

The Entrepreneurial Little Tradition: Urban Bottom Line Business of Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT

This paper declares the specific identity of business pattern of the bottom line of the urban sector of Sri Lanka showing distinguish between the upper strata. The study argues that stratified identification is common in the business sector as well comparing to all other social institutions. Conceptually the paper attempts to apply the notions grate and little traditions tha have been vastly used in ethnographic studies to evaluate the urban business structure. Thus, the study tries to show distinguishing entrepreneurial approaches of two different actions of bottom line and the mainstream business classes. The research may be interpreted as an ethnographic exploration that data has been collected via participatory observation, interviewing and studying cases among street vendors of several surrounded town areas of NuwaraEliya and Badulla Districts of Sri Lanka. Under basic findings of the research, it discusses main characteristics of mode of savings, crediting, security, target groups of bottom line retailers and behaviours of market makers and market takers. When mainstream business holders obtain all kinds of financial, security, and other infrastructural facilities that are provided by the concurrent capitalistic market system, the bottom line seems to be automatically expelled from this structural mechanism. The study has also touched on some particular conceptual areas as key identities of the bottom line entrepreneurship in terms of the risk taking personality, hedging norms and values, and informal networking that are significant among them. Though the risk-taking personality has been described as a basic quality of a mainstream entrepreneur, the paper has suggested that the same characteristics could also be seen among the bottom liners' decision making abilitythat deal with the debtor economy.

Keywords: Ethnography of Street Vendors, Urban Bottom Line Business of Sri Lanka

1. INTRODUCTION

The causally significant entrepreneurial groups could be spotted as 'great tradition' or mainstream business communities which are different from "outsider entrepreneurs" who are not usually significant in entrepreneurial roles. This study attempts to define those causally less significant business roles or 'little traditions' of outsider entrepreneurial groups. Marginal or the 'little traditional' business groups play a significant role in the urban sector with providing their services for their clients who come from specific rank of the society. They are responsible for identifying needs and making market for the bottom strata of the society. The market takers of the bottom line market are usually consisted of clients from those who are lacking of purchasing capacity. The market action among these two fractions shows a panoramic view with demonstrating peculiar behavioural patterns. Since, both groups; market makers and market takes represent the bottom line of the society, their business action has created a specific market culture that has been decorated by variety ofinterdependent and indebted relationships. This paper attempts to reveal the characteristics of market behaviour of the bottom line, particularly emphasizing the market making to the deprived that stating the term 'entrepreneurial little tradition' that has been derived against to the established market system.

2. CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND

Max Weber was one of the first scholars to pay attention to marginal entrepreneurship. He used the term "pariah capitalism", which has also had the effect of degrading the mercantile activities of particular communities ([Weber 1946: 66], Jiang 1968: 366). Although, Max Weber referred to the occidental Jewry from late antiquity to the present and the Parsees in India as marginal groups, the basic fundamentals of his interpretations on pariah entrepreneurship could be applicable with regard to other marginal entrepreneurial groups. Many scholars have used Weber's concept to develop the marginal and minority entrepreneurship, which rises in the face of social and cultural burdens. For instance, a prominent argument presented by a group

of scholars is that entrepreneurship is very often promoted by social marginality. Considering the long tradition of research that dates back to the work of Sombart (in Kalantaridis) suggests that creativity and the ability to break traditional values, usually associated with entrepreneurship, is frequent among marginal and minority groups than the larger population (Kalantaridis 2004: 49). The non-acceptance of marginalized groups in the host societies, reduce the obstacles such as traditional values and norms of individuals to influence their economic behaviour. Individuals or groups on the margins of a given social system or between two social systems are believed to provide the personnel to fill entrepreneurial roles. The turn to entrepreneurship and mercantile activities may be determined by religious, cultural, ethnic, or migration, and the marginal social position of these groups is generally believed to have the sociological effects which make entrepreneurship a particularly attractive alternative.

