Dr. D. Y. Patil Unitech Society's

Volume - 4

Dr. D. Y. Patil B-School, PGDM, Pune

CASEPEDIA

(Case Studies in Management)



EDITORS

| Dr. Amol Gawande | Dr. Atul Kumar | Dr. Lokesh Arora | Dr. Samira Raki

Dr. D. Y. Patil B-School, PGDM, Pune

Center for Case Development

Presents

CASEPEDIA

Volume - 4

A Collection of

Case Studies in Management

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PRESIDENT'S FOREWARD

At Dr. D. Y. Patil B-School, we are transforming potential into power with the unwavering support of our stakeholders and partners. The institution has consistently set new benchmarks of excellence, not only for itself but for its peers as well. I am confident that Dr. D. Y. Patil B-School remains true to its vision of offering top-tier management



education, fostering innovation, and contributing positively to industries and society at large. Our focus on teaching, research, and community service stands as a testament to our commitment to progress.

As we reflect on our journey, it is heartening to witness how far the institution has advanced. With our passion and determination, I am certain that Dr. D. Y. Patil B-School will achieve even greater milestones in the future.

In this fourth edition of Casepedia, you will find contributions from esteemed faculty and industry leaders, whose insights, dedication, and unique perspectives have enriched the case development process.

I extend my best wishes for your success in all your future endeavours.

Dr. P. D. Patil PresidentDr. D. Y. Patil Unitech Society,
Pune, India

MESSAGE FROM SECRETARY

It is with immense pride that I work together with an exceptional team to bring you Casepedia Volume 4. The Center for Case Development of Dr. D. Y. Patil B-School has been dedicated to curating and publishing high-quality cases to support case-based



learning, a teaching methodology that remains ever-relevant in today's educational landscape.

These cases are meticulously designed to nurture creative, adaptive business professionals who excel in analytical thinking and proactive decision-making. I am incredibly impressed by the depth and clarity of the cases, which have greatly enhanced the quality of this publication.

Best Wishes,

Dr. Somnath Patil, Secretary Dr. D. Y. Patil Unitech Society Pune. India

Preface

In an age dominated by Artificial Intelligence and advanced technologies, the landscape of management education continues to evolve. Yet, some educational methods, such as the case study approach, remain timeless. When a thorough exploration of a topic is required, case studies have proven to be one of the most effective tools for teaching. Case studies not only serve as a method for applying knowledge but also foster critical thinking, problemsolving, and decision-making skills among students.

The power of case studies lies in their ability to stimulate diverse interpretations of the same data, encouraging a variety of perspectives in the analysis of complex scenarios. The Center for Case Development at Dr. D. Y. Patil B-School is committed to promoting this culture by publishing high-quality cases that mirror the intricacies of real-world business challenges.

By engaging with these case studies, students and readers alike will cultivate the ability to think critically, make reflective judgments, and make informed decisions.

Center for Case Development

Dr. D. Y. Patil B-School

MESSAGE FROM THE EDITORS

Dear Readers,

We are thrilled to present to you the fourth edition of Casepedia –

Volume 4: Case Studies in Management (ISBN: 978-93-48413-

13-0). It is often said that "Knowledge is only valuable when put into

practice," and the best way to apply knowledge is through case

studies.

In this volume, we have curated a wide array of cases from diverse

domains such as Human Resources, Finance, Marketing, Information

Technology, leadership, sustainable development, strategic

management and Hospitality. These cases provide both exploratory

and illustrative insights into real-world business challenges.

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to all the scholars

who have contributed to this volume. Their hard work, dedication,

and thoughtful contributions have been instrumental in making this

publication a reality.

We hope Casepedia continues to serve as a source of multi-

disciplinary learning for years to come.

Happy Reading! Best Regards,

Dr. Amol Gawande Dr. Atul Kumar Dr. Lokesh Arora

Dr. Samira Raki

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Culture and Social Influence on Fashion Consumer Behaviour : Insights from the Movie 'The Devil Wears Prada'

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Abstract:

The movie 'The Devil Wears Prada' provides an in-depth analysis of social and cultural factors that affect fashion consumption. It demonstrates how fashion can be a vector of social hierarchy and cultural manifestation. It proves the role organizational culture exerts on the self-image and purchasing behavior of individuals, paying more attention to how fashion aids in career advancement and social status enhancement. In the movie, we notice how powerful people can dictate what is in and out of style and how people choose to wear clothes. It's not just about the protagonist's preferences, who can choose styles because she likes them; it is about her struggle to adapt to the new environment. Transformation in her case also proves that fashion is not just what people wish, but also the desire to comply with others' requirements. This narrative illustrates how fashion leads to and/or reinforces socialization, cultural values, and norms.

It makes us think about the extent of the influence of the fashion world on our decisions and actions as consumers.

1. Social Context and Consumer Behavior

Social standards and norms play an important role in the decision-making process of a consumer, who is considerably impacted by social environment such as family, friends, colleagues, or any other social structure and norms. For instance, consumers often purchase products, to either fit in or stand out based on whether a certain selection would be normative behavior in their society. The understanding of social norms and values is of utmost prominence for businesses when creating marketing strategies and for individuals to make aware choices in a linked society.

For the quintessential audience, brand differentiation and reputation are of absolute importance. High-end fashion clothing is seen as expensive and of high value therefore those who wear such clothing are seen as elite members of society, influenced by celebrities who spread these affluent styles. Social media has played a key role in creating such demands. For instance, it draws the attention of consumers who are value-oriented and seek luxury brands, towards eco-friendly luxury goods.

Problem statement

As portrayed in different sequences of the movie 'The Devil Wears Prada', there exists a complex relationship between different cultures, social classes, and individual beliefs that influence one's behavior regarding the consumption of luxury items. Even though the story effectively demonstrates how cultural norms and social expectations shape the identities and consumption patterns of leading characters like Andrea Sachs and Miranda Priestly, the core issue can be boiled down to understanding the subtle compromises

each of these people must make regarding their integrity and fashion industry practices.

The main goal is, therefore, to explain how the multidimensional factors, including but not limited to culture, social class, and workplace interactions, as well as one's ambition and work, combine to explain the evolution of the character's interactions with the world of high-end fashion. This investigation can yield important insights into the tensions between structure and agency, as well as the role of the fashion industry in both mirroring and perpetuating societal hierarchies.

Addressing this problem can contribute to the scholarly discourse on consumer culture theory by providing a comprehensive understanding of the intricate linkages between cultural forces, social structure, and individual decision-making in the context of luxury consumption.

2. Movie background

"The Devil Wears Prada" is a funny and dramatic movie that came out in 2006. It was directed by David Frankel and is inspired by the book "The Devil Wears Prada" written by Lauren Weisberger in 2003. In the movie, Meryl Streep plays the role of Miranda Priestly, who is the powerful chief editor of a renowned fashion magazine. This popular movie guides us to learn about cultural norms and social impacts on shopping habits. Its setting, the glamorous fashion world, leads us through brands, trends, and how people view themselves. We explore how status symbols affect choices and aspirations. The glitz highlights desires. It paints how an industry masters image importance.

Looking at themes like self-identity and professional ambition, the film unpacks what drives people's buying. Prominent is status being stylish and successful. We observe characters pursuing an elite label, conspicuous consumption directed by social pressures. Buying isn't just shopping. It's a quest for belonging.

Movie main characters

Anne Hathaway played Andy Sachs. Andy was a young woman who wanted to be a journalist. She became Miranda's assistant.

Miranda was a very powerful woman. What she said and liked greatly affected the people around her. This shows how authority impacts choices made by others.

The movie shows how people feel pressure to be considered beautiful, successful, and stylish. It depicts how peer influence and social standards shape consumer behavior. By featuring expensive fashion brands and luxury items, the film explores themes of brand loyalty, excessive consumption, and the appeal of luxury.

3. Movie Analysis Methods

"The Devil Wears Prada" could employ various methodological approaches to analyze different aspects of the film, such as its depiction of the fashion industry, its portrayal of workplace dynamics, and its exploration of themes like ambition, identity, and power. Here are the methodological approaches that could be utilized:

Content Analysis:

Conduct a thorough content analysis of the film to examine its portrayal of the fashion industry, including its depiction of key characters, fashion trends, workplace culture, and power dynamics. This method could involve identifying recurring themes, analyzing dialogue and character interactions, and exploring visual elements such as costume design and set decoration.

Narrative Analysis:

Break down the details of the narrative and reconstruct it using the film's storyline from a macro-sociological perspective to emphasize the major plot structure, character descriptions and functions, and the use of symbols. This might involve looking for plot lines, character intent and interest and associated drama or conflicts, and the use of symbols and metaphors and what they stand for.

4. Movie Analysis Results

Film analysis can consider themes and patterns from sociocultural beliefs and norms as well as from social critiques that can be useful in the context of films and their stories.

Indicators of Social Class and Social Class Pyramid

Indicators of social class in the luxury fashion industry are multifaceted, often including the exclusivity of the brand, the rarity of the items, and the heritage and craftsmanship behind them. Highend brands often signal social class through their pricing strategies and limited-edition releases.

Characters' designer clothing and participation in exclusive events signify their elevated social status within the fashion elite.

Pursuit of Prestige: People in the film work hard to follow fashion trends. They do this because being stylish is valued. Those close to Miranda Priestly go far. They pursue looking fancy and prestigious. Society sees fashion as a status symbol. The movie shows characters striving for this prestige.

Beauty Standards: The movie also reflects the social norms surrounding beauty. Characters are often seen adjusting their lifestyles, diets, and wardrobes to fit into the industry's narrow definitions of beauty, highlighting how cultural standards can dictate consumer choices.



Picture 1: Screenshot from the Devil Wears Prada Source: Reynaud (2024)

The social class pyramid in the luxury fashion industry is a hierarchy that reflects the levels of exclusivity and prestige associated with different brands and consumers. Miranda's position depicted in Picture 1 symbolizes the upper class within the social pyramid dynamics of the luxury fashion industry. In the context of social pyramids, the upper class typically occupies the top tier, representing individuals with significant wealth, influence, and status. Miranda Priestly, as a prominent figure in the fashion world, embodies the characteristics associated with the upper class, such as sophistication, exclusivity, and authority.

Within the social pyramid of the luxury fashion industry, Miranda's role as the editor-in-chief of Runway magazine places her at the pinnacle of influence and power. Her refined taste, high standards of fashion, and overwhelming personality place her as a trendsetter and taste-maker who determines the standards and aesthetics of the industry.

Furthermore, Miranda's relations with other characters in the industry, as depicted in the scene, demonstrate the social relations and structure that are embedded within a fashion-based social pyramid. Such characters' interaction, inference, hierarchy, and influence highlight how hard it is to climb even a few rungs on the social ladder of the luxury fashion industry.

Changes or Mobility Within Social Classes

Social mobility in the luxurious fashion industry can be a strong indication of society's changing outlook alongside the market dynamic forces. At the start of the movie, Andy is introduced as an eager journalist from a modest family with no resources to go anywhere up the social class pyramid.

However, Andy's transformation throughout the movie explains the influence of socioeconomic status on consumer preferences and decision-making. At the outset, fashion is the last category she cares about, but gradually, alongside her career advancement, luxury brands become a symbol of her success and socioeconomic expectations. This transformation illustrates how the fashion world can be considered as the cut-throat competitive world of social hierarchies.

The office scene image shows Andy's character's journey of change and adaptations within the high fashion social pyramid. The difference between Andy's modest background and Miranda'smodern office environment echoes the challenges that Andy encounters in dealing with the upper echelon of Runway magazine.



Picture 2: Screenshot from The Devil Wears Prada Source: Cummings (2016)

Impact of Social Class on Consumption Patterns

Social class significantly impacts consumption patterns in the luxury fashion industry. Higher social classes tend to engage in conspicuous consumption, using luxury goods as symbols of status and wealth. This behavior is influenced by subjective social class and the desire for social distinction.

Characters' lifestyles, including attendance at exclusive events and engagement in extravagant shopping experiences, reflect the consumption patterns associated with their elite social class.

In the realm of fashion, different subcultures such as the high-ranking fashion aficionados and nonconformists have a key role in shaping consumer trends and market behavior. The distinction between the 'in' and 'out' groups greatly influence the fashion sector." The insiders' preferences and endorsements can make or break fashion trends, highlighting the power of niche groups in driving market dynamics.

The portrayal of consumer behavior in 'The Devil Wears Prada' mirrors important societal issues, including the impact of media on

consumer attitudes and the pressures to fit societal norms. Media plays a significant role in shaping consumer views and actions, as shown in the film through fashion magazines and media's influence on beauty ideals and choices. The characters in the movie also grapple with staying true to themselves while navigating industry expectations, reflecting the larger societal debate between conformity and individuality.

In picture 3, Andy's transformation involves a shift towards luxury brands, high-end designer clothing, and accessories that are characteristic of the affluent social class. Her wardrobe evolves to include upscale fashion items that reflect a refined and sophisticated taste, mirroring the consumption patterns of the privileged elite within the fashion world.

Andy's journey highlights the influence of social class on shaping one's consumption behaviors, preferences, and lifestyle choices as they navigate different social spheres and aspire to fit into exclusive circles within the fashion industry.



Picture 3: Screenshot from The Devil Wears Prada Source: Cummings (2016)

Conclusion

The film "The Devil Wears Prada" highlights how cultural beliefs and traditions impact people's decisions in the fashion industry. Factors like social identity including ethnicity, religion, gender, and economic standing greatly influence what consumers are drawn to. Sub-cultural groups in the film also influence mainstream fashion choices. Furthermore, the film portrays larger societal shifts and obstacles, such as how media influences perceptions and the struggle between fitting in and being true to oneself. Recognizing the impact of culture, society, and different groups is essential in studying consumer behavior and advertising. This understanding allows for better engagement with various consumer demographics and adjusting to evolving societal norms.

Teaching Notes

Synopsis

The video case study examines how cultural norms, social identity, and subcultures influence consumer behavior through the movie "The Devil Wears Prada." It explores how the fashion industry in the film mirrors broader societal shifts and obstacles, emphasizing the role of media, social standing, and conformity in consumer choices.

Keywords:

Fashion consumer behavior, Social and cultural influences, Social mobility, Cultural norms

Target Audience:

This video case study is designed for:

Students studying marketing, consumer behavior, fashion, sociology, and related fields.

It aims to provide a deeper insight into the complex connection between culture, social identity, and consumer behavior in the fashion industry.

Learning Objectives:

Gain an understanding of how cultural norms and values influence consumer

Discussion Questions:

How does social identity affect consumer behavior in movies, and how does this translate to real-life consumer decisions?

What is the significance of sub-cultural or niche groups in shaping consumer trends and market dynamics? How can marketers effectively target these segments?

How does the way consumers are depicted in the film mirror larger social patterns and obstacles? What does this mean for marketing approaches within the fashion sector?

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DLF: Firing on all cylinders

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Introduction:

Set up in 1946 by Chaudhary Raghvendra Singh, DLF began its operations with the development of 22 urban colonies in Delhi. During 1985, the company ventured into little known region of Gurgaon, building exceptional living and working spaces for India's young professionals. Today, DLF is India's largest real estate company which is publicly listed. It deals with residential, retail and commercial properties in 15 states and 24 cities (dlf.in, 2019).

Two Operating Segments:

The company operates in two segments –

- 1) rental business and
- 2) development business.

Since its IPO in 2007, the company has developed and leased out 28 msf of area, while it has developed and sold 85 msf of area, o/w 77 msf is residential and 8 is commercial.

Area developed

Cumulative area developed and delivered since IPO in 2007 28 msf Area developed and leased out 85 msf Area developed and sold 77 msf Residential area developed developed

Figure 1: DLF – Area Developed (Source: Investor Presentation, 2019)

(Source: Investor Frederication, 2015)

- 1) Rental business offers cash flow visibility.
- 2) It has ~33 msf of operational assets with 3.2 msf under development and ~19 msf with development potential.
- 3) It hosts 1000+ tenants including many Fortune 500 companies.
- **4)** The development business has INR 12,300 Crs of ready inventory.
- 5) It boasts of ~204 msf of staretgic land reserves which can be developed in the future.



Figure 1: DLF – Overview of Operating segments (Source: Investor Presentation, 2019)

Growth Drivers for Rental business:

Sr.	Area	Description			
1	Contractual Escalation	~15% escalation every 3 years			
		is built into the contracts			
2	MTM lease rentals	Higher rental resets for			
		expiring leases			
3	Assets under construction	3.2 msf under construction			
4	Future inorganic growth	Given its strong free cash			
		flows			

Growth Drivers for Development business:

Sr.	Area	Description
1	Inventory	Inventory of INR 12,300 Crs.
2	New projects	~16.6 msf projects announced
3	Land reserves	204 msf of strategic land reserves

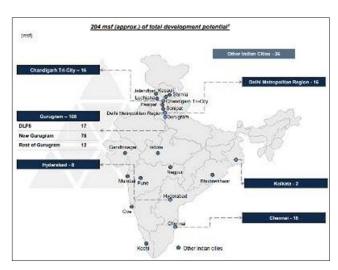


Figure 2: DLF – Land Reserves (**Source:** Investor Presentation, 2019)

TEACHING NOTES

Synopsis

DLF is India's largest real estate company. It has two operating segments – first its rental business which assures it of steady cash flows and second its development portfolio. The rental business is attractive considering the rent inflation built into the lease agreements as well as mark-to-market growth from expired leases. The development business is attractive given its large inventory and land reserves. All in all, DLF is firing on all cylinders.

Target Audience

MBA and PGDBM Students Senior corporate leadership

Learning Objectives

Different revenue models for real estate sector Growth strategies for annuity and development businesses How to value land reserves

Discussion Questions

- 1. Describe growth drivers for DLF's rental business.
- **2.** Describe growth drivers for DLF's development business.
- **3.** Describe how land reserves are key to DLF's future growth strategy.

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Tech Mahindra: Sustainability Metrics for Human Capital

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Introduction:

Tech Mahindra is a leading IT services company with revenues of \$5 bn and employs more than 120,000 professionals across 90 countries and more than 1,000 customers including Fortune 500 companies. The company is focused on new technologies such as AI, 5G, Blockchain etc. to help customers achieve digital transformation. The company is among the top 15 IT service providers worldwide ("Techmahindra.com", 2019).

Company's Business Model:

The metrics related to the Human Capital are training, rewards, attrition and satisfaction surveys.

Inputs	Activities	Dutputs	Outcomes	
Intellectual Capital driving development of new products, platforms and solutions.	Setting up of Moléri labs to other new age enkillance. R&D. Technited Charter and 3-4-3 Strategy. Cuthboration, on-amountain and on-creation.	31% reverse from digital NR 311 Million spent on R&D	Institutionalization of an incovation Charter and Council Leunch of All for Addion	
Relationships with washunddars - ousloners, collaborators and partners, and academia.	Dahlporation and Co- innovation Co-creation Engagement with customers through various channels. New Age Delivery Models	Future ready solutions. Customer satisfaction and repeat outdomer	New Age Delivery Models - Day Ope and agile based delivery models that helps in faster delivery cycles.	
Human Capital - 100022 employees globally constitute the Techt family act as the key input for value creation	Increase in the handcount. Employee re-skelling and opth-skelling. Trainings on digital and new- age behindlogies like AL, AR, Automation, etc. Employee Engagement and Podestion.	70% employees trained in digital. 42% employees rewarded during the year. Centried as a great place to work.	Increase in IT Admison from 16% to 20.8% 4.25% improvement in the TechNI Cores Survey Score.	
Financial Capital Increase in Roserrae, EBITA and PAT to drive growth, strategic acquastions, tromose in head count.	Margin expansion Operational efficiencies.	Revenue increase of 12.9% to £347.419 Million. Consolidated Profit After Tax of £42.875 Millions No of active clients increased to 983.	85% dividend payou) compared to 43% last year. 26,4% return on capital invested. Buy back of equity shares.	
Natural Capital	Making Suntainability Fersonal. Integrating sustainability arth strategy Improving efficiency of data centres.	Science Based Tergsta sporoved Launched All for Climate Action	11.63% reduction in Scape 2 and 8.3% reduction in Scape 1 amissions. Total Scape 1-2 reduction by 11.56%. 21.13% reduction in energy intensity. 15.2% Electricity from Remeasible energy.	
Social and Relation Capital	CSR Indialives to support education, employability and disability.	167 high-impact projects with 90°s partners. Reacting out to 150,000°s children, teachers and youth across locations. 100 smart Centres at 11 locations to enhance employability.	Trained 17,595 young persons under SMART, of which 1,368 were persons with disabilities. More than 70% of the graduates are placed in jobs. 200 young men and women trained in SMART Academy for Digital Media and Legislatos.	

Figure 1: Tech Mahindra – Business Model

(**Source:** Sustainability Report 2019)

Sustainability Governance Structure:

The company has a well-defined hierarchy to deal with sustainability. The HR department is responsible for various initiatives and various committees review the same.

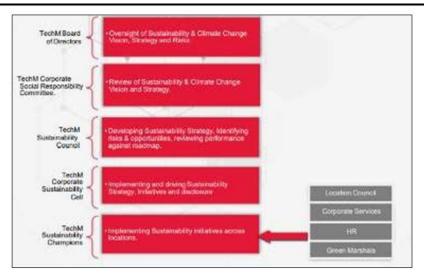


Figure 2: Governance Structure

(**Source**: Sustainability Report 2019)

HR Engagement Tool:

The HR engagement tools at the company have been developed based on survey of associates. The tools capture associate needs and level of engagement and help the management understand workplace strengths and weaknesses. The company conducts a survey of employees—TechM CARES which measures associate experience with regards to career alignment, recognition and empowerment. The action planning feature ensures collaborative decision making.

Sustainability Metrics:

- 1) Below is the company's performance against various metrics.
- 2) The employee engagement score has gradually improved from 3.7 in FY15-16 to 3.9 in FY18-19.
- **3**) Gender diversity has improved a tad but needs to improve further against the target.

- **4**) Retention or attrition has increased and needs to improve significantly against the target.
- 5) In terms of learning, the company has done well with average 47 hours of training.

Aspect	Mahindra Sustainability Framework	Target	Baseline 2015-16	Progress 2016-17	Progress 2017-18	Progress 2018-19	7arget 2020- 2021
ENABLING STAKEHOLDERS TO RISE							
Employee Engagement and Retention	Build a great place to work	Employee Engagement Score	3.7	3.78	3.76	3.92	3.9
Gender Diversity	Foster inclusive development	Women in Senior Management	8%	8.4%	7.32%	8.68%	12%
Integrating Sustainability into Business	Make Sustainability Personal	Sustainability training of total associates	25%	27%	27%	100%	100%
Talent Retention	Build a great place to work	IT Attrition rate	20%	17%	18%	21%	17%
Learning and Development	Build a great place to work	Continuous Learning for all Associates (Hours Per Person Per Year)	40	40	39.11	47,44	40

Figure 3: Sustainability Metrics

(Source: Sustainability Report 2019)

TEACHING NOTES

Synopsis

This case study focuses on Tech Mahindra's sustainability metrics for its human capital. The company rightly focuses on human capital as it is the most important input for the company. The outcome is measured in terms of satisfaction surveys and attrition rate. The company has done well on some of the metrics, however, needs to improve the retention rate.

Target Audience

MBA and PGDBM Students

enior corporate leadership

Learning Objectives

Operating model for sustainability Sustainability governance structure ustainability measures for human capital

Discussion Questions

- **1.** Describe HCL's operating model for sustainability with regards to human capital.
- **2.** How well has HCL fared in terms of the sustainability metrics?
- **3.** Which are the areas of improvement for the company going forward?

