women in many things such as socio-economic opportunity, property rights, political representation, social equality, personal right, family development, market development, community development and at last the nation development.

Objective of the study

The aim of UNIDO's Rural and Women Entrepreneurship (RWE) Programme is to contribute to poverty reduction through entrepreneurship development with a focus on rural development and gender equality. The essential elements in this Programme are to create a business environment that encourages the initiatives of rural and women entrepreneurs and to enhance the human and institutional capacities required to foster entrepreneurial

dynamism and enhance productivity.

1. To study the present position of women entrepreneurs.
2. To identify the socio economic constraints for women entrepreneurs.
3. To suggest remedial measures to overcome the problems of women entrepreneurs.

Methodology

This study is based on secondary data. The data has been collected from various published sources, books and websites.

Present Position of Women Entrepreneurs

In India though women have played a key role in the society, their entrepreneurial ability has not been properly tapped due to lower status of women in the society. It is only from the Fifth Five Year Plan (1974-78) onwards that their role has been explicitly recognized with a marked shift in the approach from women welfare to women development and empowerment. The development of women entrepreneurship has become an important aspect of our plan priorities. Several policies and programmes are being implemented for the development of women entrepreneurship in India.

Table shows the women's work participation in India in comparison to select countries of the world. In India it has been increasing continuously. In 1970-71 the percentage of women work participation in India was 14.2, it increased to

31.6 in 2010-11. But it is still less in comparison to other countries. In Sri Lanka and Brazil the percentage of women work participation is 35, France 38, Indonesia 40, Canada 42, UK 43 and highest in USA 45.

Country	Percentage
1. India (1970-1971)	14.2
2. India (1980-1981)	19.7
3. India (1990-1991)	122.3
4. India (2010-2011)	31.6
5. USA	45
6. UK	43
7. Canada	42
8. Indonesia	40
9. France	38
10. Sri Lanka	35
11. Brazil	35

Conclusion

From the above analysis it can be said that women's entrepreneurship is both about women's position in society and about the role of entrepreneurship in the same society. Women entrepreneurs face many obstacles specifically in marketing their product that have to be overcome in order to give them access to the same opportunities as men. Particularly the entry of rural women in micro enterprises will be encouraged and aggravated. Rural women can do wonders by their effective and competent involvement in entrepreneurial activities. The rural women are having basic

indigenous knowledge, skill, potential and resources to establish and manage enterprises.

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Management of Health Insurance Business in India in The Light of Pandemic Covid-19 Situation

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Abstract

Insurance is the most significant risk mitigation device to reduce vulnerability of people from disease, disability, an untimely death and natural calamities. During this pandemic situation due to the spread of corona to protect himself or herself with family, insurance must be done.

The market share of Public sector insurance companies are comparatively higher than private players. Among Public Sector Insurance Companies, The New India Assurance Company Limited has the highest market share of 33.03% in 2017-18 and 35.32% in 2018-19; National Insurance Company Limited accounted for the second highest market share of 24.80% in 2018-19 it gained 0.26% in

2018-19. Among Private Sector Insurance Companies, Star Health and Allied Insurance Company Limited has the highest market share of 25.24% in 2017-18 and 24.20% in 2018-19 followed by ICICI Lombard General Insurance Company Limited 12.09% in 2017-18 and 11.14% in 2018-19. However, market share of ICICI Lombard General Insurance Company Limited reduced by 1.05%.

Health insurance will become a crucial factor to every person's life in this pandemic situation in 2020 due to the rapid spread of Covid-19.

1. Health is one of the important issues to every human being, therefore is it possible for the Government to cover general people's health protection with subsidised premium or not.
2. People prefer cashless settlement in Hospitals or Nursing homes, is it possible for the General Insurance companies to cover all the medical units of a territory for cashless settlement of claim at a standard rate for each disease.

Key Words: Insurance, Premium, Claim, Vulnerability, Policy, Corona Kabach, Corona Raksha.

Introduction

Insurance is a term which implies protection from dangers. It may be life insurance and or health insurance. Health Insurance consists of two words – health and insurance. Health is wealth. Insurance is the most significant risk mitigation device to reduce vulnerability of people from

disease, disability, an untimely death and natural calamities.

Health

Insurance consists of two words – health and insurance. Health is wealth. Insurance is the most significant risk mitigation device to reduce vulnerability of people from disease, disability, an untimely death and natural calamities. During this pandemic situation due to the spread of corona to protect himself or herself with family, insurance must be done.

Earlier health insurance premium was considered as an additional expenditure, because there is no maturity value unless some medical expenditure is incurred by admitting nursing home or hospital etc. People thought that medical expenditure to be paid from cash in hand balance. There is a common dilemma among people about the right age to buy a health insurance policy. However, there's no right age to buy one. But, if one buys a health insurance policy at an early age, one will have to pay less for the policy. Premiums for a health policy increase with one's age; that's because the associated risk increases. Premiums for health plans are determined by the age, medical history, city of residence, etc. of the insured. So, if you buy a health plan early it will help you save on the premiums you will pay.

Companies offer different types of health insurance policies. Family Health Protector Policy, Individual Health Protector Policy, Health Protector Plus Policy Coverage are some examples of the health insurance policies offered by them.

Objectives of The Study

To assess the progress of health insurance schemes in India in the present pandemic situation.

Research Methodology

This is a descriptive study. All the data are published data and collected from secondary sources. Methods used are averaging and percentage

Findings

In present circumstance people's thinking power has, but they believe that a health insurance of Rs. 1 lakh to 3 lakhs assured sum is sufficient for reimbursement of medical expenditure. But our suggestion is that choose appropriate policy considering the following factors:

1. Corona kabach or Corona Raksha could be purchased separately beside health insurance policy for support of huge financial expenditure for Corona.
2. Compare public and private health insurance policies for checking diseases covered, claim settlement amount, cashless or immediate pocket expenditure then reimbursement, availability of home treat

Insurance Companies Dealing With Health Products In Indian Markets

Insurance Company	Gross Health Premium Collection in 2017-18 (Rs. In Lakhs)	Percentages of Market Share in 2017-18	Gross Health Premium Collection in 2018-19 (Rs. In Lakhs)	Percentages of Market Share in 2018-19
Acko General Insurance Limited	10.12	0.00%	3,037.68	0.07%
Aditya Birla Health Insurance Company Limited	23,030.68	0.61%	42,343.05	0.93%
Apollo Munich Health Insurance Company Limited	1,56,626.83	4.15%	1,98,753.10	4.36%
Bajaj Allianz General Insurance Company Limited	1,49,669.44	3.96%	2,33,688.37	5.12%
Bharti AXA General Insurance Company Limited	13,435.48	0.36%	31,182.63	0.68%
Cholamandala m MS General Insurance	26,001.52	0.69%	27,370.82	0.60%

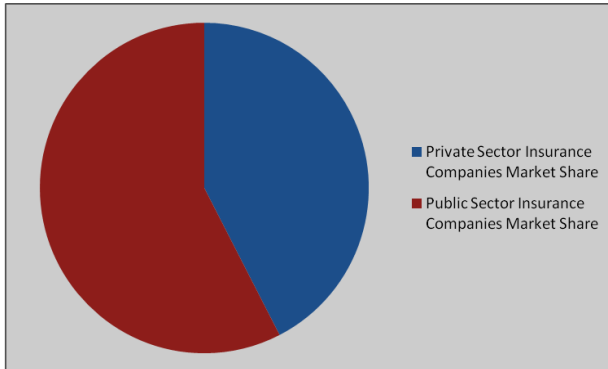
Company Limited				
CIGNA TTK Health Insurance Company Limited	32,654.27	0.86%	46,882.19	1.03%
DHFL General Insurance Limited	6,737.45	0.18%	10,425.77	0.23%
Edelweiss General Insurance Co Ltd	117.89	0.00%	6,953.19	0.15%
Future General India Insurance Company Limited	24,590.77	0.65%	29,493.35	0.65%
Go Digit General Insurance Ltd	292.56	0.01%	1,525.28	0.03%
HDFC ERGO General Insurance Company Limited	99,390.57	2.63%	1,27,872.08	2.80%
ICICI Lombard General Insurance Company limited	1,93,757.63	5.13%	2,43,283.37	5.33%
IFFCO-TOKIO General Insurance	67,090.56	1.78%	80,367.80	1.76%

Company Limited				
Kotak Mahindra General Insurance Company Ltd	2,527.89	0.07%	6,076.17	0.13%
Liberty Videocon General Insurance Company Limited	11,908.81	0.32%	19,881.50	0.44%
Magma HDI General Insurance Company Limited	1,675.34	0.04%	8,633.17	0.19%
Max Bupa Health Insurance Company Limited	74,326.55	1.97%	81,449.09	1.79%
Raheja QBE General Insurance Company Limited	6.84	0.00%	9.92	0.00%
Reliance General Insurance Company Limited	78,208.75	2.07%	1,07,036.26	2.35%

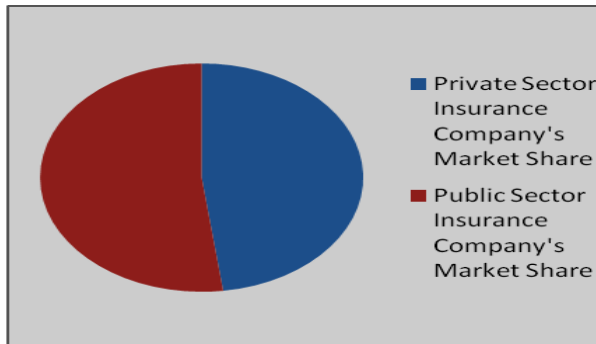
Religare Health Insurance Company Limited	93,175.07	2.47%	1,61,122.34	3.53%
Royal Sundaram Alliance Insurance Company Limited	28,306.30	0.75%	35,546.25	0.78%
SBI General Insurance Company Limited	47,343.85	1.25%	51,430.69	1.13%
Shriram General Insurance Co Ltd	1,448.00	0.04%	7,896.00	0.17%
Star Health and Allied Insurance Company Limited	4,04,465.76	10.71%	5,28,508.79	11.59%
Tata AIG General Insurance Company Limited	55,335.67	1.47%	80,049.95	1.75%
Universal Sompo General Insurance Company Limited	10,076.93	0.27%	13,498.05	0.30%

Total Private Insurance Company	16,02,211.53	42.43%	21,84,316.86	47.88%
National Insurance Company Limited	5,33,674.81	14.13%	5,89,706.51	12.93%
The New India Assurance Company Limited	7,17,949.87	19.01%	8,39,659.03	18.41%
The Oriental Insurance Company Limited	3,60,863.76	9.56%	4,11,530.71	9.02%
United India Insurance Company Limited	5,61,402.93	14.87%	5,36,524.64	11.76%
Total Public Insurance Company	21,73,891.37	57.57%	23,77,420.89	52.12%
Total	37,76,102.90	100.00%	45,61,737.75	100.00%

Source: IRDA website and Annual Reports of Companies



Market Share in 2017-18



Market Share in 2018-19

The market share of Public Sector Insurance Companies in health segment was 57.57% in 2017-18 and in 2018-19 it reduced to 52.12%, where the health insurance market increased by 20.81% in 2018-19. Private Sector Insurance Companies accounted 42.43% market share in 2017-18 and 47.88% in 2018-19. Market share of Private Sector Insurance Companies increases by 5.45% in 2018-19.

Among all insurance companies, The New India Assurance Company Limited has the highest market share of 19.01% in 2017-18 and 18.41% in 2018-19, however its market share reduced by 0.61%. United India Insurance Company Limited being most unfortunate and losing 3.11% market shares in 2018-19. Market share of National Insurance Company Limited get reduced by 1.21% in 2018-19. However, Religare Health Insurance Company Limited increased its market share by 1.06% in 2018-19.

Among Private Sector Insurance Companies, Star Health and Allied Insurance Company Limited has highest market share of 25.24% in 2017-18 and 24.20% in 2018-19 followed by ICICI Lombard General Insurance Company Limited 12.09% in 2017-18 and 11.14% in 2018-19. However, market share of ICICI Lombard General Insurance Company Limited reduced by 1.05%.

Among Public Sector Insurance Companies, The New India Assurance Company Limited has highest market share of 33.03% in 2017-18 and 35.32% in 2018-19; National Insurance Company Limited accounted for the second highest market share of 24.80% in 2018-19 it gained 0.26% in 2018-19. The Oriental Insurance Company Limited accounted 16.60% market share in 2017-18 and 17.31% in 2018-19. Insurance business in India both life and general have increased by 2.74% p.a, but this increasing percentage is low as compared to other countries in the world, where it is 6.31%. Average investment per person in India in the

insurance sector is 70-80% low in comparison with other developed countries, L.I.C. has reported that their business has increased by 13.15% in August,2020.

In India current health expenditure is only 3.53% of GDP where in Brazil, China and Thailand it is 9.47%, 5.15% and 3.75% respectively. Current health expenditure per individual is around Rs. 4,672.87 in India where in Brazil, China, Thailand and Indonesia it is approximately Rs. 62364.73, Rs. 29727.65, Rs. 16659.13 and Rs. 7753.27 respectively. Out of pocket health expenditure is approximately 62.40 % of total expenditure on health in India where 27.45% in Brazil, 36.05% in China, 11.14% in Thailand and 34.61% in Indonesia. Out of pocket expenses are quite high in India as compared to other economic peer group countries.

Recommendations And Conclusion:

1. Women in India are not adequately covered by health insurance, the Government should frame health insurance schemes for them like in education.
2. There should be proper guidelines form regulatory authority for each type of medical treatment and expenditure.
3. A centralized vigilance mechanism for functionaries of TPA and processing of claims and transparent procedures for calculation of claim amounts.
4. Universal Health Scheme: Each and every person should have a health insurance policy. People in rural

India could not afford standard health treatments due to paucity of funds. Government should have focus on such issues.

