



Social Entrepreneurship in Palmyra Tree Product Businesses of Tamil Nadu: Enterprise Practices and Business Model Perspectives

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Abstract

The palmyra tree (*Borassus flabellifer*) has always been a mainstay of rural livelihoods in all parts of Tamil Nadu, and the tree provides a range of food material, handicrafts and construction material. Although the sector demonstrates a high level of economic versatility and ecological resilience, palmyra-based activities have been so far mostly informal, poorly organised, and marginalised in the contemporary markets. The present review scrutinises the prospect of social entrepreneurship as a mechanism for transforming of these subsistence-oriented livelihoods into sustainable and inclusive rural enterprises. Using a structured narrative approach, the article draws together scholarship on social entrepreneurship, rural business management, value chain development and non-timber forest products. Findings reveal that social entrepreneurial models - characterised by hybrid value creation, collective organisation and reinvestment of surplus - can help to mitigate structural constraints such as production fragmentation, lack of access to markets and low value addition. By placing palmyra enterprises in a broader context of discussions on rural enterprise development and social innovation, this review contributes to an understanding of the academic literature and a policy debate. The study also defines gaps in existing research and outlines the areas for future empirical and conceptual research relevant to traditional product-based enterprises.

Keywords: Social entrepreneurship, Palmyra tree products, Rural enterprise development, Value chains Sustainable livelihoods ,Tamil Nadu.

1. Introduction

Rural economies in the developing world continue to be based on traditional, resource-based activities for livelihood security. While industrialisation and the growth of the service sector have created new streams of employment, significant proportions of rural populations are still dependent on agriculture, forest products and artisanal production. In this milieu, the policy and academic challenge extends beyond the basic issue of preserving heritage livelihoods; rather it requires their transformation into economically viable and socially inclusive enterprise systems. Social entrepreneurship has become a hot topic as a theoretical framework for dealing with this challenge. Broadly construed, social entrepreneurship refers to entrepreneurial efforts that have a social goal, achieved through market-based processes and which are financially sustainable (Dees, 1998; Austin et al., 2012). Distinct from conventional businesses - which have a primary focus or orientation on profit maximisation - and from purely charitable endeavours - which are dependent on a constant supply of external funds - social enterprises create social value simultaneously with economic returns through earned income (Mair & Marti, 2006; Zahra et al., 2009). Over the past two decades, the study of social entrepreneurship has exploded in various sectors including: education, healthcare, renewable energy, and financial inclusion. Yet this expansion is still uneven; empirical studies are disproportionately focused on service-delivery models, urban contexts or technocentrism (Short et al., 2009; Nicholls, 2010). Product based rural enterprises, especially those based on traditional natural resources, continue to be under-represented in the scholarly canon. A product sector like the palmyra tree (*Borassus flabellifer*) in Tamil Nadu is a good example of such an under-explored area. The palm family, which is very common throughout coastal belts, drylands and semi arid areas, produces utilitarian products from all parts: the sap is used to make jaggery, sugar, syrup and fermented liqueurs; leaves are used to make mats, baskets, fans and roofing; fruits and tubers provide for household nutrition; and the trunk can be used as a substitute for timber. Historically, palmyra-based activities have been the foundation for the livelihood of rural communities, particularly for socially and economically marginalised communities (Preethi & Ramasamy, 2025; Oskarsson & Nielsen, 2016). The economic marginalisation of the palmyra sector in the contemporary market notwithstanding, this tree holds multifaceted utility. Predominantly small scale, informal and seasonal in nature, palmyra production is spread throughout individual households, characterised by low levels of value addition and marketing through intermediaries who capture a disproportionate amount of the final value. Consequently, incomes are low and volatile, which discourages reinvestment and lowers the participation of

youth (Kaplinsky and Morris, 2001; Trienekens, 2011). The stagnation of product enterprises of palmyra is not due mainly to the lack of demand or by depletion of resources. On the contrary, shifting the preferences of consumers towards natural sweeteners, traditional foods and eco-friendly products have generated new opportunities for the market. The major constraint lies in the lack of viable enterprise structures which can organise production, organise value chains, guarantee consistent quality and access remunerative markets. This article argues that social entrepreneurship provides an appropriate framework for addressing these structural constraints. By combining business discipline with social goals, social entrepreneurial models would be able to reorganise the palmyra-based activities as sustainable rural enterprises. Rather than seeing palmyra as a residual or welfare issue, social entrepreneurship brings it as a legitimate business sector, which is embedded within the scope of social and environmental considerations. The goals of this review are three-fold. First, it locates palmyra tree product businesses within the literature on social entrepreneurship and rural enterprise development more broadly. Second it raises questions on how social entrepreneurial models can address business, governance and sustainability challenges in the palmyra sector. Third, it identifies key research gaps and conceptual issues that are relevant to those scholars and policymakers who are engaged with traditional product-based enterprises.