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Hindalco Industries: Integrated Aluminium Operations

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Abstract:

Hindalco is one of low-cost producers of Aluminum worldwide. It has achieved low-cost operation by integrating its manufacturing processes. It has access to bauxite and coal which are the key inputs for producing Alumina and in turn Aluminum. Its plants are in close proximity to the raw materials and are logistically very well connected. This provides Hindalco a great strategic advantage and it is all set to tap the fast-growing Aluminium market in India.

Introduction:

Hindalco Industries Limited is the flagship metals company of the Aditya Birla Group. With a combined turnover of over \$15 bn, Hindalco is an industry leader in aluminum and copper. In India, the organization's aluminum units across the nation over include the range of tasks from bauxite mining, alumina refining, coal mining,

captive power plants and aluminum purifying to downstream rolling, extrusions and foils. Today, Hindalco positions among the worldwide aluminum majors as an integrated producer and a footprint of 9 nations outside India.

Aluminium Value Chain:

Hindalco is present across the value chain, in terms of raw materials – bauxite and coal, alumina, primary metal and value-added products. Moreover, it has captive power plants.

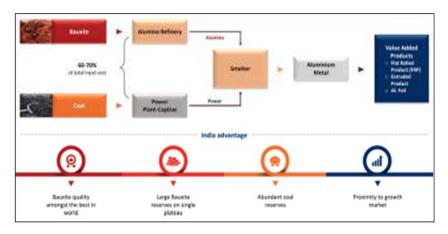


Figure 1: Aluminium Value Chain

(Source: Investor Presentation, 2018)

Raw material security:

- 1) Hindalco has access to both bauxite and coal, the key inputs for producing alumina.
- 2) It has capacity to produce 3 MTPA Alumina against 1.3 MTPA Aluminium capacity.
- 3) Access to excellent quality bauxite.
- **4**) Alumina refineries are located in close proximity to bauxite mines.

- 5) Excellent logistics using a long-distance conveyer belt.
- 6) Hindalco ranks in first quartile cost producer of Aluminium.
- 7) One of the most economical producers of Alumina.
- 8) Has long term coal offtake contracts with Coal India.
- 9) Have a few captive coal mines
- 10) The balance demand is fulfilled through open market purchase.

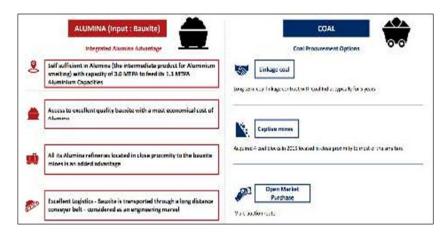


Figure 2: Raw Material Security

(Source: Investor Presentation, 2018)

Utkal Alumina – One of the most economical Alumina Plant:

- 1) Utkal Alumina plant is located in Rayagada district of Orissa with a current capacity of 1.5 MTPA.
- 2) Primarily supplies alumina to Mahan, Aditya & Hirakud smelters through dedicated BTAP wagons
- 3) With state-of-the-art technology from the world's best technology supplier Rio-Tinto-Alcan
- 4) Bauxite transported from mine site to refinery through a longdistance conveyer belt and it has access to good quality bauxite

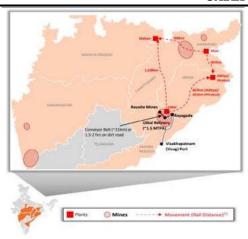


Figure 3: Utkal Alumina – Proximity to Raw Materials

(Source: Investor Presentation, 2018)

Aluminium and Alumina Production:

Hindalco's Aluminum production capacity is well backed by its Alumina production capacity. For

FY18, the Alumina production was 2.9 mt while Aluminium production was 1.3 mt.

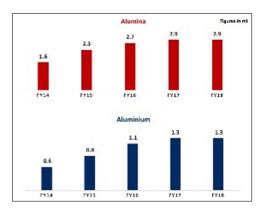


Figure 4: Alumina and Aluminium Production

(Source: Investor Presentation, 2018)

Huge Opportunity for Growth:

Given the low per capita consumption in India, Hindalco is all set to tap this attractive market.

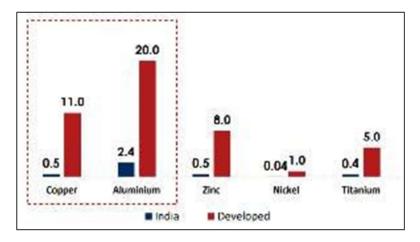


Figure 5: Huge Opportunity for Aluminium in India

(Source: Investor Presentation, 2018)

Conclusion:

Hindalco represents a classic case of integrated Aluminium operations. The company with access to bauxite and coal which are key ingredients to produce Alumina and in turn Aluminum enjoys low-cost operations. The company ranks in one of the most economical Alumina production and in the first quartile for Aluminium production across the globe. The company's plants benefit from close proximity to the mines and are very well-connected logistics wise. Hindalco's integrated aluminum operations gives it a very strong strategic advantage.

Teaching Notes: Synopsis

This case study focuses on Hindalco's integrated Aluminium operations. The company has access to bauxite and coal which are the key inputs for Alumina production and in turn Aluminium. The plants are located in close proximity of the raw materials and are logistically very well connected. The integrated operations result in low-cost operations and make Hindalco one of the lowest cost producers of Aluminium in the world.

Keywords: Aluminium, Alumina, Bauxite, Coal

Target Audience

MBA and PGDBM Students Senior corporate leadership

Learning Objectives

- 1) Metal value chains
- 2) Integrated operations
- 3) Low-cost manufacturing advantage

Discussion Questions

- 1) Describe Hindalco's integrated Aluminium production operations.
- 2) Why is Hindalco one of the lowest cost Alumina producers in the world?
- 3) How is Hindalco placed to tap enormous growth opportunity for Aluminium in India?

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Nestle: Delivering long-term shareholder value

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Introduction:

Nestle is world's number one food and beverage company. With more than 2000 brands, the company is present in 191 countries across the globe.

Nestle India, subsidiary of Nestle, is present in the country for more than 100 years and has 8 manufacturing facilities – Moga, Choladi, Nanjangud, Samalkha, Ponda and Bicholim, Pantnagar and Tahliwal.

Nestle India manufactures some famous brands such as Nescafe, Milkybar, Maggi, Bar One, Kit Kat, Nestea and Milkmaid (Nestle, 2019).

Long Term Shareholder Returns:

- 1) Nestle is one of the premium FMCG companies in India.
- 2) It has delivered stellar shareholder returns over the last twenty years.

- **3**) From 2001 to 2019, Nestle's market cap is up 23 x vs. FMCG index 12 x (i.e. almost double than the peer group)
- **4**) During FY01-19, the company has delivered 2,234% shareholder return which translates to CAGR of 19.3%.

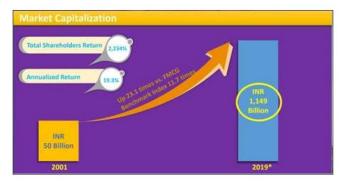


Figure 1: Nestle Shareholder Return

(Source: Investor Presentation, 2019)

Shareholder returns underpinned by strong operating performance:

1) The company's sales has grown by a CAGR of 14% during 2001-2014 and by 11.5% during 2001-2018.

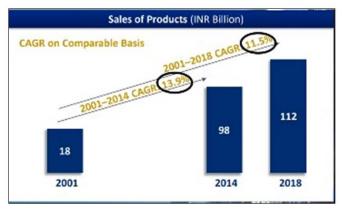


Figure 2: Sales Growth

(Source: Investor Presentation, 2019)

2) The company's operating performance has grown by a CAGR of 16.3% during 2001-2014 and by 14.1% during 2001-2018.



Figure 3: Operating Profit Growth

(Source: Investor Presentation, 2019)

3) The company's EPS has grown by a CAGR of 17.9% during 2001-2014 and by 15.6% during 2001-2018.



Figure 4: EPS Growth

(Source: Investor Presentation, 2019)

Operating performance driven by strong brand performance:

The strong operating performance is attributable to its brands which are typically number one in their respective categories.



Figure 5: Nestle Brands

(Source: Investor Presentation, 2019)

TEACHING NOTES

Synopsis

This is a case study focused on how Nestle has delivered stellar shareholder returns over the long term. During the last two decades, the company has outperformed its peers, with 23 x returns vs 12 x returns. This substantial outperformance is a function of its sales, operating profit and earnings growth over the same period. In turn, the strong operating performance is attributable to its strong and number one brands.

Target Audience

MBA and PGDBM Students Senior corporate leadership

Learning Objectives

Long term shareholder return

Underlying drivers of stock performance

Brand performance

Discussion Questions

- 1. Describe Nestle's strong shareholder return track-record.
- **2.** What are the drivers for this strong shareholder returns?
- **3.** Do you think Nestle will be able to deliver similar growth going forward and why?

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Global Brand Boycott: Case Study of McDonald's Morocco

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Abstract

In today's globalized marketplace, consumer behavior is shaped by social media, activism, and ethical consideration. From this competitive environment has emerged brand global boycotts, a potent weapon to force both branding strategy and corporate policy implementation. McDonald's Morocco was the target of a virulent boycott campaign in response to McDonald's financial supports Israel and its army.

The boycott hit religious, economic and social nerves that caused the franchise to take a defensive marketing stance. McDonald's Morocco responded with more transparent communication, reinforcement of local identity and strategic public relations along with evidenced corporate social responsibility initiatives. These strategies aimed to reduce negative impacts and rebuild the trust while building a local presence, these are long term efforts toward resilience.

Keywords: McDonald's Morocco, boycott, defensive marketing, social media, corporate social responsibility, local identity, crisis management

1. Organizational Context

Consumer behavior is influenced by a multitude of factors in the modern globalized marketplace such as social media, activism and ethics. Global brand boycotts have-bubbled up in this dynamic environment. These network-empowered and media-enabled coordinated campaigns have the power to reshape brand perceptions and firm practices.

Social media has undoubtedly played a role in the globalization of brand boycotts, offering potentially powerful ways to organize and mobilize consumer voices. This has also allowed for virtual communities to come together around similar concerns and objectives, allowing consumers to collectively hold companies accountable on anything from working conditions all the way through green innovation. Pro-Palestinian groups have also initiated boycott calls against western brands like McDonald's angry in response to the chain's backing of the Israeli army.

McDonald's opened its first outlet at Casablanca in 1992. It was the starting point for further expansion in North Africa. By 2024, the franchise will have over 70 restaurants in key cities including Rabat, Marrakech, Tangier and Fes demonstrating a significant penetration of businesses into Morocco.

Morocco's franchises are operated by First Rest International, a local company that has controlled the rights since the brand's opening in the country. This local management underscores McDonald's dedication to assimilating within the Moroccan market and economic structure. Additionally, McDonald's

Morocco is a large job creator, with more than 5,300 employees working at its various sites. This comprises jobs held directly in the restaurants, as well those provided via its supply chain.

2. McDonald's Problem: The Boycott Campaign

The McDonald's Morocco boycott is trigger by religious and social motivations.

Religious Motivation:

The primary religious reason for the boycott emanates from McDonald's support to the Israeli army against the Palestinians. Predominantly Muslims, Moroccan consumers consider this practice to be against their religious and moral values. This sentiment was fired up by the Israeli franchise actions like feeding Israeli soldiers for free as an implicit alignment with military actions against Palestinians.

Social Motivation:

The social motivations behind the boycott are closely linked to broader trends in social justice and activism. It is a movement that symbolizes the growing sense of collective agency among Moroccan consumers; an eagerness to shape corporate behavior and make multinationals accountable for their actions. Which would be used to advocate and enforce ethical business practices, maintain corporate respect for human rights and oppose perceived injustices. This rise of social motivations has been increased by the use of social media, where customers who share similar values can organize and mobilize to make their voices loud enough against corporate wrongdoing.

3. McDonalds' Response Marketing Strategies

McDonald's Morocco has had to deal with consumer boycotts and heightened scrutiny in the midst of large political and social challenges. The controversy- largely unleashed by the Israel business' behavior during the war with Gaza, has posed more serious risks to the brand' reputation and performance. To respond, McDonald's Morocco elaborated and executed an exhaustive defensive marketing mix to limit boycott outcomes. This includes clear communication & public relations, local identity & community engagement along with strategic PR that goes hand in glove with strong corporate social responsibility.

3.1 Transparent Communication and Public Relations

The franchise has communicated loud and clearly via press releases, social media updates and public statements. These communications are intended to clear the franchise's non-political message and highlight its operational disassociation from the global entity, especially given problematic actions of other franchises such as Israeli. Senior executives, including the CEO, have offered public statements in a show of transparency and to stress that relations with Moroccan consumers are important.

Furthermore, to improve public image, McDonald's Morocco has recently launched local marketing campaigns highlighting its contributions to the Moroccan community. These campaigns focus on the employment created by the franchise over its almost 30 years in existence as well as the community support especially during the 2023 Earthquake. The company also has made efforts to tap into national media coverage by purchasing sponsored content and advertorials. Such pieces offer a factually correct story of the business, and how it is trying to stay non-political — helping shape those narratives as well as counteract negative news.

Moreover, McDonald's Morocco, takes social media particularly seriously and engages proactively with customers to counter disinformation attempts. It provides regular updates, shares posts in an engaging way and answer customer queries on time. McDonalds wisely used social media in managing the crisis during the time of boycott to minimize reputation damage and maintain consumer trust. In addition, the brand has been working with local influence's and community leaders to help endorse it. Local influence with loyal followers can spread McDonald's messages, accompany it to demonstrate the authenticity and transmit positive impact so that repositioning initiative will have greater significance among skeptical consumers.

3.2 Emphasizing Local Identity and Community Integration

McDonald's Morocco has put a lot of effort into stressing its Moroccan ownership and autonomy. The franchise has made it clear that is wholly Moroccan-owned and managed, with no connection to decisions of the global entity. That difference serves to create a perception of McDonald's Morocco as an indigenous business operating according to Moroccan values and needs, thus allowing it to avoid the controversies surrounding its global partners.

McDonald's Morocco has stepped up its commitment to connect with the local community, launching multiple campaigns. The franchise donates to local charities, sponsors education programs, and participates in community events. They not only yield hard benefits to local community but show that McDonald's is good corporate citizen with socially responsible mission in reestablishing trust and goodwill. The franchise also specifically caters its menu to meet the demands of Moroccan dietary practices by offering a McArabia sandwich and ensuring all outlets comply with local Halal standards.

To humanize the brand and demonstrate its commitment to giving back, highlighting local employees' contributions and stories has been a smart direction. The franchise focuses on using positive testimonials and stories from McDonald's Mourn staff about the kind of work environment there is in such company, while highlighting what this opportunity means for people working in Morocco. The initiative plays an active part in promoting McDonald's as not just another multi-national company, but a key local employer and community member.

Conclusion

In response to the boycott, McDonald's Morocco's managed comprehensive marketing strategies integrating transparent communication, local identity reinforcement, strategic public relations, corporate social responsibility initiatives. These strategies serve as a comprehensive example of crisis management, showcasing the need to pivot global brand practices according to local landscapes and the effectiveness of addressing multifaceted issues with multi-facet responses.

Teaching Notes

Synopsis

McDonald's Morocco was widely boycotted on account of accusations that they supported the Israeli military during Gaza conflict. This case study explores their marketing response strategies including transparent communication, leveraging local identity and public relations with corporate social responsibility initiatives. The strategies targeted damage control from the boycott, brand reputation, and McDonalds' identity.

Keywords: Fast Food Industry, Morocco, Boycott, Crisis Management, Social Media, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Local Identity, Public Relations.

Target Audience

This case study is suitable for undergraduate and graduate students in business, marketing, and management courses. It is particularly relevant for courses focusing on international business, crisis management, corporate social responsibility, and marketing strategies.

This case is appropriate for use with both undergraduate and postgraduate business, marketing or management students. The case can be used in specific international business, crisis management, corporate social responsibility and marketing strategy related course as well.

Learning Objectives

Understand the global brand boycotts dynamics.

Analyze brand crisis management and evaluate the corporate response against the boycott.

Assess consumer behavior during the boycott time.

Enhance strategic-thinking skills through the use of theories in practice to formulate defensive marketing strategies.

Discussion Questions

- **1.** Why was the boycott campaign against McDonald's Morocco launched?
- **2.** In what ways did religious and social issues play a part in leading up to the boycott?
- **3.** How did the transparent communication strategy of McDonald's Morocco stack up in addressing concerns?

- **4.** How was focusing on place-based identity and embedding within community in these more resilient initiatives offset the harm associated with boycott?
- **5.** How did McDonald's use digital platforms to alter consumer's perception?
- **6.** How the CSR initiatives by McDonald's Morocco did to help earn back consumer trust?
- 7. Any other additional tactics you would implement if in charge of McDonald's Morocco to take the brand a little further?
- **8.** What can McDonald's Morocco do to survive such crises and ensure resilience for the long term?
- **9.** What can other MNCs facing similar obstacles learn from the McDonald's Morocco story?
- **10.** How should firms get ready for and react to these crises in various cultural environments?

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HCL Technologies: CSR Activities

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Introduction:

HCL Technologies is a leading IT service company. It offers products and services though three divisions – IT & Business Services, Engineering & R&D Services and Products & Platforms. HCL offers services in several industry verticals such as Manufacturing, Financial Services, Telecom & Media, Technology & Services, Life Sciences & Healthcare, Retail & CPG and Public Services. HCL has a revenue of ~\$ 9 billion and employees 143,900 associates in 44 countries (hcltech.com, 2019).

HCL Foundation's Journey:

- 1) HCL's CSR activities are carried out through HCL Foundation.
- 2) HCL Foundation has three flagship programs HCL Samuday, HCL Grants and HCL Uday.

Table 1: HCL Foundation Timeline

Sr.	Year	Description
1	2011	HCL Foundation is registered.
2	2014	HCL Samuday, a flagship program launched with a
		focus on uplifting rural India.
3	2015	HCL Grant, launched which is one of the largest
		CSR Grants of India
4	2016	HCL Uday, HCL's urban development program

(Source: HCL Foundation Annual Report FY2019)

HCL's CSR Investments:

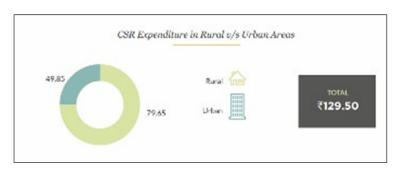


Figure 1: CSR Expenditure Breakup

(Source: HCL Foundation Annual Report FY2019)

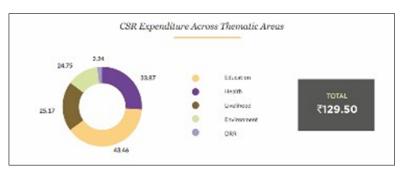


Figure 2: CSR Expenditure Breakup by area

(Source: HCL Foundation Annual Report FY2019)

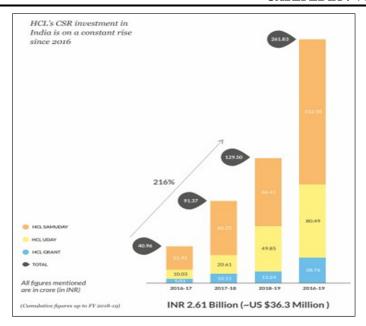


Figure 3: CSR Expenditure Breakup by program (**Source:** HCL Foundation Annual Report FY2019)

CSR Activities:

Table 2: HCL' CSR Activities

Sr.	Program	Activities
1	HCL Samuday	It is a rural development initiative. It works across six different thematic areas – Education, Agriculture, Infrastructure, Health, Water, Sanitation & Hygiene and Livelihood. The activities are accomplished
		through – Capacity building & training, community mobilization and awareness, knowledge management, technological solutions, process improvements and

2 HCL Grants	It focuses on sustainable rural
	development. The areas of activity are
	health & education and environment. It
	supports community led ecosystems – NGOs.
	Applications for grants are received through
	HCL Grant Portal, screening is based on
	application forms and field visits, then it is
	recommended to sub-jury and jury and then
	it is finally allotted.
3 HCL Uday	It focuses on urban community development
	in cities where HCL is present. The areas of
	activity are health, education, water,
	sanitation, environment, skill development.
	The beneficiaries are in the following cities –
	Chennai, Noida, Lucknow, Madurai,
	Bangalore, Kolkata, Pune, Hyderabad,
	Vijayawada, Nagpur, Coimbatore.

(**Source:** HCL Foundation Annual Report FY2019)

TEACHING NOTES

Synopsis

This case study focuses on HCL Technologies' CSR activity. The company's CSR activity is carried out through HCL Foundation. The Foundation has three flagship programs – HCL Samuday, HCL Grants and HCL Uday. While HCL Samuday and HCL Grants are focused on rural development, HCL Uday is focused on urban areas where HCL operates. These flagship programs work on several areas such as health, education, water, sanitation, skill development and environment. All in all, HCL is a very good corporate citizen.

Target Audience

MBA and PGDBM Students Senior corporate leadership

Learning Objectives

Various CSR activities Corporate citizenship Screening of CSR activities

Discussion Questions

- 1. Describe HCL's investments in CSR activities.
- 2. Describe HCL's various CSR activities.
- **3.** Do you think HCL is a good corporate citizen and why?

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Sun Pharma: Failure in USFDA Audits

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Introduction:

Founded in 1983, Sun Pharma is the fourth largest specialty generics company in the world. It employs more than 36,000 people across the world and reported sales of \$4.5 bn. It has 40 manufacturing facilities and supplies its products to over 100 countries.

Halol Facility gets 8 Observations:

- 1) Halol plant is one of largest facilities for Sun Pharma.
- 2) The plant's contribution to the revenues of Sun Pharma is around 15%.
- 3) US Food and Drug Authority (US FDA) conducted an audit at the Halol facility during December 3 to 13, 2019
- **4**) At the conclusion of the audit, US FDA issued form 483 which had 8 observations
- 5) One of the observations was related to the sampling procedure. This was a repeat observation.
- **6)** Other observations were –

Out of specification

Implementing controls to monitor environment related data

Correct test procedures for sample vials and their analysis

Incomplete documentation

Inadequate control procedures

Implementation of corrective actions

- 7) These observations, though not serious to attract a warning letter, are likely to take 3 months' time to get resolved.
- **8**) However, they suggest that quality issues are still lingering at Halol plant.

Background of quality issues at Halol:

- 1) USFDA audited the Halol facility in September 2014 and issued a warning letter in 2015 ("Businesstoday.in", 2019).
- 2) The company took corrective actions and the plant was again audited in December 2016
- **3**) USFDA maintained OAI (official action indicated) or considerable objectionable practices were found.
- **4)** USFDA again visited the site in 2018, and issued VAI (voluntary action indicated)
- 5) This meant, it took almost four years to rectify the observations
- **6)** The site was successfully inspected in Aug 2018, Dec 18 and Jun 2019
- 7) The problems cropped up again in 2019 December as mentioned in the section above.
- **8)** The failure in quality audits means lower revenues and lower approval of new products

Sun Pharma Stock Performance:

- 1) Sun Pharma had a stellar stock market run from 2005 to 2015.
- 2) The stock peaked in 2015

- 3) Subsequently it fell by more than 50% during FY15 to FY19
- **4)** There were two reasons for this under performance pricing pressure and USFDA audit challenges
- 5) For an exporter like Sun Pharma the importance of quality is sacrosanct.