Hoselitz et al. (1963) provide theoretical constructs in the context of social marginality focusing on the impotency of social groups rather than individual economic agents. In contrast to an emphasis on marginality, there is also emphasis upon the necessity to some degree of social integration and cohesion within the marginalized group if entrepreneurship is to succeed. This factor emphasizes the need for some integrative bonds between entrepreneurs and the larger social system. Marries and Somerset (1971) have emphasized this factor, claiming that an increase in the scale or range of interaction is necessary and that barriers to interaction must be broken down if entrepreneurship is to occur. Group solidarity and resources at hand are also crucial factors dealing with entrepreneurship. According to Wilken (1979) social marginality is determined by social-isolation, for instance, being an immigrant and being a member of a minority group are the fundamentals of marginal entrepreneurship. It considers the space of access to the mobility channel within marginality is inevitable in definition. Wilken states:

...Hence, marginals are likely to play entrepreneurial roles under opposite conditions than are actors from the societal mainstream. The legitimacy of entrepreneurship will influence which of these two potential sources of entrepreneurship will be predominant in a society. In situations in which entrepreneurial legitimacy is low, mainstream actors will be attracted to the non-entrepreneurial roles, and entrepreneurial roles will be relegated to marginals. But in situation in which entrepreneurial legitimacy is high, mainstream actors will use the entrepreneurial role as a mobility channel, and marginals will have to find other roles as means of mobility. This later situation is characteristic of some racial and ethnic minorities (1979: 2).

At its basic minimum for the importance of legitimacy and social mobility to exist, the positive ideology should consist of the norms and values of the marginal group. The turn to a positive attitude toward entrepreneurship is determined by the degree of legitimacy or approval of the particular society. Wilken also presents a formula to address the relationship between entrepreneurial legitimacy and social mobility within two different groups: mainstream and outsiders.

A high degree of group solidarity or cohesion could be the significant consequence of extreme social blockage. Meanwhile, this assumption represents the notion that intermediary-level social integration could be constructive in the attainment of social progress. Uphoff (2000: 215-253) identified the structural and cognitive characteristics as two distinguishing phenomenon predominant in highly integrated societies. For Uphoff structural capital associates with various sorts of social organizations in different forms of roles, rules or procedures and it mutually benefits collective action. The cognitive aspect of networking then emerges from a mental process derived from cultural productions mainly associated with norms and values. Such 'institutionalized behaviour' has also been broadly described by Scott (2001) as the three pillars of regulative, normative, and cultural-cognitive systems that are vital ingredients of institutions. The normative-evaluative system may not only accord approval to entrepreneurial behaviour but it may also more actively encourage individuals to rely on such a style.

The greater contacts with ethnic entrepreneurship have the environment of marginalized groups or minorities, their tendency to recruit and reward within the group increases. Their wider information network, more informal in-group contacts, their mechanisms of mutual assistance can be used to raise capital; and their exemption from various customs and legal obligations of the larger social system could cause a sort of a 'defensive network' to surround them. They mobilize freely within inter-marginal spaces towards the entrepreneurial purposes. The formation of such a group identity has also been identified as the most important factor even in contemporary business ventures. Ruef (2010: 11) suggests that entrepreneurs inherently eager to be coherent in their collective form, emphasizes three phases of group-identity formation: closed group, constrained group

Table 1: Relationship between entrepreneurial legitimacy and access to mobility channels

	Degree of entrepreneurial legitimacy	
	Low	High
Access to mobility channel		
Low	Outsider entrepreneurship	Non entrepreneurial roles
High	Non entrepreneurial roles	Mainstream entrepreneurship

and open group. The formation of closed and constrained groups is an abundant marker in marginal communities. Therefore, these marginally specific ties may have both advantages and disadvantage in terms of application to the business sector. Since marginal social groups are inherently accustomed to depend on strong social ties, they should find alternatives to this form of dependency with development of external relations in the form of weaker ties to succeed outsiders.

Therefore, there is a great potential for its application to the concept of social marginality as a positive factor in creating business relations, and this conceptual background would be a useful way to evaluate the entrepreneurial behaviour of the low-income groups. Though the scale and the manner would be different, both mainstream and outsiders use social capital for their entrepreneurial purposes. For instance, Greve & Salaff preferred to state the entrepreneur as a “good networker” and his/her role is accumulating social capital, which is essential for starting new businesses (2003: 3). Therefore, this particular type of social capital has been discussed following as an extension of the theoretical framework of this study.

3. METHODOLOGY

This research is an ethnographic interpretation. Both primary and secondary literature has been employed. The existing literature pertaining to business culture has been used in constructing main arguments of the paper and plenty of ethnographic materials collected from several remote town areas of Sri Lanka such as NuwaraEliya, Hatton, Badulla to elaborate it. Participatory observation, informal and in-depth discussions with business owners and some case studies have been used as the data collecting techniques as of primary sources.

