



A STUDY OF NGOS AND THEIR SOCIAL MARKETING PRACTICES - ISSUES AND CHALLENGES: WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO MAHARASHTRA STATE

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ABSTRACT :

Social Marketing is the use of commercial marketing theory, skill and practices to achieve the social changes. Commercial marketing tries to change people's behaviour for the benefit of the marketer, Social Marketing tries to change people's behaviour for the benefit of the consumer, or of society as a whole. The prime aim of commercial marketing is to earn maximum profit while the prime aim of social marketing is to achievement of social good. Social marketing-a new marketing tool-can be a great asset if used properly. NGOs is any non-profit, voluntary citizens' group which is organized on a local, national or international level. NGOs performs a variety of service and humanitarian functions for the betterment the peoples in society. In Maharashtra Non-Governmental Organisations are playing important role for the social development and welfare of the state people. Different NGOs like Lions Club, Rotary Club, Health Departments, Environment Protection Departments through their different social campaigns persuaded the peoples of the state to accept or avoid the certain practice, behavior or attitude. However Social marketing is more difficult than commercial marketing. As you are selling a 'change' not a 'soap'...! Present research paper aims at finding out what actually NGOs and Social marketing is all about and explores the main issues in social marketing practices in Maharashtra state. The paper also list outs the social marketing programs and activities by the NGOs in Maharashtra state. And further the paper also explores the challenges before the NGOs while implementing the social marketing activities in Maharashtra & suggest the measures for better implementation of social marketing practices in Maharashtra state.



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KEYWORDS : NGOs Non -Governmental Organisation, Social Campaign, Social Marketing-Mix, Commercial Marketing.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the present paper are:

1. To highlight on the issues and challenges regarding the NGOs and their Social marketing practices in Maharashtra state.
2. To highlight the implementation of social marketing programs and activities by the NGOs in Maharashtra state.
3. To suggest the measures for better implementation of Social marketing practices in Maharashtra state.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present research paper is based on the secondary data. The data is collected from various books, journals, research articles and web-sites from internet. The inferences are based on the analysis of the secondary data. The study is restricted to Maharashtra state only.

ORIGIN OF RESEARCH PROBLEM

One of the biggest challenge that face the world today: health issues like obesity, or environmental problems like climate change. These issues are often caused by human behaviour, and so can only be tackled if people change their lifestyles and habits. It is necessary to persuade the peoples to accept or avoid the certain behaviour or attitude. NGOs through their social marketing activities makes the peoples aware about what should do and what should not. NGOs and their social marketing activities are essential to improve the quality of life of individual and society as a whole. Of course the NGOs in Maharashtra and their Social Marketing Practices, Issues and Challenges which obviously is the origin of the research problem.

SOCIAL MARKETING

Social marketing means application of commercial marketing techniques to solve the social problems, it means the techniques which are used in selling the goods (T.V. Pizza, Car, Shoes) the same techniques will be used to convince the people to change their behaviour. Commercial marketing will convince the college students that they need to wear stylish jeans. Social marketing will convince the college students about 'Don't use your cell phone while driving', 'Be safe from HIV-AIDS' etc. In short commercial marketing tries change people's behaviour for the benefit of the marketer, Social Marketing tries change people's behaviour for the benefit of the consumer, or of society as a whole. The prime aim of commercial marketing is maximum profit while the prime aim of social marketing is to achievement of social good.

Thus social marketing involves the use of commercial marketing practices to achieve non-commercial goals i.e. social benefits.

NGOs = Non -Governmental Organisation

Organisation that are independent of any government's involvement are called **Non-governmental organizations**. NGOs are a subgroup of all organizations founded by citizens, which include clubs and other [associations](#) that provide services, benefits, and premises only to its members. NGOs are usually [non-profitable](#). Many NGOs are active in the areas of humanitarian or social sciences.

India has around 3.2 million registered NGOs which are practising social marketing efficiently for community welfare and social benefits. The non-profit sector in India is predominantly rural based. More than half the NGOs in the country are based in rural areas. Of course, several NGOs based in urban areas serve rural communities. Nearly half the NGOs are unregistered. The percentage of registered NGOs is highest in Maharashtra (74%) and lowest in Tamil Nadu (47%). In recent years, NGOs have grown not only in numbers, but also in terms of the sheer diversity of activities in which they are involved.