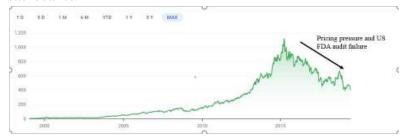


Figure 1: Sun Pharma Stock Performance

(Source: finance.google.com)

TEACHING NOTES

Synopsis

This case study focuses on Sun Pharma's quality issues. Sun Pharma's Halol facility got warning letter from US FDA after its audit. It took almost four years to get it resolved. Moreover, the facility got another set of observations. The resolution of quality issues is of utmost importance as it boosts revenues and approval of new drugs. All in all, the importance of quality audit is sacrosanct for company's successful operation.

Target Audience

MBA and PGDBM Students Senior corporate leadership

Learning Objectives

Importance of quality in operations

Audit requirements for pharma industry

Good manufacturing practices for pharma players

Discussion Questions

- 1. Describe USFDA audit problems for Halol facility.
- **2.** Why is US FDA audit clearance important for pharma players like Sun Pharma?
- **3.** Do you think Sun should improve their quality processes and why?

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ICICI Bank: Digital Services

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Introduction:

ICICI is one of the leading private sector banks in India. The bank has assets more than Rs. 14 trillion and has a network of over 5,000 branches and 15,000 ATMs ("ICICI bank.com", 2019).

Digital Platforms:

Digital channels accounted for over 86% of the savings account transactions in FY2019. Below are the various platforms offered by the bank.

Sr.	Platform	Description
	Internet Banking	Convenient platform for transactions, fund transfer,

-	1	CASEI EDIA : Volume -
2	iMobile	Mobile app for retail customers with more
		than 200 services.
		Single view for all relationships.
		Block or unblock credit cards, convert
		transactions to EMI, manage limits.
		Manage financial goals.
		Mutual fund investments.
3	iBizz	This is a mobile app for current account
		customers.
		View deposit and loan account information.
		Bill payments, letter of credits and bank
		guarantees, remittances.
4	Easypay	Solutions for merchants to collect payment
		from their customers.
5	Electronic	First bank to launch electronic toll collection
	toll collection	on national highways.
		Allows motorists to pay at multiple toll plazas
		using FASTag.
		~1.7 mn FASTags issued.
		~60% market share.





Figure 1: Digital Platforms

(Source: Company Presentation, FY19)

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6	Loans for	Instant home loan, auto loan, top up loan,
	pre- approved	loan against shares.
	customers	Reduction in sanction time thereby providing
		better service to the customers.
7	Paylater	Digital credit facility to per-approved customers for buying small ticket items such as online shopping, travel bookings

Digital platform for corporates:



Figure 2: Digital Platforms for corporate customers

(Source: Company Presentation, FY19)

Digital Financial Supply Chain:

Real time digital platform which can be integrated with ERP for dealers and suppliers to provide integrated payments and channel financing.

Benefits:

- 1. Transact with suppliers and dealers digitally
- 2. Integrate with ERP
- 3. Real time reconciliation
- 4. Financing solutions for channel partners

TEACHING NOTES

Synopsis

This case study focuses on ICICI Bank's digital services. The bank offers a wide range of digital services to its retail customers such as internet banking, mobile banking, per-approved loans etc. The

company was the first to launch electronic toll collection at plazas and commands 60% market share. Moreover, it has a wide range of digital services for its corporate customers. The bank is well poised to reap benefits of using digital platforms.

Target Audience

MBA and PGDBM Students Senior corporate leadership

Learning Objectives

Technology leadership
Digital platforms for various banking services
Tech enabled customer satisfaction

Discussion Questions

- 1. Describe various digital banking services for retail customers.
- **2.** Describe various digital banking services for corporate customers.
- **3.** Do you think ICICI Bank is on track wrt digital banking services?

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Meesho on the Value Pyramid

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Introduction:

Fashnear Technologies Private Limited doing business as Meesho is an Indian e- commerce company headquartered in Bangalore. Meesho is an online shopping and reselling platform in India where users can buy and sell a variety of products, including fashion, electronics, and home essentials, often at wholesale prices. It allows consumers to shop on a budget while also providing opportunities for individuals to become resellers. Time magazine named Meesho one of the year's most significant startups in 2023. Meesho is the fastest shopping app to excel 500 million downloads in the same year. Additionally, the company witnessed triple increase in orders over business-as-usual (BAU) days for its most recent offering of branded products, "Meesho Mall." (Meesho, n.d.) Meesho wants to make sure that consumers in India have a wide range of reasonably priced solutions. (Meesho, n.d.)

Bain & Company, identified 30 "elements of value" based on their thirty years of experience doing consumer research and observation for corporate clients. Their paradigm extends Abraham Maslow's "hierarchy of needs" by concentrating on people as consumers and

characterizing how they behave when using goods and services. The components are arranged in a pyramid based on four categories of needs, with "functional" at the base, "emotional," "life- altering," and "social impact" at the top. (Eric Almquist, n.d.)

The case study represents application of Meesho's strategy on Value Pyramid. Meesho is playing hard on pricing. 60% of their products are cheaper than any other market place. Let's check if Meesho has fulfilled other criteria on Value Pyramid apart from Price.

Organizational context: About the company and industry in detail:

Given that online shopping presently accounts for approximately 5–6% of overall retail spending, compared to far higher rates in the US and China, India's e-retail market is expected to surpass US\$ 160 billion by 2028 due to robust post-pandemic growth and substantial expansion potential. By 2030, the Indian e-commerce market is expected to have grown significantly to a value of US\$325 billion. The sector's growth is anticipated to be supported by technologically enabled innovations such as digital payments, hyper-local logistics, analytical driven customer engagement, and digital ads. (IBEF, n.d.)

Meesho has seen tremendous growth over the past 12 months, with order volumes rising by

43% and reaching over a billion orders. The fact that 85% of the orders have come from repeat customers, indicating strong user retention. Non-fashion categories have grown by more than

120% over this time, indicating Meesho's genuinely horizontal nature and the platform's broad appeal. (Meesho newsroom, n.d.)

Today, Meesho, the only genuine e-commerce platform in India, celebrated becoming the country's first profitable horizontal e-commerce business. This historic occasion not only confirms

Meesho's leadership in the Indian e-commerce market but also provides compelling evidence of its creative business strategy.



Image Courtesy: Meesho newsroom

Specific area of Interest:

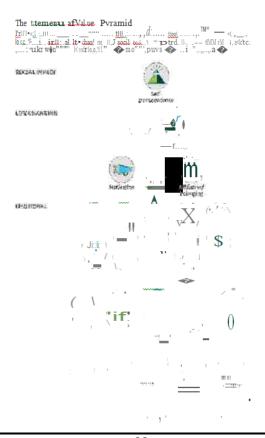
About the 30 "elements of Value" Pyramid:

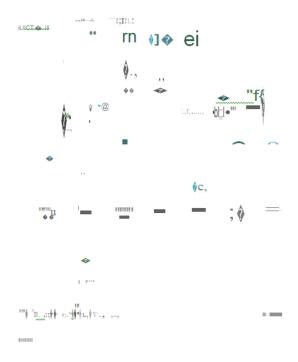
Customers compare a product or service's perceived value to its asking price when evaluating it. Since increasing prices can quickly increase profits, marketers have typically concentrated a large portion of their time and effort on managing the price side of that equation. That's the simple part, though, because pricing analytics and methods are well developed and typically involve controlling a relatively limited set of numbers. (Eric Almquist, n.d.)

However, it can be challenging to identify and psychologically complex to determine what customers actually value. In what ways can leadership teams actively manage value or come up with ways to provide more of it, whether it be in an emotional (reducing worry, giving entertainment) or functional (saving time, lowering cost) way. Similar research techniques, such as discrete choice analysis, which models demand for various combinations of product features, pricing, and other elements, are effective and practical tools, but they are made to test how consumers respond to preconceived notions of

value, the notions that managers are used to evaluating. Anticipating what else people might find helpful is necessary to generate fresh ideas. (Eric Almquist, n.d.)

30 "elements of value"—fundamental qualities in their most basic and distinct forms—have been identified by Bain & Company. These components can be divided into four groups: social influence, lifealtering, emotional, and functional. Some components are more inwardly oriented, focusing mostly on the individual wants of customers. Others are externally focused, assisting clients with navigating or interacting with the outside world. (Eric Almquist, n.d.)





Specific problem or decision:

Functional elements include basic expectation of customers from the product or services. For Meesho, out of twelve elements as indicated on the pyramid, four elements work best. They are saves time, makes money, reduces risk, reduces efforts. Meesho is a platform providing easy product delivery and return thereby saving time, reducing efforts and risk. Huge discount and affordability definitely win the game on makes the money element. Emotional elements include the well being of consumers after using the product or services. They consist of feelings on every purchase. For, Meesho reward me element and provides access element works well. The company launches Meesho Gold and Loyalty program ahead of

festive season. **Life changing elements** consists of fulfillment of dreams with favored brand. For Meesho, affiliation/belonging and provides hopes fits well. Many buyers feel bonding with the decent cheaper platform (Meesho) compare to Amazon and Flipkart. The hopes of availing multiple products under the category of home décor, electronics, fashion and self-care are being fulfilled by Meesho. **Social Impact elements** is on the top of the pyramid where environmental concern and sustainability plays important role. Meesho has not promoted these elements yet. There are number of elements on which Meesho can work on providing value. These elements are variety, sensory appeal and heirloom.

Conclusion:

Creating values can help companies to build long lasting and trusting relationships with their customers. When there are many businesses offering the same service, it can be challenging for them to stay profitable without finding new ways to create value for their customers. The value pyramid developed by Bain & Company is a helpful tool to check on what elements company can offer value.

Teaching Notes

Synopsis:

Fashnear Technologies Private Limited doing business as Meesho is an Indian e- commerce company headquartered in Bangalore. Meesho is an online shopping and reselling platform in India where users can buy and sell a variety of products, including fashion, electronics, and home essentials, often at wholesale prices. It allows consumers to shop on a budget while also providing opportunities for individuals to become resellers. Time magazine named Meesho one of the year's most significant startups in 2023. Meesho is the fastest shopping app to excel 500 million downloads in the same year. Additionally, the company witnessed triple increase in orders over business-as-usual (BAU) days for its most recent offering of branded products, "Meesho Mall." (Meesho, n.d.) Meesho wants to make sure that consumers in India have a wide range of reasonably priced solutions. (Meesho, n.d.)

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The case study represents application of Meesho's strategy on Value Pyramid. Meesho is playing hard on pricing. 60% of their products are cheaper than any other market place. Let's check if Meesho has fulfilled other criteria on Value Pyramid apart from Price.

Keywords: Value Pyramid, Value, Price, Meesho

Target Audience: Students pursuing management courses like BBA, MBA

Learning Objectives:

LO1: Students should be able to understand 30 elements of value pyramid.

LO2: Students should be able to apply 30 elements of value pyramid to Meesho.

Discussion Questions:

Q.1 Identify and mention elements (out of 30) applicable to Meesho (apart from mentioned in the case). Discuss with your class.

Q.2 Identify and mention elements (out of 30) that Meesho can work on. (apart from mentioned in the case) Discuss with your class.

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General Motors in India: Lost battle or a strategic move?

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Abstract:

Introduction:

India is a vast, value-conscious market so organizations need to put concentrated efforts to meet the varied requirements. In December 2017, GM stopped selling cars in the Indian market due to continued operational losses but continued exporting Beat from the Talegaon plant which was closed later on 24 December 2020.

Teaching objectives:

After studying this case, students should be able to analyze the key factors that led to General Motors' failure in the Indian market and apply management concepts such as strategic management, marketing, supply chain management, and organizational culture to a real-world scenario.

Research implications:

This case study will be helpful for academicians to teach different management aspects to MBA students.

Practical implications:

This case study will be helpful to organizations planning entry or operating in the Indian market to know crucial factors for performance in this peculiar market. This will also be helpful to budding entrepreneurs.

Case positioning and setting:

Different management concepts like Entry Strategy, International Expansion, Strategic Management, Marketing and Branding, Supply Chain Management, Organizational Culture, and Change can be aligned with this case study on the performance of General Motors in India.

Pedagogical objectives:

Students will engage in discussions and research to increase an understanding of the characteristics and dynamics of the Indian market.

Keywords:

Business Strategy, Restructuring, Entry Strategy, Joint venture, Indian automobile market.

Introduction:

Mary Barra, Chairman and CEO of General Motors had said that as the industry is changing, they are transforming their business by establishing GM as a more focused and disciplined company. On 18 May 2017, GM India announced stopping sales of cars in India, phasing out the Chevrolet brand by 2017 end, discontinuing domestic sales, and continuing exports from the Indian plant.

General Motors India Private Limited (GMIPL) was a subsidiary of General Motors with stakes of 93% by GM and 7% by Shanghai Automotive Industry Corporation of China (SAIC). After Maruti Suzuki, Hyundai, Tata Motors, and Mahindra & Mahindra, it was

the 5th largest automobile manufacturing company in India. Their focus was to produce and export small cars

& and automotive components to Mexico and a few other Latin American countries. And secondary focus was offering parts, and related services for the Indian market.

Presence in India:

GM assembled Chevrolet cars, trucks, and buses in India from 1928 to 1952. Later continued tie-up with Hindustan Motors. GMIPL was formed as a 50-50 joint venture with Hindustan Motors in 1994 to produce and sell Opel-branded vehicles, later buying out Hindustan Motors' stake in 1999. At the Halol facility, GM produced Opel cars till 2003 followed by Chevrolet cars.

Indian headquarters was shifted to Gurgaon in 2000. In 2003, GM opened a technical operations center in Bangalore for R&D, vehicle engineering, later adding purchase and finance support for GM operations located outside of India. In 2006, they started constructing an additional vehicle assembly plant at Talegaon, which started producing Chevrolet vehicles in September 2008.

For new vehicle architecture as part of a Global Emerging Market (GEM) vehicle program and build low-cost vehicles, in 2015 GM announced investing \$1 billion in India, which never materialized. In December 2017, GM stopped selling cars in the Indian market but continued exporting Beat from the Talegaon plant which was closed later on 24 December 2020. In January 2020, GM announced that Great Wall Motors, China was planning to acquire GM' Talegaon plant by December 2020. However, the Indian government didn't approve it. This was after GM's earlier sale of the Halol plant to SAIC which fell in June 2022 with MG Motor India taking over that plant later. Both these plants had a combined production capacity of 2,25,000 vehicles per year. After

the 2017 decision, the Talegaon plant produced only the left-hand drive Beat for exports till 2020.

Product portfolio, Sales & Service:

In 2017, GM had Spark, Beat, Sail, Cruze, Enjoy, Tavera, and Trailblazer in their portfolio with Spark at ₹3.64 Lacs at the lower end and Trailblazer as the most expensive starting from

₹24 Lacs. Chevrolet Beat was the first diesel car in India and it benefitted from Government subsidy on diesel engines.

By launching low-priced Sail, GM undermined Indian consumers and it started GM's fall. They had independent dealers to sell, service, and market the vehicles. GMIPL, under the AC Delco brand, sold parts and services to independent vehicle maintenance providers.

Performance in India:

Indian market had experienced year-on-year growth of 5.4% in 2017 with annual sales of 27 lakh passenger vehicles. In the same year, GMIPL had a degrowth of 42% with sales of less than 6000 cars. This resulted in their decision of not to launch any new vehicles in India. As they never held a foot in India since their 1995 entry, the closure news wasn't a surprise for the market as it also posed questions on their entry strategy.

They realized that a further increase in Indian investment would neither deliver higher returns than other global opportunities nor it will result in significant market share and long-term profitability. As India offered a skilled, cheaper labour force, lower raw material prices; GM continued serving Mexico and Central and South America markets with Indian production. As their exports from India had tripled over the earlier year, it helped them to focus on exports only. After losing over \$1 billion during its 20+ years in India, GM had decided to stop car sales in India as part of a larger

restructuring plan which also included South Africa exit and concentrating on Brazil and China operations. The Indian automobile market is one of the toughest markets in the world. GM had multiple ups and downs in the Indian market. Initially, they had good sales with Astra and Corsa but increasing maintenance issues and new offerings from competition impacted sales; forcing GM to withdraw Opel from the market. Subsequently, they launched the Chevrolet brand in India by catering to different segments but left without making any mark. GM's 2017 exit from the rising and growing Indian market was notable. At the same time, they were doing well in China. The following are major aspects regarding GM's India venture:

The Indian automobile market is the world's 4th largest, diverse, and value-conscious market with different preferences making it difficult for organizations to meet the wide-ranging requirement. Indian consumers, specifically the middle class which was targeted by GM looked for cost-effective, comfortable cars which GM couldn't deliver. Initially, with Chevrolet, they were able to meet the need. However, later models failed in this cost-effective aspect and the number of dealers, and service centers also reduced. This resulted in a reduction in market share and revenue. The Indian market also had well-established players like Suzuki with a significant market share, an established dealer network, and deep knowledge about the customer psyche. Suzuki sold cost-effective, fuel-efficient vehicles. For foreign automakers, particularly US organizations; India has been a tough market to conquer. Their biggest competitors were Suzuki from Japan and Hyundai Motor of South Korea, dominating about 60% market share between them. Later Ford trimmed and realigned its global businesses and had to stop Indian operations like GM.

GM management followed bureaucracy. During their India stint from 1995, they had 9 different CEOs coupled with multiple changes in the corporate structure resulting in the absence of a proper long-term business strategy.

In their prime time, GM had 400+ dealers in India but over a period sale started falling, dealers confidence started waning in GM's offerings and strategies, customers had issues with dealers. During 2017, GM had 150 dealerships and 200 service centres. In their tenure of 20+ years, GM launched 20+ different models with prices ranging from ₹3 lakhs to ₹30 lakhs and withdrew 10 models. These recurrent model changes lead to poor resale value of GM cars. With reducing dependability, customers didn't come back to GM. Customers preferred to get the GM cars serviced from aftermarket garages instead of authorized service centres. GM's India offerings were with old engines & and platforms and few GM cars just managed to clear emission tests. Component quality deteriorated hampering the long-term dependability whereas competition kept launching better cars with new platforms & and engines. In July 2013, GM India had recalled 1,14,000 units of Tavera. Later, an internal probe exposed GM India's violation of testing norms prevalent in India. They fired a few employees after this and also paid a fine of ₹23 million.

Compared to GM's global portfolio, cars offered by them in India were sub-standard. Cruze got a good number of customers. GM's highest-selling cars were the Beat, Cruze and Tavera. The Beat was a good launch, but GM continued selling over a longer period with minor upgrades. The Tavera was popularized by tourists but 1.2 lakh cars failed on the emissions front. The Cruze got appreciation due to performance & and quality but later in the absence of any upgradation, competing offerings like Hyundai's Elantra, Volkswagen's Jetta, and Skoda's Octavia captured its market.

When the market was growing exponentially between 2010 to 2016, GM's market share came down from 6% to 1%. In 2015, GM targeted to achieve a share of 3% by 2020 but their share fell below 1% when the market has grown up by 9% in the same period. GM showcased the Beat Activ and Beat Essentia during the 2016 Auto Expo but in 2017 they announced the exit. Due to the closure decision, the number of service centres was reduced, the resale value dropped drastically, impacted parts availability and GM laid off 400 employees. GM declared the stopping of sales in the Indian market from December 31, 2017, but assured after-sales service.

Global business strategy of GM: Smaller, More Profitable

Around 2017, GM has been strategically divesting operations in different markets like India, Western Europe, and Russia to boost profitability and allocate resources towards automated driving technology, e-vehicles, and new mobility ventures like ride-hailing. Though India's economy and automotive sectors were growing, GM's market share came down to about 1% in 2016.

Since taking over as GM's CEO in January 2014, Barra took decisions to leave Russian and Indonesian markets, pulling the Chevrolet brand out of Europe, and slashing sales for rental cars. It resulted in a reduction of 0.3% drop in GM's global market share in 2016. They sold Opel and Vauxhall brands thereby abandoning the global volume race. GM decided to invest in trucks and SUVs in the high-profit US market, autonomous cars for ride services.

GM concentrated on strategically important global markets through business performance, operations consolidation. Along with the Indian market exit, GM also announced East and South Africa operations transition to Isuzu Motors and phasing out of Chevrolet brand there.

Europe:

GM Europe hampered GM's global profitability since 1999. During 2017, General Motors was in talks with PSA to sell its European auto business. GM restructured its European operations in 2011, closing Belgian and German Opel factories and withdrawing the Saab & Chevrolet brands from sale. In spite of these, GM Europe couldn't break even in 2016. Due to European government regulations and consumer demands regarding cleaner diesel vehicles, and the rapid market shift toward sport utility vehicles; GM will have to invest heavily in Europe. GM and PSA have already collaborated on the production of commercial vans and the development of common vehicle platforms. With Opel's sale, GM will channel investment towards vehicle development for profitable markets like North America and China, and add up new businesses.

United States:

On March 07, 2017, GM announced to lay off about 1,100 people at Michigan which is the 4th manpower reduction since 2016. Lower US sales forced GM to reduce production and employment. Towards the end of 2016, GM eliminated the third shifts at three US plants.

General Motors was planning for thousands of self-driving Bolts in 2018. Most of these Chevrolet Bolt e-vehicles were to be used by Lyft to test them in its ride-sharing fleet. GM had planned to invest USD 500 million in Lyft. To develop self-driven cars, GM acquired Cruise Automation in early 2016. GM also started a car-sharing business Maven which provided vehicles to Lyft.

GM is restructuring operations and focusing on cost reduction in US and various other markets. Since 2017, in order to tackle difficult market and operating conditions in markets like the U.S., Canada, Korea, Southeast Asia, India, Africa, Australia, New Zealand, and

Europe; GM commenced a restructuring program to achieve lower operating costs.

Current Status of GMIPL plant:

Having stopped selling cars in the Indian market since 2017, General Motors has finally exited the world's third-largest car market and has signed the agreement to sell its Talegaon plant to Hyundai Motor India(HMIL). This second Indian plant, in addition to the Sriperumbudur (Chennai) plant will boost Hyundai's production capacity as it is planning to launch six e- vehicles locally by 2028. The first Hyundai SUV will roll out from this plant in 2025 and will help it to reach its annual manufacturing capacity target of one million units. Hyundai will invest over INR 5,000 crore in this plant in the coming decade. This deal was completed after court approvals despite GM India's worker protests.

HMIL is aiming to achieve a total annual production capacity of 1 million units through these plants. This expanded capacity will also help them to launch additional e-vehicle models into the Indian market thereby advancing India's electrification goals. Hyundai confirms launching five EVs by 2032 and plans to incorporate Indian design elements.

Conclusion:

GM faced several difficulties sustaining its market position in India due to fierce competition, low market share, and declining sales. GM's global business, restructuring, and optimization strategies drove them to exit the Indian market. Though GM exited the Indian market with its own brand, it continued to operate in India through exports and its technical center engaged in engineering design and R&D activities. GM's decision to exit was influenced by the

realization that the planned investment in India would not yield returns comparable to other global opportunities.

The turbulent journey of General Motors in the Indian market showcases the challenges multinational automotive companies face when trying to create a foothold in a diverse, competitive, peculiar market like India. Indian customer looks for Fuel efficiency, resale value, proximity of service station, parts affordability, and lower service costs. In order to achieve significant long-term success in such markets, organizations should concentrate on localized production, invest in understanding consumer preferences, work on competitive pricing along with suitable & effective marketing strategies.

General Motors' journey in the Indian automobile sector from 1994 to 2017 reveals the complex nature of operating in an evolving market. GM's endeavors to adapt its product

portfolio, build its brand, and establish local manufacturing demonstrate the challenges inherent in navigating the competitive Indian landscape. Despite these efforts, GM faced tough competition and ultimately exited the market in 2017.