Health insurance will become a crucial factor to every person's life in this pandemic situation in 2020 due to the rapid spread of Covid-19.

3. Health is one of the important issues to every human being, therefore is it possible for the Government to cover general people's health protection with subsidized premiums or not.
4. People prefer cashless settlement in Hospitals or Nursing homes, is it possible for the General Insurance companies to cover all the medical units of a territory for cashless settlement of claim at a standard rate for each disease.
5. Is it possible for the General Insurance Companies to pay some maturity value at the end of a specific period when no claim arises.

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Higher Education And Women Empowerment In North East India

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Abstract

A nation or a society can make development in the truest sense only when both its male and female population is efficient and effective in making contributions in all aspects of life. India is the second highest populated country in the world where women constitute half of the population. Thus, by developing and empowering our womenfolk, India can make progress easily in almost every sphere. North East India is one of the most beautiful and important parts of our

motherland and is better off than that of the nation as a whole in terms of gender equality. However, in some parts of this region women are relatively disempowered and possess somewhat lower status than their male counterparts. In this regard, higher education can play a significant role in the process of women empowerment in North East India. The present paper makes an attempt to examine the role of higher education in making the women of North East India empowered in different fields of life.

Keywords: Higher Education, Women Empowerment, North East India.

Introduction

“Empowering women is key to building a future we want”-AMARTYA SEN.

The concept of empowering women or women empowerment is gaining popularity day by day. In simple words when we say ‘empowerment’ we mean the process of making an individual able to make his or her own choices and to think and to perform any work autonomously. Thus, ‘women empowerment’ is the process of making the womenfolk aware of their rights and to help them to make their own decisions and choices. It is associated with gender equality. The concept of women empowerment was introduced at the international women’s conference held in the year 1985 at Nairobi. This conference defines women empowerment as ‘redistribution of social powers and control of resources in favour of women’.

Need of Women Empowerment

A nation or a society can make development in the truest sense only when both its male and female population is efficient and effective in making contribution in all aspects of life. India is the second highest populated country in the world where women constitute half of the population. Thus, by developing and empowering our womenfolk, India can make progress easily in almost every sphere. Women empowerment is needed in order to build gender equality and for the improvement of female sex as a whole. The process of women empowerment helps in positive thinking which is very much needed for positive social change. It can improve the leadership qualities among the womenfolk so that they can excel in different fields of life. In this respect, education more particularly, higher education can play a significant role in making women aware of their rights and abilities and can provide various opportunities for the upliftment of women in various fields.

Objective of The Study

To highlight the role of higher education in empowering the women of North East India and the main challenges of the same.

Data Collection and Methodology

This paper is purely based on secondary data which has been collected from various books, journals, magazines, websites etc.

Status of Women in North East Region of India

The north east region of India (NER) is one of the most beautiful regions of the country consisting of eight states namely, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura and Sikkim. Generally, the NER of India is regarded as one of the backward regions in terms of growth of per capita income but in case of gender equality it is quite better than many North Indian states and also India as a whole.

In this paper, in order to present the status of women of North East India, female sex ratio, female literacy rate and female work force participation rate have been used as indicators.

**Table 1 Showing The Female Sex Ratio of Ner
(A Comparison Between The Year of 2001 and 2011)**

S. No.	States	Year of 2001	Year of 2011
	ALL INDIA	933	943
1	Arunachal Pradesh	893	912
2	Assam	935	958
3	Meghalaya	972	989
4	Manipur	978	992
5	Mizoram	935	976
6	Nagaland	900	931
7	Tripura	948	960
8	Sikkim	875	890

Source: Census of India, 2011.

Thus, it has been seen that the female sex ratio of North East India has increased from the year 2001 to 2011. Five states out of the eight states of NER have shown higher female sex ratio than that of India as a whole.

Table 2 Showing The Female Literacy Rate Along With The Male Literacy Rate of NER

S. No.	States	Male	Female
	ALL INDIA	82.14%	65.46%
1	Arunachal Pradesh	72.55%	57.70%
2	Assam	77.85%	66.27%
3	Meghalaya	75.95%	72.89%
4	Manipur	83.58%	70.26%
5	Mizoram	93.35%	89.27%
6	Nagaland	82.75%	76.11%
7	Tripura	91.53%	82.73%
8	Sikkim	86.55%	75.61%

Source: Census of India, 2011.

From the above table it has been seen that though the female literacy rate is lower than that of male literacy rate in the NER States, but it has to be noted that 7 out of 8 NER states have higher female literacy rate than that of India as a whole. Only the state of Arunachal Pradesh have lower female literacy rate than the national level.

**Table 3 Showing The Female Work Participation Rate of
North East Region of India
(A Comparison Between The Year of 2001 and 2011)**

S. No.	States	Year of 2001	Year of 2011
	ALL INDIA	25.6 %	25.5 %
1	Arunachal Pradesh	36.5 %	35.4 %
2	Assam	20.7 %	22.5 %
3	Meghalaya	35.1 %	32.7 %
4	Manipur	39.0 %	38.6 %
5	Mizoram	47.5 %	36.2 %
6	Nagaland	38.1 %	44.7 %
7	Tripura	21.1 %	23.6 %
8	Sikkim	38.6 %	39.6 %

Source: Census of India, 2011.

From table 3 we have seen that the rate of female work participation has increased in 4 of the 8 NER states from the year 2001 to 2011. The state of Assam and Tripura are found to be below the national level of female work participation, however the other six states of NER are above the national level.

Higher Education and Women Empowerment

In India, higher education refers to the post secondary education which is provided to the students through colleges and universities. Higher education helps individuals to become self-dependent and provides various employment opportunities thereby making them economically productive and socially desirable member. Higher education can be regarded as one of the most important means of empowering women with the asset of knowledge, skills and self-esteem. It can reduce dependency among the women by providing with various career opportunities. Our government has also encouraged higher education for women empowerment through various schemes like Post Graduate Scholarship for single girl child, PRAGATI- Scholarship for girls for technical education, SHAKSHAM- scheme for providing guidance for women safety in campuses, women scientist programme in Department of Science and Technology and Department of Biotech (DBT). According to the data of AISHE, there has been an overall increase of female enrollment in higher education in the north eastern states of India from 2015-16 to 2019-20. However, female enrollment in professional and technical courses is lower in comparison to the academic course. Also we have seen that though the female literacy rate is better in North East India than the other states, it is lower in comparison to the male literacy rate.

Colleges and universities are the main centres of higher education and they can support women empowerment in the following ways-

1. By putting greater emphasis on modern technology based education for the girls.
2. Modifying the higher education curriculum and introducing skill oriented education and new professional courses for the girls.
3. By offering add-on courses and short term courses along with the regular degree course so that the girls can get access to vocational, technical and professional studies.
4. Proper career guidance and counseling should be provided to the girl students so that they can properly choose their subjects and also their vocations.
5. Motivational programs should be organized in order to motivate and inspire the girls to move forward in their careers and also to dream high.
6. Encouragement should be provided to the meritorious female students by offering scholarships.
7. Higher educational institutions should establish their relationship with the local industries.
8. Communication skills of the students should be developed in the higher educational institutions. Along with the regional language, English language should be given due importance since it is the international language and it is used in many job interviews.

Common Challenges of Higher Education in Empowering Women

1. **Poor economic condition of the parents-** Female students belonging to the family of low socio-economic status cannot fulfill their higher educational needs.
2. **Rapid population growth-** Due to the rapid population growth there has been increased in the demand of higher educational institutions. The present number of institutions has become inadequate to fulfill the demand.
3. **Lack of motivation-** It has been observed that female students of rural areas are generally not motivated enough for pursuing higher studies. There is absence of ambitions among them.
4. **No scope for training in competitive exams-** There is lack of training for various competitive exams like NET, SLET, UPSC, other state public service commission, banking, staff selection etc. in the higher educational institutions.
5. **Social barriers-** Sometimes particularly in the rural areas conservative minds of the family members stand as a barrier for the girls in pursuing their higher studies. Those parents do not allow their daughters to leave their homes for higher studies.
6. **Lack of parent's education-** It has been seen that if the parents are not educated then they become incapable to understand the value of women education at the higher level.

7. **Early marriage-** Generally the girls of rural areas get married quite early after they passed out their HSLC and higher secondary exams neglecting their higher studies.
8. **Negligence of English language at undergraduate level-** It is generally seen that in the college level education, regional languages are used as medium of instruction more particularly in the rural colleges. Used of regional language is appreciable but total negligence of English language should not exist. Due to this reason only many of our students failed in many competitive exams of national levels.

Conclusion

In conclusion we can say that women empowerment is required not only for the self development of the females but also for the development of one's family, society and nation as a whole. Higher education greatly helps in the total process of women empowerment. The status of women in North East India is quite satisfactory when we compare with the status of women of India as a whole, but we have also noticed that the female sex ratio, female literacy rate and work participation rate are low when we compare them with their male counterpart. Also in some NER states these rates are low in comparison to all India level. There also exist some common challenges while providing higher education for women empowerment in this region. Thus, it should be the joint responsibility of the public and the government for empowering the women so that they can be aware of their

potentialities. Mass motivation is required in this regard. Higher educational institutions should put emphasis on providing vocational, technical and professional courses along with the regular degree courses for the girls. They should prepare the students for facing various competitive examinations both at the state and national levels and should also be encouraged for self employment.

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How Changing Values of Financial Ratios Has Impacted The Growth of The Fertilizers Industry of India

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Abstract

This study gives a clear idea about the impact of changing values of the financial ratios on the fertilizers industry. The aims and objectives of the research have been discussed with the appropriate research philosophy, research approach and research design. The proper representation of the ratios with graphs and charts has been provided. With the help of these graphs and charts, the financial position of the chosen company has been derived.

Introduction

In this study, the impact of the changing value in ratio for Zuari agricultural limited has been discussed along with the comparison between three agricultural companies named Chambal fertilizers, Indian farmer fertilizers and Hindustan

fertilizer cooperation. The literature review and the research methodology have also been briefly discussed here. All the data considered for this topic is between the periods of 2014 to 2019. Net profit ratios, gross profit ratio, ROA, ROE, and ROCE and soon have been analyzed.

Review of Literature

Condition of the Indian Fertilizer Industry

The fertilizing companies of India are entirely dependent on agricultural companies. It is the backbone of the Indian agricultural company. The use of fertilizers helps to facilitate faster production of food to serve the nation (Singh *et al.*, 2019)

Contribution in GDP

The contribution of the Indian fertilizer industry to GDP is precious (Praveen,2017). It has been seen that the share of the fertilizer industry for the growth of GDP is 20% which has been increased from the year 2019-2020.

Implementation for economic growth

The fertilizer industry has played a unique role to implement the economic development of the country. It has been proven that the economic development of the country is partially dependent on the fertilizer industry. The industries like cotton and jute mills tend to manufacture different kinds of products which are considered a vital part of the economic growth process (Shahbaz *et al.*, 2017).

Literature Gap

Different studies have been conducted in the sector of

the fertilizers industry. This study includes various aspects of the fertilizers industry, such as decisions regarding produce goods for sale, pre and post-harvesting activities etc.

Methodology

Research philosophy

To complete any research correctly, a research philosophy has been used. In this matter, the main focus has been given to the ***positivism research philosophy***. This philosophy has been used because it provides conservative information regarding the topic (Ryan,2018)

Research approach

A deductive research approach has been considered for this research. Woiceshyn and Daellenbach (2018) ***opined that deductive research*** helps provide valuable and potential data for the analysis.

Research Design

As the research design for this study, ***exploratory research design*** has been the most appropriate one. This research design is beneficial for understanding the issues and the problems, and also it helps solve the problem as soon as possible (Jain and Tiwari, 2020).

Data collection method

A secondary research method has been used for collecting the data. Books, magazines, and journals have been used as the definitive resource (Johnston, 2017).

Research Aim and Objective

Aim

The main aim of this study is to find out the impact of the changing value of ratios of the fertilizer industry.

Objectives

1. Comparison of the same categorical companies based on financial data.
2. The practical impact of the fertilizer industry for the improvement of the economy and contribution to the growth of the GDP.

Collection of Secondary Data

Statistical Analysis

Zuari Agrochemicals Limited

	Gross Profit Ratio	NET Profit Ratio	Operating Profit Ratio
Average	24.144	-0.56	7.752
SD	3.18	2.03	9.45
CV	0.13	-3.63	1.22

Chambal Fertilizers Limited

	Gross Profit Ratio	NET Profit Ratio	Operating Profit Ratio
Average	40.81	4.222	8.402
SD	5.98	2.34	2.12
CV	0.15	0.56	0.25

Indian Farmer Fertilizer Cooperation Limited

	Gross Profit Ratio	NET Profit Ratio	Operating Profit Ratio
Average	19.536	3.112	3.64
SD	2.65	0.83	4.02
CV	0.14	0.27	1.11

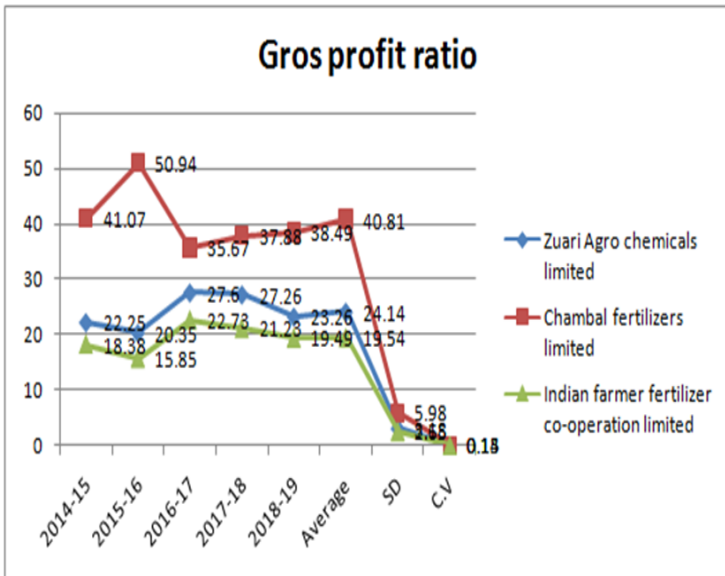


Figure 1: Gross profit ratio

(Source: Self-Created)

In this study, the financial ratio of Zuari agricultural limited has been analyzed along with its two competitors for the time span of 2014 to 2019. As per the record, the gross profit ratio has been increasing from 2014 to 2018, but in

2019 it seems to decrease. CV is 0.13% which is comparatively lower than the other two companies which mean there is a decrease in the selling price of goods.

