

Empowering Women through Social Entrepreneurship: A Case Study of Shri Mahila Griha Udyog Lijjat Papad, Mumbai, India

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Abstract:

Shri Mahila Griha Udyog Lijjat Papad (SMGULP) is women social innovative entrepreneurs begin with a group of seven semi literate women. Lijjat is an organization that has acted as a catalyst in empowering poor urban & rural women across India during the last four decades. Today Lijjat has more than 43,000 members in 81 branches across 17 Indian states and turnover of Rs 800/-Crore and provides employment to around 48,000 women without discrimination in caste, creed and religion. Lijjat can be joined only women members and all of its members called as sisters in the organization system. Lijjat's main product is a thin, round, savory snack called papad. The Lijjat brand is built on certain core values that have been ingrained into the entire system. The values are ensuring such as smooth process, quality standards, and rational cost of product, good corporate governance and profit sharing.

Keywords: Empowerment, Entrepreneur, Women, Papad, Employment, Innovation etc.

1. Introduction:

Shri Mahila Griha Udyog Lijjat Papad (SMGULP) is a women's social entrepreneur begin with cottage industry in 1959. It was registered under the Bombay Public Trust Act 1950, and also registered under societies registration act, 1980, and got reorganisation from Khadi & Village Industries Commission as a village industry. Initially Shri Mahila Griha Udyog Lijjat Papad was started with seven semi-literate women (sisters) a borrowed sum of Rs. 80/- at Girgaum, now it is Girgaon in south Mumbai, Maharashtra, India. Mumbai is capital city of Indian state of Maharashtra and also the financial, commercial and entertainment capital of India. Mumbai is the most popular city in India having total population is 12.4 million as per 2011 censuses. Seven women began rolling papads at the terrace of a building in Girgaon, a densely populated area in South Mumbai (Bombay). Word of mouth and advertising in a local newspaper contributed to the rapid growth of the group, and its membership increased from 7 to 300 during the first three years. Lijjat's main product is thin, round, savory snack called papad, which is a staple food for a majority of Indian households. Traditionally, the housewives prepared or "rolled" papads with the help of neighbouring women. However, because of busier lifestyles, time became scarce for this activity, providing an opportunity for commercial production of papad. The labour was also available, since housewives usually knew papad rolling.

Chhaganbapa was the guide and philosopher of Shri Mahila Griha Udyog. He recommended that these women maintain high standards of production at any cost, such practice which later turned out to be their main strength. The first branch of Lijjat outside the state of Maharashtra was established at Valod, Gujarat, in 1968, and today Lijjat has 62 branches across 17 Indian states. The 62nd branch became operational at Jammu and Kashmir in 2002, enrolling more than 150 members.

The objective of Shri Mahila Griha Udyog Lijjat Papad to maximize employment opportunities for women through activities connected with village industries, while, at the same time, not sacrificing basic business principles and quality consciousness. Entrepreneurs are full-fledged commercial, self-reliant organization and not a charitable society. SMGULP (Shri Mahila Griha Udyog Lijjat Papad) works because there are no barriers to entry such as skills, making papad is like a birthright to the Indian women. The model is saleable unlike a crafts-based cottage industry. The Company increased day by day. Presently this company provides employment to 43,000 women and profits and losses are produced by these entire 43,000 sister members. The organization seeks to impart feeling of self-confidence among the women who are working in SMGULP because most of them come from deprived sections of society. The profits are shared by member sisters themselves in a prudent manner. The daily activities are freely chosen by the member sisters and equal importance is given to each activity. The decision of leaving the organization by sister member is voluntary.

2. Objective of the study:

The objective for the present study is to understand function and contribution of Shri Mahila Griha Udyog Lijjat Papad towards women empowerment.

3. Research Methodology:

The present study is in descriptive in nature. Data presented in this study is secondary, sourced from various publications (cited in the reference section, at the end of the paper). Some review of literature has been explored. Annual reports, website information and different books have been also used as source of secondary data.