2. Contextual Background: Palmyra Tree Product Sector, Tamil Nadu

The palmyra tree is a tree of a unique place in the agrarian and cultural fabric of Tamil Nadu. Adapted to dry climatic conditions, the species is well adapted to saline and drought-prone soils, under which conventional crops often fail, thereby forming an important ecological asset in communities susceptible to climate variability and land degradation (Leakey, 2010). From an economic standpoint, Palmyra provides for a diversified range of product-based activities. Food commodities made from palmyra sap - including jaggery, palm sugar and syrup - are integral parts of the local diets and cultural practices. Leaf-based products provide the basis of traditional handicrafts and rural housing materials and fruits and tubers improve household nutrition. This diversity provides an inherent risk spreading potential, which is what differentiates palmyra from monocrop dependency-based livelihood systems. Nonetheless, this potential is still very much unrealised because of structural and institutional constraints. Palmyra based production is mainly organised on the household level, with reduced horizontal or vertical coordination. Producers usually work in isolation, with no access to shared infrastructure, standardised processing methods or collective marketing channels. As a result, economies of scale and scope are rarely achieved. The historically established governmental interventions in the palmyra sector have been performed in terms of a welfare approach to the matter, as opposed to enterprise development. Although these interventions have offered temporary relief of the business with regard to income, the core business limitations which include low productivity, low quality control and poor market integration have not been resolved. Informality and dependence have been supported by welfare framing in certain instances and it discourages entrepreneurship. As a business management perspective, palmyra product enterprises are encountering difficulties on every functional area. The production processes are labor intensive and inefficient and there is a lot of wastage. Minimal financial management is involved and little concern is given to cost accounting or pricing strategy. In marketing, this is very passive as it relies on local traders as opposed to active market participation. There is informality in the human resource development based on intergenerational skills transfer as opposed to formal training. These dilemmas demonstrate the necessity of moving towards a radical shift of paradigm one that would not prioritize palmyra as a fading traditional profession, but as a social entrepreneurship resource to develop.

3. The Reason to have a Social Entrepreneurship Perspective

Social entrepreneurship is especially applicable in situations that have a market failure, social exclusion, and institutional neglect. The palmyra sector portrays all the three circumstances. Traditional types of private enterprises are hesitant to invest in the high costs of coordination, and are concerned about the risk, and the public intervention has failed to generate long-term results. (Scoones.,2015). Social entrepreneurial businesses are in the middle ground. With this social purpose or commercial logic, they are able to internalize coordination functions and invest in value addition as well as reinvest surplus in community development and resource sustainability (Santos, 2012; Battilana and Lee, 2014). This ambivalent nature in products allows businesses in product-based sectors to strike a balance between efficiency and inclusion.

The use of a social entrepreneurship lens on palmyra product business alters the analysis of the livelihoods to the systems of business enterprises. It places focus on collective organization, governance forms and sustainability in the long-term and not short-term income support. This view is in tandem with more general debates regarding inclusive growth and sustainable rural transformation.

4. Theoretical Understandings of Social Entrepreneurship

Social entrepreneurship has been developing over several stages of academic discussion, depending on the divergent disciplinary perspectives and contextual interests. Initial debates conceptualized social entrepreneurship as a reaction to state and market failure to solve social issues. In this perception, social entrepreneurs were to be seen as change agents who utilize innovative solutions to relevant social problems (Dees, 1998). Although such a point of