Net Profit Ratio

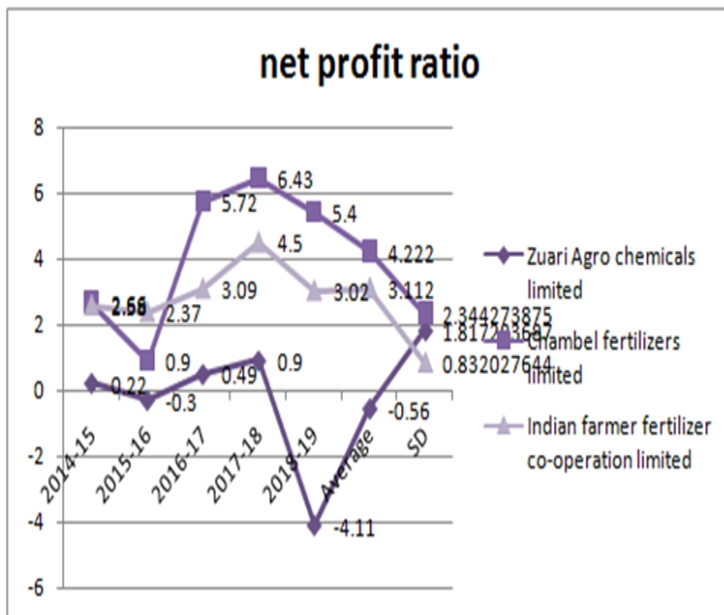


Figure 2: Net profit ratio

(Source: Self-Created)

Comparing to the Chambal fertilizers limited and Indian farmer cooperation limited, Zuari agrochemical has managed to earn a lower net profit ratio of 0.22% in 2014. It means that the company has used an inactive cost structure for the pricing strategy compared to the other two companies. As per the record, it can be seen that in the years 2015 and 2018, the company had a negative net profit ratio of -0.3%

and -4.11%, which means that the money earned from the selling of the products is not enough to cover the production cost.

Operating Profit Ratio

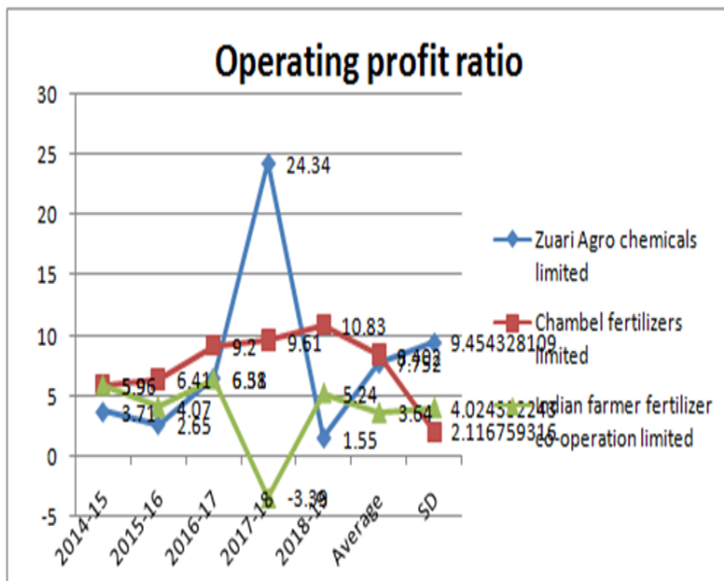


Figure 3: operating profit ratio

(Source: Self-Created)

The ratio is a profitability ratio responsible for reflecting the percentage of the profit that a company produces. Here Zuari agro chemical's operating profit ratios for the year 2014 to 2019 were 3.71%, 2.65%, 6.51%, 24.34% and 1.55%. As per the record, it can be seen that the company has managed to earn a higher margin of operating profit ratio in the year 2018 which means that the company has efficiently managed its operations. However, Chambel fertilizers have a

higher average operating profit ratio than Zuari agrochemicals and Indian farmer fertilizers have a lower average operating ratio.

Return on capital employed

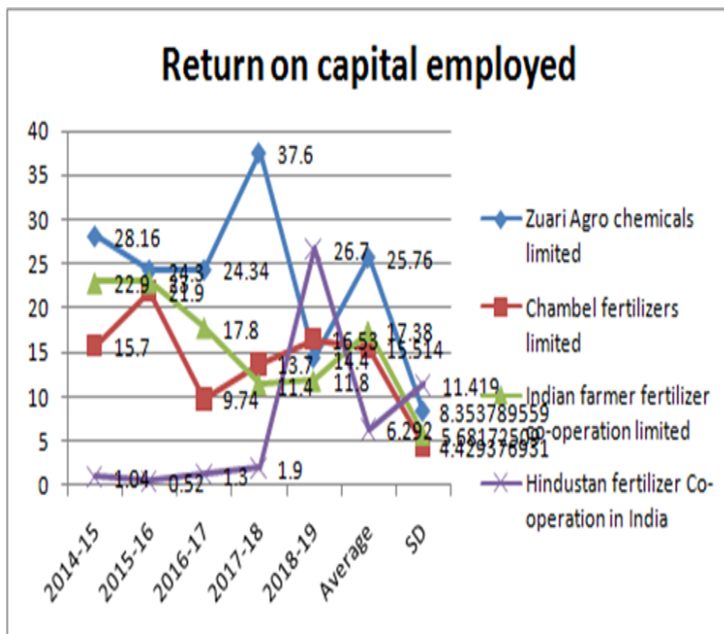


Figure 4: ROCE

(Source: Self-Created)

In this study, the comparison of the return on capital employed has been conducted on the basis of four agricultural companies. The average return on capital employed during the period from 2014 to 2019 for the four companies was 25.76%, 15.514%, 17.38% and 6.25%. Hence it can be seen that Zuari agrochemical has managed to earn a

higher percentage of return on capital employed than the other companies and also the changing value of the company has increased over time. It is the indicator of the successful growth of the company.

Return on Equity Ratio

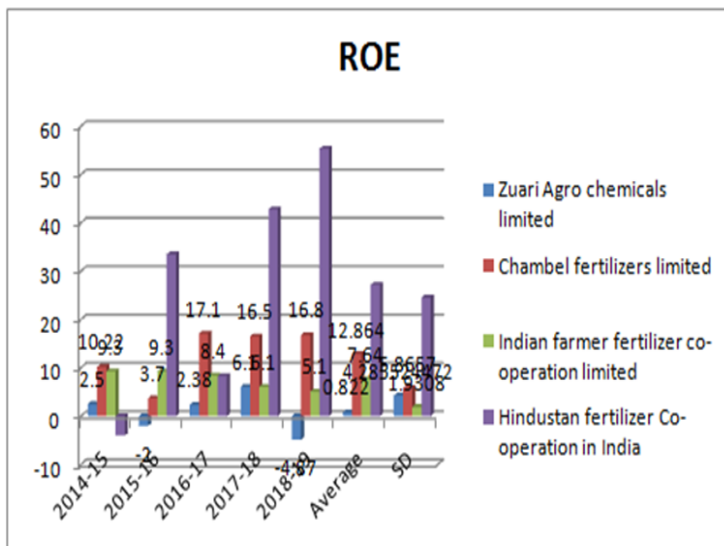


Figure 5: ROE

(Source: Self-Created)

The term return on equity ratio or ROE is the measurement of financial performance by dividing the net income by shareholder's equity. Considering the average percentage of ROE, Hindustan fertilizers cooperation has the higher percentage of average ROE and SD of 27.198% and 24.542% whereas Zuari agro has the lowest average ROE of 0.8222%.

Return on Total Asset Ratio

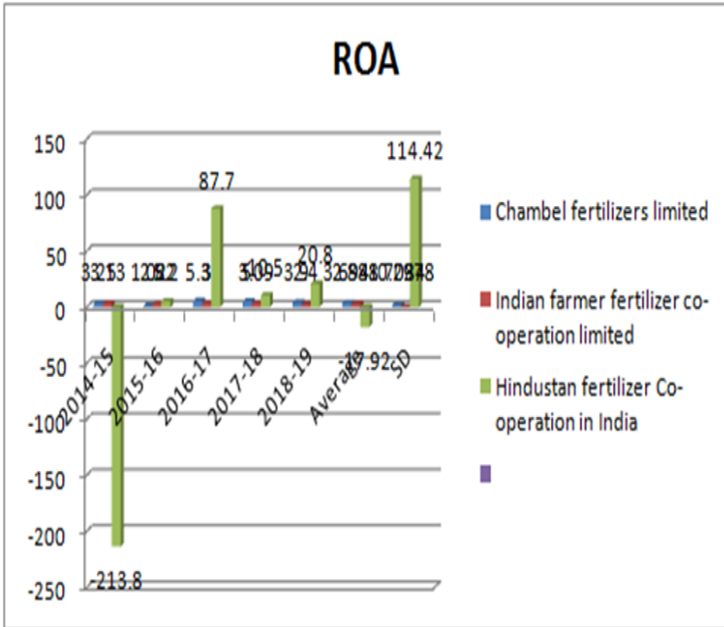


Figure 6: ROA

(Source: Self-Created)

The average percentage of ROA of Zuari agro shows a negative balance of -0.484 %. Hindustan fertilizers cooperation has the lowest percentage of average ROA of -17.92% and Chambel fertilizers have achieved the highest percentage of 3.694%.

Expenses Ratio

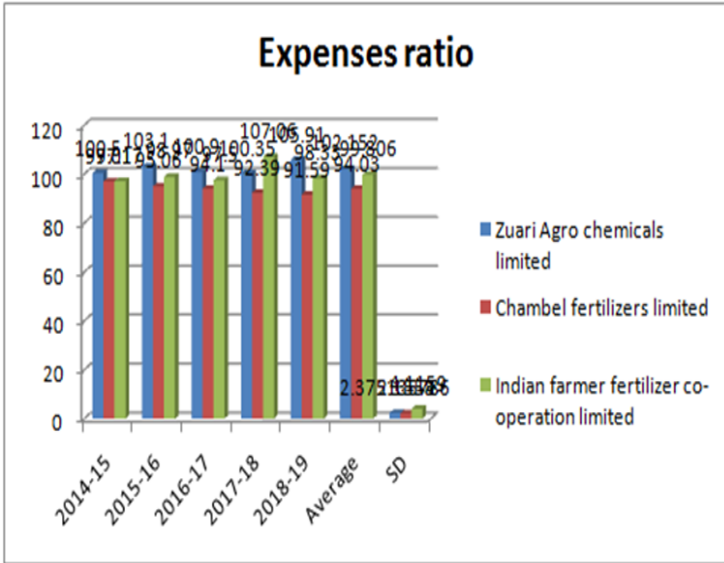


Figure 7: Expenses ratio

(Source: Self-Created)

The average expenses ratio of Zuari agro fertilizers is comparatively higher than the other three companies. It shows 102.152% for the time span of 2014-2019. However, the standard deviation is lower than the Indian farmer cooperation.

Earnings per share

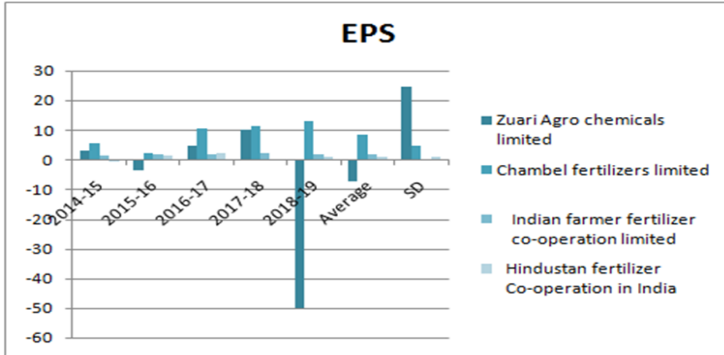


Figure 8: EPS

(Source: Self-Created)

Earnings per share of Zuari agro shows a negative balance of -7.282%, chambal fertilizers, Indian fertilizers cooperation and Hindustan fertilizers operation has a higher earnings per share. Chambal fertilizers have the highest percentage of average EPS of 8.55%, whereas Zuari agro has the lowest.

Current ratio

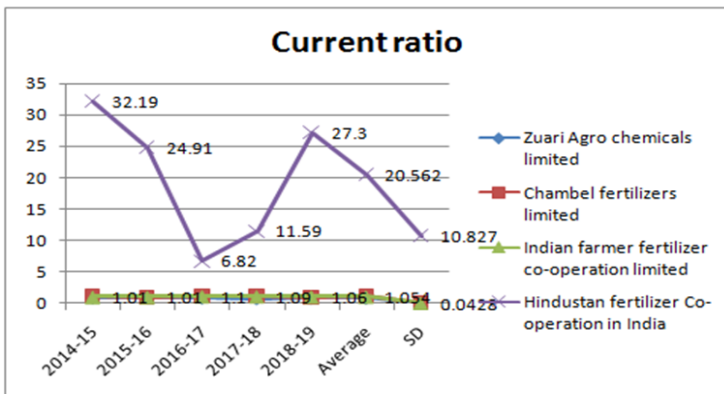


Figure 9: Current ratio

(Source: Self-Created)

As per the record, Hindustan fertilizers operation has the highest percentage of current ratio and Zuari agro has the lowest percentage of current ratio. 0.882% is the average current ratio and 0.06% is the SD of Zuari agro which is comparatively lower. However, the CV is higher than the Indian farmer cooperation.