4. Review of Literature: Review of literature is an essential part of the any research study. While studying social entrepreneurship researcher must know the concept of entrepreneurship and review of literature .The term social entrepreneur has come to mean a person who founds and an organisation or taken initiative engaged in social entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurs sometime are referred to as social innovation.

5. Types of Social Innovation: There are four types of innovation

Invention: The creation of a new product, service, or process often one that is novel or untried such concept tend to be revolutionary.

Extension: the expansion of product, services, or process already in existence .such concept makes a difference application of a current idea.

Duplication: the replication of an already existing product, services, or process. The duplication efforts however, are not simply coping but adding the entrepreneurs own creative touch to enhance or improves the concept of and beat of competition.

Synthesis: the combination of existing concepts and factors into a new formulation .this involves taking number of idea and finding a way that they can form a new application.

6. Some important review of literature for this present study:

1. **Adeel, Anjum (2012)**, has made an attempt to analyze and highlight the problems and prospects for women entrepreneurs. It is a case study of quetta city in baluchistan province of Pakistan. The study was exploratory in nature. Primary and secondary data was used for the purpose of the study. Through a structured questionnaire a sample of 100 women entrepreneurs was surveyed. It was concluded that the policy makers should develop a comprehensive national policy for women by involving real stakeholders and its implementation should be ensured by provinces by devising strategic plan of women development and social welfare.

2. **Kumar and Jayachitra (2013)**, assessed the problems, issues, challenges faced by women entrepreneurs, how to overcome them and to analyzed the policies of Indian government for and problems faced by them while pursuing their business. It was concluded that women entrepreneurs must be moulded properly with entrepreneurial traits and skills to meet changing trends and challenging global markets, and also be competent enough to sustain and strive in the local economic arena.

3. **Jennings and Brush (2013)**, conducted a study to document the development of the body of work known as women's entrepreneurship research. In this study through the broader entrepreneurship literature the contributions of this work was assessed and discussed how this broader literature posses challenges (both difficulties as well as opportunities) for scholarship on female entrepreneurs. It was found that this sub-area has come a long way in a very short period of time, surpassing many of the developmental milestones as the broader field of entrepreneurship despite its more recent origins.

4. **Mahajan (2013)**, attempted to identify the status of women entrepreneurs in India and also studied the success story of Hina Shah the most successful women entrepreneurs of India in plastic packaging and Founder of ICECD. It was revealed that a major change in traditional attitudes and mindsets of people in society is required for the elimination of obstacles for women entrepreneurship rather than being limited to only creation of opportunities for women and it is imperative to design programmes that will address to attitudinal changes, training, supportive services.

5. **Sanchita (2013)**, has also analyzed the socio- economic profile of the women entrepreneurs and interpreted the management problems of women entrepreneurs of small-scale sector in Haryana. The study was based on primary data which was collected by the researcher by conducting a survey of 210 women entrepreneurs of small-scale sector in Haryana (out of the list of 321 made available by the directorate of Industries Haryana, Chandigarh) by personal interview method by using a comprehensive interview schedule.

7. Contribution of Shri Mahila Griha Udyog Lijjat Papad in the Field of Education:

Shri Mahila Griha Udyog Lijjat Papad has contributed in the field of education. They started an educational and hobby centre is set up in Valod Centre for the rural women. They were also taught the orientation courses in cooking, typing, sewing, knitting and toy making along with other courses like child welfare, first aid and hygiene. In 1979, Lijjat united with UNICEF to organize a seminar on "Child care and Mother Welfare" as a part of the International Year of the Child Celebrations in Mumbai. Bhadraben Bhatt, in October 1984, represented Lijjat at the UNESCO sponsored international workshop on "The Role of Women in the Assimilation and Spread of Technological Innovation" held at NITIE, Powai in Mumbai. Computers are being used for accounts and administration work in some of the Mumbai branches. To promote literacy and computer education among sister members and their families, the organization has undertaken various steps. A literacy campaign started by the managing committee in all its branches for sister members. From 1980 onwards, the scholarship schemes also started by Lijjat named Chhaganbapa Smruti Scholarships for the daughters of the sister members. Every year scholarship is given to the children of the sister members who pass out in 10th and 12th standard to encourage them for education. Currently, Pujya Dattanibapa Scholarship is given to 455 children of sister member who achieved success in 10th & 12th Board Exam of March 2015. Lijjat is published multi –languages journal entitle as a "Lijjat Patrika" in many languages such as English, Hindi, Marathi, and Gujarati. Women working in SMGULP are published their article and research papers and successful story.