4. SAVINGS PATTERNS OF THE BOTTOM LINE

In general, the traditional financial organizations do not make relations with poor people in their financing, crediting or savings. Meanwhile, the banking, insurance recovery, business credits are known as rationalistic functions which belong to the upper levels of the society, or cater to the practices of large-scale business holders. These functions are conceptually and practically away from the marginalized and segregated communities. As such, obtaining monetary facilities from those banks and other formal financial agencies have been limited to the upper-class social groups. This is the established idea regarding formal banks and monetary facilities among the disadvantaged groups. On the one hand, it is not plausible to directly refuse this trajectory, because the marginals are structurally separated from the complicated and rationalistic actions implemented in the formal monetary organizations. For instance, these institutions are situated in cities. They stand superior to the services utilized by the general public. Therefore, additional knowledge and social status that go beyond the general literacy is required to deal with these formal organizations.

The saving patterns or the informal monetary system prevailing in the urban low-income communities reflects another aspect of difference between mass society and marginal social groups. Savings and crediting with reputed banks or other monetary organizations are accounted as formal savings, while traditionally and culturally derived economic systems such as *seettu* and *muttikasi* can be taken into the informal category. Although, the modern banking and savings facilities are available all over the Island, informal savings, money lending and crediting systems seemed to be in wide practice amongst many low-income families. In spite of the legal restrictions that prevail, the local moneylenders play a significant role in the rural, estate and urban informal sectors. Moreover, informal economic groups (IEGs), which form into small clusters, can be seen in every part of the country. Mostly these informal savings and crediting clusters are known as ‘*seettu* groups’, and these seemed to be highly utilized by development practitioners as a positive tool of their social empowerment and poverty alleviation projects in the recent period.

According to field experiences, most of the senior generation of the urban low-income families do not patronise the official banks and other formal monetary organizations. The modern equipment, air conditioned spaces, marble floors, well-dressed officials and very much formal paper-documents seems to be irritating experiences to the people who were accustomed to a rural lifestyle. Moreover, traditional banks usually take strict measures when they lend money to borrowers owing to various difficulties in recovering the basic amount and interest. Consequently, they pay special attention on the requirements of maintaining formality of documents, production of sureties, and the bonding of properties. The poor are extremely inconvenienced in these circumstances. The lack of sureties, shortage of property and resources to mortgage, the unfamiliarity with the formal functions (filling documents, alien technical terms etc.) of the funding organization, and ignorance of the relevant officials are the most common obstacles faced by the low-income groups.

The needs of the marginalized are not all together different from those of any other section of the community. They need their savings, they need to borrow and they would be happy with fiscal security. Often, these needs are more pronounced among the

Table 2: Distinguishing of the great and the little traditions of business

Business task	Fulfilment of business tasks in each traditions	
	Grate tradition	Little tradition
Consultancy	Formal consultancy services	Friends/relatives
Loan	Banks/formal monetary services	Moneylenders/friends/relative/seettu groups
Security	Public/private security service	Bajar
Insurance	Private/public companies	Bajar/friends/relatives
Recordings/reporting	In-written	Rhetorical
Agreements	Public laws & regulations	Personal trust
News	Formal mass media	Bajar

poor than the rich. Therefore, turning to borrowing is the easiest way to fulfil such monetary needs. However, the repayment is the parallel term which goes together with borrowing. Most of the low-income groups seem to be sunk in trouble at this juncture. Rutherford (2000) identifies, and as also emphasized by Simanowitz and Walter (2002: 22) with further improvement, there are four major circumstances for which the bottom line needs monetary support:

- Social circulation needs: weddings, funeral, childbirth, education, home building, widowhood, old age
- Disasters: fires, floods, cyclones, tsunami, landslide, and man-made events like war or bulldozing of dwelling
- Emergency needs: sickness, injury, unemployment, theft, harassment or death
- Investment opportunities: expanding business, buying land or equipment, improving housing, securing a job etc.