Quick ratio

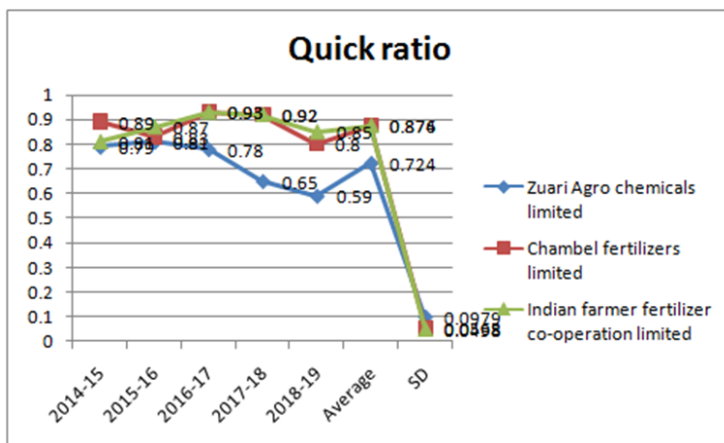


Figure 10: Quick ratio

(Source: Self-Created)

On the basis of the average quick ratio, SD and CV for the period 2014-2019, it can be stated that the Indian farmer fertilizer cooperation has the highest percentage of average quick ratio however; the SD and the CV are comparatively lower.

Absolute liquid ratio

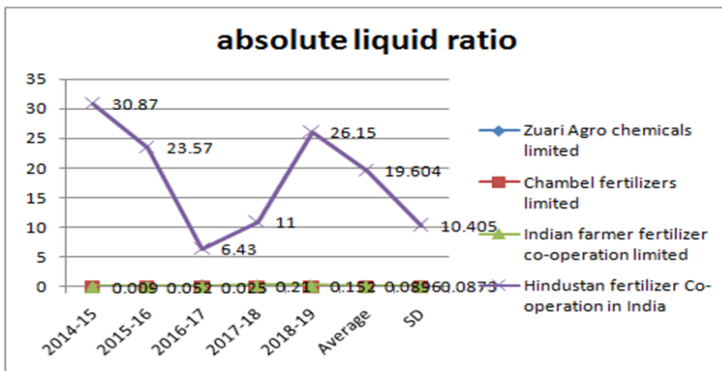


Figure 11: Absolute liquid ratio

(Source: Self-Created)

Hindustan fertilizer has the highest percentage of the average absolute liquid ratio of 19.604% whereas Chambel fertilizers have the lowest average absolute liquid ratio of 0.0138%. The standard deviation is highest for Hindustan fertilizer operation and the CV is high for the Zuari Agro.

Fixed asset ratio

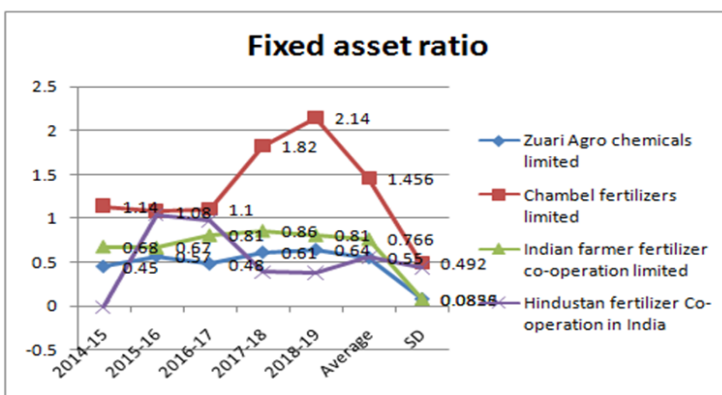


Figure 12: Fixed asset ratio

(Source: Self-Created)

Chambal fertilizer limited has the highest fixed asset ratio of 1.456% and Zuari agro hs the lowest fixed asset ratio of 0.55%. Chambal fertilizer has the highest SD as well, whereas Hindustan fertilizers operation has the lowest fixed asset ratio.

Debt equity ratio

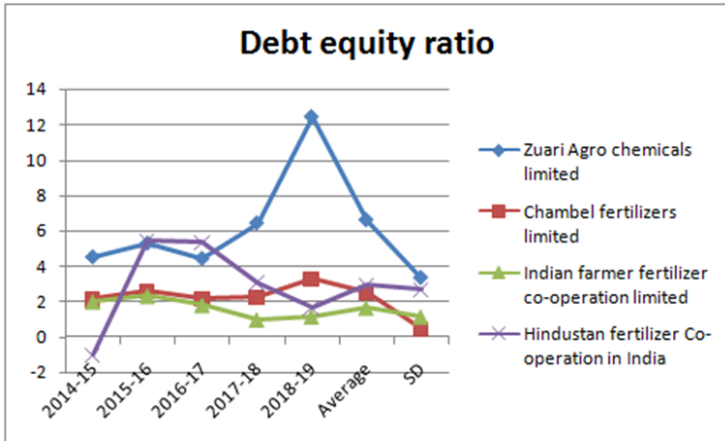


Figure 13: Debt equity ratio

(Source: Self-Created)

Zuari agro has the highest percentage of the debt-equity ratio of 6.61%, whereas Indian farmer cooperation limited as the lowest percentage of 1.646.

Inventory turnover ratio

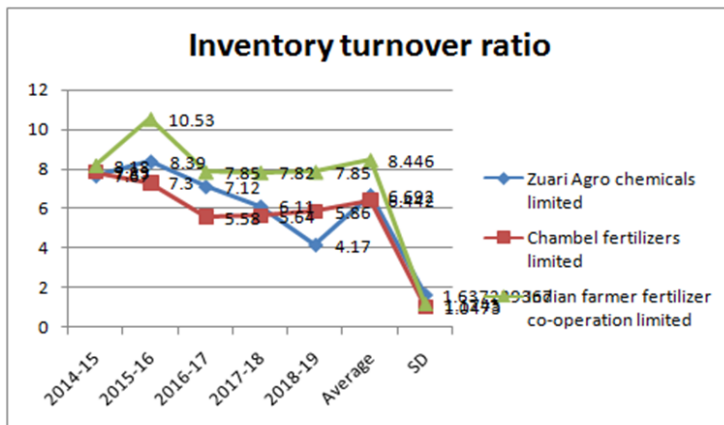


Figure 14: Inventory turnover ratio

(Source: Self-Created)

Indian farmer fertilizer has the highest inventory turnover ratio of 8.446% and Chambal fertilizers have the lowest percentage of 6.442.

Debtor's turnover ratio

Indian farmer fertilizers cooperation has the highest debtor's turnover ratio and Chambal fertilizers have the lowest.

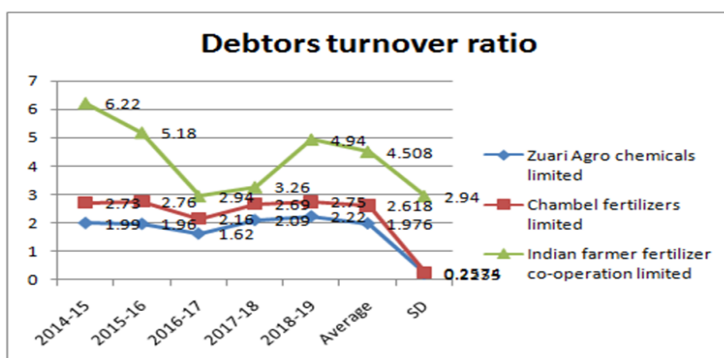


Figure15: Debtors turnover ratio

(Source: Self-Created)

Creditor's turnover ratio

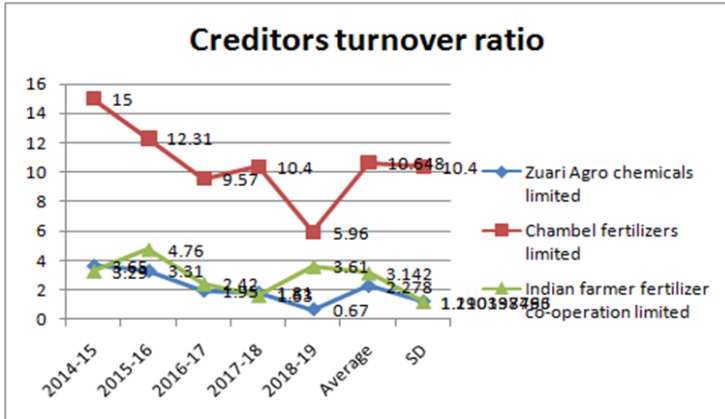


Figure 15: Creditors turnover ratio

(Source: Self-Created)

In this matter, Chambal fertilizers have the highest percentage and Zuari agro has the lowest. 10.648% is the creditor turnover ratio for Chambal fertilizer is the highest among the three companies.

Working capital turnover ratio

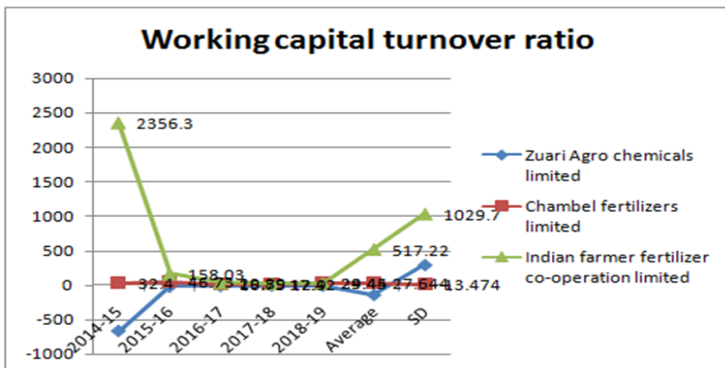


Figure 16: Working capital turnover ratio

(Source: Self-Created)

Indian farmer cooperation limited has the highest percentage of the working capital turnover ratio of 517.218% however Zuari agro has a negative 143.666% ratio being the lowest one.

Capital Turnover Ratio

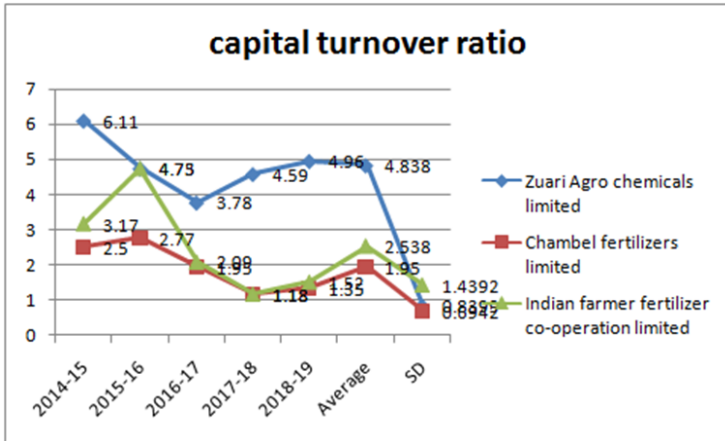


Figure 17: capital turnover ratio

(Source: Self-Created)

Zuari agro has the highest capital turnover ratio of 4.838% whereas Chambal fertilizers have the lowest ratio of 1.95%.

Findings and Researches

In this segment, the correlation and the regression on the basis of gross profit ratio has been discussed. In regression analysis, the P-value is lower than five which means it is considered as significant. The correlation of Chambal fertilizer has been negative, which means if the on a

variable will increase the other will automatically decrease.

ANOVA								
	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>			
Regression	1	27.89273	27.89273	6.938711	0.118947			
Residual	2	8.039744	4.019872					
Total	3	35.93248						
	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>Lower 95%</i>	<i>Upper 95%</i>	<i>Lower 95.0%</i>	<i>Upper 95.0%</i>
Intercept	42.61332	6.904915	6.171448	0.025265	12.90387	72.32277	12.90387	72.32277
41.07	-0.44167	0.167671	-2.63414	0.118947	-1.1631	0.279761	-1.1631	0.279761

Table 1: Regression Analysis

(Source: Self- Created)

	22.25	41.07
22.25	1	
41.07	-0.88105	1

Table 2: Correlation analysis

(Source: Self- Created)

Conclusion

In this study the financial analysis has been done on the basis of the changing value in the ratios. Different graphs and charts have been provided for all the necessary calculations, Also the proper research philosophy; approach and design have been discussed.

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E-Commerce and Relevant Market: Unease for Future

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To inquire into any alleged abuse of dominant position, the first step and indeed a question of paramount importance is to ascertain the relevant market.[1] The Raghavan Committee Report points out that dominance and its subsequent abuse can be established only in the context of relevant market.[2] Thus, the relevant market forms the bedrock for the enforcement of competition law.[3] However, it is to be noted that determining the relevant market is not an end in itself but a key step in identifying the existing

competitive constraints.