8. Contribution of Shri Mahila Griha Udyog Lijjat Papad in Social Field:

The Lijjat contributed in the social service activities on several moments such as distributing nutritious food for poor children, contributing money for conducting community marriage, give prize money for widening primary education, enforcing for blood donation drive, organizing health camps, drive for plantation and even making contribution to Govt. bodies.. The earthquake affected village Chincholi (Jogn), in the Latur district of Maharashtra reconstructed by Lijjat. The finance and the supervision work of reconstruction of 58 houses for the people of the village are provided by the Lijjat. The sister members of Lijjat from their wages donated the money. After the Gujrat earthquake in 2001 all the branches of Lijjat donated more than Rs. 4.8 million, including Rs. 1 million from the central office. Lijjat built for the reformation of the people of Bhujpur (Bhachau) in Kutch district forty houses.

9. Different Activities of Shri Mahila Grihya Udyog :

1. Flour Division- It is situated at Vashi (Mumbai), where flour is milled from Udad Dal and Moong Dal. Masala Division- It is situated at Cotton green along with a Quality Control Laboratory.
2. The various types of spices powders are prepared and packed such as turmeric, Chillies, Coriander and ready mix masala and like Garam Masala, Tea Masala, Pav Bhaji Masala, Punjabi Chole Masala etc.
3. Printing Division- It is also located at Cotton green.
4. Advertising Division- It is placed at Bandra (Mumbai).
5. Chapati Division- It is established at Bandra, Wadala, Mulund & Kandivali.
6. Polypropylene Division- It is set-up at Kashi-Mira Road.

10. Products of Lijjat:

1. Papad- There is seven varieties of Papads for local market and fourteen varieties for exports which is in different flavours like Papad with Udad with pepper, garlic chillies and red chillies, Udad special, Moong and Moong special and Punjabi masala special.
2. Traditional Masala- It includes standard chilli powder, black pepper blended powder, premium chilli powder, Kashmiri chilli powder, turmeric powder, and coriander powder.
3. Ready Mix Masala- It adds wide varieties like Garam Masala, Tea Masala, Sambar Masala, Special Sunday Masala, Shahi Garam Masala etc.
4. Jeera Papad- It is Lijjat's Special papads in long form with Jeera.
5. Appalam- It is specially made from Udad and Rice Powder available in South. 6. Gehu Atta- The gehu atta of Lijjat made from superior quality of wheat.
7. Chapati- The chapaties are made from fresh Wheat Flour available in Mumbai. 8. Detergent- It is available in SASA Detergent Powder, SASA Detergent Cake, SASA Liquid Detergent, and SASA Nilam Detergent Powder.

11. Issues and Challenges

Lijjat office in Mumbai previously coordinated the activities of all the branches, but with the increasing number of outlying branches, authority was decentralized in terms of routine work and sharing of profits at the branch level. However, branches and sanchalikas still need the managing committee's approval prior to undertaking any new project or activity, and they all must follow the same set of instructions and have similar accounting systems.

In spite of the equal distribution of income among the member sisters, with the opening of more outlying branches, it was found that a few branches dominated the administrative process. The central office appealed to members to participate in the administrative process, as a duty toward the organization and a right. The members, if found practicing mismanagement, are relieved from membership.

Because the papads are prepared in different parts of India, the quality of the water used usually varies, and so can the quality of final product. To prevent any inconsistencies, Lijjat has its own laboratory in Mumbai, where the final products are tested and coded. In the monthly meetings, the quality issue and modifications are also discussed.