GM is pruning non-profitable businesses. They stopped operations in India, Western Europe, South Africa, and Russia, in order to improve profitability and freeing up cash for automated driving technology, e-cars and other mobility businesses. For General Motors, it's not just a lost battle but also a strategic and timely move to control and reduce losses thereby allowing them to venture into other potential businesses & and partnerships, successful markets, and new-age mobility solutions. Despite leaving the market, GM could consider re-entering the Indian automobile market if conditions are favorable, as automakers have returned to the markets they had previously exited.

Teaching Note for Case Study

Introduction:

This teaching note is designed to accompany the case study on General Motors' failure in the Indian automotive market. The case study provides a comprehensive analysis of the factors that contributed to General Motors' inability to succeed in India and offers valuable lessons and managerial insights for learners. This teaching note provides guidance on facilitating classroom discussion, highlighting key points, and encouraging learners to apply relevant management concepts.

Synopsis:

India is a vast, value-conscious market so organizations need to put concentrated efforts to meet the varied requirements. In December 2017, GM stopped selling cars in the Indian market due to continued operational losses but continued exporting Beat from the Talegaon plant which was closed later on 24 December 2020.

Keywords:

Business Strategy, Restructuring, Entry Strategy, Joint venture, Indian automobile market.

Target Audience:

Management learners, Automobile sector practitioners

Learning Objectives:

After studying this case, learners should be able to:

Analyse the key factors that led to General Motors' failure in the Indian market.

Understand the importance of aligning entry strategies with market dynamics and consumer preferences.

Identify the challenges faced by multinational companies when expanding into new markets and how to address them.

Apply management concepts such as strategic management, marketing, supply chain management, and organizational culture to a real-world scenario.

Formulate recommendations for General Motors to improve its chances of success in the Indian market or similar markets.

Key Topics to Cover:

General Motors' entry strategy in India, including product offerings, pricing strategies, distribution channels, and marketing efforts.

Market analysis and assessment of the Indian automotive market, considering key market trends, consumer preferences, competition, and regulatory factors.

Identification and analysis of the challenges and failures General Motors faced in India, such as product portfolio misalignment, pricing strategies, market positioning, supply chain management, and brand perception.

Examination of management concepts related to entry strategies, international expansion, strategic management, marketing, supply chain management, and organizational culture. Lessons learned from General Motors' failure in India and recommendations for the company to improve its chances of success in the Indian or similar markets.

Discussions Questions:

What were the main factors that contributed to General Motors' failure in the Indian market?

How did General Motors' entry strategy align (or not align) with the market dynamics and consumer preferences in India?

What are the key lessons that other multinational companies can learn from General

Motors' failure in India?

How could General Motors have better adapted its product portfolio to suit the Indian market's needs and demands?

What role did cultural and social factors play in General Motors' failure, and how could the company have better navigated these aspects?

These questions can facilitate critical thinking, analysis, and discussion among management learners, encouraging them to delve deeper into the case study and apply relevant management concepts to understand the reasons behind General Motors' failure and identify potential strategies for success in similar situations.

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Revitalizing Rural Marketing: The Digital Transformation Journey of AgriMark in Karnataka

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1. Flow of the chapters:

Organizational Context - AgriMark, a mid-sized agricultural cooperative operating across rural Karnataka, specializes in connecting farmers with broader markets through a network of local mandis and cooperative societies. Founded in

2005, AgriMark initially relied on traditional marketing methods to facilitate agricultural produce exchange. However, rising competition, inefficiencies and farmer dissatisfaction prompted the organization to explore innovative solutions for sustaining its relevance.

Specific Area of Interest - The management recognized the growing potential of digital platforms in rural marketing. This case focuses on AgriMark's strategic shift towards digital transformation in agricultural marketing, highlighting how e- commerce platforms, digital payment systems and real-time market data enhanced operational efficiency and farmer income.

Specific Problem or Decision –

By 2018, AgriMark faced several challenges:

Declining farmer participation due to limited access to fair market prices.

Operational inefficiencies in traditional supply chain management.

Competitor advantage from multinational firms offering digital alternatives. The key decision was whether to invest heavily in a comprehensive digital platform integrating end-to-end agricultural marketing or to adopt a hybrid model blending traditional methods with incremental digital adoption.

Alternatives

o **Full Digital Transformation:** Develop an integrated platform for e-trading, real- time price updates, digital payments and supply chain tracking.

Pros: Increased market reach, cost-efficiency and transparency.

Cons: High initial investment, digital literacy gap and resistance from traditional stakeholders.

o **Hybrid Model:** Gradual integration of digital tools while maintaining physical market touch points.

Pros: Lower resistance, manageable costs and better adaptation.

Cons: Slower scalability, potential duplication of processes.

o **Status Quo with Minor Enhancements:** Continue with traditional marketing and enhance only basic tech support for inventory management and payment systems.

Pros: Minimal risk and cost.

Cons: Limited growth potential and vulnerability to market disruption.

Conclusion: AgriMark ultimately adopted the Hybrid Model, balancing digital initiatives with existing systems. This decision allowed a phased digital roll-out, focusing on farmer education, infrastructure development and partnership- building, leading to a 25% increase in farmer participation and a 15% reduction in operational costs by 2022.

Exhibit 1: Farmer Income Comparison (Pre & Post Digital Adoption)

Year	Average Farmer Income (₹)	Digital Adoption (%)	Increase in Income (%)	Major Digital Initiatives Implemented
2017	50,000	5%	N/A	Initial awareness campaigns
2018	52,500	15%	+5%	Pilot digital payment systems
2019	55,125	25%	+5%	Expanded digital payment & training
2020	60,637	40%	+10%	Beta launch of e- commerce platform
2021	66,701	55%	+10%	Supply chain tracking and real-time pricing
2022	73,371	70%	+10%	Full digital platform rollout

Insight: Farmer income steadily increased in correlation with digital adoption, reflecting the direct impact of enhanced market access and reduced intermediaries.

2. Exhibits:

Exhibit 2: Digital Adoption Roadmap (2018-2022)

Year	Key Milestones	Challenges Faced	Solutions Implemented
2018	Farmer awareness programs, initial training	Low digital literacy	Launched farmer- concentric digital literacy workshops
2019	Digital payment system pilot in select mandis	Resistance from traditional stakeholders	Engaged local leaders to build trust

2020	Beta version of e- commerce platform	Infrastructure gaps in remote areas	Partnered with telecom providers for connectivity
2021	Real-time pricing & supply chain tracking expanded	Data management inefficiencies	Introduced cloud- based data systems
2022	Full digital platform rollout across Karnataka	Cybersecurity	Strengthened cybersecurity protocols

Insight: AgriMark's phased approach to digital adoption ensured continuous improvement and effective management of challenges.

Opportunities	Threats	
Partnership with government schemes like eNAM	Rising competition from fully digital competitors	
New revenue streams from data-driven insights	Potential cybersecurity vulnerabilities	
Expansion into value-added services (e.g., logistics)	Resistance to change in deeply traditional areas	

Exhibit 3: SWOT Analysis of Digital Transformation in AgriMark

Strengths	Weaknesses
Expanded market reach beyond regional boundaries	Initial high capital investment
Increased transaction transparency and trust	Limited digital skills among older farmers
Faster decision-making through real-time data	Inconsistent digital infrastructure in rural areas

Insight: Strengthening internal capacity and partnerships can mitigate weaknesses and threats while maximizing opportunities.

Exhibit 4: Organizational Chart (Pre & Post Digitalization)

Pre-Digitalization (2017)

Board of Directors

1

Regional Managers

l

Mandis (Local Markets)

↓ Farmers

Post-Digitalization (2022)

Board of Directors

 \downarrow

Digital Strategy Team

1

Regional Digital Managers

1

E-Marketplace & Mandis

↓ Farmers

Key Changes:

Creation of a Digital Strategy Team for overseeing tech initiatives.

Regional Digital Managers introduced to bridge traditional and digital operations.

Farmers now have direct access to e-marketplaces, enhancing efficiency.

3. Teaching Notes

Synopsis - This case explores the digital transformation journey of AgriMark, a rural agricultural cooperative in Karnataka, addressing the challenges of traditional agricultural marketing and how digital solutions led to enhanced market efficiency and farmer empowerment.

Keywords - Agriculture, Digital Transformation, Rural Marketing, Karnataka, Supply Chain, E-commerce, India.

Target Audience

MBA and Executive MBA students specializing in Marketing, Operations or Digital Strategy. Suitable for mid-career professionals in rural development or digital transformation sectors.

Learning Objectives

Understand the challenges of digital transformation in rural contexts. Evaluate strategic alternatives for digital adoption in traditional industries.

Analyze the impact of hybrid models on organizational efficiency and stakeholder engagement.

Develop a framework for change management in traditional sectors.

Discussion Questions

o What were the key factors driving AgriMark's decision to pursue digital transformation?

- o Compare the risks and rewards of the three alternatives presented. Which one would you choose and why?
- o How can AgriMark overcome digital literacy challenges among farmers?
- o What are the long-term implications of the hybrid model for AgriMark's market competitiveness?
- o Suggest ways to enhance stakeholder engagement during digital transformation in rural settings.

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ICICI: Dealing with CEO Corruption Charges

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Introduction:

ICICI is one of the leading private sector banks in India. The bank has assets more than Rs. 14 trillion and has a network of over 5,000 branches and 15,000 ATMs (ICICI 2019).

Chanda Kochhar, erstwhile CEO of ICICI Bank, was the first woman to head an Indian bank. However, corruption allegations surfaced against her in the case of loans to Videocon Group. Subsequently she had to step down. Here's a timeline of her fall from grace.

Timeline:

March 2016: Shareholder activist Arvind Gupta, who is additionally the originator and trustee of Indian Investors Protection Council, writes to Prime Minister Narendra Modi on March 15,

2016, red-flagging "the unlawful banking and business connection between Videocon Group of Venugopal Dhoot and ICICI Bank's MD and CEO Chanda Kochhar's family". At the point when Gupta didn't hear back from the authorities, he posted the letter on his blog in October

2016 ("Businesstoday.in", 2019).

July 2016: The RBI leads a detailed probe into the matter after the Prime Minister's Office alluded the claims of Kochhar's better half, Deepak, procuring windfall gains from his relationship with Dhoot, whose organization was a large debtor to ICICI Bank. But it tracks down no evidence of any reciprocal benefits being stretched out by ICICI Bank to the Videocon

Group.

March 2018: While the nation is as yet reeling under the Rs 13,000 crore PNB-Nirav Modi scam, the established press gets Gupta's blog post, and this time the matter makes significant waves. Yet, before the month's end, ICICI Bank's board surveys the bank's internal processes for credit approval and announces them robust. It additionally communicates full confidence and trust in Kochhar, adding that there is no doubt of any quid pro quo, nepotism or conflict of interest as is affirmed in the "rumours". But on March 31, CBI starts an enquiry against Deepak Kochhar.

April 2018: Doubts are fanned further when the CBI gets Kochhar's brother-in-law Rajiv Kochhar for questioning around the same time. The charge here is that his organization, Avista Advisory, got the order to restructure foreign currency-denominated debt deals worth more than \$1.7 billion of seven organizations, all of which had taken advances from ICICI Bank simultaneously.

May 2018: The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) sends a notification to Kochhar, looking for her reaction on the supposed noncompliance with disclosure norms in dealings with the Videocon Group and Nupower Renewables, an organization co-founded by her husband.

Despite the developing commotion, fanned by another unknown informant's charges against Kochhar, ICICI Bank's board foundations an enquiry. Nonetheless, the distrust among corporate administration specialists and investors the same after the interim report giving the bank a clean chit, at last prompts the board to think about a second, more detailed probe.

June 2018: ICICI Bank appoints for SC Judge Srikrishna to head enquiry against Kochhar. She goes on indefinite leave till the examination is finished however in any event at first the bank calls it her arranged yearly leave. In a little while Sandeep Bakhshi assumes control over the reins of the bank on an interim basis.

October 2018: In an abrupt advancement Kochhar leaves her position, even before the Srikrishna panel presents its report. She additionally leaves the Board of Directors of ICICI Bank's auxiliaries.

January 2019: The CBI books Kochhar, her better half and Dhoot for supposed cheating and debasement in endorsing advances to the Videocon Group, which caused a deficiency of Rs

1,730 crore to the bank. The office asserted that ICICI Bank endorsed six high-esteem credits to different Videocon organizations between June 2009 and October 2011, beginning not long after Kochhar took over as CEO. Indeed, she was supposedly authorizing advisory group which had affirmed a credit of Rs 300 crores to Videocon International Electronics Ltd (VIEL) and Rs 750 crore to Videocon Industries Ltd (VIL).

The previous sum was purportedly dispensed into the VIEL account on September 7, and as indicated by the CBI, the "next following day" Dhoot had transferred Rs 64 crore from VIL to NuPower Renewables Limited, the organization claimed by her better half Deepak Kochhar.

Days after the fact, the Srikrishna board presents its report, which sees Kochhar as blameworthy of abusing different guidelines. The bank at that point chooses to stop all neglected retirement benefits and furthermore recuperate rewards worth Rs 9.82 crore paid to her since 2009.

TEACHING NOTES

Synopsis

This case study focuses on ICICI Bank's challenges while dealing with corruption charges against its CEO. There were allegations that CEO got kickbacks for approving loan to the borrower. Initially, the Bank's enquiry did not find any wrongdoing. However, subsequently when CBI launched probe into the matter the bank appointed a retired judge to probe into the issue. The CEO was found guilty and then the bank took necessary steps.

Target Audience

MBA and PGDBM Students Senior corporate leadership

Learning Objectives

Corporate governance
Dealing with corruption
Usefulness of having an independent board

Discussion Questions

- **1.** What were the allegations against ICICI Bank's CEO?
- **2.** What action did the Board take initially? Was the Board right in its decision?
- **3.** What action did the Board take in the end?

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The Clean Sweep: A Case of How Indore Achieved Sustainable Waste Management and Effective Governance in India

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Organisational Context

Launched in 2014, the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan aims to address sanitation and waste management issues across India. Indore has been the cleanliest city in the country for consecutively 7 years and its success serves as a model for other cities, showcasing the effectiveness of community participation and modern techniques in improving waste management.

The Indore Municipal Corporation (IMC) developed a comprehensive waste management strategy that successfully implemented a hybrid model for waste collection, segregation, and processing. Innovations such as decentralized processing facilities, technological advancements, and strong community involvement were crucial to this transformation. (Chandra, 2024)

As a result, Indore improved public health, enhanced environmental sustainability, and achieved 100% waste segregation at the

source. The case highlights the significance of leadership and public engagement in tackling urban waste challenges. It addresses the city's initial challenges in waste management, including limited public participation and inadequate infrastructure.

Specific areas of interest:

The transformation of Indore into India's cleanest city presents a critical opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of its waste management strategy and pinpoint key strategies that may be used in other urban contexts. A well-coordinated approach that included technological breakthroughs, citizen engagement, and strong municipal government resulted in the city's success. GPS-enabled garbage collection vehicles and decentralized composting facilities made operations easier, while public awareness initiatives promoted pride and a long-term commitment to cleanliness.

It is recommended that readers critically assess the factors that made Indore's model successful and consider how similar strategies may be adjusted for cities with distinct infrastructure, topography, or socioeconomic conditions. For instance, how might resource-constrained communities employ cost-effective trash management solutions? In cities with less government oversight, may community-driven waste segregation and decentralized processing facilities succeed? How may the methodology of Indore be extended to more densely populated urban regions?

This example also encourages readers to research the challenges of replicating Indore's model, including potential obstacles such as financial constraints, governance capacity, and cultural differences. It promotes the development of alternative strategies to address the unique waste management needs of other places, such as forming public-private partnerships, putting waste- to-energy technology into practice, or enacting local laws. Through this research, readers may

apply the lessons learnt from Indore to challenging urban issues worldwide.

Key Learning Outcomes:

- Acknowledge the significance of governance and strategic planning in urban management.
- Recognize how important public involvement is to accomplishing significant environmental objectives.
- Evaluate how cutting-edge technologies might improve waste management procedures.
- Use the insights from Indore's model to help other cities deal with comparable urban issues.

Case Content

1. Introduction

Ranked first in the world with a populace of almost 1.4 billion, India is projected to grow by an expansive 416 million people in urbanization by the year 2050 (United Nations, 2019). It is essential to note that the fast-growing Indian population together with rapid urbanisation contributes to more threat of waste management. Municipalities in India are battling with the growing concern of excessive waste production and the inability of the waste management infrastructure. In its annual report, the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) reported that the country produces around 65 million metric tons of waste every year out of which only 20% is treated. Also, Land degradation and health concerns due to exposure to waste are rampant as the remaining waste is either buried in landfills or simply not collected.

The Government of India 2014 introduced the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan to help fight development mostly in rural areas for both priorities. The mission had the vision of a clean and green India by October 2, 2019, which is the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. This part of the mission focused on improving solid waste management (SWM) systems for the urban population. This case study examines how the city of Indore undertook all the objectives of the mission and managed to transform itself from a city with a lot of waste management problems to the cleanest city in India within a span of a few years.

The case study highlights the problems with trash management in Indore, such as inadequate infrastructure, ineffective collection, and low public involvement. The Indore Municipal Corporation demonstrated successful urban management problem-solving by addressing these issues through strategic decision-making, the use of technological advancements like GPS tracking, the adoption of a hybrid waste processing model, and community engagement through education and rewards.

Relevance to Management

Important insights into important management concepts like leadership, decisionmaking, governance, community and management are provided by the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan's transformation of Indore's waste management system. The instance emphasizes the value of strategic planning and the function of efficient governance in carrying out significant urban projects from a management standpoint. By establishing precise objectives, optimizing procedures, and guaranteeing adherence to national waste management laws, the Indore Municipal Corporation (IMC) demonstrated excellent leadership. This demonstrates how important visionary leadership is in promoting change inside organizations and communities. Making decisions was essential, and IMC used a data-driven strategy to map trash-generating locations, identify high-priority areas, and use technologies like GPS-enabled garbage trucks to increase operational effectiveness. Combining centralized and decentralized processing systems, the hybrid waste management approach exemplifies creative resource optimization and decision-making. The active integration of citizen involvement into the trash segregation and cleanliness programs made community management a crucial component. The IMC promoted a sense of ownership among people through frequent community meetings, recognition programs, and public awareness campaigns—all of which are critical to the long-term viability of any management endeavour.

This example is extremely significant to management studies because it demonstrates how management ideas like operational excellence, change management, and stakeholder engagement can be applied to solve complex urban difficulties.

This case study's academic rigour is increased by its alignment with many important management theories. The shift from ineffective waste practices to a more efficient system is supported by Change management theory and leadership and governance are key factors in promoting this change. Since the Indore Municipal Corporation worked with private companies, governmental organisations, and individuals to achieve success as a group, stakeholder theory is also pertinent. The case is also based on sustainable development theory, which highlights how Indore's waste management approach affects the environment, society, and economy. Readers may apply and critically evaluate the case using the conceptual perspective these frameworks offer.

Research Methodology Employed

A qualitative research methodology forms the basis of this case study on Indore's waste management transformation under the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan (Clean India Mission). To collect pertinent information and insights for the analysis, the following techniques were employed:

To learn more about Indore's waste management system, a thorough investigation was carried out utilizing records, official publications, and environmental assessments. The Ministry of Environment's solid waste management standards, Swachh Survekshan rankings, and Central

Pollution Control Board (CPCB) reports were important sources. (Bhatia, 2021)

Understanding India's urban waste management issues and the legislative frameworks affecting municipal government was made easier with the use of data from reliable sources like the National Green Tribunal (NGT) and the United Nations. The case study was designed to show how Indore's waste management techniques evolved, from the difficulties encountered before the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan to the changes that resulted in the city's designation as the cleanest in the country.

The influence of important Indore Municipal Corporation (IMC) efforts on the efficiency of trash management was examined. These programs included door-to-door rubbish pickup, technology advancements, and community involvement tactics. To obtain firsthand knowledge of how Indore's waste management strategy is being implemented, informal conversations were held with community leaders, waste management professionals, and municipal authorities. The opinions of community members and locals were taken into consideration to comprehend how important behaviour modification and public involvement are to the accomplishment of waste management projects. To give the case study a theoretical foundation, pertinent scholarly works on community participation models, sustainable waste management techniques, and urban governance were examined. By using these techniques, the case

study offers a thorough understanding of how government, technology, and community involvement play a part in urban management as well as how Indore's creative waste management techniques might serve as a model for other cities.

2. National Green Tribunal's Directives and the Legal Framework

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has emerged as an instrument for the upholding of environmental laws in India. The right to life guaranteed under Article 21 of the Constitution has been interpreted by the courts to encompass the right to a clean and healthy environment (Supreme Court of India, 1985). Based on this interpretation, a few orders have also been issued by NGT for better urban sanitation and waste management.

In 2016, the Solid Waste Management Rules were amended to provide for more detailed provisions on waste segregation, disposal (Ministry of collection, removal. treatment and Environment, Forest and Climate Change, 2016). As per these rules, the municipalities were required to provide waste collection on a door-to-door basis as well as source segregation of waste before the collection and promote treatment of waste at sites nearer to the generation of waste. In its ruling of 2019, the NGT maintained that municipalities that refuse to abide by these rules will face sanctions which sped up the reforms on waste management in cities in India. (Pushkara, 2022)

Legal frameworks of this nature found a receptive environment in the case of Indore. The Indore Municipal Corporation (IMC) saw an opportunity not only to comply with the directives of the NGT but also to go beyond them and set a precedent for other cities. **3. Specific Problems and need for Waste Management in Indore** Before the implementation of the Swachh Bharat, It was very challenging to Manage Waste in

Indore Due to Several Reasons

- Garbage Bins in the Streets Overflow with Garbage: These garbage bins made available at different locations in the city were often overflowing, and the waste had also started to spill over onto the roads. This foul smell attracted stray animals, creating a health hazard and unsanitary conditions.
- Waste Management and Collection: The waste collection was either not carried out or was done in a highly unplanned manner.
 Most of the waste in residential and commercial areas was either left on the streets or was collected irregularly.
- Waste Treatment and Management System: No solid waste segregation at source or further stages had ever been practised resulting in mixed waste being landfilled causing pollution and hindering the processing of waste.
- Health Effects: The waste that was not collected. For instance, many waste dumps turned out to be breeding grounds for mosquitoes and rats. This had a very strong destructive influence on the health status of the population, especially in the areas with poorer households.

Some of the urban waste management issues in Indore can be said to be common to many other cities across the country. It became clearer than ever that the existing waste management model needed radical changes to not only make the city more presentable but also make it healthier for the people who lived in it.(Cardoni & Kiseleva, 2023) In 2021, Paul & Paul highlighted the urgent need for scalable waste management strategies in Indore, as current statistics on garbage

generation illustrate significant challenges. While semi- bulk (25–100 kg/day) and bulk (>50 kg/day) generators primarily practice basic segregation, domestic generators (<25 kg/day) separate waste into wet, dry, and hazardous categories. (Table 1)This indicates a potential to enhance segregation practices at the source for larger waste producers.

Table 1: Classification of waste generators in Indore.

Waste	Amount/	Segregation
Generators	Day	
Domestic	< 25 Kg	Wet, Dry, and Domestic
		Hazardous
Semi-Bulk	25 - 100	Wet and Dry
Generators	Kg	
Bulk Generators	> 50 Kg	Wet and Dry

Total waste is projected to rise from 522 tons per day in 2001 to 935 tons per day by 2031, driven by population growth and a consistent per capita waste output of 0.321 kg per day. (Table 2)

Table 2: Projected population and total residential waste growth per day for Indore.