Market

The expression 'market' owes its origin in the concept of economics. As a result, it is bound to be dynamic in nature and varies with peculiar facts of each case.[4] The Webster's International Dictionary defines the term 'market' as a place where provisions are sold. It is a place where exchange or purchase and sale take place.[5] Similarly, Oxford English Dictionary states that a market is a place or seat of trade.[6] In layman's language, market is a place where buyers and sellers meet. In a larger sense, market would mean the availability of commodities at a particular price specifying the needs and requirements of the sellers and the buyers. It is an operation between the parties in trading with each other, depending upon the utility of the product from the purchaser's point of view and the price from the vendor's point of view. A true market connotes freedom of bargain.[7] Therefore, a market means a place where parties to the purchase or sale have access to each other. It is an established medium or platform for supplier-consumer communication. Based on certain unique set of circumstances, a market can be of the following kinds [8]:

Table II – Kinds of Market

Characteristics	Perfect Competition	Monopolistic Competition	Oligopoly	Monopoly
Number of competitors	Many	Few to many	Very few	No direct competition
Ease of entry or exit from industry	Easy	Somewhat difficult	Difficult	Mostly regulated by Government
Similarity of goods/services offered by competing firms	Same	Seemingly different but maybe quite similar	Similar or different	No directly competing products/services
Individual firm's control over price	None (Set by the market)	Some	Some	Considerable (In true monopoly); little (in regulated monopoly)
Examples	Agricultural products	Fast-food restaurants	Automobile manufacturers	Indian railways

Relevant Market

Section 2(r) of the Competition Act, 2002. *Relevant market means the market which may be determined by the*

1. Abir Roy and Jayant Kumar, *Competition Law in India* (Eastern Law House Pvt. Ltd 2008) 100-101
2. The Report of the High Level Committee on Competition Policy Law (SVS Raghavan Committee Report), Para.

No. 4.4.5

3. Amrit Subhadarsi, 'Competition Law & Electronic Commerce: Comparative Analysis of US, European Union and Indian Laws' [2016] Business Sciences International Research Journal 56
4. Smeksha Bhola, 'India: Determination of Relevant Market – Easier Said Than Done' (*Mondaq*, 26th February 2014) <<http://www.mondaq.com/india/x/295618/Trade+Regulation+Practices/Determination+Of+Relevant+Market+Easier+Said+Than+Done>> accessed 1 April 2018
5. *Webster's International Dictionary* (2nd edn, 1934) vol. 1, page no. 1163
6. *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* (3rd edn, 1973) vol. 1, page no. 1280
7. D.P. Mittal, *Competition Law & Practice* (3rd edn, Taxmann Allied Services Pvt. Ltd. 2011)
8. Sugata Bag, 'Economics of Regulations: Market Types' (Delhi School of Economics, 2013)

Commission with reference to the relevant product market or the relevant geographic market or with reference to both the markets.

The Competition Act, 2002 exhaustively defines the expression 'relevant market'. The Indian competition law has borrowed the concept of relevant market from the EU competition law. In accordance with Section 19(5) read with

Section 2(r) of the Competition Act, 2002, the Commission shall take into consideration the relevant geographic market and relevant product market for the purpose of determining whether a market constitutes a relevant market.

Relevant market means the periphery of the market in which the enterprise participates or conducts its business.[9] According to Black's Law Dictionary, relevant market is defined as a market that is capable of being monopolized, i.e., a market in which a firm can raise prices above the competitive level without losing so many sales that the price increase would be unprofitable.[10] In the words of Supreme Court of United States[11], relevant market is the area of effective competition, within which the defendant operates.[12] The Commentary of UNCTAD - Model Law on Competition states that the relevant market is the place where supply and demand interacts.[13]

In short, for the purposes of Competition Act, 2002, relevant market is merely a portion of the Indian market which can be viewed as an independent business area in which competitive relationships are affected or destroyed.[14] Determination of relevant market means identifying the particular products or services produced or rendered, as the case maybe, by an enterprise in a given geographical area.[15]

It is to be borne in mind that there is not strait-jacket formulae to decide the contours of the relevant market.[16] According to World Bank/OECD Glossary, if markets are defined too narrowly in either product or geographic terms,

meaningful competition may be excluded from the analysis. On the other hand, if the product or geographic market are too broadly defined the degree of competition may be overstated. Too broad or too narrow market definitions leads to understanding or overstating market.[17]

Relevant Geographic Market

Section 2(s) of the Competition Act, 2002. *Relevant geographic market means a market comprising the area in which the conditions of competition for supply of goods or provision of services or demand of goods or services are distinctly homogenous and can be distinguished from the conditions prevailing in the neighboring areas.*

The Indian competition law has borrowed the concept of relevant geographic market from the EU competition law with a few minor changes. Instead of the words 'distinctly homogenous', the EU law uses the expression 'sufficiently homogenous'. Relevant geographic market is the area in which the sellers of a particular product or service operate and sell the product or service in question which the buyers purchases[18]. It involves the identification of the geographical area within which competition takes place.[19] Homogeneity of the market conditions for the supply of goods or provision of services in a specified area is the requirement. The expression 'homogenous' has not been defined in the Competition Act, 2002. As per Law Lexicon, homogenous means "of the same description".[20] Homogeneity means uniformity of composition.[21] Thus, the conditions of competition should be the same in the relevant geographic

market.

It is to be noted that a geographic market is not the physical territory in which the competing enterprises operate but only that part of the territory in which the conditions of competition for supply or demand of goods or services are distinctly homogenous and distinguishable from the conditions prevailing in the neighboring area. Only that part of the geographic territory where uniformity of composition is present should be considered as geographic market. Conversely, when conditions prevailing in the neighboring areas are different, the markets are different.

The Court in *United Brands v. Commission*[22] opined that the geographic market helps to evaluate the market power of an undertaking. Relevant geographic market could be local, national, international or occasionally even global, depending upon the particular product under examination, the nature of alternatives in the supply of the product, and the presence or absence of specific factors.[23]

If purchasers of a product sold in one location would, in response to a small but significant and non-transitory increase in its price (popularly known as SSNIP Test), switch to buying the product sold at another location, then those two locations are regarded to be in the same geographic market, with respect to that product. If not, the two locations are regarded to be in different geographical markets.[24] Geographic market definition involves the identification of those firms to which the consumers in the area will turn in the event of a significant price increase, and may also include

firms that would enter the geographic area in response to such an increase.[25]

Section 19(6) of the Competition Act, 2002 explicitly lays down certain factors which the Commission shall take into account while ascertaining the relevant geographic market. The factors are reproduced below:

- (a) Regulatory trade barriers;
- (b) Local specification requirements;
- (c) National procurement policies;
- (d) Adequate distribution facilities;
- (e) Transport costs;
- (f) Language;
- (g) Consumer preferences;
- (h) Need for secure or regular supplies or rapid after-sales services

Relevant Product Market

Section 2(t) of the Competition Act, 2002. *Relevant product market means a market comprising all those products or services which are regarded as interchangeable or substitutable by the consumer, by reason of characteristics of the products or services, their prices and intended use.*

The Indian competition law has borrowed the concept of relevant product market from the EU competition law. Relevant product market, as per Section 2(t) of the 2002 Act, comprises of interchangeable or substitutable products or services. The products or services may be switchable/exchangeable due to its characteristics, price or use. On the demand side, the relevant product market

includes all such substitutes that the consumer would switch to, if the price of the product were to increase. On the supply side, this would include all producers who could, with their existing facilities, switch to the production of such substitute goods.[26] It was observed in *Brown Shoe v. United States*[27] that in determining whether products are interchangeable or substitutes are available for that product, an element for consideration is to be made for responsiveness of the sales of one product to price changes of the other.[28]

As stated above, the test to determine the relevant product market is interchangeability or substitutability of the product or service in question. Thus, the factor to be taken into consideration is whether the end use of the product and its substitutes are essentially the same or whether the physical characteristics or technical qualities are similar enough to allow customers to switch easily from one to another.

Also, as stated above, one of the central factors is price. It involves enquiry into the proportionate amount of increase in the demand of one commodity due to the proportionate increase in the price of another commodity. In a highly elastic market, a slight increase in the price of one product will prompt customers to switch to the other, thus indicating that the products in question compete in the same market while a low cross-elasticity would indicate the contrary, i.e., that the products have separate markets.[29] In some cases, even one brand of a product can constitute one

market.[30] A product market has no geographical limits.[31]

Section 19(7) of the Competition Act, 2002 explicitly lays down certain factors which the Commission shall take into account while ascertaining the relevant product market. The factors provided under Section 19(7) are reproduced below:

- (a) Physical characteristics or end-use of goods;
- (b) Price of goods or service;
- (c) Consumer preferences;
- (d) Exclusion of in-house production;
- (e) Existence of specialized producers;
- (f) Classification of industrial products.

Examples of Relevant Market

In *Belaire Owner's Association v. DLF Ltd.*[32], DLF announced the launch of a housing complex comprising of five multi-storied residential buildings to be constructed in DLF City, Gurgaon, Haryana. The owners' association alleged that unfair, arbitrary and unreasonable conditions were imposed on the owners by DLF Ltd. amounting to abuse of dominant position under the Competition Act, 2002. The Commission delineated the relevant product market as high end residential accommodation/buildings. The relevant geographic market was decided to be the city of Gurgaon.

In *Shri Shamsher Kataria v. Honda Siel Cars India Ltd. and Ors.*[33], three car manufacturers were alleged to be indulged into anti-competitive practices wherein genuine spare parts of automobiles manufactured by them were not made freely available in the open market. Later, other

automobile players were also investigated. The Commission delineated two separate relevant product market, namely, market for manufacture & sale of cars (primary market) and market for sale of spare parts (secondary market). The secondary market was further divided into market for supply of spare parts and market for after-sale services. The relevant geographic market was common in both the cases. It was the whole of India.

In *MCX Stock Exchange Ltd. v. National Stock Exchange of India Ltd. & DotEx International Ltd.*[34], the fee waiver and other concessions in the currency derivatives market granted by NSE was in contravention of the provisions of the Competition Act, 2002. The zero pricing policy adopted by NSE was opposed by the Informant. Stock exchange services in respect of currency derivative segment were considered to be the relevant product market. The relevant geographic market was delineated as India.

Relevant Market in E-Commerce Industry

Prima facie, ascertaining the relevant market sounds like a cakewalk but it can be aptly remarked as 'it is easier said than done'. Determining relevant market in e-commerce sector remains debatable and questionable. With reference to Indian competition jurisprudence, the question of paramount importance arises as to whether e-commerce and traditional market are two separate relevant markets or are merely different channels of distribution of the same product or service.

In most cases, products or services offered through

various e-portal platforms can be purchased and delivered in any part of the country. Rapid technological advancements have, undoubtedly, withered the geographical limits. Thus, in context of e-commerce, the relevant geographic market will be India. With reference to relevant product market, products or services offered on various e-commerce platforms are identical in nature, characteristics, intended use etc. Thus, products or services offered online are perfectly substitutable and interchangeable with products or services offered offline. Consumers find it easy to switch from offline to online market place and *vice versa*. This is evident from the fact that the online retail sales in India has jumped from a meager US \$ 3.8 billion in 2009 to an impressive US \$ 38 billion in 2016.[35] For the time being, it can be concluded that both - offline and online markets- are a part of singular market.

An Opportunity to Settle the Law

In the case of *Mr. Mohit Manglani v. M/s Flipkart India Pvt. Ltd. & Ors.*[36] as discussed in Chapter-II under the heading 'Exclusive Arrangements in E-Commerce Sector', the Informant alleged that e-commerce websites and product sellers have entered into exclusive supply agreements to sell selected products exclusively on selected portals. Accordingly, other e-portals and physical channels are excluded. The Informant named Chetan Bhagat's book titled 'Half Girlfriend' and a few other products which were exclusively sold by one or the other opposite party.

During the course of proceedings, the Informant submitted that each of the OPs has 100% market share for

the product in which it is exclusively dealing. Thus, according to the Informant, the relevant market has to be defined in context of a particular product in question. To the contrary, the OPs argued that relevant market cannot be construed in context of each product separately. It was strongly argued by the OPs that online and offline retail market do not constitute separate relevant market. Both are merely different channels of distribution of the same product. The product purchased or service availed either through online or offline portal is fundamentally the same in its nature and characteristics.

The Commission rightly observed that online portals provide benefits to consumers such as comparing the prices, weighing the pros and cons, rapid delivery right at the door step, purchase of product at convenience of the consumer, quicker purchase than brick and mortar retail outlet. It further went on to observe that every single product cannot be delineated as relevant market. Subsequently, it found that none of the OPs are individually in a dominant position

The disturbing part of the order is that the Commission did not go any further the investigate the question of relevant market. For the purpose of the case, the analysis of relevant market was not useful as the OPs were not in a dominant position. But, for the purpose of settling the law and establishing a precedent for further reference, the Commission should have resolved the question. Despite having an opportunity, it left open the question of whether e-portal markets may be treated as a separate relevant market or as a sub-segment of the market for distribution.

Online and Offline Markets Constitute a Single Market

In the celebrated case of *Re: Mr. Ashish Ahuja v. Snapdeal.com and San Disk Corporation*[37], decided on 19th May 2014, the Commission examined the question of relevant market in context of e-commerce. The Informant, in the present case, is engaged in selling various products, particularly electronic products, such as pen drives, hard disks, laptops etc. OP 1 is an online portal or marketplace for sellers and buyers to meet. The portal charges a commission from the seller. It has tie-up with cargo companies for successful delivery of the ordered consignment from the seller's place to buyer's place. OP 2 is Indian sales office of San Disk Corporation, USA. San Disk Corporation is engaged in the business of manufacture, distribution and sale of pen drives, SD cards, Micro SD cards and other storage devices.

The Informant entered into an online agreement with OP 1 for sale of various products such as pen drives, laptops, hard disks etc. The sale took place electronically, i.e., through online portal of OP 1. Subsequently, OP 1 abruptly denied the Informant from selling its products through the online portal. It informed the Informant that he is not an authorized partner to sell San Disk items as per the revised and confidential list of M/s San Disk India authorized online channel partners. In order to use the online portal, OP 1 demanded that the Informant shall acquire a NOC from San Disk. On further enquiry, the Informant discovered a letter being circulated by San Disk Corporation in the market. The letter explicitly stated that San Disk Corporation, USA has authorized only four *bona*

fide national distributors via whom all products of San Disk Corporation are imported into and sold in India. No other person is lawfully authorized to deal in products of San Disk Corporation.