view emphasized the sense of purpose and innovation, it did not provide much information about how social enterprises can sustain themselves economically. Later studies were able to broaden the field of analysis through the framework of social entrepreneurship as subdivided of the major topic of entrepreneurship and organizational studies. Austin et al., Akpinar, and Saleem, S. (2012), Akpinar and S. (2019) claimed that the similarities between social and commercial entrepreneurship include the opportunity recognition, mobilization of resources, and risk management, whereas, the former uses social value creation as the first priority. Such an analogy highlighted the necessity to view social enterprises in the context of intent and business performance and organizational capacity as well. One of the major theoretical developments was the identification of social enterprises as the hybrid organizations. Hybrid organizations implement social and commercial rationalities in the same organization, which can usually cause internal conflicts associated with the prioritization of goals, governance, and evaluation of performance (Battilana and Lee, 2014). Instead of considering those tensions as pathologies, modern studies treat them as characteristic features that inform the organizational strategy and behavior (Smith et al., 2013; Hahn.,et al.,2016). This mixed framing is especially applicable to old fashioned product based industries like palmyra. Purely commercial models are usually unsuitable in those contexts because the transaction costs are high, and initial profitability is low, whereas purely social or welfare-oriented ones do not generally have incentives to be efficient and innovative (Martens et al., 2021; Paredo AND McLean, 2006). Social entrepreneurship provides a conceptual medium that combines both the market and social goals together within one enterprise system.

5. Social Enterprise Perspectives of Business Models

The business models give an analytical tool on how social enterprises generate, deliver and capture value. According to Teece (2010), business model defines the structure of the value creation and value capture systems in an organization. This architecture has to consider both economic sustainability and social impact in the social enterprise, which makes the business model design very complex. Social enterprise business model research finds that there are a few general trends, among them cross-subsidization, hybrid income streams, and value propositions based on stakeholders (Santos, 2012). These models are usually programmed to work in settings that are institutional vacuum, poor infrastructure and low purchasing power. Instead of destroying market mechanisms, social enterprises reform them in a manner that incorporates actors that are not eligible. As Amit and Zott (2012) point out, the creation of value in the cases of an entrepreneurial venture is achieved through new combinations of resources and activities, and not by scale. This observation is particularly applicable to the palmyra products businesses in which the raw material is so plentiful but under utilized because of poor organization and value addition. Business model innovation can also be achieved through the processing, branding, and direct market engagement, which can greatly contribute to value capture without the need to invest enormous capital. Nevertheless, as noted in the literature, business model innovation does not necessarily result into social impact. Enterprises, (2020) state that a social enterprise needs to match its business model with quantifiable impact outcomes and governance processes to prevent mission drift. Without such alignment, businesses may run the risk of focusing their energies on the financial sustainability by sacrificing the social goals or vice versa, sacrificing economic sustainability in pursuit of too much social commitment. In the case of palmyra-based enterprises, this means that social entrepreneurship should be based on realistic evaluation on the cost structure, market demand, and capacity of operation. Idealized concepts of tradition or community cohesiveness are not enough replacements to decent business design.

6. Theory of Value Chain and Rural Enterprise Development.

Value chain analysis is a potent model of analyzing the creation and distribution of value throughout the various production processing and marketing processes. The concept Kaplinsky and Morris (2001) develop about value chains is as a series of value-adding activities regulated by relationships between actors. These relations are usually asymmetrical in power in the rural and traditional sector to the disadvantage of the primary producers. The theory of global value chain emphasizes the importance of governance structure in the development of upgrading opportunities (Gereffi et al., 2005). In a situation where producers are not organized collectively in addition to being inaccessible to information, they tend to be relegated to limited value activities like provision of raw materials. The need to upgrade-to transfer to a higher value process like processing, design or branding- demands coordination, investment and meeting quality standards (Trienekens, 2011; Hidayati et al .,2021; Lanjouw, & Lanjouw.,2001). Collective action is usually required to counter scale and coordination defects in the context of traditional product industries. Markelova et al.,(2009) illustrate that producer organizations are able to enhance access to markets and bargaining power with an institutional support of proper institutional arrangement. Collective structures are however not enough. Devoid of professional management and well elaborated rules of governance, producer organizations are likely to be characterized by inefficiency, elite capture or conflict. Value chain constraints in case of palmyra product businesses exist in a number of forms. Raw sap or unbranded products are normally sold at the farm gate by producers, whilst processing and transport, as well as retail all lie in the hands of intermediaries. This system constrains the value of the final value of the producers and minimizes the motivation to improve the quality. The intervention of social



entrepreneurial enterprises can be internalization of coordination roles and grouping of supply and investment in common processing and marketing facilities.