Currently there is a problem of fake Lijjat papads being introduced in the market. In June 2001, three persons were arrested in this connection in Bihar, but the threat exists in the global market also. Lijjat's Website (<http://www.Lijjat.com/new.htm>) tries to explain the identification features of original Lijjat papads, but even with technological advancements, it is difficult to guarantee the original product.

Besides papads, Lijjat has initiated some unsuccessful ventures such as cottage leather, matches, and agarbatti (incense sticks). However, by the end of 1978, Lijjat had flour mills, spices, printing, and polypropylene divisions of its own and in 1979 began manufacturing bakery products as well.

In 1966, Lijjat was recognized under the Khadi and Village Industries Act, and it obtained exemption from income and sales taxes and could get loans at lower interest rates. Currently, the state governments of Punjab and Mumbai have withdrawn the sales tax exemption on Lijjat's Sasa detergent because Lijjat has already grown into a sizeable organization. This can potentially obstruct Lijjat's growth in these states.

12. Key Elements for Success

The following are key elements for success.

1. The consistent quality of the products.
2. They adopted Sarvodaya philosophy proved vital in forming
3. Lijjat has emerged as an innovative organization in which women from any religion, caste, or class can become members.
4. Transparency in operations and a non-hierarchical structure
5. Lijjat does not accept donations, but gives donations, which enhances members' self-esteem and pride in their own organization.
6. Creates an informal work environment. Consensual distribution of tasks reduce the possibility of disputes resulting from communication gaps and help work to go smoothly
7. Lijjat provides economic opportunities through a domestic activity.
8. Lijjat exemplifies a remarkable way of making leaders out of ordinary women.

13. Awards & Appreciation:

Shri Mahila Griha Udyog Lijjat Papad had recipients many awards and appreciations letters received from various prestige institutions

- The Institution has received an award from Khadi & Village Industries Commission as a "Best Village Industry" for the period 1998-1999 to 2000-2001.
- In 2002 the Institution has received the Economic Times Award of "Business women of the Year 2001-02 for Corporate Excellence".
- In January 2003 the organization has received the award for 'Best Village Industries'
- On 21st December 2005 the institution has received the 'Brand Equity Award' at the hands of Hon'ble President of India, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam
- Lijjat Papad has been chosen as a Power Brand 20102011 by the Indian Consumer and received the award on 4th February 2011 in New Delhi.
- Khambatta Lifetime Achievement Award for 2010 was conferred of Shri Mahila Griha Udyog Lijjat Papad by All India Food Processors Association, New Delhi.
- 'Outstanding Service Organisation Award-2012' was conferred of Shri Mahila Griha Udyog Lijjat papad, by National Institution for Quality and Reliability (NIQR), Chennai.

14. Conclusion Remark;

Lijjats, a case study and discussion, it is conclude that in developing country like India; SMGULP is a symbol of unity and progress. The managers can pick up an interesting lesson from SMGULP which is holding its core values from the past 56 years i.e. The concept of business adopted by the organization for empowering the women which deals in producing quality products at reasonable price, along with this concept the organization have adopted the concept of mutual family affection, concern and trust and the concept of devotion because the organization is the place to dedicate one's energy for the benefit of all instead of their own benefit. The membership of the organization has expanded from the initial number of 7 sisters under one building to over 43,000 sisters throughout India. Presently, the organization is wide spread with its central office at Mumbai and its 81 Branches and 27 Divisions in different states all over India. With a seed capital of Rs. 80 in the year 1959 SMGULP has an annual turnover of around Rs. 6.50 billion in 2010, with Rs. 290 million in exports. It provides employment to around 43,000 women in the year 2015. The economic empowerment is not only the aim of the SMGULP but also aim of SMGULP is to make women self-reliant and raise standard of living of their family by giving them need base training such as life skill education and providing them platform to avail of employment opportunity.

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