Based on the above facts, the Informant alleged that the collusion between OPs resulted into the Informant being tried to stop from offering products at competitive price which was below the price offered by other sellers of the same product. Further, the Informant submitted that OP 2 is monopolizing the market. Lastly, by entering into an agreement, the OPs are unfairly deciding the price of the product being sold online.

With regard to relevant market, the Commission under Para. 15 held that the relevant product market, keeping in view the characteristics, price and intended use of the products, is the market for portable small-sized consumer storage devices that includes USB pen drives, SD memory cards and micro SD cards. The above stated storage devices were considered to be interchangeable and substitutable. Taking into account the nature of e-commerce, the Commission under Para. 17 stated that the relevant geographic market would be India. Therefore, the relevant market in the present case is the market for portable small-sized consumer storage devices such as USB pen drives, SD memory cards and micro SD cards in India.

The Commission made a crucial observation relating to traditional market and e-commerce market. In fact, this observation was the turning point of the case and a reference

for future cases. The Commission observed that online and offline market is a singular market and cannot be considered as two separate markets. The online and offline players are competing on the same level playing field. Para. 16 of the judgment is reproduced below:

“The Commission also notes that both offline and online markets differ in terms of discounts and shopping experience and buyers weigh the options available in both markets and decides accordingly. If the price in the online market increase significantly, then the consumer is likely to shift towards the offline market and vice versa. Therefore, the Commission is of the view that these two markets are different channels of distribution of the same product and are not two different relevant markets”

The Commission noted that requiring a NOC for online sale cannot itself be abusive as it is within the right of the OP to protect the sanctity of its distribution channel. The circular mandating such NOC was considered to be a part of normal course of business practice. It also observed that OP 1 is not in a dominant position. Accordingly, the Commission held that no *prima facie* case of contravention of the provisions of the Competition Act, 2002 is made out against the OPs. Thus, the matter was closed under Section 26(2) of the Competition Act, 2002.

Affirmation of the Ratio

In *Re: Mr. Deepak Verma v. Clues Network Pvt. Ltd. & Ors.*,^[38] the Informant filed information against 23 online e-commerce companies. They were alleged to increase their

business illegally and fool consumers by using anti-competitive practices. The Informant was aggrieved by the defective and deficient products and services supplied by the online market players. The matter was closed section 26(2) of the Competition Act, 2002 since OPs were not held in a dominant position.

However, it is to be noted that the Commission affirmed the ratio held in *Snapdeal.com*[39] case regarding relevant market. It stated that “in the recent past, it has been observed that buyers are shifting from offline to online retail market because of heavy discounts, better choices and convenience. Similarly, if the prices in the online market increase significantly, the consumers are likely to shift back towards the offline market and vice versa. Therefore, the Commission is of the view that these two markets are only two different channels of distribution and are not two different relevant markets. Earlier, similar observation was also made by the Commission in Case No. 17 of 2014, namely, Mr. Ashish Ahuja vs. Snapdeal.com and Another.” In addition, the Commission also observed that there is growing competition between the e-commerce market players *inter se*. The consumers can easily move from one e-commerce market player to another without much difficulty.

Similarly, another recent case on the subject is *In Re:Confederation of Real Estate Brokers' Association of India v. Magicbricks.com, 99acres.com, Housing.com, Commonfloor.com & Nobroker.in* [40]. The OPs run and manage their respective web-portals and property services

division by acting as commission agents in real estate transactions. The Informant, being a confederation of 35 real estate brokers' association consisting of approximately 20,000 real estate brokers, alleged the OPs of contravening the provisions of section 4 of the Competition Act, 2002. As a result, businesses of traditional real estate agents are adversely affected. Similar to the previous case, the OPs were not held to be in a dominant position. Thus, the matter was closed under section 26(2) of the 2002 Act.

Speaking of relevant market, it was delineated as market for the services of real estate brokers/agents in India. With regard to relevant geographic market, the Commission compared the geographical boundaries and traditional and online real estate brokers in terms of supply and demand. From the supply side, traditional brokers offer services within their respective locality, whereas online brokers are in a position to provide services anywhere in India. From the demand side, the consumers can purchase or rent any real estate property in any locality in India. Thus, the relevant geographic market was considered to be the whole of India. The Commission made an important observation under Para. 11 of the judgment for the purpose of delineating the relevant product market. The said Para. is reproduced as below:

“The Commission observes that India is one of the fastest growing e-commerce markets. With the growth of e-commerce, the number of online portals engaged in the activities of real estate listing, property finder solution, etc. have been increasing. It is observed that, besides OPs, there

are also many other real estate listing sites which are offering similar services, providing various options to the consumers. Besides the online platforms, real estate brokerage business in India is also undertaken by the traditional brokers in a large scale. Both the online platforms and the off-line traditional brokers are offering similar services to the customers. Accordingly, the Commission is of the view that on-line and off-line services of brokers cannot be distinguished while defining the relevant product market in the instant case. Both are alternative channels of delivering the same service. So, the market for 'the services of real estate brokers/ agents' is considered as the relevant product market in the present case."

An Attempt to Dissent

A controversial view was taken by CCI in *Justickets Pvt. Ltd. v. Big Tree Entertainment Pvt. Ltd & Vista Entertainment Solutions Ltd.*[41] as the Commission divorced from its view held in the *Snapdeal.com* case[42] relating to relevant market. The Informant and OP 1, in the present case, are engaged in the business of online movie ticketing through its their respective official website. In addition, both also have their own box office software. The software is provided to theatres for selling tickets at the counter. OP 2 is a global leader in the supply of box office ticketing software called 'Vista'. OP 1 is the sole distributor of 'Vista' in India. The Informant alleged that the OPs are abusing their dominant position by creating barriers for online movie ticketing portals from getting access to 'Vista'. The outcome of the case was

that no *prima facie* case was made out against the OPs. There was a plausible explanation for the act of the OPs. Accordingly, the matter was closed under section 26(2) of the Competition Act, 2002.

As far as the relevant market is concerned, OP 1 strongly but unsuccessfully argued that there is no difference between the online and offline market which are merely two different channels of distribution. Thus, the relevant market in the present case should be the market for sale of movie tickets in India. Similarly, OP 2 argued that at best relevant market would be the market for box office software provided to cinemas in India. However, the Commission delineated two separate relevant markets for each of the OP, namely, market for online movie ticketing portals in India for OP 1 and market for box office ticketing solutions in India for OP 2.

Another similar case on the subject is *In Re: Mr. Vilakshan Kumar Yadav, Mr. Rizwan & Mr. Shiv Shankar v. M/s ANI Technologies Pvt. Ltd.*[43] The Informants, being auto rickshaw and taxi drivers in NCR, alleged the OP (operating under the brand name 'Ola' and 'Taxi For Sure') of abusing its dominant position in auto rickshaw and city taxi services – collectively known as paratransit services. However, similar to the previous cases, OP was not found to be in a dominant position. Thus, no case under section 4 of the Competition Act, 2002 was made out and accordingly, the matter was closed under section 26(2) of the 2002 Act.

The Informants submitted that the relevant product market is paratransit services comprising of auto rickshaws,

black-yellow taxis and city taxis. Similarly, the relevant geographic market is NCR comprising of Delhi, and certain districts of three other States – Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan. Thus, it was submitted that the online and offline market players to be considered part of the same relevant market i.e., paratransit services in NCR. To the contrary, the OP strongly argued that auto rickshaws, black-yellow taxis and city taxis cannot be considered to be competing in the same market.

The Commission delineated the relevant geographic market as Delhi. Further, the Commission rightly observed that auto-rickshaws and taxis, despite offering similar services, differ in their characteristics, prices, consumer preference, comfort, consumption of time etc. Thus, auto-rickshaws and taxis cannot be called as part of the same relevant market. This observation seems reasonable. However, the Commission also distinguished between traditional taxis and radio taxi services despite the fact that both types provide almost identical services. Accordingly, two relevant market was determined namely, 'provision of Radio Taxi Services in Delhi' and 'provision of rickshaw services in Delhi'.

The deviation from the ratio held in *Snapdeal.com* case[44] was unnecessary. In addition, it is also to be noted that in an earlier case of *Re: Meru Travels Solutions Pvt. Ltd. v. Uber India Systems Pvt. Ltd., Uber BV and Uber Technologies International Inc.*[45], the Commission considered radio taxis and yellow taxis as part of the same

relevant market.

In another landmark case of *Matrimony.com Ltd. v. Google LLC, Google India Pvt. Ltd. & Google Ireland Ltd.*[46], the Informant alleged Google for running its core business of search and advertising in a discriminatory manner, thereby causing harm to the competition. The OPs were accused of contravening the provisions of section 4 of the Competition Act, 2002. Unlike previous cases, the Commission did find Google to be in a dominant position within the relevant market. It held Google to have abused its dominant position.

With respect to the relevant market, the DG observed that online advertising is distinct from offline advertising. Similarly, online search advertising is also distinct from other forms of advertising like display advertising. Thus, the DG delineated two separate relevant markets, namely, relevant market for online general web search service in India and relevant market for online search advertising in India.

The OPs questioned DG's delineation of relevant market on the ground that an advertiser will not restrict himself/herself merely to online medium. He/she will take advantage of other advertising opportunities to run the campaign. This includes both online and offline mediums such as TV, radio, newspapers etc. All these forms are substitutable and interchangeable. Thus, they form part of the same relevant market.

However, the Commission denied the averments made by the OPs and observed that the above said modes of advertisement are not substitutable or interchangeable. It

observed that online and offline advertising services are not comparable. Accordingly the Commission upheld the findings of the DG in respect of relevant market.

Conclusion

The researcher's observation is that online and offline markets are different channels of distribution of the same product and do not constitute different markets appears to be just, fair and reasonable. As stated above, there is absolute interchangeability and substitutability between the products and services offered by online and offline retailers. The two markets also overlap geographically since the relevant geographical market for an online retailer will be the whole of India. It is no doubt true that most of the prudent shoppers start searching for the product or service in the physical market, later compare the characteristics (like price) of the product or service offered by the e-market players and then finalize the purchase. Consumers may also prefer the other way round. Speaking out of personal experience, consumers at times inform the brick and mortar retailers about the prices offered by the e-tailers with a view that the former will match the latter. Thus, to the consumer, the online and offline markets are merging and the demarcating line between the two is blurring.

It is true that business of offline retailers has been tremendously affected by the increasing number of e-commerce players. The reason, as noted by CCI, is that the traditional brick and mortar market and e-commerce market differs in terms of discounts, convenience etc. The

Commission observed that online distribution channels provide consumers with an opportunity to compare prices as well as the pros and cons of a product much more easily than their brick and mortar counterparts. This implies that price competition as well as inter brand competition is intensified, both within the online sub-segment of retail as well as between online and offline retail markets. Also, it is to be borne in mind that the Preamble to the Competition Act, 2002 seeks to promote, sustain and protect the competition and not competitors. The advent of online retail has, undoubtedly, enhanced and improved competition in the market.

Had it been the case that the online market was about to absolutely replace the offline market, then the grievances of the offline retailer may have been answered. The offline market constitutes merely a fraction of the total retail market share. As of now, none of the online market players seems to be in a dominant position. This is evident from the fact that e-commerce share of total retail sales in India was a negligible 3.6 % in 2017.[39] The Commission once observed that brick and mortar retail market holds more than 99% of the total retail market whereas e-commerce sector represents a miniscule proportion of less than 1%.[40]

However, the above said settled position seems just, fair and reasonable as of today where there are only handfuls of cases relating to e-commerce and the e-commerce market players are not in a dominant position. In the near future, the Commission is likely to face such cases in large numbers. The above said settled law will not serve the purpose and

spirit of Indian competition law.

The issue as to whether e-commerce forms a new relevant market, or whether e-commerce shapes a new retail channel, which competes with traditional retail channel, and lies within the same market has also been dealt by developed jurisdictions such as US and EU. In US and EU, each case is to be decided according to its peculiar fact and circumstances. Unlike India, there is no comprehensive answer to the above question. It is important to evaluate each case separately and carefully. Factors such as nature of products, conditions of market, specificity of industry etc. shall be taken into consideration. It is time for the Indian competition jurisprudence to evolve in this regard. In case of e-commerce vis-à-vis relevant market, there is a need to consider each case on its peculiar facts and circumstances. In fact, the various cases discussed above in Chapter-III under the head 'An Attempt to Dissent' depicts that CCI is taking into consideration the practice followed in other prominent jurisdictions. Whenever need be, the Commission has considered the online and offline markets as separate markets. Whether the decision taken in those cases is bad in law is a subjective question of debate. However, the objectionable part is that the Commission has not yet expressly declared to treat each case on its peculiar facts and circumstances. The ratio that online and offline markets constitutes a single market holds good in law till date.

Hypothetically speaking, if CCI is encountered with a case relating to e-commerce market player engaged in the

sale of fruits and vegetables. Here, online and offline market cannot be considered as a single relevant market. Usually, a person who purchases fruits and vegetables from a local vendor/market place will not purchase it via the internet. Similarly, a consumer belonging to a high standard society will not prefer to purchase fruits and vegetables from a local vendor/marketplace. Further, an illiterate consumer cannot switch to online market if there is a price increase in the offline market. Same principle applies in case of a consumer who does not have adequate infrastructure like internet connection. To the contrary, an extremely busy consumer will prefer online market shops for speedy trading of goods or services. The two markets can be easily divided on the basis of reasons like delivery issues, complexities of e-payment, lack of trust, infrastructural factors etc.