When they are not aware of obtaining these facilities from regular institutions, the inevitable consequence may be to turn towards similar but informal options (Uphoff 2000; Kalantaridis 2004: 49). As a consequence of the above conditions, there are two most probable options that are followed by individuals of low-income communities:

- I. Requesting loans from relatives, neighbours and friends
- II. Borrowing money from informal moneylenders for higher interest

The first option would be ruled out owing to the similar low-income level of the relatives, neighbours and friends. Moneylenders and pawnbrokers who are living in the rural sector or who are located in the low-income areas benefit from these opportunities. The general interest rate of local moneylenders will increase as the belongings of borrowers are limited. According to our experience, their monthly interest rate may be between 10-100 percent. The borrower who does not have property rights or a proper income base would be bonded to the highest rate of interest and has to spend his whole monthly income for the amortization obligations of interest thereafter. Since they are not aware of taking such a high risk, the final option may be to turn towards the collection of micro-credit from the members of *seettu* group on behalf of their family needs. Therefore, we can define the *seettu* system as a 'little' traditional economic function that emerged within low-income groups as a result of exclusion from the reputed monetary structure.

5. SEETTU: THE BANKING OF BOTTOM LINE

According to the above discussion, *Seettu* or *cheettu* is a kind of traditionally derived mutual savings and crediting system that benefits each group member of a group within a highly integrated community. Bestley et al. define the *seettu* system as a "response by a socially connected group to credit market exclusion" (Besley et al. 1993: 807). Therefore, a *seettu* group generally forms among men or women on the basis of easily maintainable face to face relationship on personal contact with each other. The person who organizes gathering members of the *seettu* tended to be automatically the group leader. The rotary crediting for each one during the predetermined frequency is the verbal agreement among all the *seettu* members. Personal trust is the only warranty to retain the process for a period. If somebody breaks the verbal surety bond, the whole mechanism will crash and the social stigmatizing that follows on the defaulting member would be heavily damaging to his/her future community relations. Therefore all members of a *seettu* group are cautious to maintain their social trust. According to field experiences, there are three types of informal group-based crediting systems prevailing among the Up-land Tamil community:

1. Randomly selected chit
2. Bidding *seettu*
3. Rotating common fund for purchasing durable commodity

The rotating savings and crediting system has been used under the same concept but in different names in different societies in the world. For instance, it is popular as 'credit chit' in India, *arisanin* in Indonesia, *pasanku* in Bolivia, *tontine* in Senegal, *njangkeh* in Cameroon, *kye* in Korea, partners in Jamaica, and *susu* in Ghana (Bastelaer et al. 2000: 2). The rotating savings and crediting has been popular not only among the bottom line but also among the middle class members in Sri Lanka. At present, all ranges of people seem to be participating in the rotating crediting system, believing it as a trustworthy investment pattern for business purposes and everyday needs. However, this practice is more popular among the women in low-income communities and they gain comparatively good benefits from it in different ways.

According to the first system, the individual in the *seettu* group can take his/her chance to have the total amount of money by selecting a random number. The collection of money will go for a common fund and the whole amount will be offered for each member in the allotted numbering order. Whether there is a competition for selection of priority numbers, or not the random choice is used only for easy agreement among group members. Every member has the right to claim for an equal amount of money rotating on a daily, weekly or monthly basis. However, the monthly basis of collection is the most popular practice in the *seettu* groups.

The mechanism of the bidding *seettu* seemed to be a little different from the simple weekly or monthly payable crediting frequencies. The priority for each could be determined by the choice of each member. The person who has immediate monetary requirements can apply for the frequency priority. There is an extra weight of interest according to the order of the precedence level. The last frequencies may be the least risky in the context of bidding.

The raising of a rotating common fund for purchase of durable commodities is especially popular among women in low-income communities. Usually a chief coordinator (group leader) arranges the group meeting with each group member personally. Either all group members unanimously agreeing on the household commodity could have determined the circumstance, which they collect money for, or the group coordinator may directly suggest to the others. Most commonly their small collection would be for the purpose of an appliance for the kitchen. Sometimes it could be extended to a sofa, settee, radio, television or some relatively expensive item according to the awareness of occasion and the fiscal awareness of group members. This system has been remarkably useful for low-income families to buy their household requirements which they could not have bought individually.