7. Traditional and Resource-Based Social Entrepreneurship

The traditional and resource based industries like agro-forestry, handicraft and non-timber forest products have an ambiguous role in the economies of the rural setting. They are usually described as informal labor relations, seasonal production cycle and reliance on common or semi-common resources. Consequently, they have been given divided policy consideration and scanty individual investment (Nair, 1989). Studies of non-timber forest products (NTFPs) present useful data on the interpretation of palmyra businesses. Belcher et al. (2005) demonstrate that commercialization of NTFPs may produce beneficial livelihood effects, however, it depends on certain conditions associated with governance, market structure, and resource management. When commercialized more, in most instances, this has resulted in depletion of resources or unequal distribution of benefits especially when intermediaries control the value chains. Arnold and Perez (2001) warn that the market growth can create and increase inequality when producers are price-takers. Equally, Ros-Tonen and Wiersum (2005) propose that institutional designs must be in place to bring economic incentives in line with conservation goals in order to achieve sustainable outcomes. These results emphasize the role of organization structure and management in determining the enterprise results. It has been suggested that social entrepreneurship could be one of the strategies to deal with these issues through the implementation of social and environmental goals in the strategy of enterprises (Doherty et al., 2014). Social enterprises have the capacity to revert excess capacity to development of community and sustainability of resources unlike purely commercial firms. Their projects are market-based unlike those funded by donors to enable the project to be relevant and effective.

8. Application of Social Entrepreneurship in the Palmyra Sector

When taking the above discussed theoretical perspectives and synthesizing them, one can come up with a number of reasons as to why social entrepreneurship is especially appropriate to the palmyra tree product industry. To begin with, activities based in Palmyra are in high coordination cost markets and low initial returns which do not appeal to the traditional private investors. These costs can be borne by social enterprises in their social mission and they develop business models that can redeem them by value addition. Second, the palmyra product businesses need to be organized collectively in order to obtain the scale, consistency, and market credibility. The individual producers do not have resources and bargaining power to upgrade on their own. Social entrepreneurship is offering organizational models, like cooperatives, producer enterprises, and hybrid enterprises, which allow collective action, but remain market-oriented. Third, sustainability issues are not peripheral in the palmyra industry. Sap overextraction, lack of regeneration and deteriorating skill transfer: This poses a threat to the long-term sustainability of the resource base. These concerns are better internalized in social enterprises rather than short-term traders due to the fact that a short-term trader must be resource productive and socially legitimate to survive.

9. Determined Lack in Current Literature

In spite of the increased attention to the topic of social entrepreneurship and rural enterprise development, there are certain gaps observed in the literature. To start with, there are few empirical studies that can be specifically devoted to palmyra-based enterprises. The existing literature is more inclined to the descriptive or livelihood-based approach, instead of the analysis at the enterprise level. Second, business fundamentals like unit economics, cost structures, pricing strategies and scalability have minimal coverage when it comes to social entrepreneurship literature on conventional sectors. It is hard to determine the viability of model proposals without such analysis in the long term. Third, there are few comparative studies within traditional product industry which helps in the development of theory. The comparison and contrast between the industries like palmyra, bamboo, handlooms, and medicinal plants may provide important information on what circumstances social entrepreneurship can work. These loopholes underscore the necessity of more stringent and contextual studies on social entrepreneurship in conventional product-based businesses.

10. Form and Nature of businesses in Palmyra Tree Product.

The product companies of Palmyra trees in Tamil Nadu have a unique form depending on the ecological circumstances, historical customs, and institutional carelessness. Contrary to the plantation-based commodities, the palmyra products are made out of the naturally occurring tree species which is usually distributed on an ad hoc basis in common lands and field borders and also in semi arid terrain. The effect of such spatial dispersion is great impact on the organization of production and enterprise activities. The majority of the palmyra activities are done at the household level or the micro-enterprise level. Sapping, Jaggery making, leaf processing, and handicraft manufacturing are normally done with the help of ancient tools and equipments which have been transmitted generation after generation. Although these practices are cultural and adaptable to the environment, they are usually characterized by lack of productivity and unpredictable quality of output. The lack of standardized procedures reduces the capability of a producer to operate to satisfy the needs of a bigger or more remote market. In the enterprise view, palmyra industry



is functionally fragmented. The value chain is considered to be in different stages; resource access, extraction, processing, storage, transport and marketing is hardly ever integrated under one organizational entity. The producers are likely to be specialized in a few activities, that is, they sell semi-processed or raw goods to middle men who run downstream operations. This framework limits value capture on the producer level and solidifies dependency relations. Seasonality is another characteristic of palmyra product business. Sap extraction activities and other associated processes are focused on certain months and hence seasonal flow of income and also wastage of labor and other assets during off-season. Seasonality is one of the key risk factors without an enterprise-level planning and diversification, which discourages long-term participation and investment in the industry.