In light of the above discussion, it is viable for a sound competitive economy to consider the online and offline market as a sub-section of a single market and not two separate markets. But, with rapid growth of e-commerce sector, there will be a need to change the settled law in near future. It is true that e-commerce promotes competition in the market, but CCI also need to take steps in order to prevent the distortion of market before it is too late.

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Economic Crisis of Folk Performing Art in the Rural Economy of West Bengal

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Abstract

Folk arts in West Bengal have evolved to become indicators of a nation's tradition, identity and uniqueness. Folk art form creates cultural identity and also creates integrity of individuals and equipping them to meet social challenges. There are great variations in the performing folk art and culture in West Bengal which is directly linked with socio economic position of rural people. In recent the sudden and radical effect of COVID-19 on the lives of freelance performing artists is compounding dangerous levels of precocity in these occupations and, as a result, there are swifter, deeper and more serious consequences to policy inaction in the coming years. The effect of the crisis of an artist is not only in the form

of less public show but it is in their inability to earn as much as before with secondary job.

Key Words: Folk, Performing Art, Covid, Rural, West Bengal.

Introduction

Culture has been identified as a “driver for sustainable development” (UN 2010, UNESCO 2012). Cultural heritage is a group of resources inherited from the past which people identify, independently of ownership, as a reflection and expression of their constantly evolving values, beliefs, knowledge and tradition”. India is a land of rich culture and heritage. We know that performing art is one of the most important intangible cultural heritages. From the Vedic era to the medieval period, the performing arts remained an important source of educating the masses. Now, these Indian art forms have become means of entertainment and knowledge for people all over the world.

Folk performing art forms in India are traditional way of Communication and enriched cultural heritage. It constitutes a potential source for conveying messages for Social, Economic and Cultural Development which ultimately helps in overall National Development. Folk arts in West Bengal have evolved to become indicators of a nation's tradition, identity and uniqueness. Folklore arts, beliefs, rites and rituals, myths, rural handicrafts etc. are factors that enrich our folk tradition. The different folk art forms maintain their ethnic nature through which they make socialization possible; they regulate them and harmonize them with other communities. Folk art form creates cultural identity and also

creates integrity of individuals and equipping them to meet social challenges. Folk artistes were struggling to keep their art forms alive even before, no thanks to how rapidly the meaning of entertainment and art was changing due to globalization and now with the COVID-19 hit, everything has come to a standstill during the epidemic, work, weddings, music and dance concerts, theatres, and while some of them could somehow survive this pandemic, largely it will take some time for the indigenous art forms to get back on their feet.

Significance of this study

Government of India as well as Government of West Bengal has increasingly recognized the importance of the creative art sector to compete in the global market place. A number of factors underscore the connection between economic competitiveness and creativity. Arts and culture can play a major role in community development and redevelopment by creating new jobs as well as fostering an environment and amenities that attract talented young workers; and tourism centered on arts and culture can contribute to state and local economic growth by providing a diversified and sustainable means for creating jobs and attracting revenue. Performing folk art is one of the most important powerful traditional media by which everyone can send message to the people.

Performing artistes are the bulwarks of the cultural history of any country and integral to the national, economic and social fabric of a nation. In recent months, countries such

as Germany, Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Finland have announced funds and aid packages for their cultural sector, which is being equated with national heritage. In India, so far, there has been no concentrated effort in the same direction. While the zonal offices of Sangeet Natak Akademies have reached out to some folk and tribal artistes who are registered with them, the situation is particularly grim for artistes who are not government employees or affiliated to Sangeet Natak Akademies of the various states — many of them include instrument makers, sound and light technicians, instrument tuners, music teachers who teach from home, accompanying artistes, theatre artistes, dancers, costume designers, make-up artistes among others.

Working populations across the world are seeing their livelihoods and careers collapse or transform overnight as a result of the global pandemic COVID-19 and the responses of individual governments. Performing art is affected more than any other occupation. Even in the best of times, a vast majority of India's artists have struggled to earn decent wages as they are largely in unorganized sectors of the economy. Their predicament is exacerbated by the fact that many of them don't have regular jobs and their livelihood is dependent on regular performances. Since the sector is completely unorganised, various efforts in various directions are the need of the hour.

In recent decades, as evidence by UNESCO report, culture is increasingly discussed in the context of economics. This change is the result of a number of factors, including the

cultural policies of government and economic changes brought about by globalization (Obuljen,2006). Several studies (Jensen, 1999; Pine and Gilmore, 1999; Ellmeier, 2003; Howkins, 2001; Florida, 2002; Conference Board of Canada, 2008; UNDP, 2010; Rikalovic and Mikic, 2011; Dey, 2012; Das, 2013; Mukherjee and Bhattacharya, 2015; Boris Gershman, 2016; Sen, 2018) have studied the concepts of art and culture in different regional literature angles. Scant attention has been made to study the economics of performing folk art industries in Indian context. There are great variations in the performing folk art and culture in West Bengal which is directly linked with socio economic position of rural people. Keeping this in view, this research work is an attempt to examine those vital issues in the existing research work. The specific objectives of this paper are to study the challenges faced by performing art sector in the current pandemic situation.

Data Set & Methodology

In west Bengal, the performing arts are controlled by individuals and Government aided institutions/groups. However, there are established and successful artists and art institutions that have made meaningful strides in the development of the performing arts. Geographically there are 5 divisions in West Bengal – Jalpaiguri division, Burdwan divisions, Presidency divisions, Maldah divisions and Medinipur divisions. My study is on the economic analysis of folk performing art in Medinipur division. Medinipur Division is

consisting of five districts – Paschim Medinipur, Purba Medinipur, Jhargram, Bankura and Purulia.

Primary data has been collected from the professional artists of performing art in different districts of Medinipur Division. The sampling design followed in this study is a simple random sampling design. From each district we take 30 professional artists of folk performing art so total numbers of respondents are 150.

The research methodology will be used in this study included web site searches, literature searches, face-to-face, telephone or email interviews, and short questionnaires. In order to study the different aspects of the stated objectives simple tabular analysis, which presents absolute numerical values, percentage change, simple proportion, descriptive statistics and test of significance, will be used in this research work. The methodology used to achieve the stated objectives of this study is in the following lines:

1. Estimate the values of performing art and influence of folk performing art on Socio economic conditions

The concept of total economic value, which is widely used in the valuation of the environment (Tietenberg and Lewis 2009), can be applied to the valuation of culture, albeit with some slight modifications.

A) Impact analysis

Impact analysis seeks to estimate the economic benefits from providing a cultural good or hosting a cultural event to the local economy, in terms of additional spending, visitor numbers or jobs provided (Taonga, 2013). This

includes any direct spending as a result of the event (ticket sales, purchases from local suppliers) and any indirect spending by out of town visitors in local businesses (e.g. hotels and restaurants). The non-marketable economic contribution of cultural industries can also be estimated.

To measure impact of cultural industries CSA analysis, production function analysis etc have been used. Cultural Satellite Accounts (CSA) is a statistical framework for measuring the economic contribution of culture (UNESCO, 2012).

B) Estimating the non-market values of performing art

As an environmental valuation, non-market benefits can be estimated by mainly two techniques:

i) Revealed Preference Techniques

These techniques rely on observed behavior in a related market to infer the value placed on a particular non-market good. Hedonic Pricing models and travel cost method have been used to estimate individuals' willingness to pay for a particular non-market good.

Hedonic pricing uses market prices to extract the value that people attribute to being located near a performing art area. It is based on market prices and hence on revealed values associated with a bundle of cultural and non-cultural characteristics.

Travel Costs measures the value people place on a cultural events or goods based on the time and cost they are willing to incur in traveling to enjoying the cultural events. It is

based on actual travel times and costs that directly reveal people's valuation of a cultural event.

ii) Stated Preference Techniques

These techniques have found support within government funding bodies for the valuation of non-market benefits. Two commonly applied stated preference techniques, contingent valuation (CV) and choice modeling (CM), use carefully designed surveys to elicit the respondents' preferences for the non-market cultural goods (Navrud & Ready (eds.), 2002 and O'Brien, 2010).

Important Findings

Around the world, responses to the first and second waves of the COVID-19 pandemic are understandably focused on reducing infections and fatalities. There are also redoubled efforts to avoid the negative economic consequences of the outbreak, especially in relation to jobs, productivity and growth. But the pandemic is an economic wrecking ball, with intergenerational consequences. Global growth has plummeted. Economic inequality increases day by day due to different reasons. Higher-paid workers are working from home while lower-paid workers typically do not have this option. The pandemic is increasing poverty and inequality between organized sector workers and unorganized sector workers.

In India, the world's one of the most powerful developing economy, a massive number of jobs losses have been reported due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Due to the fall

in demand and production level the market is uncertain in overall scenario. Adding to the worries in a steep demand shock that experts say classified as a long-term worry, citing uncertainty in the post-pandemic landscape. The impact of the pandemic had not only brought the global economy to a standstill but set the clock backwards on the developmental progress of several nations. The corona virus crisis is going to produce unprecedented levels of effects on the economy of performing art.

An unlimited supply of labour may be said to exist in India due to large population relatively to capital and natural resources. There are large sectors of the economy where the marginal productivity of labour is negligible, zero or negative. In the performing art it is very difficult to measure the Marginal productivity of an individual artist.

After a detailed investigation on folk performing art of Paschim Medinipur District of West Bengal, it can be said that the originality of this traditional culture is reserved by the native rural illiterate people who are agrarian in economy, backward socially and rustic culturally. They have been performing this form of arts ancestrally parallel with marginal works in agricultural field and other activities which enforce them not being thoroughly professional artists. As a matter of fact, new generation artists are not coming up and even not showing willingness to join in near future which poses a serious question mark on the future survival of these art forms. In recent the sudden and radical effect of COVID-19 on the lives of freelance performing artists is compounding

dangerous levels of precocity in these occupations and, as a result, there are swifter, deeper and more serious consequences to policy inaction in the coming years. The effect of the crisis of an artist is not only in the form of less public show but it is in their inability to earn as much as before with secondary job.

Values provided by folk performing art to the producers (Artists)

Different techniques have been used to estimate the value of cultural activities of folk performing art in the study area. Total value of performing art derives both from market transaction and from non-market sources. It includes value that accrues to producers of folk performing art, audiences/consumers of folk performing art and society as a whole. In this paper we are mainly interested about the value that accrues to producers of folk performing art. Producers or artists of folk performing art derive both monetary and non-monetary benefits from their productive activities.

Among the monetary benefits most important is the income generation. It can be measured by divergence between what an artist can earn in a non-cultural occupation and their willingness to provide artistic output. In the study area before Covid 19 situation it was found that the average monthly income in the non-cultural occupation is Rs. 6428 but average income of a folk artist who is an artist of any registered cultural organization, is Rs. 5625 per month. Among Rs.4625, Rs. 1000 coming from artist's subsidy by State government and Rs. 4625 coming from different public

show. Therefore an artist is willing to accept a lower wage to work in an artistic occupation, relative to non-artistic occupation. The average standard of living of the folk artists is in marginal level. Therefore an artist is willing to accept a lower wage to work in an artistic occupation, relative to non-artistic occupation. It was also found that there exists uncertainty in the folk art market. During Covid situation the average monthly income as folk artist has been reduced to Rs. 2000 which is not stable. To maintain the minimum needs they are forced to migrate in another job like vegetable seller, agricultural labour etc.

Among non-monetary return, employment generation is most important. About total working population in the study area (except migratory workers) only 14% are engaged as folk artists in primary occupation and 48% are engaged as folk artists in secondary or tertiary occupation. Due to lower wage to work in a folk artistic occupation next generations are less interested to carry on the traditional folk form and a large number of working population are going here and there as migratory worker. Another non-monetary return to producers of folk art is the feeling of self-satisfaction from producing art form which is the mainly key return for engaging as folk artist in primary or secondary occupation.

Short term and long term remedy

India should consider a public-private effort to sustain its artists, many of whom are currently jobless and struggling. Such an initiative should take into account both the current needs of the artists and their long-term sustenance. In the

short term, it is important to put money in their pockets right away. The long-term goal should be to create infrastructure that will continue to nurture their creativity and offer lifelong support. It is very important to set up the regional based cultural organization under Government control to sustain the folk art and also to secure the regular flow of income for the artist.

Short term solution may be to give some subsidy in this sector but it is not a permanent solution. If Government takes some initiative to increase the number of public show in different festivals after Covid situation, they can continue their occupation with performing art. Otherwise just like different local languages different valuable intangible heritages mainly folk form may abolish from our earth. In India, a few prominent artists have already launched a modest initiative to support struggling artists. The Assistance for Disaster Affected Artistes, or ADAA, has been initiated by a group of independent artists.

Commercialization of folk art and culture for their profitable running is one of the instrumental ways to survive the folk forms; People are required to be informed with the values, styles, forms of different folk performing arts. Special allowance may be arranged as a scheme under rural development planning for economically weaker section of folk performers and artisans. However the tribal/ folk artists and cultural practitioners themselves should also upgrade their skill and acclimatize with the current socio-economic and socio-cultural trend of the broader society.

Conclusion

On the basis of the above discussion it can be said that, from a livelihood and cultural perspective, the role of folk performing art in the study area is most important. Totally natural resource based eco-friendly folk art are very much important for our society and culture. Though the performing art includes value that accrues to producers of folk performing art, audiences/consumers of folk performing art and society as a whole, the sudden and radical effect of COVID-19 on the lives of freelance performing artists is compounding dangerous levels of precocity in these occupations and, as a result, there are swifter, deeper and more serious consequences to policy inaction in the coming years. Henceforth, it is our soul duty of Researchers, Policy Makers, Government and the participants to preserving and propagating the forms of Folk culture.