Although the *seettu* or informal group-based crediting systems are considered a "female job", our field experiences consolidated that many male owners of micro, small and medium scale business also practice the same procedures and gain many benefits. Often, some business owners have used money collected by their wives from *seettu* for their business purposes. On the other hand, some traditional savings systems like *muttikasi* (collecting coins in a bowl or a small pot) are not practised at all, or are gradually disappearing. The main reason may be the deteriorating validity of coins. Although some of the younger children do maintain these 'money pots' as a result of receiving them from subsidiary communitarian organizations, often depositing coins and waiting for it to fill up has become cumbersome. However, these savings pots are also not being used regularly by children. The habit of maintaining bank accounts seems to have developed steadily among the low-income Tamil groups. Almost all business owners have built good relationships with formal banks and maintain regular bank accounts. According to field research, it is the public banks that are still popular among the business holders rather than private monetary services in terms of savings practices and drawing credit. Some subsidiary crediting systems which have been introduced by public banks seem to be popular with the entrepreneurs. However, the younger generation, particularly exposed to the employments of other formal sectors tend to be familiar with maintaining saving accounts in the formal financial institutions.

6. THE 'BAJAR': COHESION OF BOTTOM-LINE BUSINESS

External contacts may be the most important factor in terms of making links to the other structural roles. Connecting to external networks, business friends and the *bajar* seem to be noteworthy among other variables of the table. Neighbours can also be taken as another main source of making contact with outsiders. Brother-in-law, son-in-law (same kinship identity in different relation to the interviewee), and delivery services have been considered as the next important sources of external contacts. Son-in-law or the brother-in-law is important close relatives coming from a different kinship relation. He is the focal point of two different kinship groups. If he is coming from another business family, his role will be indispensable in the context.

The new trend of the market, more profitable goods, anticipation of customers and many other aspects represent business information. According to the order of significance, business friends, media (all forms), *bajar*, transport or delivery services, managerial staff, customer and monetary services tend to be more significant in terms of receiving such business information.

As with every other function, the informal networking with business friends seems highly important in receiving business information. The information that comes from the media tends to be received mainly by the high-scale business owners. Television has been on the top of all other media. The delivery or transport services may be the most important information source for the business holders in remote areas. Some micro and small-scale shops in the periphery can entirely be dependent on delivery services. According to field experience, some wholesale traders in cities and town areas maintain regular network relationship with small retail traders in the periphery providing goods and free delivery services. Consequently, the delivery services may be the only link between the town or bazaar and remote rural areas. Moreover, the *bajar* has been considered significantly as an important source of business information. Although there is no particular person or an institution called the *bajar*, the symbolic value of the term as a source of information should be investigated.

The concept of “*Bajar*” directly derives from the Persian word “Bazaar” (Turkish *pazar*, Hindi *bajar*, Greek *pazari*) which means the ‘place of prices’ or generally Merchandize Street. However, the lower middle-class and bottom line business community in Sri Lanka use it in a broader sense. If somebody states that “I don’t like this *bajar*” it reflects his reluctance to maintain friendship relations with surrounding peer groups. A mother also can say as “I am worried about protecting my son from this *bajar*” emphasizing her grievances regarding uneven socialization from bad company. In general, the term *bajar* tends to have a conceptually notorious connotation in low-income communities in the urban and rural sectors. Under-world gangs, illegal businesses such as illicit liquor brewing, prostitution, and many other pathological social practices are indirect components of the term *bajar*.

However, the “business *bajar*” seems to be a functional structure which gains reciprocal benefit. The business holder who handles a business in a particular locality is required to be integrated into the system to continue his/her business. Wittingly or unwittingly he or she has a role to play in a particular *bajar* within an identified geographical territory. Therefore, the concept of *bajar* is a little complicated and relies on a broader sense than a general social group or a formal social organization. Nobody can go against the decisions of the *bajar*. There is no particular person who is accountable for decisions of the *bajar*. However, everybody is obliged to respect it. Sometimes it may be the collective consciousness of the entire *bajar*. For instance, the fruit sellers who sell the same kind of fruit along a particular side street may sell their goods for similar prices. If somebody introduces a new idea which results in goods at cheaper rates, it is certainly going to be harmful for the peers. Therefore, people who go against the *bajar*’s decisions may get isolated or some other harsh measures may be taken against them. Moreover, the *bajar* conceptually characterizes informal social capital. The trust on weak ties, social security, unexpected external intrusions is recovered by *bajar*.