	Population	Per capita	waste	Total	waste
		generated* (kg)		(Tons)	
2001	1626297	0.321		522.04	
2011	2104658	0.321		675.6	
2021	2681831	0.321		860.87	
2031	2912701	0.321		934.98	

The data also shows that organic waste and inert materials continue to dominate overall waste composition, although their quantities are declining. Conversely, recyclable materials such as paper, plastic, and metals remain low but stable. (Table 3) This underscores the strategic importance of expanding collection and processing systems, promoting composting, and developing advanced recycling infrastructure to address the anticipated rise in waste and improve recycling and segregation techniques across all waste-generating categories.

Table 3: Projected total increase per day in the share of different solid waste materials for Indore in tonnes.

Solid Waste Material*	2011	2021	2031
Paper	7.57	2.64	2.76
Glass waste	4.11	1.43	1.5
Metal waste	5.98	2.08	2.18
Organic Waste	410.92	143.12	149.56
Plastic waste	5.8	2.02	2.11
Stones, ashes	390.92	136.15	142.28
Miscellaneous	109.67	38.2	39.92

^{*}The percentage share of different solid materials is assumed to be fixed concerning the 2012

^{*}The per capita waste generated is assumed to be fixed concerning the 2012 CPCB value.

CPCB value

The anticipated increase in waste volume to 935 tons per day by 2031 highlights the importance of developing infrastructure, including material recovery facilities (MRFs) and composting units, which IMC actively promotes. The success of composting programs is demonstrated by the drop in organic waste, but the steady levels of recyclable garbage point to the need for more robust awareness efforts and collaborations with the unorganized sector. To maintain its status as a waste management model city, IMC has to strategically incorporate more circular economy techniques, including improved recycling initiatives and public-private partnerships.

The analysis's emphasis on source segregation, capacity building, and sustainable waste management techniques is in line with the Indore Municipal Corporation's (IMC) strategic goals. To ensure adherence to its three-bin segregation system, IMC's pedagogy encourages decentralized waste disposal through active engagement from households, bulk generators, and semi-bulk generators.

4. The Swachh Bharat Abhiyan and Indore's Transformation

The Swachh Bharat Mission was the greatest driving force for Indore in terms of improving its waste management. IMC addressed the objectives of the mission with a more practical, comprehensive plan focusing on the segregation, collection, transportation, and processing of waste and the public.

The journey of transformation began with the city's waste generation points survey and mapping. (Explainers, 2024)The IMC figured out which zones generated the most waste, and made a plan to clean those zones first. They put together a team of waste management practitioners, city officials and cleanliness attendants.

5. Waste Segregation at Source

One of the main aspects of Swachh Bharat Abhiyan was preventing the waste from getting mixed up before disposal. The IMC ordered the household waste to be separated into wet and plastic paper ratios. The wet, organic material was collected separately from the dry waste which consisted of plastic, paper, and other recyclable waste. For this reason, the IMC bought and supplied householders with coloured bins, green for wet and blue for dry waste.

Focus was given to carrying out extensive awareness campaigns to encourage the citizens, on the significance of waste segregation. (Lehner, 2022) Community volunteers were engaged in carrying out door-to-door awareness campaigns and cleanliness drives and distributing pamphlets. Educational institutions also joined the campaign with their students serving as the ambassadors of the mission. (Madavi, 2022)

The achievements were outstanding. By the year 2017, the city of Indore had attained 100% segregation at the source which played a major role in facilitating its position as the cleanest city in India (Swachh Survekshan, 2018).

Wagle & Arora in 2021explore the crucial role that front-line employees play in the final mile of municipal solid waste management in Indore, emphasizing how creative accountability measures and strategic HRM reforms helped the city's cleanliness rankings soar from 149th in

2014 to first in 2017 and hold that position through 2019. Wagle & Arora in their research highlights the necessity of improved operating protocols and public involvement to maintain waste management success. The process followed by the front-line workers for waste collection and transportation is presented in the diagram below:

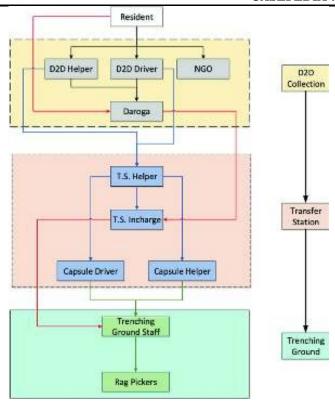


Figure 1:Solid Waste collection Process(Wagle & Arora, 2021)

6. Role of Community Engagement

One of the significant contributing factors that led to the achievement of the objectives of Swachh Bharat Abhiyan in Indore is community engagement. This is in contrast with the conventional waste management systems which mobilized only the municipal authorities, the IMC called upon the public to also assist in the cleanliness maintenance.

There were regular community meetings that allowed the citizens to express their problems and suggestions regarding waste

management. Resident welfare associations (RWAs) actively participated in the enforcement of waste segregation practices in the residential areas. Also, the IMC included a recognition and reward system for the areas that kept their cleanliness, to a high standard. The involvement of the community was useful in instilling a sense of ownership and pride in the residents which made them willing to

7. Technological Innovations in Waste Processing

help in keeping the city clean.

The IMC incorporated various technological advancements to enhance waste collection, processing, and disposal systems. One of the key technological measures was the provision of waste collection vehicles with GPS sensors. Each of the waste collection trucks was fitted with a GPS, which enabled the IMC to monitor the movement of the garbage trucks in real-time, ensuring that garbage collection operations were carried out in an orderly and timely manner. Approximately 550 tonnes of organic (wet) garbage and 650 tonnes of dry waste are managed daily by the Indore Municipal Corporation (IMC). A committed crew of over 8,500 sanitation workers who work in shifts to maintain cleanliness across the city supports this capability.

The yearly cost of the city's waste management system is about ₹200 crore, or \$24 million. This investment covers sanitation personnel pay as well as garbage processing facilities. From

₹60 lakh in 2014–15 to over ₹36 crore in 2019–20, user fees for rubbish collection have climbed dramatically, reflecting citizens' rising financial commitment to upholding cleanliness. Indore also embraced the model of waste processing which is more dispersed in nature and set up small waste processing plants throughout the city. At those units, wet waste was treated and converted into compost which was sold to the farmers and used for parks in the cities. While

dry waste was sent to other recycling plants that sorted and processed the waste further.

The other crucial innovation was a bio-methanation unit which is a plant designed for resource recovery from organic waste and produces Bio-CNG which is Compressed Biogas. This plant can generate renewable energy sources as a by-product for the daily processing of around 20 tonnes of organic waste, some of which are used in the city for public transport and lighting.

Technological applicability in waste management practice enhanced effectiveness, minimized human beings' mistakes, and created clarity in the entire focus system.

8. Waste Collection and Transportation System

Before the reforms, waste collection in Indore's penetration rate was very minimal, as collection dependence was not timely observed and was very ineffective. To mitigate these challenges, the IMC changed the modes of operation of the waste collection system and introduced daily collection of waste.

- Door-to-door Collection: Waste is directly collected from households and commercial activity. Each waste collection vehicle is equipped with separate compartments for wet and dry waste, thus ensuring waste segregation at the source is practised throughout the process.
- Bulk Waste Generators: For purpose-built facilities like hotels, malls and restaurants,

9. Centralized and Decentralized Waste Processing

In Indore, Waste processing was done based on the hybrid model which included both centralized and decentralized systems.

- Decentralized Waste Processing: This involved establishing several small composting. They produced organic waste compost which was either sold or used in beautification of the city.
- Centralized Waste Processing: Indore's central waste processing plant is situated on the outer periphery of the city. Most of the waste generated is brought here. This facility utilizes cutting-edge technology for the conversion of organic waste into bio-CNG and dry waste into Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF). The bio-CNG generated is then utilized in public buses thereby creating an ecosystem around waste management. (Upadhyay, 2022)

This hybrid model enabled Indore to recycle back more than 90% of its waste, thus not only efficient waste management but also reducing the strain on landfills and the overall carbon footprint of the city.

10. Impact of Indore's Waste Management System

The very efficient waste management system that has been adopted by an ordinary city like

Indore has resulted in numerous effects in many realms:

10.1 Environmental Impact

This effective waste management system greatly decreased the need for the construction of landfills in Indore, thus saving land and limiting environmental pollution. Since waste was sorted at the point of its generation, organic waste was composted or turned into energy instead of rotting into landfills and producing methane. (Khandekar, 2020)

10.2 Public Health Impact

The enhanced sanitary efficiency and management of waste had an indirect positive effect on the health of the public. (Gupta, 2021) When open dumping of garbage was stopped, there was a marked decrease in the incidence of diseases transmitted by mosquitoes such as malaria and dengue. The city, in addition, recorded fewer cases of respiratory illnesses, which were previously aggravated by the practice of open burning of waste.

10.3 Economic Impact

Indore's target as far as waste management is concerned was not only to ensure the environment is clean but also to employ many jobless people. Employment opportunities in the waste sanitation department increased as waste collectors, processors and supervisors were recruited. Because there was a composting business and selling of recyclables back to the market, the system was able to generate revenues making was cost effective.

10.4 Social Impact

Among all the changes that were brought about as a result of improved waste management in Indore, behaviour change among citizens might have been the most striking. The campaign on cleanliness in the city created the pride of place amongst the citizens. Cleanliness was not only left to the authorities but the citizens played their role ensuring that there was a clean environment and that values of sustainability were embraced by the city.

10.5 National and Global Recognition

Indore's transformation earned it accolades at both national and international levels. (Wood, 2019)The city was ranked as the cleanest city in India for four consecutive years from 2017 to 2020 in the Swachh Survekshan rankings. (Explainers, 2022) The success story of Indore has been featured in various international forums, with other cities seeking to emulate its model.

11. Lessons Learned

The Indore case provides several key lessons for other cities grappling with waste management issues:

Community Engagement is Crucial: The success of Indore depends on public participation, as seen by programs like school education, community contests, and participation from local religious leaders to encourage cleanliness.

Involving citizens in the waste management process fosters ownership and ensures the sustainability of the system. Public awareness campaigns, rewards, and recognition can motivate citizens to adopt and maintain good practices.

Technology is an Enabler: GPS tracking, decentralized waste processing, and bio- methanation are just some examples of how technology can streamline waste management operations and enhance efficiency.

Segregation at Source is Key: Waste segregation at the source is fundamental to efficient waste processing. Without segregation, recycling and composting become unviable.

Effective Governance And Leadership: The municipal administration contributed significantly to the development of the city of Indore. Timely observations, implementation of policies, and the capacity to gather necessary resources are among the key factors.

Comprehensive Approach: Waste disposal is an integrated system and must therefore include segregation, collection, transportation and processing. Taking one aspect at a time can be counterproductive.

12. Conclusion

Indore cleaned up as a city in the past few years to even being declared as the cleanest in the country is the epitome of the best

practices in reaping the benefits of good municipal governance, public participation and creativity. The Swachh Bharat Abhiyan provided the framework for the enhancement programme, but, it was the IMC, its citizens, and other interested parties' hard work and partnership that turned the dream into a reality. (Sumele, 2024)

This case illustrates that urban conflicts can be abated and even resolved with the correct trajectories. Indore is also an example for other cities of a waste management system that goes beyond just sanitation to include social, environmental and economic gains. Municipal leadership played a vital role in Indore's success. Consistent monitoring, policy enforcement, and the ability to mobilize resources were critical factors.

Ouestions for Discussion

- 1. How did the Indore Municipal Corporation (IMC) successfully revamp its waste management system using change management principles? Which leadership techniques were essential to this achievement?
- **2.** How did stakeholder participation contribute to the change in waste management in Indore? How can this degree of community participation be replicated in other cities?
- **3.** How did innovation and technology improve the waste management paradigm in Indore in terms of operational efficiency? How can cities with limited resources implement comparable technologies?
- **4.** In what ways does the hybrid waste management strategy in Indore strike a balance between decentralized and centralized methods? What methods of strategic decision-making went into selecting this model?

5. What obstacles may other cities encounter if they try to duplicate Indore's achievements? How might governance and strategic planning aid in removing these obstacles?

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Teaching Notes

Synopsis:

The case study on Indore's waste management reform provides an excellent platform for discussing the connections between public health, environmental sustainability, urban management, and policy implementation. It offers an opportunity to explore how government, technology, and community engagement may be applied to urban problems. This case focuses on how the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan's creative waste management techniques turned Indore into the cleanest city in India. It emphasizes how crucial technology,

decentralized processing, local government, and public participation are to the initiative's success. The case also discusses the economics of managing urban garbage, environmental sustainability, and public health.

Key words: Sustainable waste management, Urban governance, Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, Community engagement

Target Audience: Scholars pursuing education and training in environmental science. Students pursuing bachelors and masters in urban planning, public administration, sociology, public health and management

Learning Objectives:

The case study has the following learning objectives:

Analyze the difficulties in managing garbage in cities and assess how well government programs like Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan are working to improve waste and sanitation systems.

Examine how municipal government and citizen involvement affect the evolution of waste management techniques.

Assess the effects of sustainable waste management on the economy, society, and environment. Recognize how technology may improve urban trash management.

Class Discussion Plan:

1. Introduction (10-15 minutes):

Briefly introduce the background of the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan and the challenge of waste management in Indian cities.

Highlight the context of Indore before the transformation—discuss the primary issues related to waste, public health concerns, and environmental degradation.

Discussion Questions & Suggested Answers:

Why is waste management such a critical issue in urban India?

Waste management is critical due to rapid urbanization, population growth, and insufficient infrastructure. Poor waste management can lead to health hazards, environmental pollution, and reduced quality of life.

What were the main challenges Indore faced in waste management before its transformation?

Indore faced challenges such as improper waste segregation, lack of awareness among citizens, inefficient collection systems, overflowing landfills, and significant public health issues stemming from waste accumulation.

2. Strategy and Execution (15-20 minutes):

Delve into the hybrid waste collection and processing system implemented in Indore.

Explain how the municipality leveraged both centralized and decentralized waste processing facilities.

Discuss the role of technology—GPS tracking of garbage trucks, waste-to-energy technology, etc.

Key Questions & Suggested Answers:

How did the Indore Municipal Corporation (IMC) ensure compliance with the new waste management system?

The IMC implemented strict guidelines and penalties for noncompliance, combined with public education campaigns that encouraged active participation in waste segregation and management.

What role did decentralized composting units play in the city's waste management strategy?

Decentralized composting units allowed for localized waste processing, reducing the burden on landfills and enhancing community participation in managing organic waste.

How did the use of technology contribute to operational efficiency?

Technology, such as GPS tracking for garbage trucks and mobile apps for citizen reporting, optimized waste collection routes, minimized delays, and improved overall waste management efficiency.

3. Community Engagement (15 minutes):

Focus on the importance of involving citizens in the transformation. Discuss awareness campaigns, rewards, and recognition.

Explore how the IMC changed the behaviour of citizens, moving from a passive to an active role in the city's cleanliness efforts.

Key Questions & Suggested Answers:

How did the IMC engage citizens in the waste segregation process?

The IMC organized workshops, training sessions, and public events to educate citizens on waste segregation and management. They also launched competitions and reward programs to motivate participation.

What strategies were used to foster a sense of ownership among residents?

By involving residents in decision-making processes, acknowledging their contributions, and recognizing exemplary

efforts through awards, the IMC fostered a sense of ownership and pride in maintaining a clean city.

4. Impact Analysis (15-20 minutes):

Discuss the environmental, public health, economic, and social impacts of Indore's waste management system.

Highlight specific data, such as the reduction in disease vectors, improved air quality, and economic benefits (job creation, revenue from compost).

Key Questions & Suggested Answers:

How did the waste management system impact public health in Indore?

The reduction in waste accumulation decreased the prevalence of disease vectors such as mosquitoes and rats, resulting in improved public health and reduced healthcare costs associated with waste-related illnesses.

What were the economic benefits derived from waste management?

Economic benefits include job creation in waste collection and processing, revenue generation from compost sales, and savings on waste disposal costs due to improved efficiency.

What lessons can other cities learn from Indore's success?

Other cities can learn the importance of community engagement, the need for efficient and transparent governance, the potential of technology in waste management, and the benefits of creating a culture of cleanliness and sustainability.

5. Challenges and Replicability (15 minutes):

Explore the potential challenges in replicating Indore's model in other cities.

Consider the role of governance, infrastructure, and cultural differences in other regions.

Key Questions & Suggested Answers:

What challenges might other cities face when attempting to replicate Indore's model?

Challenges may include varying levels of governance capacity, differences in citizen engagement, limited financial resources, and the need for infrastructure development.

What conditions must be met for a comparable waste management program to be successful?

Solid political will, community engagement, sufficient finance, a solid infrastructure, and ongoing monitoring and assessment are all necessary for successful replication.

Conclusion (10 minutes):

- 1. In your synopsis of the case study's key findings, emphasize the need of a comprehensive and integrated waste management plan. Encourage students to think critically on whether the Indore model can be used in other contexts.
- 2. What are the top three success factors for the waste management revolution in Indore? How did each contribute to the city's success?

• Suggested Reaction:

Through education and incentives, community involvement was promoted in order to foster ownership and compliance.

Through the efficient use of technology, procedures were made simpler and efficiency was raised.

Strong governance and leadership ensured accountability and clear policies.

2. Using the lessons learned from Indore as a reference, suggest a waste management plan for a city of your choosing.

Suggested Response:

Decentralized composting facilities, technology integration for waste monitoring, collaboration with regional NGOs for execution, and community outreach and education programs should all be part of a comprehensive strategy.

3. How may other Indian cities alter Indore's waste management methodology in light of their unique socioeconomic and environmental conditions?

Recommended Reaction:

Cities should assess their particular issues, collaborate with stakeholders to create tailored solutions, and employ technologies suitable for local infrastructure in order to ensure sustainable practices.

Standards of Evaluation

Students' understanding of the case might be assessed using the following techniques:

- Class engagement: Involve the students in the discussion themes to encourage their active participation.
- Assignments/Essays: Evaluate their ability to critically analyze the case and generalize results to various urban contexts.
- Presentations: Conversations in groups on how different cities

Recommended Readings:

- **1.** Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (2018), *Swachh Survekshan: Urban Rankings*, Government of India.
- **2.** Narain, S., Pandey, S. (2016), *Challenges of Urban Waste Management in India: Policy and Practice*, Centre for Science and Environment.
- **3.** Kumar, S. (2019), Waste Management: A Practical Handbook, McGraw Hill.



Leadership and Corporate Governance – A Trailblazing Journey of Chanda Kochhar and ICICI Bank

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Abstract

The corporate leadership has witnessed a bright leader, Chanda Kochhar, a visionary banker who came out of the woods to leave an ineradicable mark on the banking industry in India. In 1984, she joined as a management trainee, landmarking new standards in the banking sector and proving herself as a dynamic and forward-thinking leader. By adapting to the skyrocketing technical infrastructure, Kochhar's dynamic leadership skills helped ICICI Bank become a retail banking legend among both rural and urban customer landscapes. Chanda Kochhar led the ICICI banking business to significant advancements, earning her the third highest civilian award, the 'Padma Bhushan,' and the 'ABLF Women of Power Award (India)' at the Asian Business Leadership Forum Awards in 2011. Accusations of corporate misconduct and quid pro quo, stemming from her involvement in dubious deals and unaccepted financial transactions, led to the disintegration of Kochhar's esteemed leadership, prompting her to leave ICICI Bank in 2018. The present case study exhibits the rise and fall of an excellent leader who developed the ICICI Bank and established high-level standards in the banking sector throughout India. The study delves deeply into the ascent of Chanda Kochhar's leadership, examining the dynamics that ultimately led to her downfall due to a failure in corporate governance. The study concludes with the lessons that can enlighten the future leaders to follow the ethical standards and considerations both in the profession and towards the organizations they are working with.

Keywords: Leadership, ICICI Bank, Chanda Kochhar, K. V. Kamath, governance, corporate leadership, organizational trust, succession planning, and crisis management.

1. Introduction

Chanda Kochhar (born 1961, in Jodhpur, India), started as a management trainee at ICICI Bank in 1984. This meteoric rise through the ranks was due in large part to her analytical prowess and innovative ideas. Kochhar was instrumental in ICICI Bank's evolution into a dominant commercial bank, helping set a blueprint for ICICI to enter the retail banking business in the early 1990s (Singh, V. 2023). She helped launch groundbreaking financial products for India's expanding middle class, which would form the building blocks of ICICI Bank's retail banking empire. By 2001, Kochhar was running the bank's retail business, leading its explosive growth. Her thrust was to use technology to make banking services simple, which helped ICICI Bank emerge as the leader in the retail space. She broke barriers by becoming the first woman CEO of ICICI Bank in 2009, maintaining the bank's competitiveness despite the economic downturn (Singh, V. 2023). But in time, cracks began to emerge in her leadership style amid accusations of favoritism and conflicts of interest. The company was plagued by a lack of management and minimal team involvement, leading to further issues. The resignation of Kochhar in 2018 was the end of a leadership era for ICICI Bank.

2. ICICI Bank's Evolution Under Chanda Kochhar

A stable focus on innovation and strategic vision by Chanda Kochhar has laid the groundwork for a ground-breaking transformation at ICICI Bank during her period of leadership (Singh, V.

2023). Following her appointment as CEO in 2009, her leadership skills significantly accelerated ICICI Bank's growth, transforming it into India's largest and most influential financial institution. She revolutionized retail banking and established a benchmark for customer service and technical integration (McKinsey & Company, 2021). Kochhar's verdicts were significant in restructuring the landscape of the banking sector in India and projecting ICICI Bank as a household name. The expansions made with her strategies adhered to evolving regulatory frameworks, ensuring growth and compliance. (Reserve Bank of India, 2020).

2.1 Strategic Focus on Retail Banking

Initially founded as a development financial institute, ICICI Bank has progressed towards the banking field by liberalizing the economy and enhancing the status of the Indian middle class under the strategic vision of Chanda Kochhar, who assumed leadership shortly after. The strategic formulation of products that support the middle class in the financial services sector, such as home loans, automobile loans, and personal loans, has significantly changed the perception of banking services in India. Her primary focus is to ensure that the financial services offered by ICICI Bank are user-friendly, offering competitive interest rates and simplified

procedures for their utilization. And this strategy of Kochhar's has transformed ICICI Bank as an emerging leader in retail banking by occupying a generous portion of the retail banking market (Singh, V. 2023). An attempt to bridge middle-class people's financial status and life expectations has emerged as a successful strategy and resulted in sustainable growth for ICICI Bank in India.

2.2 Expansion of the Bank's Footprint

Kochhar asserted that it was crucial to expand the reach of ICICI Bank, particularly in areas lacking sufficient banking services. Through the years, the bank opened 5000 more branches in tier-2 and tier-3 cities, allowing even the least privileged of the rural and semi-urban demographics to have access to financial services (Sourav Majumdar, Forbes, 2015). Given that big banks had long shunned these regions due to logistical challenges and a presumed lack of profitability, this campaign was especially bold. To address the unique requirements of these segments, ICICI Bank introduced specific banking solutions, including SME loans and agricultural finance. Using this strategy, the bank was able to diversify its customer base while also playing an integral part in promoting financial inclusion, an important objective for India's economic growth. That sprawling network became a crucial component of ICICI Bank's success under Kochhar's tenure.