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Enterprises and Entrepreneurship

(Promising Tools For Inclusive Development)

A Case Study of Zomato

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Abstract

The last two years have been very harsh to the world's economy. Countries have witnessed its drastic change in their demography structure, economic ups and downs, lockdowns, and a higher rate of Unemployment. Now every country is in dire need of adopting some measures to escalate their economic growth. Introducing new businesses in society can escalate countries' economic progress by providing wealth and creating new job opportunities for society. For

example, Japan and the USA developed because of their entrepreneurial culture. Every known company with an innovative business idea has come to light only from these countries. We can see within India; that economic disparity varies from state-to-state Gujrat and Punjab have seen rapid economic growth because of their entrepreneurial Venture. This paper is trying to analyze the importance of entrepreneurial contribution in a country like India and also explain the successful Indian venture story of “Zomato”.

Key Words: Inclusive Development, Digitalization, Street Vendors, Economic Growth.

Introduction

Any country's growth depends on many factors including economic, political, social, International, and environmental factors, etc. Every factor has its share to contribute to the country's development but among them, the contribution made by entrepreneurs cannot be denied. No doubt, the future of any country lies in its younger generation. If the young generation of a country has got the opportunities to cultivate and learn to take risks, the same country ends up having many entrepreneurial ventures. New entrepreneurial ventures (business) have been linked directly to the country's economic development. On one hand, entrepreneurs will earn their livelihood, on the other hand, they will create wealth for society, create jobs, help to keep a balanced regional growth, and also perform community developer roles. Economic development cannot be achieved overnight. “Economic development is the process of upgrading a country's real per capita income over a specific period.”

Merely technology upgradation cannot fulfill this goal of economic development. For effective utilization and implementation of technology, the country needs entrepreneurs. A country, especially a developing country like India needs entrepreneurs more than other developed countries who have the potential to take the risk and start their own business. The meaning of entrepreneurship is defined by many scholars. One definition given by Professor Howard Stevenson, is “entrepreneurship is the pursuit of opportunity beyond resources controlled”. Now, society has been through a big change or shift like rapid change in technological infrastructure. If a country is ready to harness the potential of this rapid shift, it has to reinforce and try to create an entrepreneurial society mindset in its younger generation.

India, a developing country, needs to reinforce entrepreneurial skills among the young generation. The Government of India is giving special attention to skill enhancement and the development of entrepreneurial culture and spirit among the youth. Last decades, India has seen many successful start-ups which have revolutionized the Indian business world. Start-ups like OYO Rooms, Your Story, Paytm, Ola Cabs, Zomato, Flipkart, MakeMyTrip, Biju's and Big basket, etc. This paper explains the successful journey of Zomato. How a small company created only to fulfill its own office staff's needs became a well-known venture in India.

Zomato

Zomato is an Indian online food delivery application that is focusing on Indian customers' need for food. Primarily, it started to serve as an online restaurant discovery and

search platform. From the time of its inception, it keeps on expanding its functions. Now, it provides an online platform for customers or its other stakeholders to search the restaurant and food delivery options. The company was started by Deepinder Goyal and Pankaj Chaddah in 2008. Initially, it was known as a “foodiebay” application only meant for the intra-office staff. Later on, it changed its name from foodiebay to Zomato. Till 2011, Zomato constantly worked to expand its business across the country and the targeted cities were Mumbai, Delhi NCR, Chennai, Bangalore, Kolkata, and Pune. In 2012, it started expanding its business in foreign markets like UAE, Qatar, Sri Lanka, the UK, South Africa, and the Philippines. It again extended its operation to other countries like Brazil, New Zealand, Turkey, and Indonesia.

Idea Inception

The Idea of Zomato has come into Deepinder Goyal and Pankaj Chaddah’s minds while working in Bain and the company office. Deepinder Goyal was a management consultant and Pankaj chaddah was working as a senior consultant at Bain. One day they experienced difficulty seeing the office canteen menu because of a long queue. The idea came to their mind to create an interoffice facility to get rid of this problem which generated “Foodiebay”. Foodiebay scanned the office canteen menu and uploaded it on the website (the company’s private network), soon office staff members started using the platform. After getting success in office the first time it opened for the public and the first menu uploaded on the portal was related to Hauz Khaz of Delhi. After getting so much popularity, it thought to change its name

from foodiebay to Zomato. Accepting Zomato as a brand name diminishes its similarity with eBay and also it came with a bundle of services.

Based on Zomato Annual Report 2021-22, there are some important functions performed by Zomato: -

- 1) **Food Ordering and delivering:-** By the time, Zomato added a food delivery option to its function and within a very short time it has covered a good percentage of the market.
- 2) **Hyperpure (B2B Supplies):-** It is an integrated effort to offer farm-to-fork supplies to restaurants in India. Under this scheme, Zomato gets fresh ingredients and raw materials from the farmers and supplies them to its partner restaurants directly.
- 3) **Dining-out and others:** - Zomato's first function was to search about restaurants in its menu cards and make a reservation of table.

Sustainability Core Areas of Zomato

Zomato is fully dedicated to the country's mission of reducing carbon emissions and developing sustainability for the present and future. For fulfilling this purpose, it has set six core areas to focus on. All six core area themes are aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs). These six core areas are given below: -

- 1) **Climate Conscious Deliveries:-** Having been a member of the climate group EV100 initiative, Zomato is adopting many practices to reduce carbon emissions as it decided to have 100% electronic vehicles by 2030.

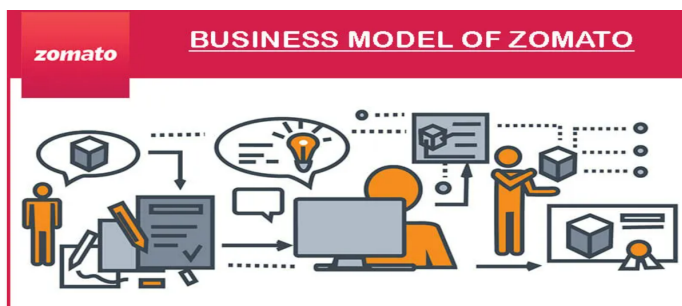
- 2) **Waste-Free World:-** Being committed to a plastic-free environment, Zomato recorded 100% plastic-neutral deliveries from April 2022. It has reduced 300 tonnes of plastic use in FY, 2022.
- 3) **Zero Hunger:-** Zomato is committed to eradicating India's hunger and malnutrition problem. Feeding India is a non-profit organization founded by Zomato. Feeding India is a collaboration between the Government of India and Zomato. The main purpose to create this non-profit organization is to make India hunger-free.
- 4) **Sustainable Livelihood:-** Zomato is a technology-based platform that connects many restaurants and gives them a vast database of customers, their choices, and preferences on the other hand it allows choosing, reserving, and giving feedback regarding restaurant services their delivery services, etc and also provide flexible earning options to its delivery partners.
- 5) **Health Safety and well-being for all:-** Zomato is fully committed to the health and safety of its all stakeholders. During corona time, it has reimbursed all Covid expenses including vaccination charges.
- 6) **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion:-** Zomato is a place that gives full equal opportunity to all people without having any prejudices based on gender, race, or religion. Its board of directors comprises 50%, female directors. Zomato is also following the Parental leave policy irrespective of gender.

Zomato's Target Audience

Being an online platform, internet availability is the

first and foremost requirement of its functioning. Keeping that in mind, it targets people from the age group of 18 to 35 years old who have mobile phones with internet accessibility and are ready to use their applications.

Zomato Business Model



FY22 – Financial and Operational Highlights of Zomato

Adjusted Revenue

<i>INR billion, unless otherwise mentioned</i>	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22
Food delivery	9.1	23.6	21.6	47.6
Hyperpure (B2B supplies)	0.1	1.1	2.0	5.4
Dining-out and others	4.8	6.6	2.8	2.4
Total	14.0	31.3	26.5	55.4
YoY % change	201%	123%	-15%	109%

Note: 'Others' includes dining-out and membership revenue (Zomato Pro) in India as well as UAE. It also includes revenue from food delivery services we offer to Talabat in UAE which is a pass through revenue (EBITDA neutral). Other businesses such as Nutrition, Fitso and our international operations in countries other than India and UAE have been discontinued during FY22.

Source: - Zomato Annual Report 2021-22
 (https://b.zmtcdn.com/investor_relations_documents/zomato_annual_report_2022_1659701415938.pdf)

Adjusted EBITDA

<i>INR billion, unless otherwise mentioned</i>	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22
Food delivery	-19.9	-19.3	0.4	-3.8
Hyperpure (B2B supplies)	-0.1	-0.5	-0.5	-1.2
Dining-out and others	1.0	1.3	-0.6	-0.2
Unallocated costs	-2.4	-3.5	-2.5	-4.5
Total	-21.4	-22.1	-3.3	-9.7
Adjusted EBITDA margin (%)	-153%	-71%	-12%	-18%

Note: Unallocated costs include server & tech infrastructure costs, corporate salary costs and other corporate overheads.

Source: - Zomato Annual Report 2021-22

(https://b.zmtcdn.com/investor_relations_documents/zomato_annual_report_2022_1659701415938.pdf)

Food delivery

<i>INR billion, unless otherwise mentioned</i>	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22
GOV	53.9	112.2	94.8	213.0
Orders (million)	191.0	403.1	238.9	535.2
AOV (INR)	282	278	397	398
Contribution as a % of GOV	-24.8%	-11.0%	5.2%	1.7%
Adjusted EBITDA as a % of GOV	-37.0%	-17.2%	0.4%	-1.8%
Average monthly transacting customers (million)	5.6	10.7	6.8	14.7
Average monthly active food delivery restaurant partners ('000)	61	131	110	180
Average monthly active delivery partners ('000)	81	189	120	285

Note: We have converted millions into single decimal billions and hence there could be some totalling anomalies in the numbers.

Source:- Zomato Annual Report 2021-22

(https://b.zmtcdn.com/investor_relations_documents/zomato_annual_report_2022_1659701415938.pdf)

Revenue Sources For Zomoto

1. Advertising
2. Subscription
3. Event Organization
4. Zomato White label
5. Online Food Delivery
6. Zomato Consultancy
7. Zomato Gold

Advertising

Zomato is using an online platform providing access to the vast database of customers to explore restaurants, check their menu, to reserve their table if they select the dine-out option. Restaurants give banner ads on Zomato's site in return for this Zomato charges fee. In this way, restaurants get a large audience in a very short period. It is estimated that 50 to 70 % of Zomato's revenue comes from banner ads.

Subscription

Those restaurants which have subscriptions with Zomato. Zomato provides them with some analytical tools. Zomato has a good database regarding customers eating habits, tastes, preferences, timing, etc. Zomato gathered customers' data through their store and their cookies. One of the analytical tools which Zomato offers is Zomato order. It contains the data regarding customers' table booking frequency, preferences, and what are other features customers want while booking a table.

Event Organization

If any major festival or event is coming, Zomato plans to organize events for that event. Like new year's events, organized by Zomato are very popular and Zomato earns money through ticket selling.

Zomato White Label

Under this, Zomato offers its connected restaurants to develop a customized app for themselves. By doing this, Zomato also attracts money.

Online Food Delivery

Zomato is a very popular food delivery option. It charges a commission on each order to the restaurant.

Zomato Consultancy

Zomato is having good customer database. If anyone starts a new venture related to food or business, they can contact zomato and utilize its database, in return this tomato will charge a fee.

Zomato Gold

Zomato gold is a subscription-based customer-oriented service. Under this scheme, when a customer subscribes to this offer, they get complimentary food items and cold drinks at the time of placing an order.

During Covid -19 days, many people lost their jobs but the severe effect of unemployment can be seen mostly in unorganized sectors, especially in the case of street vendors. In the wake of the Lockdown, street vendors suffered a lot financially, physically, and mentally. Having been locked up in their home and unable to do their daily business activities, which was technically their only source of livelihood, makes them hopeless and helpless. And more than that, not having any solution to overcome this problem posed a big question for their survival. To help and revive these street vendors, Zomato came up with a solution. Zomato tied up with the Government of India (GOI) in February 2021, to provide a wider database of customers to provide them online access. For this purpose, GOI has launched a revival scheme named “Prime Minister Street Vendor’s Atma Nirbhar Nidhi Scheme or PM SVANidhi Scheme”. This scheme is funded by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA). This scheme mostly targets providing working capital loans, incentivizing regular repayments, and making them digital payment friendly. The purpose behind this opportunity was to make them up to date and economically independent by introducing a digital platform. To empower the vendors, Zomato also signed an

MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) to provide them access to the Zomato technology platform.

Feeding India

With having “Make India Hunger Free” mission statement, Zomato is trying to feed people in need. “Feeding India” one of the non-profit organizations created by Zomato is trying to eradicate or provide the necessary means to make India hunger-free. Having been established in 2014 by Ankit Kawatra and Srishti Jain. Later it merged with Zomato in 2019 and became “The Feeding Foundation” with a motive to speed up its efforts toward solving the existing hunger problem in India. It is a daily feeding program across India. As of September 2021, Feeding India has served more than 15.3 Cr meals. Going one step ahead, it also tries to help children from underserved communities like slum areas, community development centers, creches, etc. Giving meals to these children will not only fulfill their hunger needs but also act as an example for bringing positive change in their life.

Conclusion

Zomato is one of the leading, successful, and popular online food delivery. Though, many new players have come to the Indian market like Swiggy, many local food delivery platforms, etc. which are giving stiff competition to Zomato. Zomato is not only a food delivery platform, it came up with a unique business model which is adding more and more features day by day based on the need of customers. Easy procedure, accessibility, assortment, and user-friendly interface make Zomato top in the market. Now Zomato is not only earning money on its own but also expanding its revenue options to its partners and collaborators. Uber, Paytm, restaurants, and many food bloggers are now getting new income opportunities through Zomato. With Innovation and

development as its core values, Zomato keeps on adding and coming up with new ideas.

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