Therefore, *bajar* is conceptually important to distinguish ‘mainstream’ and ‘outsider’ traditions of business networking. The upper level market, or the business handled by large-scale market makers are usually secured in the capitalistic economic structure. All kinds of commercial agencies such as banks, insurance companies, government policy system, government police bureau and many other organizations are structurally created to provide necessary facilities and security to the concurrent market system. These agencies are looking forward to provide hedging facilities to avoid taking unnecessary risk at fluctuating market prices, to supply distress loans during market liquidation, to recover any kind of losses occurred as a result of theft, fire or any other disasters to the reputed traders. However, there is no such formal protection to the bottom line business holders from the system. They are constantly vulnerable to the conditions of market competition. Sometimes bottom line retailers are required to find options to overcome everyday market challenges. Therefore, we can recognize the *bajar* as a bottom line latent functional action that comes against the dominant market structure.

7. BUSINESSMAN-CUSTOMER BEHAVIOUR

Food and grocery shops tend to be a particular variety of items, which are handled by bottom line traders in almost all the major cities in Sri Lanka. A large quantity of rice bags (*goni*), containers of lentils and other cereal, several kinds of dried fish, coconuts, potato, garlic, onion, every type of spice, instant food, soap and shampoo, broomsticks, spoons made of coconut shell, and other non-descript miscellaneous stuff are characteristic items of the Tamil grocery business. These items are associated with meeting the basic needs of everyday life of every ethnic group. Therefore the owners of this type of business are required to be in contact with their uncertain customers. From the beginning of the day, almost all grocery shops are crowded with customers. Tolerance and patience therefore are an inevitable concomitance of a high degree of performance of the businessman-customer relationship.

These vendors transact business not only with rich customers but also with poor customers mainly coming from the low-income groups. Indebtedness is very common among the low-income communities and it may be quite significant in the urban, rural

and plantation sectors. Some may not have spent even a single day of their whole lifetime free from debt. The total earnings of the current month of these chronically poor may be just enough to pay back the debts which have been drawn in the previous month. Therefore there is a great possibility for the grocery shop owners in the nearby town or bazaar to automatically become the “messiah” or the lifetime partner of these communities.

The entrepreneur knows practically that the debtor relations impede the valorisation process of business. It tends to depreciate the accumulating business capital. Sometimes its ultimate consequence might be the loss of both money and some of the good customers. Although the customer is the least important factor in terms of facilitating things like land, labour, fiscal support, information etc., the entire business enterprise may depend on their goodwill. Therefore, the tactful market maker deals with his customers with the public notice “Loan is hostile to our relationship”, or “Loan will break our relationship” on the wall or on the showcase of the shop. When relatives, neighbours or regular customers frequently make trouble requesting goods on credit, the shop owner does not hesitate to get into action by expressing his reluctance in a further creative notification in the form of “Cash today, lending tomorrow”.

When the shop owner wants to maintain the concerns of the customer and continue the business, he may take action and inform more honestly and descriptively, as a softened notification than previous one: “We trust you, but we are not economically stable to give credit to you”. These types of notifications can be commonly seen in the retail shops in the rural areas. However, as the shops are located far from the relatives, neighbours and friends, this particular credit related notifications seem to be gradually disappearing. The shifting of the business from the estate residential areas to town or bazaars makes them free from additional troubles created by kin, neighbours and friends. The new customers in the new locations are aware that there is no credit facilities provided for unknown or uncertain others. That can be interpreted as an obvious advantage of shifting from bonding to bridging.

This situation can be explained as analysed in terms of the gaining of profit through the emphasis on ‘high effort-high return’ mechanism. Considering initial predictions of effort and return for purposive action and interaction, high returns may be yielded with low investment of maintaining resources in terms of undertaking a business within a homophilous group (Lin Nan 2008: 48). When heterophilous relations are weakening with debt related matters, the entrepreneur may not obtain the minimal advantage of low-cost maintaining resources. Therefore, there is no risk other than gaining from the action that is absent in the basic network. However, the market maker is required to run the risk of high effort despite low return in the heterophilous enclaves. He who is motivated by high gaining of resources within heterophilous relations should have managerial skills to handle the new situation.

The modern concepts of business management, such as banking, marketing, labour, efficiency enhancement and welfare do not seem to be common among micro and small-scale business of the bottom line. However, we could also observe that most of these concepts are actually being used by little traditional market makers through their personal attitudes and practical experiences. Although they do note that customers are the least important factor in their business oriented networking circumstance, it seems that almost all their business missions are attuned to maintaining the businessmen-customer relationship. Sometimes this may be derived from an inherent market making process. For instance, when I asked what action the respondent (business owner) was taking to provide proper service for the customers and for enhancement of management, all the answers were found to have similar characteristics. One business owner expressed his attitude towards the customers as follows: “*Usually I don’t classify my customers into two groups as important and less important, every single customer is equally important for me*”.