2.3 Pioneering Technological Innovation

Chanda Kochhar says the three main pillars of ICICI Bank's digital strategy are digital, mobile, and social. The bank not only digitizes its own operations and provides essential banking services on digital platforms but also expands them to social media and mobile platforms, where younger customers spend a significant amount of time (Sourav Majumdar, Forbes,

2015). In its quest for digital enrichment in banking services, Kochhar has made significant investments to expand its digital platform, initially focusing on internet banking and then expanding to mobile app-based banking services. Under Kochhar's strategic approach to enhancing banking services, customers no longer need to physically visit a bank or ATM center to check their bank balance, transfer money to other accounts, or even apply for loans from home. Chanda Kochhar's strategic insights have enabled ICICI Bank to implement this extended digital footprint. Now, ICICI Bank can apply the business analytics domain to its banking operations, enabling it to predict the future and make informed decisions to enhance the quality of services provided to customers. Thus Kochhar's leadership has transformed the traditional banking services of the bank into brand new digital banking services.

2.4. Adapting to global challenges

Every journey has its own complex path; in the case of Kochhar's leadership journey, the global financial crisis of 2008 slowed down the ICICI banking system by experiencing a liquidity crunch and increasing NPAs. Amidst this cataclysm, Kochhar's intellectual strategy demonstrated the urgent need to address these challenges (Singh, V. 2023). Kochhar's strategies to implement cost-effective measures and upgrade risk management procedures at ICICI Bank have saved and laid a smooth path through these challenges. Kochhar has proven to be effective in safeguarding the bank's operating efficiency, and her emphasis on diversifying the bank's income sources has ensured its stability even during the period of global volatility. Kochhar has gained widespread praise for her abilities in steering a financial institution through rough times.

2.5. Recognition and global standing

Kochhar's strategic plays gained fame not only for her but also elevated the brand name of ICICI Bank at a global level. Under Kochhar's leadership, the bank established itself as a top financial institute in India but also secured global recognition in the banking sector by attracting foreign capital and building global partnerships with international financial entities. Kochhar's strategic approach involves equipping ICICI Bank employees with the necessary skills to excel in digital platforms and customer service. Her focus on workforce development has led to the development of an agile workforce at ICICI Bank, which is flexible enough to drive the bank's progress and improvement (Verma et. al., 2024).

2.6: An Era of Transformation

Kochhar's fearlessness in retail banking, emphasis on digital evolution, and showcased skills in navigating changes in the banking market have ushered in the transformation of ICICI Bank, which has not only consolidated its presence in the Indian finance landscape but also redefined the standards of the banking sector. Every raise will lead to a fall, just like a normal curve. Scandals and corporate governance failures also flattened Kochhar's leadership journey, yet her efforts to transform ICICI Bank into a legendary retail banking system remain remarkable to this day. Kochhar's leadership journey is an illustration of how a combination of strategy and vision can help organizations move forward even in crisis situations.

3. Comparative Leadership Styles: K. V. Kamath vs. Chanda Kochhar

The impact of theories and styles on culture, decision-making, and sustainability makes them increasingly relevant for study, as evidenced by the contrasting leadership styles of K. V. Kamath and

Chanda Kochhar at ICICI Bank. Both K. V. Kamath and Chanda Kochhar played a pivotal role in the development of ICICI Bank, yet their leadership styles were radically different, reflected in the way teams worked, confronted crises, and adapted to a changing environment.

3.1 Leadership Approach

V. Kamath was a mentor and a delegator; he simply guided his team and gave them freedom to act (Verma et. al., 2024). He encouraged a culture of trust and accountability, empowering managers and executives to make decisions. Not only did Kamath assign tasks to his subordinates, but he also provided them with training, a challenging task given the diverse range of employees. On the contrary, Chanda Kochhar's leadership ideology was centralized and autocratic, which reduced entrepreneurial decision-making and was a hindrance to innovation and creativity. At times, Kochhar's power stymied employees from challenging decisions or pursuing alternative plans, which contrasted with the approaches taken by those still in charge.

3.2 Team Building

As one of the top executives at ICICI Bank, Kamath set out to build a solid leadership pipeline by identifying (with the help of the HR department) and then breeding high-potential talent. He nurtured leaders like Shikha Sharma, Nachiket Mor, and Sandeep Bakhshi. They placed a significant emphasis on team building, particularly in ensuring that there were always individuals in leadership positions who could transition over time. Contrast this with Kochhar, who emphasized personal branding at the cost of the team. In 2018, she resigned, her strong presence having crowded out prospective

successors. This weakness revealed the bank's demand for appropriate substitutes.

3.3 Crisis Management

Kamath demonstrated excellent crisis management by consulting diverse stakeholders and getting his team involved in the decision-making process! This allowed ICICI Bank to remain resilient and growing during the economic reforms of the 1990s. Kochhar's crisis leadership style was reactionary, solitary, and lacked dissenting views, leading to inadequate communication with the rest of the organization. Her lack of trust in her own team meant she lacked crucial allies during key moments, making her leadership weaknesses visible and much harder to address.

3.4. Visibility and branding

Kamath ensured a comprehensive approach to foster a sense of ownership among all employees, thereby fostering trust, whereas Kochhar only included herself in the narrative whenever ICICI Bank was mentioned. Kamath's humility and selflessness allowed him to foster trust and loyalty among his colleagues internally, whereas Kochhar's self-centeredness created a rift between herself and her team; no one wants to work with someone who constantly puts the limelight onto themselves and is only seeking to gain visibility and recognition, which weakens the layer of organizational culture and destroys the aspect of shared understanding between employees (Verma et. al., 2024).

Aspect	K. V. Kamath	Chanda Kochhar
Leadership	Mentorship and	Centralized and
Approach	delegation	autocratic,
	promote autonomy.	emphasizing control.

Team	I have established a	The emphasis on	
Building	strong leadership	personal branding	
	succession plan with	resulted in a weakened	
	reliable successors.	pipeline.	
Crisis	Collaborative approach,	Isolated decision-	
Management	leveraging team	making, limiting	
	strengths.	internal support.	
Visibility	I shared credit with the	He dominated public	
and	team, promoting	narratives, often	
branding.	collective achievements.	disregarding the	
		contributions of his team.	

3.5 Cultural Impact and Organizational Adaptability

Kamath created a culture of trust, innovation, and resilience within ICICI Bank. It encouraged employees to voice their thoughts and challenge the status quo, resulting in a more fluid and responsive organization. His practice of decentralizing authority meant the bank could adapt quickly to changes in the marketplace and to unexpected challenges. In contrast, Kochhar's top-down authority constrained the organization's agility. By fostering an environment that silenced opposing viewpoints and alternative modes of thought, Kochhar managed to conceal the impending danger, even from the masses disguised as individuals. Her singular obsession with personal control and her unwillingness to accept feedback led to the mess ICICI Bank faced during her tenure. This underscores the dual nature of leadership, the delicate balance that both K. V. Kamath and Chanda Kochhar embody (Economic Times, 2018). Kamath's people-oriented, mentoring approach facilitated slow but steady long-term results, while Kochhar's top-down, authoritative approach achieved quick wins but did not develop depth in the organization. For leaders operating in high-stakes environments, this comparison shows the importance of trust, transparency, and a strong leadership pipeline for long-term success.

4. Controversies and Downfall

Chanda Kochhar, the former managing director and chief executive officer (MD & CEO) of ICICI Bank, had a tremendous and epochmaking tenure with the bank, receiving several recognition and awards, but her legacy turned dark with a string of controversies that led to her resignation in 2018. ICICI Bank faced accusations of favoritism, governance shortcomings, and leadership isolation (News18, 2018; NDTV, 2019). The controversies not only exposed the fissures in her brand of leadership but also placed ICICI Bank under the spotlight from regulators, stakeholders, and the public. Chanda Kochhar's leadership style helped in steering the bank through a series of controversies after she took over ICICI Bank in 2009 and remained largely unshaken when the bank went through a spate of crises. As a transformational leader, Kochhar was able to lead ICICI Bank to become a market player in the rapidly changing environment of the Indian banking sector after liberalization had led to the establishment of many privately owned banks that competed against the public sector monopolies (Chandani et al., 2014). Bhansali et al. (2013) describe her leadership style as one focused on organizational learning and enterprise agility, key elements in adopting bank strategies that demonstrated impact and stability in the face of external pressure. Kochhar influenced and motivated personnel to align bank objectives and vision (Owuori, 2021), which is key for the success of an organization. Moreover, her CEO status a woman in a history-bound, male-dominated industry dismantled the glass ceiling, and at the same time, it added a woman's capability and sophistication to the governance of the corporation, which brought better financial performance to the bank through the diversity of the board (Owuori, 2021). Her own bank's financial metrics reflected the effectiveness of her leadership, given the role of her strategic decisions in shaping a bank whose robust performance, as assessed by CAMEL ratings (which represent capital adequacy, asset quality, management efficiency, earnings, and liquidity (Chandani et al.,

2014)), outperformed the overall industry (Khatri, 2020). Abhijit Kuchhal, ICICI Bank's Chief Financial Officer, stated that forbidding Ms. Kochhar from asking her board members to channel their queries through his office was "overstepping and obtrusive" in a 2014 meeting (Chauhan, S., 2023) (Cherian & Farouq, 2013).

4.1 Favoritism Allegations

During Chanda Kochhar's tenure, ICICI Bank faced controversy due to allegations of favoritism and conflict of interest, particularly in the Videocon loan case. The loan was sanctioned to Videocon Group in 2012 but has since been questioned, as it was alleged that Dhoot invested in a firm owned by Kochhar's husband, Deepak Kochhar (Saha, 2018). Allegations suggest that Kochhar and her husband founded NuPower Renewables with some of the funds. The case can raise serious question marks on the internal department of the bank as well as the oversight of the bank from time to time in light of the case and the reputation of the bank in question, and it further emphasizes the fallible nature of unchecked power in corporate bastions.

4.2 Exit and Aftermath

In 2018, Chanda Kochhar faced numerous controversies and ultimately resigned from her position at ICICI Bank. Initially, the board supported her, but later faced criticism for its lack of action. Kochhar was on a voluntary leave, which ultimately led to her resignation in October

2018 (Moneycontrol News, 2019). The fallout did not stop with her departure; the bank publicly stated her termination was "for cause," stripping her of benefits including a retirement package. The Kochhar incident ignites an increased scrutiny of corporate governance, accountability, and ethical leadership in financial institutions. The regulatory authorities enforce stricter banking regulations to enhance transparency in the banking system. The legacy of Kochhar has written a cautionary tale in banking history, teaching every banking professional to prioritize ethical standards in governance and decision-making.

5. Corporate Governance Under Chanda Kochhar: Strengths and Gaps

5.1 Corporate governance at ICICI Bank under Chanda Kochhar

Corporate governance refers to a collection of rules and regulations aimed at legally governing a business. People framed Chanda Kochhar's story as a cautionary tale about the dangers of greed in the corporate world. Under the leadership of Chanda Kochhar, ICICI Bank experienced significant growth and innovation; however, the bank's corporate governance frameworks faced critical examination, particularly in the context of the controversy surrounding the Videocon loan. The concentration of decision-making at the upper echelons significantly diminished the checks and balances typically established by a distributed governance framework. Her leadership enhanced operational efficiency across the organization while simultaneously reducing visibility for critical risks that introduced vulnerabilities. ICICI Bank is one of the largest private sector banks in India. Private sector banks are non-government-owned banks. The bank's Board of Directors

established the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative in 2009. The committee's objective was to evaluate the CSR initiatives implemented several years prior, particularly in light of the significant media scrutiny regarding the CEO, Chanda Kochhar, and the questionable exercise of authority associated with her actions. The Central Bureau of Investigation characterized this debacle as a money laundering case. The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has claimed that ICICI Bank approved credit totaling Rs 3,250 crore to entities associated with the Videocon Group under the leadership of Dhoot in violation of the Banking Regulation Act, guidelines set forth by the Reserve Bank of India, and the bank's own credit policy.

5.2. Governance Strengths

Under Kochhar's leadership, the ICICI Bank has maintained strong compliance with the bank's governance standards, ensuring regulatory compliance and transparency in its operations. The bank timely publishes its yearly financial results and auditing procedures. The adoption of technology in banking operations has led to positive governance in retail banking operations. The advancements in detecting financial frauds and regular monitoring of financial transactions have strengthened ICICI Bank's banking operations and provided customers with the highest quality service, a direct reflection of the positive and strong corporate governance under Chanda Kochhar's leadership.

5.3. Governance Gaps and Challenges

Every strong fort will have at least one gap that weakens its strength. Similarly, Kochhar's leadership undermined corporate governance at a prominent financial institution through news- related power abuses. Records, reports, and news published in this context have identified a dark spot in ICICI Bank's corporate governance failure. Prospective conflicts of interest went unidentified by the

internal monitoring systems. The governance structures of ICICI Bank were very wanting, as revealed by the Videocon loan scam. Built-in systems for checking hazards were inadequate to uncover or address potential conflicts of interest. The allegations of preferential treatment and the lack of a plan for who would lead once leadership returned laid bare some of the downsides of perpetually centralising decision-making. As a distant leader, Kochhar frequently disregarded dissent and alarm signals, thereby exacerbating governance distortions.

6. Key Lessons from Kochhar's Journey

From 2006 to 2018, Chanda Kochhar's tenure as the head of ICICI Bank was characterized by a complex blend of success and coHer meteoric rise through a series of brands demonstrated her extraordinary site-specific vision, guiding the organisation towards innovation and growth. nd growth. Alternatively, her later degradation highlighted the dangers of unchecked authority and the commercialization of morality. Learnings from Kochhar's Story for Leaders Working in High-Stakes Contexts Leaning on her story, Kochhar provides important lessons for leaders and organizations working in high-stakes contexts. The drama surrounding Chanda Kochhar's rise and fall, plus the fortunes of ICICI Bank, makes for a meaty case study in corporate governance and crisis management practices. The lessons highlight that transparency, ethical leadership, and strong governance do not happen in a vacuum. The case of ICICI Bank is a telling example of inadequate disclosure and conflict of interest (Barua and Varma, 2023) in which Kochhar did not disclose her connections with a corporate entity that borrowed money from ICICI Bank. This emphasizes the importance of strong institutional frameworks, including functional whistleblower systems and regulatory oversight, that are fundamental to curbing

ethical transgressions and holding perpetrators accountable (Mehrotra & Kolpula,

2024). And, from the situation with ICICI Bank, we learn of a major challenge boards face regarding crisis governance and the critical need for proactive and strategic leadership in the face of complex species and opportunity (Coulson-The dynamic nature of crisis management requires adaptability and actions based on knowledge and insight, while engaging key stakeholders and navigating the ever-changing environment that sustains the strategic vision in the long term (Alam et al., 2024). et al., 2024). The issue with ICICI Bank poses a larger question about the adequacy of present-day corporate governance mechanisms in meeting the challenges of modernity. It indicates a need for additional co-creative and sustainable approaches (Coulson-Thomas, 2019). Overall, these highlights reflect the significant role that ethical leadership and robust governance frameworks play in enhancing the resilience and integrity of financial institutions.

6.1 Trust and Collaboration

"Leadership works through a foundation of trust and collaboration, creating a climate where team members will feel empowered to contribute ideas and defend different points of view" (McKinsey & Company, 2021). The centralized leadership style that Kochhar followed, while effective in the short run, severely hampered collaboration at ICICI Bank. Her top-down reluctance to cede decision-making authority to her team led to a failure to pass along critical information, leaving organizational voids in knowledge. The lack of trust and collaboration was most noticeable in times of crisis. With limited support systems and limited access to diverse perspectives, Kochhar found herself increasingly isolated and vulnerable to the wide range of challenges she encountered

(Singh, 2019). As leaders, we must recognize that collaboration is not a weakness but a strength—it is what makes us resilient, innovative, and adaptable to the constant shifts of our environments. In so doing, leaders both prepare to better handle crises and empower better decision-making.

6.2 Succession Planning

One of the most crucial aspects of leadership is ensuring the sustainability of your organization through proactive succession planning. Kochhar's focus on personal branding and her high-visibility role in the decision-making algorithms of ICICI Bank left little inkling for nascent leaders to identify and grow. In contrast, Kochhar's tenure did not involve building a team, unlike her predecessor, K. V. Kamath, who had built a strong leadership pipeline. After Kochhar stepped down amid controversies, the bank found itself at a disadvantage due to the absence of a clear succession plan. That readiness gap not only created internal bottlenecks but also exposed the long-term impacts of neglecting leadership development.

6.3 Crisis Management

One of the most important traits of outstanding leadership is the ability to handle crises effectively. The process of handling accusations yielded valuable insights into transparency and the appropriate and inappropriate forms of predictive communication during challenging times. Her initial reluctance to cooperate and her defence statements exacerbated the situation, heightened speculation, and worsened the reputation damage to both her and ICICI Bank. Leaders will need to brave a candid and precise path through crisis, validating hardships but also detailing a path through them. Stakeholders must have access to you during times of crisis, reliable contacts must answer smart questions, and you bear the

ultimate responsibility. Kochhar's belated and individualistic moves underline that trust and the ability to act quickly are key aspects of sound crisis management strategies.

6.4 Balancing Authority with Empathy

In the most in-depth exploration of the idea, leaders must strive to maintain the equilibrium between their power over others and their empathy for them. While some degree of top-down control is necessary for strategic alignment, too much centralization can sap motivation and discourage teams from taking bold initiatives. Kochhar's micromanaged and autocratic approach has stunted the growth and evolution of the organization. Empathetic leadership creates a culture of inclusive that embraces and celebrates diversity of thought, ideas, and experiences. Leaders who listen and remain engaged with their teams over time come to build connections and strengthen functions. Building loyalty is now necessary to inspire innovation and collaboration, and leaders must balance authority with compassion.

7. Conclusion

The career path of Chanda Kochhar at ICICI Bank exemplifies the complexity of leadership in high-stress environments. Khosla's journey from a management trainee to the Chief Executive Officer of one of India's leading financial corporations tells a story of determination, insight, and creativity. She smashed the glass ceiling, introduced path-breaking innovations in retail banking, and brought in technology-driven developments that reinvented the banking space in the country. However, her downfall highlights the importance of trust, collaboration, and ethical stewardship in positions of power (The Wire, 2019; RBI, 2020). The controversies during her leadership revealed the dangers of hyper-centralization, failure to cultivate a team, and inability to manage a crisis. These

challenges not only damaged her legacy but also negatively impacted the reputation of ICICI Bank, serving as valuable learning examples for leaders and organizations. Kochhar's story has valuable insights for anyone looking to reach the top. Leaders are not only about achieving results; they build collaborative relationships characterized by trust, transparency, and shared achievements.

Such organizations, which are sustainable by nature, not only want to maintain governance but also focus on strengthening the leadership pathway and being proactive when it comes to crisis management. Kochhar's case demonstrates leadership not only needs vigor and expertise but also requires humility, empathy, and value-based decision-making. Thus, the storytelling framework sets out a blueprint for negotiating the complexities of contemporary leadership, in which success is no longer about the individual but about establishing sustainable organizations and enabling others to thrive (Singh, 2019).

8. Teaching Notes

8.1 Synopsis

This case study analyses the leadership journey of Chanda Kochhar at ICICI Bank. It highlights her journey as a management trainee to the forth first female managing director & CEO. Kochhar brought many new-age technologies and approaches to the forefront, transforming the Indian banking sector and setting new benchmarks for women leaders in the upper strata of the corporate world. Yet claims of favouritism and poor government knowledge helped bring her down. The contrast also highlights one of the major differences between Kochhar's leadership style and that of her mentor, K. V. Kamath. Kochhar's top-down strategy limited the organization's ability to respond to new concepts in stark contrast to Kamath's

emphasis on enhancing skills and team building, which created a climate of collaboration. This case is a demonstration of how leadership impacts almost everything in organizational dynamics, such as culture, governance, crisis management, and others. It especially highlights the importance of trust, cooperation, ethical decision-making, and succession planning for promoting a resilient organizational setting. This case study offers insightful lessons for workers and students who are interested in learning how to become leaders in a high-stakes environment, as well as how businesses can find a balance between innovative thinking and effective governance. The financial industry has analysed and dissected Chanda Kochhar's leadership journey at ICICI Bank, particularly through her relationship with the former chair, K.V. Kamath. The financial industry has analysed and dissected her style of corporate governance and crisis management.

Keywords: Leadership, Crisis Management, Corporate Governance, ICICI Bank, Chanda Kochhar, K.V.Kamath

8.2 Target Audience

Students in the management domain Trainees of Executive Leadership Experienced Leaders from Corporate

8.3 Learning Objectives

- **1.** To examine the growth of ICICI Bank during the leadership era of Chanda Kochhar.
- **2.** To compare the effective leadership styles of K.V. Kamath and Chanda Kochhar.
- **3.** To comprehend the causes of the disputes and the collapse of Kochhar's authority.
- **4.** To analyze the strengths and gaps of corporate governance under Chanda Kochhar.

5. To formulate the lessons observed from Chanda Kochhar's leadership journey.

8.4 Discussion Questions

- **1.** Explain how Chanda Kochhar's leadership transformed ICICI Bank into a powerful retail banking system in India.
- **2.** Differentiate the leadership styles and strategies of Chanda Kochhar and K.V. Kamath.
- **3.** Discuss the reasons or situations that made Chanda Kochhar involvement in an unanticipated dispute that laid a big break to her career in banking sector.
- **4.** What measures can organizations implement to prevent governance issues?
- **5.** Lessons from Kochhar's leadership can assist future leaders in streamlining and modifying their leadership journey in a positive direction. Explain.

8.5 Teaching Methodology

Case Discussion: The case study examines the leadership styles of Kochhar and Kamath through a group debate.

Role Play: Engage in role play to simulate crisis management scenarios, allowing for the exploration of alternative responses.

Research Assignment: Examine analogous controversies in corporate leadership and identify parallels.

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Moonlighting and employee behavior at ALAMB software technologies

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Organizational Context & Global Impact:

Alamb Tech being a multinational company headquarted in USA had to undergo radical changes due to the impact of economic models of the nations. As a move to cope with pandameic effect govt has imposed many policies which has hit the companies positively and adversely. On the other hand, Alamb Tech assumed work from home is a good initiative for cost reduction. The company has witnessed a significant impact on their business leading to increased profits. Employees are motivated to increase their contributions with huge perks and benefits. Various employee benefits were sanctioned as a part of employee welfare which eventually added to increased expenditure.

Company scenario:

Earlier days of alamb technologies were quite shiny. The firm use to organize family visits where employees feel delighted and enthusiastic. Every year recognition programs were organized and best employees are highly rewarded. There was a team spirit among employees and the organize climate witnessed joyful work

environment. Many employee motivation programs were launched like reward systems, employee benefits, referral programs, corporate gifting etc. The company created oneness amongst all the employees where managers and sub ordinates work together towards goals.

Alamb technologies has been with a good start after setting up but gradually there was a consecutive drop down of projects. several teams are less performing and resulted in missing deadlines. The company had to withdraw few operations and client relationships worsened. Also, profits started falling down. During this critical times Alamb Technologies has made employee policies rigid. Employees noticed work pressures instead of joyful work environment. Teams are frequently shuffled so that employees work with new members and resulted in poor team dynamics.

Authority and responsibility of employee performance vested with reporting managers who can suggest to hire or fire an employee from the team and refer to HR department. Even the compensation decisions like employee pay package, increments and performance-based bonus were in the hands of reporting managers.