11. Palmara Enterprises Unit Economies and Cost Structures

The lack of systematic focus on the cost structures and unit economics is one of the most overlooked issues regarding the palmyra product businesses. The traditional producers do not tend to compute costs of production in other than the instant cash expenses, e.g. fuel or transport. Work time (which is often donated by family members) is usually never monetized, which results in the underestimation of real expenses and the mispricing of products. The labor and processing of sap into jaggery or sugar, fuel, and simple maintenance of the basic equipment, transportation between the scattered production centers and losses as a result of spoilage or contamination can be considered major cost elements in palmyra-based enterprises. In the event that all these costs have been shouldered on, profit margins on raw or unbranded palmyra products are usually lower. This is an economic fact that has left most palmyra producers in the low incomes equilibria even after the long-hours of work. It also explains the reasons why the welfare-driven interventions that aim at raising the amounts of production alone cannot produce sustainable income gains. More output may just result in more labor and less income-related rewards without a corresponding increase in value addition and access to the market without lowering the price. Unit economics is radically altered with social entrepreneurship. Through aggregation of production, infrastructure sharing and value added processing, social enterprises are able to lower unit costs and increase margins. Open cost accounting allows enterprises to establish price that recognizes both the economic and social goals and forms the basis of sustainable business.

12. Dynamics and Demand in the market of the Palmyra Products

Palmyra products are in a rather complicated situation in modern markets. On the one hand, they are ingrained within the consumption habits used on the local level, in rural and semi-urban regions. Conversely, they are going to gain prominence in the niche urban markets due to the pressure to have natural sweeteners, traditional foods, and environmentally friendly products. Palm oil products have the local markets that are usually price-sensitive and controlled by the informal trade roads. Although such markets are predictable sources of demand, they have low potential of price premiums or brand differentiation. The producers who sell in to local markets are usually forced to compete mainly in terms of prices which supports low margin business models. However, the urban and the specialty markets have stronger focus on such attributes as purity, traceability, health benefits, and cultural authenticity. Palm sugar products and jaggery have been taken up in the market like Palmolive as a substitute to refined sugar, especially by people who are concerned about their health. Likewise, the palmyra leaf handicrafts will be attractive to consumers who want sustainable and artisanal products. Nevertheless, to penetrate such markets, there are capabilities that are not readily available to single producers. It must be of consistent quality, with standardized packaging, meet regulations and do marketing effectively. Social entrepreneurial businesses have the ability to fill this gap through the middle ground of converting producer potential into market potential products. More importantly, effective market penetration in the palmyra industry requires effective market segmentation. It is neither possible nor advisable to compete with industrial food producers or mass-manufactured handicraft on price. Rather, it requires that social enterprises consider its social mission and market segments that are carefully chosen and that are appreciative of unique qualities of palmyra products (Shetty.et al.,2026).

13. Social Entrepreneurial Models in the Palm Tree Sector.

There are a few social entrepreneurial models that are especially applicable to the palmyra tree product businesses. These models vary in form, governance and market strategy, being similar in the focus on integrating an economic viability framework with social inclusion.

13.1 Aggregation Enterprises which are owned by the producer.

Producer-owned aggregation businesses aim to form palmyra farmers into such collective organizations as cooperatives or producer firms. These enterprises are able to gain scale, stabilize quality and reduce transaction costs by pooling their output. Also improvement of bargaining power is provided by aggregation which allows producers to negotiate more favorable prices and terms with buyers. On the governance level, producer ownership matches enterprise success to the welfare of the members. Nevertheless, to be successful, it should be well-managed by professionals, it should have clear rules of membership, and clear financial structures. The lack of these factors may cause collective enterprises to be inefficient and internally strife.