This idea is particularly important in building up little traditional entrepreneurship. For instance, once I had a chance to observe the practice of catering equally to all customers when I was conducting an interview in a tailor shop. Although the tailor had been busy with miscellaneous work of the other customers, he accepted to repair a dress belonging to a woman, who was also his neighbour. When she left, the tailor said to me that, this type of work is usually time-consuming and less profitable. However, they are obliged to accept any kind of work in order to maintain good neighbourliness and good-will with customers. The tailor expressed this in his words: “*Everybody comes here to get good service from us; our duty is to provide maximum customer-friendly and prompt service for them*”.

As stated before, the indebtedness is an integral part of everyday life of the low-income sector. Therefore the most knowledgeable person about the worries and grievances of neighbours is the neighbourhood shop owner. Although, most business personnel articulate their lack of enthusiasm in maintaining business relationship with disadvantaged communities, some successfully manipulate the market condition within the poor. One food and household stuff retailer commented on his managerial experiences with disadvantaged groups: “*Some of my customers are undergoing financial difficulties; or otherwise almost all people have bad periods sometime in their lifetime; so I don’t hesitate to sell on credit; I know we are interdependent on each other; if they have money they will pay back later*”.

One shop owner revealed the secret of the success of his business as: “*Punctuality, quality goods, and attractive prices are ideologies of my businesses*”. These ideas are very much in agreement with modern concepts of business management. Another medium-scale business owner who employs several shop assistants divulged how far he has been dedicated to building up his business systematically: “*I don't close my shop without finishing off everyday account balancing; I often emphasize to my shop assistants not to leave until they finished cleaning and tidying up at the end of the day*” Often these form of businesses have succeeded with high dedicated, self-exploitative experiences.

The one pawn brokering and money lending service interviewed in this study provides evidence for the efficiency and management capacity of bottom line businesses. Although there are modern and established monetary services available in the bazaar and nearby town area, the entrepreneur has been successful in retaining the traditional pawn-brokering and money lending facility. He stated: “*You can see there are two reputed banks established on the left and right sides of my shop, but still a lot of customers come to me looking for my service*”. He is able to provide attractive packages to his customers that are not accessible in the formal banks and funding agencies. The efficiency, less formality in terms of documents, face-to-face contact with customers, and flexibility can be taken as the major peculiarities of his financial service. Therefore, concisely, all of these descriptive characteristics illustrate innovative and entrepreneurial actions of skilful entrepreneurs.

Likewise, this description reflects the characteristics of the under-development or the dependent market system in the third world. Although the market has been manipulated by the capitalistic system, it does not function properly to accomplish with all its requirements. The retailers act the role of market makers in the local market. Their action is innovative and entrepreneurial enough as the representatives of mainstream market makers. The goods are also supplied at the sufficient levels. However the market does not perform properly as a result of lack of competitive buyers or the third factor. The lack of credibility of consumers seems to be the cause of slow progress of the buying and selling mechanism of this type of market.

8. CONCLUSIONS

Thus, the study has shown distinguishing entrepreneurial approaches of two different actions of bottom line and the mainstream business classes. When mainstream business holders obtain all kinds of financial, security, and other infrastructural facilities provided by the concurrent capitalistic market system, the bottom line seems to be automatically expelled from the mechanism. Consequently, some informal manners of accumulating capital like *seettu* system and indefinite social networking structures like *bajar* seemed to have appeared as options from the bottom. Therefore, this conceptual contribution will be important to identify the nature of two levels of economic patterns not only of the deprived business community but also common for the underdeveloped urban sector of the globe. With regard to the consideration of contributions to the enhancement of the discipline, the study has sought to fill the narrow epistemological space in unravelling the legacy of minority and marginal groups, entrepreneurship, and social networking studies. The study has also attempted to inspect internal sub divisions of bottom-line entrepreneurship while the much of the existing literature on entrepreneurship has at times sought to group the entire community into a single cultural diagram. Therefore the study has cast a new gaze upon comparing entrepreneurialism of ‘outsider’ entrepreneurs and mainstream business groups. In that sense, the study has stated the necessity of different dimensions of social theory in terms of extracting the essence of ethnic entrepreneurship.

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