Protagonist

Joe a software engineer at ALAMB SOFTWARE TECHNOLOGIES abruptly stepped into the office on a Monday morning. Mr. Sam the project lead checking the project details to be accomplished by coming month end. Sam decided to schedule a one-to-one meeting with Mr Joe to check the readiness towards the upcoming project deadline. Joe had a gloomy face and checking the mail very anxiously. He starred at the mail and felt a deep sigh. The mail read "YOUR APPLICATION FOR THE POSITION OF SOFTWARE CONSULTANT AT ABC INC., HAS BEEN REJECTED". Joe now lost into thoughts about his financial crisis

and inability to cover all the expenses from the salary received in the current job.

Demotivated Employee

Joe was working at Alamb Software Technologies from past 8 years but several times he missed the promotion opportunity due to Manager Bias and misconception about him. Joe was a workaholic personality but, in several instances, he was aggressive towards the manager regarding various work aspects. Ms Rosaline, the reporting manager to Joe pointed out the aggressive nature several times but Joe was unchanged. She assumed the negative attitude of Joe and started neglecting and never referred any promotions to him. To other employees who were favorable Ms Rosaline assured a prompt career progress.

Changing work nature

Since inception Alamb Technologies was been working from site and employee policies were very friendly and highly motivating. The organization believed in workplace integrity and employee compensation structure was fair. This led to increased productivity and increased employee morale. During sudden global pandemic every organization was forced to adopt new work culture i.e. virtual work environment. The employees were forced to work virtually. This scenario has hit the employees of Alamb technologies also. In this regard the lead scheduled a daily meeting with the members to check the work progress. When employees work virtually the biggest challenge arised is the work delay due to various reasons like technical glitches, improper resource availability and house hold issues etc. Joe was initially very happy when pandemic started as he felt staying at home and working virtually is joyful. He

realized work pressures enhanced during work from home rather than work from site.

Manager attitude:

Ms. Rosaline was been earlier working in non-technical department to handle employee development activities. But the firm has taken women empowerment initiatives which led to promoting Ms. Rosaline as reporting manager in technical department. Her work culture with the sub ordinates was quite unpredictable. she assumed all the team responsibility but never indulged in work progress of sub ordinates. She believed in multi-tasking but failed to define proper timelines for assigned jobs to the sub ordinates. This led to employee differences among the team. Ms. Rosaline failed to delegate and relied on team members for her individual contribution also. During promotions she was biased and neglected the contributions of team members. As per company policy reporting manager has to take staff compensation decisions. She misused the opportunity to nurture employee contribution through motivation rather ended up with employee dissatisfaction. Joe was workaholic but the decisions taken by Ms. Rosaline during several instances made him reluctant to work which led to heated arguments between them several times during the working hours.

Protagonist dilemma:

Joe who joined the company in his early career gradually lost the enthusiasm at work. He noticed that work contributions merely matter and career growth looks rigid. He was intended to have one to one with lead Mr. Sam several times but taken aback knowing the meagre impact. Joe was initially very friendly with other colleagues. He maintained work progress ahead of deadlines to ensure his employee performance is never a concern for his career

path. He maintained good rapport with the reporting managers earlier. But gradually with the changing work scenario at alamb technologies Joe became less active and other colleagues who were his earlier reporting managers started highlighting Joe as aggressive person instead of appreciating his work nature. Ms.Rosaline too misinterpreted Joe and reported negative performance for 3 consecutive years. On the other hand, Joe was eventually facing work-life balance challenges which made him more rigid at work place.

Company's warning signs:

As days rolled on, Alamb Technologies was not like earlier. Globally recession started hitting and Alamb also shutdown few units across the globe. Alongside, as a part of cost cutting headquarters has rolled out a downsizing to be implemented at all the sites globally. This was a terrible state to all the employees as everyone were at job risk, even Joe was not exceptional.

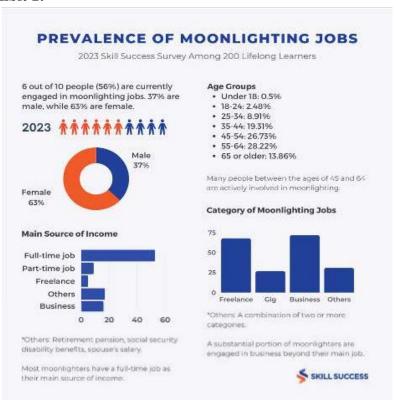
Joe's action plan:

Mr. Sam being the lead has suddenly resigned the job to have better opportunity knowing the company crisis. Now Alamb Technologies was not a happy place to work for employees. The departments were restructured and reduction in head count was rolled out gradually. Joe feels day to day risk at job and worried about personal obligations too. On the other hand, not only Alamb Technologies but many other companies were implementing downsizing and recession has hit at a higher state. In this critical scenario, Joe was searching for any second job while working at Alamb technologies to be on safe zone. He started vigorous job search and one day Ms. Rosaline directly communicated that team members have to prepare resumes and look forward to new opportunities.

Moonlighting scenario

Moonlighting is an act of choosing secondary work while already engaging in a primary work. (Imran & Tanveer, 2015) which include freelancing, consulting or running a small business. Due to global environment the remote work culture enhanced(Dr. A.Shaji George & A.S.Hovan George, 2022) and moonlighting has become a way of life.(Sussman, n.d.). Gig workers has increased and covid has positively boosted this trend. Especially IT sectors have a greater number of employees looking for secondary job.

Exhibit 1:



Source: Moonlighting Jobsin 2024: Facts, Statistics, and Expert Insights | Skill Success Blog

Exhibit 2:

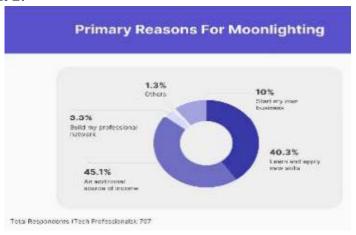
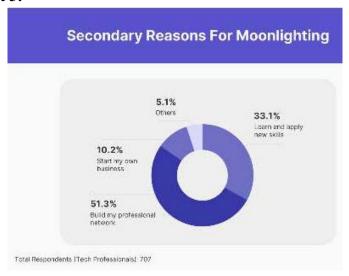


Exhibit 3:



TEACHING NOTES

Synopsis of the Case: This case discusses the moonlighting scenario in an IT company where a protagonist has faced multiple circumstances to drive him towards choosing second job. Also, the

case tries to establish whether moon lighting is ethical way at the work place by defining a strong moon lighting policy.

Key words: Moon lighting, Organization, Work Environment

Teaching Objectives:

To understand the concept of moon lighting in Human Resource Management

To understand the pros and cons of moonlighting policy in an organization

To suggest policies to HR managers for safeguarding against the negative impact of moon lighting

Expected Learning Outcomes:

The case allows the students to make decisions pertaining to employee Moon lighting. The major expected outcomes include:

Explore the possibilities of moon lighting at work place.

Understand the moon lighting scenario in the organizations.

Identify major challenges and strategies to cope with moon lighting.

List down key HR issues regarding moon lighting policy.

Target audience:

- MBA/Post Graduate Program in Management in first year where core course like HRM is taught
- MBA/Post Graduate Program in Management in the course like "strategic HRM" in the second year. The case is to be discussed towards the end of the program so that the students can appreciate the problems faced by employees and discuss ways to solve the issues that arise in an organization.

 MBA/Post Graduate Program in Management in General Management Specialization to evaluate the pros and cons of a policy.

Suggested teaching Plan

Pre-class reading: 2 hours of pre-class reading to understand the intricacies of case and to analyse the assignment questions. The students can also supplement this case by additional information on various organisations moon lighting policy.

Suggested teaching process: 90 minutes

- 20 minutes to understand the insights and impact of Moon lighting.
- 30 minutes to discuss the predicaments of HR managers in terms of Moon lighting.
- 30 minutes to deliberate the role of Human Resources Management towards Moon lighting.
- 10 minutes for wrapping up the case

Discussion questions

- 1. what is the action plan for Joe??
- 2. How Alamb Technologies can deal with unfair moon lighting?
- **3.** What are the reasons for Joe to adopt Moon lighting?
- **4.** What are the HR challenges that arise during moon lighting policy?
- **5.** Is moon lighting at work place ethical or unethical?

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Neo Timber Traders: Balancing Heritage, Innovation, and Sustainability in the luxury Timber market

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Introduction

Mr. Vijay Patil, who hails from Satara, Maharashtra, is an entrepreneur in his 48th year and has spent nearly two decades in the timber business. Hailing from a family of farmers, he was exposed early to the importance of natural resources, and thus, his respect for wood as a sustainable and valuable commodity dates back to his childhood days. He then took what his father left him-a small timber trading business-and expanded and modernized it to make "Neo Timber Creations," a thriving enterprise specializing in high-quality, sustainable timber products.

Neo Timber Creations caters to the luxury timber market, focusing on eco-conscious consumers who value ethically sourced, finely crafted wood products From high-end teak furniture to cross-laminated timber for green building projects, the business that Mr. Patil has set up has turned into a name across Maharashtra and further.

Sustainability for him means that wood has to be sourced from certified forests, zero waste, by upcycling, and local artisans have to be supported in order to save traditional craftsmanship. Mr. Patil aspires to see NeoTimber Creations as a household name for sustainable luxury across India. He wants to expand the business in the international markets and prove the artistry and eco-friendliness of his business. He further aims to establish a model company that will influence other small businesses in the region to pursue sustainability and thus contribute to conserving the environment.

The Dilemma

Despite the desires he has, Mr. Patil faces a strong dilemma. The timber industry is growing very competitive since there is a rise in the price of raw materials, harsh environmental laws, and demanding consumers wanting more transparency. Now, he has to choose between one of the two strategic choices:

Modernization Through Technology: Investment in the latest technology, including blockchain for traceability and augmented reality for developing customer experience. It should promise efficiency and robust market position but requires considerable upfront capital and technical expertise.

Scale-Up Through Artisan Partnerships: Business scale-up on different unique handcrafted products, timber products from local artisans reflects his philosophy in the manner of community development and sustainability but may be less powerful at beating technologically savvy competitors, especially regarding efficiency and transparency.

The Crossroads: Mr. Patil knows that the road he takes will determine Neo Timber Creations' future. To be on a par with the tech-based market, should he modernize and compete? Or does he follow along with his old strengths in craftsmanship? This is one

that would allow him to grow significantly but also one fraught with great risk. This case calls for us to examine in which way Mr. Patil might balance personal values, business goals, and market demand so as to create a sustainable strategy for future success.

About the Industry

A high-end timber is unique as a product that finds itself between two worlds-a rich tradition, quality craftsmanship, and commitment to sustainability on one end: rapidly changing market pressures on the other (Guðmundsdóttir, 2023). Indeed, such an industry becomes particularly vital as global markets call for greater requirements in terms of the level of high-quality sustainable wood that meets people's environmental expectations (Shamim & Azam, wood-dependent 2024). End. being From skilled upon craftsmanship and lasting materials, it transformed in the modern market due to raw material cost escalation, customer demand for ethically sourced products, and emphasis on environmentally friendly practices (Zhou et al.,

2024). Neo Timber Traders responded to all these factors by embracing the ancient ways combined with modern approaches. In that case, cross-laminated timber usage stands as a perfect blend where the same would provide strength along with lightweight, which attracts green building. Their commitment to sustainable ensures understanding forestry of practice environmental responsibility, which responds to the market that values its products with an attenuated ecological footprint. Neo Timber has also been able to integrate advanced manufacturing technologies optimizing precision and design capabilities and use computer- aided tools to achieve intricate textures and exact cuts wherein the beauty of the natural wood shines through. These efforts signify that the brand is concerned with the quality and flexibility, so that it can absorb old traditional values along with new contemporary demands.

Operating in such a volatile environment, key drivers propel Neo Timber Traders toward profitability. Margin status is supported by raw material cost and operational efficiency but also by distance from production hubs and strategic diversification into new products and markets. Sustainability is both a source of benefit by supporting consumer values and reduces costs through recycling and upcycling of wood waste-an innovative but economically sensible practice.

This case study explains how innovation and sustainability meet within the luxury wood market. This case discusses how Neo Timber Traders applies sustainable practices and technological advancement in terms of market challenges and sustains leadership in responsible luxury. Focusing on strategic approaches to profitability and brand differentiation, this case will be of significant value providing insight into the factors helping long-term growth and resilience in a competitive conscience market environment.

Indian Scenario

India is a booming country when it comes to wood consumption or to meet the demand of consumers (Jarzombek, 2023). Since, the country has the largest consumption of wood, sometimes it becomes difficult for the country to meet its own demand and hence, it turns out to be the largest importer of tropical woods.



Figure 1: Example of Sagwan/teak wood

Source: https://upscwithnikhil.com/article/geography/sagwan-tree-teak

The wood industry originated since prehistoric times when people used wood for shelter, food, and other basic needs for living (Elliott, 2023). As ancient people developed, they began making wood into furniture, a step towards aesthetic and functional usage. This skill was advanced during the Middle Ages where craftsmen shaped wood into intricately designed furniture and also added it to architectural designs to make it look attractive. The Industrial Revolution, during the 18th and 19th centuries, brought mechanization (Varmola & Carle,

2002). As a result, its production capability increased manifold and, hence, further widened its applications. In the 20th century, the advent of engineered wood products, like plywood, came along, and chemical treatments rendered wood more resistant to natural factors, thus opening the field of applications (Barbaritano et al., 2019).

- Tectona grandis or Teak is majorly used in boat building, it has been extensively used for decking, rails, bulwarks, hatches, weather doors, and planking.
- In general construction, it is suitable for flooring, decking, framing, cladding, fascias and barge boards.
- Decorative uses of teak include indoor and outdoor furniture, parquetry, turnery, carving, lining and panelling.

Figure 2: Common application of sagwan/Teak wood

Source : https://cameroontimberexport.com/teak-wood-properties-characteristics-uses/



Figure 3 Teak Wood Furniture Manufacturing unit

Source: https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/history-indonesia-teak-wood-furniture-nur-salim-606bc/

Wood industries have also taken up the idea of sustainability in recent years. The practice set focus on ecologically friendly products, recycling, and minimal impact on the environment. The life cycle of wood today starts from harvesting and cultivation up to the point of distribution, then disposal and recycling. Wood production involves forestry, which is the management, planting, and harvesting of sustainable forests. Saw-milling is the cutting, drying, and treating of logs into usable lumber. In terms of prolonging the life of wood, various chemical-based treatments prevent bugs from pestering and microbes and Molds from decaying the wood. Recycling and reuse practices revolve around refinishing, sanding, and changing re- use wood to a point of absolute minimal wastage of original timbers. Sale or delivery usually occurs after

wholesalers/retailers, through even door-to-door means sometimes to ensure access of buyers to such products.

The last thing is that sustainability practices go on. Companies, therefore, are leading in an industry integrating old-fashioned craftsmanship with modern technology and sustainability for modern needs through responsible sourcing of materials, minimizing waste, and environmentally friendly processes Neo- Timber, and others are also making it's place among all other companies with time.

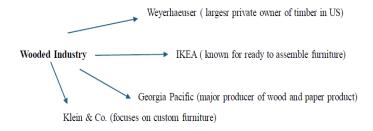


Figure 4 : Competitors

Source: Author's Own

The industry focuses on all the aspects under Porter's Generic model when it comes to survival or sustainable growth. Fig 2 reflects onto the different aspects of cost and differentiation confronting and also sees to which part to focus on as the need arises. The firm's or industry's relative position determines the firm's profitability in the long term while providing competitive advantage.

Technological innovation in the wooden industry is heavily influenced by advancing technologies and changing demands from customers. For instance, engineered wood products such as cross-laminated timber has gained great popularity due to its lighter texture, further increased strength, and greater adaptability for construction use. Other factors include growing consumer demands

for responsible forestry practices and responsive sourcing that allows companies to remain operational but minimize the adverse impact of such operations on the environment. This practice is then focused on meeting consumer demand for product purchases that reduce their ecological footprint while the consumers also strive to preserve their natural resources. Other innovations include recycling and up-cycling, which is the transformation of waste timber into new marketable products, minimizing waste, and implementing closed-loop economy. Another role digital manufacturing plays is computer-aided technologies could offer fine cuts and complex textures in designs while being effective.

There are numerous factors that affect profitability within the industry and improve on cost efficiency to increase profitability margins. Cost of raw material is one of the starting factors because any increase may lower the margin and make profitability very dependent on controlling the raw material costs. Operational efficiency is also very crucial as companies require streamlined processes and attractive price strategies that will help them be competitive. Sustainability practices driven by environmental awareness are profitable as well because recycling offsets the cost of producing the materials. Profitability is also a function of market demand since increased demand is often associated with increased costs of production or importation, which should be controlled effectively. Location also determines profitability; the closer the facility to production and distribution centers reduces transportation costs and hence provides even more economical operation. Diversification to various other product lines or areas will allow companies to better deliver upon market needs, therefore improving cost efficiencies and having more diversified revenue streams. So, with all the mentioned innovation-based practices and the discussed

profitability factors, the growth and sustainability of industry goals are supported.

Sustaining Growth in a Luxury Commodity Market: The Case of Neo Timber Traders

The luxury commodity market has several special moments of interaction concerning consumers, environmental sustainability, and economics. It provides opportunity yet is a challenge to corporations on business growth. Looking within such a context, with respect to Neo Timber Traders, lies huge opportunity for growth and position before its competitors in this fast competitive industry. With ecofriendly sourcing in tandem with quality craftsmanship, Neo Timber appeals not only to the growing conscientious consumer base but also sets a benchmark for ethical standards in industry. This essay will explore elements contributing to the sustained growth of Neo Timber Traders, special emphasis on their innovative marketing strategies, supply chain management, and customer engagement techniques. This analysis will point out how such factors not only contribute to an improvement in market positioning but also enhance long-term resilience with regards to changing market conditions and consumer expectations. Finally, this discussion will end by reminding everyone of the importance of sustainability as a competitive advantage as well as a moral imperative in the luxury goods industry. The luxury commodity market has grown to become an industry that holds strong influences over the world's economies and consumer behavior. High-quality products, exclusivity, and aspirational branding have characterized this market, yet it has had its share of challenges towards sustainability and responsible sourcing. This new demand from consumers for increased transparency and social responsibility gives companies that combine luxury with environmental consciousness the edge in the market.

This trend not only attracts some selective clientele but also brings about long-term customer loyalty in an age where the old mode of marketing is no longer working the way it used to be. Besides, this marketplace is more than just a set of simple economic statistics; it rather helps define cultural values, consumer identity, and social waves among different strata within society. Understanding these dynamics, supporting this marketplace while keeping high ethical standards has become important for companies as Neo Timber Traders in trying to steer this marketplace. True enough, sustainability will also increasingly mark the distinction for this space in continued growth as a luxury commodity space that forges brand identity and longevity.

Market Dynamics and Trends

Luxury commodity markets recently witnessed drastic change because the preferences of consumers are changing in favor of sustainability and ethical sourcing. Increasingly, high-income consumers prefer goods that reflect the quality and prestige of goods but now also reflect environmental awareness. This is a strong trend towards ecowarity in industries such as wood trading whose products are not only environmentally friendly, thus aligned with the present regulatory standards but also the fast-growing sector of consumers willing to pay more for responsible luxury. A supply chain that makes use of technology like blockchain further reinforces transparency and trust from brands to embrace such technologies. As this continues to shift, the competitive landscape of the luxury commodity marketplace is changing at a breakneck pace. New entrants are shaking up established players because, in this way, the disrupts can easily reach niche audiences using digital, thus dismantling the old-fashioned barriers to entry. Legacy brands must adapt accordingly. This calls forth the dire need of larger entities like

Neo Timber Traders to create agility in its operational strategy, embracing more than technological advancement in it, innovative marketing technique. Most importantly, that will determine continuing competitiveness vis-à-vis changing consumer requirements and aggressive market forces. Understanding the psychological drivers that lead consumers to buy into or out of a brand is a must for any luxury brand looking to attract and retain an enlightened clientele. With experiences taking over from tangible products in the new paradigm, luxury consumers are looking for brands that speak to their values and aspirations. This appeal for bespoke, emotionally charged experiences underscores the role of authentic brand stories, especially those focusing on sustainability and community initiatives. For Neo Timber Traders, this means not only the need to refine product offerings to align with the changes in consumer expectations, but also to improve storytelling and brand positioning to deepen their connection with target audiences. As such, they would effectively make better use of market dynamics to able to sustain competitive growth within the luxury commodities.

Analysis of consumer behavior in the luxury timber sector

Consumer behaviour within the premium timber industry indicates complex psychology, cultures, and socio-economic environments influencing purchases. Luxury goods consumers typically have a thirst for material which speaks directly to the customer's desires of sustainability and artisanship. Hence, brand narration and responsible sourcing become essentials in decision making. Research indicates that the consumers in this market segment are often prone to exclusivity, where scarcity equates to prestige, thus affecting their loyalty to specific brands. Also, as concerns over the environment continue to increase, consumers are

more likely to prefer companies that make transparent supply chain and sustainable practice commitments. Therefore, luxury timber traders should adapt their marketing strategies in order to showcase not just the aesthetic and functional aspects of their products but the ethical dimensions that are closer to the hearts of the target audience. In fact, this is what will continue the growth in a discerning market, thus fortifying the symbiotic relationship between luxury branding and responsible consumerism.

Strategic Moves toward Growth

Therefore, in navigating the complex commodity luxury market, Neo Timber Traders should take up diversified strategic approaches toward ensuring continued growth. A leading strategy will be through digital transformation, which can enhance the interactions with customers and more operational functions streamlined. Having taken onboard advanced technologies such as AI and machine learning, it will better understand consumer trends which can be used to enhance better targeted marketing strategies as well as optimal supply chain management. Additionally, the partnering of suppliers allows the company to elevate artisanal products while reinforcing brand integrity and authenticity, appealing more so to a discerning customer base increasingly concerned about sustainability and ethical sourcing. The other area for growth is in emerging markets, where growing wealth and the desire for luxury goods offer ample opportunities. However, such initiatives must be sensitively fine-tuned to the cultural sensibilities of the regions and consumption habits. Last but not least, integration of technological advancement, ethical partnership, and extension of market may strategically position Neo Timber Traders at the top of the luxury timber business even as forces of competition rage, and provide it with the growth direction it wishes.

Neo Timber Traders' novel marketing strategies

As a measure to sustain growth in the luxury commodity market, Neo Timber Traders has employed innovative marketing strategies that are dependent on digital media as well as experiential experiences. The company embraces the use of cutting-edge technologies such as augmented reality in order to allow potential clients to envision timber products in their spaces, thereby making the buying experience richer and more interactive. Related, Neo Timber Traders took the social media campaign for products whose aesthetic quality lay in the ethically sourced background which was reflective of all beauty that one got coupled with concern for its corporate responsibility nature appealing to an environmentally conscious consumer. In addition, the company is positioned at the forefront of luxury design trends by working with influential designers and architects, thus aligning its brand with high-profile projects that elevate its prestige. Ultimately, these integrated marketing campaigns increase the brand's visibility and develop a more intimate relationship with the choosiest of clients, making Neo Timber Traders a competitive force in a saturated market.

In such complexities of developing the luxury commodity market, in particular, for a stakeholder like Neo Timber Traders, it becomes multilateral when it comes to the strategic management. A precise study reflects that the benefit of sustainability for brands, both reputation-wise and to meet the ever-changing trend in consumer preference to increasingly show preference for ecological choices. In addition, creative approaches to marketing tailored towards these new demographics will form another competitive advantage. Application of data analytics and consumer insight will further empower companies operating in this industry to adapt their offerings and thereby grow closer to their consumers. The agility of the structure, however, is needed in order to adapt to change brought

about by the market as well as regulatory requirements. Consequently, this implies that Neo Timber Traders has to make its operational agenda dominated by a continuous drive of improvement and the ethics they have to always adopt. Of course, long-run growth opportunity of this niche stands only through harmonization between tradition and innovation for sustainable success in a growing competitive landscape.