NGOs in Maharashtra:

In Maharashtra Non-Governmental Organisation are part of social development and welfare of the state people. There are nearly 7319 registered NGOs in Maharashtra. NGOs in Maharashtra has been actively working for genuine social development programmes and welfare activities of urban and rural communities. Maharashtra NGOs are participating in social development and charitable issues organised by the government and welfare groups. Maharashtra NGOs are always ready to come ahead to work for the welfare and betterment of the children, women development, education, social awareness and other objectives.

NGOs in Maharashtra are functioning for child education, women development, old age home for old age persons, physically & mentally handicapped persons. They are well organising education, health, social justice, disaster management and agricultural development.

NGOs in Maharashtra adopting the social marketing successfully:

NGOs in Maharashtra has been implementing the following programs successfully-

- Employment
- Conservation of historical places
- Protection of environment
- Female foeticide
- Social equality
- Rain water harvesting
- Drinking water issues
- Animal welfare
- Right to information
- Science, technology, sports

However, not every NGO out there is engaged in serious social welfare work. Many are fraudulent and many are there without much serious intent.

Challenges Ahead

Social marketing is much different from commercial marketing. It is not just advertising, it is a social or behavior change strategy. The level of involvement for the consumers or society is usually much higher in social marketing. It requires strategy, efficient use of resources and deep research. Because you are going to sell 'change' not a 'soap'...! Following are the some major challenges or problems for the NGOs in Maharashtra while implementing the different social marketing activities in the state.

- Lack of fund is the major problem before the NGOs in Maharashtra.
- Poor networking with another community is also the biggest challenge before the NGOs of Maharashtra.
- Some of the NGOs has become the political platforms for the political parties.
- While commercial marketers promote products and services that offer immediate and visible benefits to consumers, social marketers promote practices for which there are no immediate benefits. Eating a healthy diet, exercising regularly and giving up smoking are all examples of change that offer benefits in the form of weight reduction, prevention of cancer, etc. only in the long term. With the due consideration of the state's lifestyle, traditions, culture, tendencies of the peoples, the task of the social marketers in convincing the target group is more difficult.
- Commercial marketers generally promote their products and services to the educated middle classes whereas social marketers most often are concerned with illiterate, rural audiences. Maharashtra is the state of having the rural peoples and the task of convincing such audiences becomes more difficult.
- For market analysis, Maharashtrian social marketers have much more difficulty in accumulating valid, reliable, and relevant marketing data.
- The biggest obstacle in delivering campaigns in Maharashtra is lack of skilled and experienced employees.

SUGGESTIONS:

Social Marketers / NGOs of Maharashtra should focus into the following matters to implement social marketing successfully:

- There should be transparency regarding the income and expenditure.
 - Necessary to get sufficient and continuous funding to the NGOs.
 - Members of NGO should be professionals in the area they work.
 - For achieving response or result, the effective adaptation and coordination of Social Marketing Mix - four Ps (product, price, promotion, and place) is necessary.
 - More skilled and knowledgeable manpower involved in social campaign is essential.
 - You'll have to be very clear about your marketing strategies, purpose, your goals, and what you hope to accomplish on the way.
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- The number of social media users in Maharashtra is very high. Social media sites such as what's app, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube etc. Social media is the great tool for the social marketers & should be used efficiently in his promotion mix strategy.
 - Maharashtrian consumers are very price sensitive. The social marketer should adopt reasonable pricing policy for the social market product. Too high or too lower prices of the products may result less or no response from the consumers.
 - The social marketer should make the social products available at the right time and at the right place to the consumers.

CONCLUSION:

The number of registered NGOs are highest in Maharashtra. Their aims should be to achieve the behavioural change across a wide range of issues which are crucial to the wellbeing of individuals, groups and communities of the state. Till today the Maharashtra NGOs are working positively in the areas like welfare and betterment of the children, women development, education, social awareness and other objectives. However still lot of efforts are required to achieve the social benefits at a large. The collective work of NGOs, environment Protection Department, Health Departments of Maharashtra are required in the contribution of the development of the state. It is the role of the social marketers that will determine the future of social marketing and if they can play a constructive role, social marketing can establish itself as most potent tool for bringing desired social change in Maharashtra.

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