13.2 Hybrid Processing and Value-Addition Enterprises.

Enterprises of hybrid processing specialize in processing raw palmyra resources into more valuable products like packaged palm sugar, syrup, or handcrafted curation. Such businesses usually involve commercial processing with social goals (like local jobs, capacity building, and community infrastructure) or getting reinvested.

processing is a greatly improved value capture that also presents new challenges. Managerial competence and risk management are needed to comply with the food safety regulations, working capital conditions, and market volatility. Social entrepreneurship can address these problems through the incorporation of processing units into larger enterprise systems that incorporate producer networks and support institutions.

13.3 Branding and Market-Linkage Models

Social enterprises that are led by brand focus on storytelling, traceability, and consumer engagement. Branding will help brand products turn palmyra products into differentiated products with recognizable social and environmental values. Successful branding is based on assurance of standard quality, open sourcing and believable impact assertions. Market-linkage models build on this model and make a direct relationship between producers and consumers via retail relationships, institutional purchasers, or online channels. These models eliminate reliance of traditional intermediaries and still have local ownership. Nevertheless, they need investment in logistics, marketing skills and trust-building processes.

14. Human Capital Development, Governance and Inclusion.

In determining the success of the social entrepreneurial activities in the palmyra sector, governance has been at the centre stage. Hybrid enterprises need to reconcile between efficiency and participation, as well as profitability and equity. These tensions should be managed by having clear governance structures, role definitions and accountability mechanisms. The aspect of gender inclusion is quite relevant in the palmyra based businesses. Women tend to be engaged in leaf processing, handicrafts, as well as secondary value addition but their efforts are often undermined or unrecognized. Social entrepreneurship offers the prospects to institutionalise the role of women, increase income security, and the influence of making decisions in business (Kabeer.N,1999). Another important issue is youth involvement. Weak returns and stigma attached to the traditional jobs have decreased the youth participation in the palmyra activities. Youth would be more willing to join social enterprises providing stable income, skill training, and decent working conditions, which will guarantee intergenerational continuity.

15. Integrated Discussion

The latter sections have discussed social entrepreneurship, business models, and value chain dynamics regarding the palmyra tree product businesses in Tamil Nadu. The review, in whole, points one thing: the continued marginalization of the palmyra sector is not due to the ecological constraints or absence of market demand, but due to the poor organization of enterprises, as well as the poor business integration. Theoretically, the palmyra sector is one of the examples of the circumstances in which social entrepreneurship applies the most. The industry works under a market failure, social exclusion and institutional neglect environment. The high coordination costs and low returns in the short-term discourage conventional private enterprise, and a state-led welfare intervention has historically put more emphasis on welfare assistance rather than enterprise development. Social entrepreneurship lies between these two strategies by integrating the market focus with social goals. The review also proves that social entrepreneurship in rural sectors based on products is fundamentally different in comparison to service-based models. Social value is created in palmyra based enterprises not just in terms of service delivery or access provision, but also in terms of restructuring production and exchange relationships. Impact creation is thus related to collective organization, value addition and mechanism of governance. This observation augments the current body of research in the field of social entrepreneurship, which has largely belittled the dynamics on the production side. The other important lesson is about the role of hybridity. Hybrid organisations within the palmyra industry need to strike between efficiency and inclusion, profitability and stewardship. These tensions are not accidental, they influence the strategic decisions concerning the pricing, market selection and reinvestment. Organizations that recognize and deal with these tensions clearly have higher chances of attaining long-term sustainability than those that strive to pursue either the social or commercial goals solely.

16. Policy Implications

The results of this review have significant implications to the rural development and enterprise policy in Tamil Nadu and any other comparable situation.

16.1 Re-positioning Palmyra as an Enterprise Sector

The necessary policy change is a critical process that needs to reposition the palmyra-based practices as residual livelihoods into a legitimate enterprise sector. Although welfare-oriented programs are important to social protection, they cannot bring a lasting transformation in the sector. Policies should appreciate the palmyra as based enterprises within larger frameworks of micro, small, and medium enterprise (MSME) development, agro-processing and rural industrialization. This would make palmyra enterprises receive enterprise finance, infrastructure support,



skill development programs and market development initiatives. In the absence of this change the social entrepreneurial initiatives in the palmyra industry will continue to be divided and reliant on the short term project funding.

16.2 Empowerment of Finance and Infrastructure

Finance is still a significant challenge faced by social enterprises in palmra. The industry is usually seen by traditional financial institutions as a risky business because of seasonality, lack of formalities and collateral. Blended finance, which is a combination of grants, concessional loans, and patient capital, is more appropriately addressed by policy instruments that address the fact of reality in the sector. By allowing the sharing of infrastructure in form of common processing plant, storage units and packaging locations, barriers to entry can be significantly low and compliance with quality standards enhanced. Government expenditure on these kinds of infrastructure must be supported by a system of governance that guarantees influence and responsibility of producers.

16.3 Regulation and Market Access

Small palmyra businesses have challenges in regulatory compliance; especially food safety and product certification. Formal market participation with scale-appropriate regulatory mechanisms (like group certification and shared compliance systems) may be made without excessive burdens. The market positioning may be further enhanced with policy support to branding, geographical indication like recognition and ethical labeling.

17. Managerial implications to Social entrepreneurs.

To the practitioners, the review highlights the fact that without the business discipline, the social impact in the palmyra sector cannot be maintained. Social entrepreneurs need to avoid the temptation of depending on either social discourse or donor funding but invest in the fundamental management skills. Market Strategy Enterprise Design Enterprise design focuses on how organizations can enhance their efficiency by offering products and services in the most cost-effective manner.

17.1 Enterprise Design and Market Strategy

Enterprise design is the approach through which organizations can improve their effectiveness, by selling products and services in the most cost-effective way. Successful social enterprises, which are palmyra based, start with value propositions and market strategy that are clear and realistic. This will entail the determination of the customer groups that cherish the unique features of palmyra products and creating products that will address those expectations. It is not possible or even desirable to compete with industrial manufacturers on the prices alone.

17.2 Governance and accountability

The structures of governance need to be balanced between participation and efficiency. Open-minded decision-making, description of roles and performance monitoring are critical in preserving trust between the producers and other parties involved. Hybrid tensions can be addressed by the introduction of incentives that are associated with the financial performance and social outcomes.

17.3 Human Capital and Leadership

The company has been able to leverage its human capital and personnel in reaching its objectives and as a result, has been able to reach a high level of success without attracting too much attention of its competitors. Strategic priority is making investments in human capital. Training programs, leadership development and succession planning are structured to increase productivity and resilience. Developing managerial capacity among producer communities enhances reliance on external players and makes them more sustainable over the long term.

18. Research Gaps and Future Research Directions

This critique pinpoints some of the research directions that future studies can take, which is most specifically applicable in the case of the doctoral level of study. First, the enterprise level empirical research analyzing the cost structures, pricing strategies and profitability in palmyra social enterprises is needed. These studies would give a stronger evidence base on which the viability of businesses can be evaluated. Second, the theoretical knowledge of social entrepreneurship in resource-based industries could be developed through comparative studies of traditional product industries, including palmyra, bamboo, handlooms, and medicinal plants. Comparative designs would assist in separating the sector-specific issues with the general structural trends. Third, longitudinal research is needed to know the ways in which palmyra-based social enterprises change over time, how they combine hybrid tensions, and how they react to market and environmental shocks. It is not possible to use short-term assessments to reflect the processes of enterprise development. Lastly, willingness to pay, trust formation and ethical consumption research that should involve consumers can be used to inform better strategies of branding and engaging consumers in the market of palmyra products.

19. Conclusion

This review has provided an overall overview of social entrepreneurship within the palmyra tree product industry in Tamil Nadu. Due to the synthesis of literature in the field of social entrepreneurship, business management, value chain analysis, and rural development, the review shows that the issues of the palmyra sector are less about ecological factors and more about organizations and institutions. Social entrepreneurship presents an effective change agent in the process of converting the palmyra based activities into sustainable rural entrepreneurship through incorporation of business discipline with social inclusion and environmental conservation. Aggregation by producer, hybrid processing enterprise and branding-based models of market linkages can be seen as especially promising models of market linkage, should they be supported by proper governance and policy frameworks. To researchers, the palmyra industry can offer a good background within which to develop theory regarding social entrepreneurship in product and resource based industries. To policy makers and practitioners, the results highlight the essence of shifting away into welfare-focused policies to enterprise-focused development policies. When growing palmyra as a business opportunity, it is vital to treat it as a serious business opportunity, which has its roots in social and ecological realities to ensure that full potential is achieved in the context of making palmyra a powerful tool towards inclusive and sustainable rural development.

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