Luxury timber survival calls for the complex addressing of economic, environmental, and social considerations. As more customers demand sustainable products, the luxury timber sector must find its rhythm and adopt alternatives and innovative means such as responsible sourcing and openness along the supply chain. For instance, eco-certifications that include and meet the regulatory requirement according to Lacey Act can work to earn customer trust as well as a much stronger brand image. Joint activity with environmental organizations and local community can bring in mutual profit strategies for biodiversity and forest conservations. Luxury timber trading also needs to invest in modern technology for future growth that will optimize the production lines by using data analytics in making them less wasteful. This forward-thinking approach will serve the evolving expectations of an environmentally conscious consumer base and position the sector as a leader in sustainable luxury. Integration of sustainability into core business practices will be the only way to meet the challenges posed by market volatility and regulatory frameworks while providing longterm viability.

General Discussions

The luxury commodity market is a very unique and complex sector, especially in the case of industries like timber. Companies like Neo Timber Traders can take advantage of this convergence of luxury,

sustainability, and consumer demand for ethical sourcing to set a benchmark for innovation and responsible business practices. Consumer demand shift in light of environmental responsibility will definitely influence timber luxury brands, even the sustainable ones, which is a good opportunity to realize more substantial growth and deeper involvement from clients. Here are few suggestions and strategies, complete with applicable graphical illustrations, through which this market can attain enduring development.

Agendas of Case Discussion

High luxury consumers often yearn for exclusivity and quality but increasingly make decisions on purchase based environmental footprints by brands. Affluent consumers no longer see rare materials, including responsibly sourced, as an aspect of status, but it is also as an emblem of being socially responsible. Sustainable practice within the timber industry caters not only to an ethical clientele but also offsets potential risk to them from environmental legislation's. The use of technology to minimize waste and increase product traceability is one of the ways to gain consumer trust. Experiential Marketing is the key i.e Consumers are increasingly seeking experiences that resonate with their values. Offering a tangible connection between the product and the brand's ethical stance creates more significant consumer loyalty. Embracing augmented reality (AR) and social media campaigns tailored to luxury markets can enhance consumer engagement. Full visibility of the sourcing, production, and distribution of timber products through block-chain technology can lead to high consumer trust levels. Resilience and adaptability in supply chains are very important in reaction to demand and supply changes arising from market conditions. In a competitive market, collaborative artisan work, such as partnering with skilled artisans to elevate the craftsmanship of its products, can help Neo Timber Traders stand out from the competition. Marketing Targeting strategies targeting high-income consumers in developing countries where demand for luxury goods is on the rise, especially in Asian and Middle Eastern markets. The luxury timber industry has to be responsive to change in consumer demand, regulatory requirements, and market forces. The luxury market often reacts to shifts in economic conditions, which means companies must be ready to adapt pricing strategies, marketing approaches, and product offerings.

A better understanding can be visualized through a diagram, which depicts the areas in the luxury timber sector influencing consumers based on the predicted levels of importance. The categories showcase various elements, such as sustainability, experiential marketing, and technology integration, which is driving consumer preferences.

Recommendations for the Neo Timber

- 1) Certifications such as FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) and products that are environmental friendly may directly affect the purchase decision.
- 2) tNeo Timber Traders can narrate a story about each piece of timber product's journey from forest to final craftsmanship. Including stories which highlight the company's commitment to the conservation of forests and biodiversity will strengthen the emotional attachment of consumers to the products.
- 3) Using AR and Visual Customization, give the customers an idea of how the luxury timber product would look in their spaces and hence enrich the buying experience as well as emotional connect. Collaborate with influential and environmentally conscious influencers or high-profile designers to showcase how Neo Timber products can meet aesthetic and ethical values.

- 4) Block-chain Adoption Integrates block-chain systems that can trace the origin of products in real time. It increases transparency and confirms Neo Timber's commitment to ethical sourcing.
- 5) Neo can launch programs where a percentage of the profit are channeled to tree planting or biodiversity projects for customers to be part of the impact. Flexible pricing strategies that reflect both marketplace demand and supply chain realities of competitiveness while maintaining luxury positions.

Conclusion

This requires Neo Timber Traders to frame sustainability as much more than a moral responsibility, but as a key piece of competitive advantage. When embracing innovative technologies, working through transparent and ethical sources, and meeting the values that drive an environmentally conscious consumers, this company will better build sustainable roots in this evolving landscape of luxury timber. Strategic integration of these factors with cutting- edge marketing techniques and operational agility will keep Neo Timber Traders at the forefront of this intersection of luxury and sustainability.

TEACHING NOTES

SYNOPSIS

This case examines the strategic dilemmas of Mr. Vijay Patil, founder of Neo Timber Traders, a sustainable luxury timber company. The business strikes a balance between traditional craftsmanship and modern sustainability practices and needs to decide whether to modernize through advanced technology or expand through artisan partnerships. The case provides insights into the dynamics of the luxury timber industry, including the importance of sustainability, consumer behaviour, and the challenges of operating in an increasingly competitive and ethically

conscious marketplace. The case study focuses on the strategic initiatives pursued by Neo Timber Traders in maintaining growth in the luxury timber industry at the interplay of heritage, innovation, and environmental stewardship. In terms of responsible sourcing, progressive manufacturing technologies, and green consumer engagement, Neo Timber Traders has positioned itself as a leader in sustainable luxury. The analysis highlights how the company embraces cross-laminated timber, recycling, and up-cycling to fulfil new market demands while retaining the values of traditional craftsmanship. Neo Timber Traders best exemplifies the resilience in a competitive, ethically driven marketplace through aligning consumer values with its business operations and embracing digital tools for precision and transparency. This study provides comprehensive insights into generating profitability, innovation, and the environmental stewardship needed to succeed in a constantly dynamic industry.

KEYWORDS AND SUBJECT CODE

Keyword: Luxury, Marketing, Wood Industry, Strategy.

Subject Code: Consumer Behaviour, Marketing, Online Marketing, E-Commerce, Digital Marketing.

TARGET AUDIENCE

Students pursuing professional degrees in Marketing domain and industry personnel from marketing can use this case study for their decision making and knowledge enhancement.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- 1. To make students aware about the concept of Luxury Marketing
- **2.** To Evaluate how companies like Neo Timber Traders can choose between competing priorities of modernization and preserving tradition.

- **3.** To make students understand influence of Technology on Local markets.
- **4.** To discuss how sustainability impacts profitability, branding, and customer loyalty in luxury markets.
- **5.** To unable students to analyse the dynamics of human behaviour and the basic factors that influence the consumer's decision process.
- **6.** To make student able to compare the characteristics of Traditional marketing and Influencer marketing.
- **7.** Examine the influence of consumer expectations, technological advancements, and regulatory environments on luxury commodity markets.

ASSIGNMENT QUESTIONS

- 1. Illustrate how companies like BYJU's and UNACADEMY responded to the internet and the digital age using online marketing strategies such as Influencer Marketing.
- **2.** Explain why companies should use online marketing channels and outline the advantages of Influencer Marketing.
- **3.** Develop a marketing strategy for a brand called MAMAEARTH by using influencer marketing.

REFERENCE BOOKS SUGGESTION

- ➤ Consumer Behaviour In Indian Perspective, Suja R. Nair, Himalaya Publishing House.
- ➤ Digital Marketing, Prof. Seema Gupta, McGraw Hill Publications.
- ➤ E- Marketing by Judy Strauss, Adel Ansary, Raymond Frost, Prentice Hall.
- ➤ Social Media Marketing All-In-One for Dummies, Jan Zimmerman and Deborah.

Key Issues for Discussion

1. Strategic Dilemma:

- Modernize through blockchain and augmented reality or expand artisan partnerships?
- Impact on market positioning, cost structure, and long-term brand identity.

2. Sustainability as Differentiation:

- How does Neo Timber Traders leverage sustainability as a branding tool?
- Role of certifications and consumer trust in building competitive advantage.

3. Profitability and Operational Efficiency:

- Managing raw material costs and achieving operational efficiencies while maintaining ethical sourcing.

4. Consumer Behaviour Analysis:

- Exploring trends like demand for transparency, eco-conscious products, and luxury experiences.

Suggested Discussion Questions

1. Industry Analysis:

What are the growth drivers in the luxury timber industry, and how can Neo Timber Traders be a leader in that?

2. Dilemma Resolution:

Which path should Mr. Patil take, modernization or artisan partnerships, and why?

3. Role of Technology:

How can technologies such as blockchain and augmented reality be leveraged to enhance customer engagement and operational transparency?

4. Sustainability in Luxury Markets:

How does sustainability intersect with profitability and market competitiveness in Neo Timber's case?

5. Growth Strategy:

How can Neo Timber Traders expand into international markets while staying true to its core values?

Teaching Strategy

1. Case Warm-Up:

Start by opening discussion on the specific challenge that comes with the need for balancing heritage and modernity in luxury markets. Utilize examples from the case to highlight key dilemmas.

2. Group Activity:

Have groups divided into teams to evaluate both strategic paths and present recommendations, along with justifications for them.

3. Frameworks for Analysis:

- SWOT Analysis:

Assess Neo Timber's strengths and weaknesses in terms of its own internal factors and opportunities as well as threats in its external environment. -Porter's Five Forces: Analyze the competitive forces in the luxury timber market.

- **Sustainability Matrix:

Plot the economic, social, and environmental impacts of each of the two strategies on each other.

4. Role-Playing:

Put the participants into roles, like Mr. Patil, the customer, artisan, or sustainability advocate to deliberate over strategic options from a multiple-point-of-view perspective.

5. Conclusion Discussion:

Summarize key learnings and present a basis for how Neo Timber could be a model of the future for other luxury brands.

What is Expected to Be Learnt

1. Making Strategic Decisions

Students will gain insights into how companies weigh competing priorities and choose a strategic path that aligns with their values and market conditions.

2. Sustainability and Branding:

Participants will understand how ethical practices can enhance brand equity and customer loyalty in luxury markets.

3. Market Adaptation:

Students will learn to adapt to changing consumer expectations, regulatory challenges, and technological advances.

4. Actionable Insights:

Provide actionable solutions to support growth in a competitive and sustainability-driven market environment.

Assignment Ideas

1. Strategic Analysis Report:

Write a detailed report recommending the best strategy for Neo Timber Traders and justify it with data and frameworks.

2. Presentation:

Develop a 10-minute presentation analyzing the impact of sustainability on profitability and market positioning.

3. Case Extension:

Propose an alternative growth strategy for Neo Timber Traders to balance modernization and heritage.

Additional Notes

- Teaching Duration:90–120 minutes, including case discussion and group activity.
- Prerequisite Knowledge: Familiarity with concepts of sustainability, luxury branding, and strategic decision-making.
- Target Audience: Business students, sustainability professionals, and executives in luxury markets.

This teaching note unpacks the intricacies of the Neo Timber Traders case in a step-by-step manner, while asking learners to critically approach its strategic dilemmas.

Additional Material-

Research Articles:

- https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/epdf/10.1080/02650487.20 22.2031729?needAccess=true&r
- ole=button
- https://www.theseus.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/135448/Iman _Veissi.pdf?sequenc

Videos:

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pyQswKbpbHo
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The Resilience and Success of Single Mothers in Corporate world

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Abstract

With nearly two decades of diverse corporate experience, my focus has always been on empowering individuals, particularly women, by creating opportunities for educated and talented professionals who manage household responsibilities and may often feel disconnected from society. Over more than a decade, I've observed that single mothers frequently thrive in corporate roles. When a single mother steps into the business world, regardless of her level of formal education, she often excels, driven by the motivation to provide for her child's basic needs. Despite her strengths and holistic approach to organizational success, she faces numerous workplace challenges that can impact both organizational goals and her own self- confidence. While she brings a transformative vision and exceptional skills, leadership teams may find it difficult to position her in a way that maximizes her impact, sometimes questioning how her unconventional personal life might influence business outcomes. Single mothers in business encounter significant obstacles, such as the glass ceiling, toxic masculinity, and discriminatory behaviours like derogatory comments. objectification, and exclusionary practices. They also face challenges in process implementation, building executive presence, overcoming gender bias, balancing work and family responsibilities, and securing peer support. Additional hurdles include unequal resource access, adapting to rapidly changing technologies, and meeting intense work demands.

They must also navigate common workplace disruptions-like technology failures, natural disasters, health crises, security breaches, and market shifts—alongside personal and social challenges, including POSH issues within and outside the workplace.

This article is intended for single mothers in business, HR professionals, diversity advocates, and POSH regulatory bodies, offering insights and strategies to foster a more inclusive environment that supports single mothers and builds resilient organizations. Notwithstanding of her degree of formal instruction, single moms habitually succeed within the work environment since they are persuaded to meet their children's fundamental needs.

She faces a few work environment impediments that might influence both corporate goals and her possess self-confidence, in spite of her qualities and all-encompassing approach to organizational victory.

Authority groups may battle to put her in a way that maximizes her affect, indeed when she has surprising aptitudes and a transformative vision. They may too ponder how her abnormal individual life can influence corporate results.

Single Mothers in Corporate world face significant challenges, namely glass ceiling, toxic masculinity, and discriminatory behaviours like derogatory comments, objectification, and exclusionary practices. They also face the obstacle such as demonstrating executive presence, overcoming gender bias, balancing work and family responsibilities and securing peer and

management support. They struggle to implement processes in organisation.

Additional hurdles include unequal resource access, adapting to rapidly changing technologies, and meeting intense work demands. They must also navigate common workplace disruptions— like technology failures, natural disasters, health crises, security breaches, and market shifts— alongside personal and social challenges, including POSH issues within and outside the workplace.

This article is intended for single mothers in business, HR professionals, diversity advocates, and POSH regulatory bodies, offering insights and strategies to foster a more inclusive environment that supports single mothers and builds resilient organizations.

Flow of Chapters

1. Organizational Context

Single Mother is not by choice but by the situation. This situation is forced.

My previous research endeavour titled "Workplace Disruptions: Leadership Challenges and Organizational Sustainability Across Traditional and AI/ML Leadership Domains" uncovered significant insights, highlighting the notable growth of single mothers in corporate environments. This finding serves as the foundation for the current case study, "The Resilience and Success of Single Mothers in Business." This case think about investigates the societal and organizational variables impacting single moms in proficient parts. It dives into the challenges they confront, such as exploring complex corporate structures, adjusting familial duties, and overcoming systemic obstructions in male- dominated businesses. The perceptions emphasize how

single moms, in spite of confronting misfortunes just like the glass ceiling and working environment inclinations, proceed to exceed expectations in assorted organizational parts, exhibiting their strength and authority potential.

2. Specific Area of Interest

The objective of this study is to understand and address the unique obstacles in the way of single mothers in corporate world. They are as below.

- a) Overcoming gender biases and toxic masculinity.
- **b**) Building executive presence and managing work-life balance.
- c) Adapting to rapidly evolving technology and business demands.
- **d**) Overcoming Personal issues
- Coping with loss (of a partner, lover, friend and fellow parent)
- Assuming additional roles and responsibilities (being everything to everyone)
- Enabling and Adjusting to the new role and circumstances
- Dealing and coping with own emotions and changed condition
- Adequate care and fostering the needs of the children
- Maintaining self-confidence and low self-esteem
- Balancing effective parenting with career (work/home) life
- Overcoming Social Issues in Office and in Family circle.
- Battling societal prejudice and stigma of single-parent homes and care-giving

Societal prejudice and stigma

Health:

Managing self-health and child's health is the big task.

Loneliness

The study also emphasizes the strengths of single mothers, such as their resilience, holistic approaches to problem-solving, and leadership potential.

3. Specific Problem or Decision

The inclusive workplace environments can boost single mothers to perform themselves up to maximum of their capacity by balancing the personal and professional responsibilities. Hence, from organisation point of view the main problem that the organisation or corporate should address is to create the inclusive workplace environment.

The challenges they face are mentioned below.

- Derogatory behaviours and discriminatory practices in the workplace.
- Restricted Access to Resources and Career Advancement Opportunities
- Navigating common workplace disruptions alongside personal struggles.
- Stereotype treatment and making hostile environment continuously showing her that she is taboo in the society.

4. Alternatives

Organizations can adopt the following strategies to address these challenges:

• Enhanced Support Systems:

Provide mentorship programs and flexible work arrangements.

Policy Revisions:

Strengthen policies to address gender bias, POSH issues, and equal opportunity frameworks.

• Promoting a Positive Work Environment:

Implementing policies and practices to discourage gossip and office politics which makes the Single mother to feel taboo about her situation. Encouraging collaboration, respect, and exclusivity to foster a supportive and productive workplace atmosphere.

• Technology Training:

Offer regular upskilling programs to adapt to evolving market trends.

• Leadership Development:

Identify and nurture leadership talent among single mothers.

To overcome the challenges, family and society can consider the following strategies:

• Provide childcare

Family and friends can help with childcare, which can be less expensive than professional services.

• Build a support network

Single parents can rely on family and friends during difficult times. They can also connect with other single mothers through online groups or in-person gatherings.

• Practice self-care

Single parents should prioritize their own well-being and seek help when needed. They can be kind to themselves and remember that they are doing their best.

• Provide community resources

Single parents can seek out community resources.

• Provide financial support

Public investment in a high-quality universal childcare system can help working parents, especially single parents.

• Health Management

Due to Societal prejudice and stigma, they need to take care of health crises on their own. While they are sick, they need to keep in mind health is primarily important for normal functioning of their home and child.

While child is sick, they give proper medication to child and leave for office. Going to office when child is sick is very challenging task,

Sometime Family members only dominate, discourage crating negative work culture to survive. This has to stop to encourage her for smoothly exhibiting the responsibility on her shoulders. If the Family members cannot help or make the situation better, they should prohibit them shelves from being the cause of trouble to the Single working Mother.

Some challenges that single working mothers face include financial burden, Balancing work and home life, Societal prejudice and stigma, maintaining self-confidence, and overcoming emotional weight.

5. Conclusion

This case study concludes that single mothers bring transformation strengths to organizations, including resilience, dedication, and unique problem-solving abilities. However, realizing their full potential requires organizations to address systemic biases and provide supportive ecosystems. By fostering inclusive, businesses can not only support single mothers but also build resilient and innovative teams.

Exhibit 1: Text

Title: Challenges Faced by Single Mothers in Business Single mothers encounter barriers, elaborating those barriers which has already mentioned in abstract of this paper.

Key Points:

Workplace biases such as **the glass ceiling**, **toxic masculinity**, and **derogatory comments**.

Exclusionary practices impacting their ability to integrate into teams or rise to leadership roles.

Work – Life equilibrium:- in Maintaining harmony between work and personnel life in critical work delivery environment.

Continuous Changing Technology :- reconciling to new technology.

Health Crises:- Being single managing health Al-alone is taxing at multiple level.

Relevance: Above Discussion really insist the organisation to work towards creating inclusive environment.

Exhibit 2: Data

In my research titled "Workplace Disruptions: Leadership Challenges and Organizational Sustainability Across Traditional and AI/ML Leadership Domains," I employed a survey methodology, which identified several single mothers excelling in corporate environments. For this case study, I have narrowed the focus to one single working mother in the corporate sector to provide a detailed and nuanced analysis.

During my previous research endeavour titled "Woman in Leadership: Workplace Disruptions: Leadership Challenges and Organizational Sustainability Across Traditional and AI/ML Leadership Domains", I have used the methodology as Survey. According to one of the survey findings, it is evident that single mothers excelling in corporate world. For this Case Study I have focused on only one single working mother in corporate.

The challenges faced by single working mothers, as highlighted in earlier sections, are both pervasive and complex. A key observation is the drastic shift in attitudes from colleagues, peers, and supervisors once they become aware of a woman's single mother status. For example:

A peer or boss who once provided positive feedback that led to promotions or salary hikes may start micromanaging her work and displaying significant trust issues after learning about her personal circumstances.

Single working mother mostly look upon as stereotype. People keep judging them most of the time and made as the fault figure for all the problems occurring at home and at corporate.

Health Challenges:

Single mothers are always into adverse situations while encountering health issues.

Personal Sickness:

if she or her small child is ill, there in merely any support, making her just to administrate the medical treatment without emotions. For example, If she is sick, she has to swallow the tablets and immediately come on the work platform.

Child's Sickness:

When her child is sick, she often has no choice but to provide only the basic medical treatment before resuming work or attending critical meetings, even when her presence at home is crucial for her child's emotional and physical well-being.

Lack of Family Support:

Parents' Limitations:

Elderly parents may be unable to provide adequate support due to their age-related constraints.

Siblings' Challenges:

Siblings may keep themselves away due to their ego problem, inferiority complex or they may think being single mother is taboo, even though it is not by choice but it has been forced by unavoidable situation.

Loneliness and mental disturbances:

• Mental Disturbance:

Prolonged feelings of abandonment and societal rejection can contribute to anxiety, depression, and a diminished sense of selfworth.

• Social Isolation:

The lack of a familial support network may prevent single mothers from seeking help or sharing their struggles, further deepening isolation.

• Compromised Well-Being:

Emotional strain from loneliness may manifest as physical health issues, affecting overall productivity and quality of life.

Relevance:

These discussion points, demonstrate that single mothers encountered with many critical issues in the run of life, hence it shows the urgency for implementing the new strategies those can be handy for elimination the critical challenges which single mother faces. These new strategies should be such that they should help the single mothers at home and at corporate to nullify the difficult problems.

Exhibit 3: Visuals



Image Credit :- Generated by ChatGPT

This picture shows the unique qualities of single mothers demonstrated at workplace.

Key Attributes Displayed are:

Resilience: Continuously defeat the problems at home and office front with positive mindset.

Motivation: With extremely high positive attitude, working towards the success and completion towards target as the great motivation is the welfare, food and shelter of her child.

Holistic Leadership: Leading the teams and managing situations with 360 degrees thinking approach.

Innovative Problem-Solving: Always working towards solving the problem with Practical view.





Image Credit: <u>https://www.momjunction.com/articles/effects-of-single-parenting_00373930/</u>

Teaching Notes for the Case Study

1. Synopsis

The discussion of this case study is about the (resilience) constant aim and efforts and the success of single mothers. This case study focuses attention on the unique qualities of single mothers to defeat the personal and professional obstacles mentioned in above sections. With the research and study in this case it encourages organisations to implement strategies for inclusiveness in the organisation and society to give support and same respect to single mothers compared to other family women. The target audience of this case is Single mothers in corporate world, HR Professionals, diversity advocates, POSH regulatory bodies, corporate policy makers, leaders who are key decision makers. The expectations are these target audience to create the

inclusive environment strategies and other welfare strategies to support single mothers in corporate on the way to their success.

2. Keywords

Single Mothers

Gender Bias

Workplace Inclusive

Resilience

Leadership Challenges

Diversity and Equity

Human Resource Development

POSH Regulations

Emotional Health

3. Target Audience

The Target audience for this case study is mentioned in the group below;

a) Corporate Training Programs:

For HR professionals, diversity and inclusion leaders, and corporate strategists.

b) Industry Leaders and Decision Makers:

To understand the benefits and challenges of employing single mothers in business.

c) Regulatory Bodies:

To improve policies that protect and empower single mothers at work.

d) Undergraduate and Postgraduate Students:

In management, organizational behaviour, or gender studies courses.

e) POSH Regulatory Bodies:

To ensure effective measures against workplace harassment and promote a safe, inclusive environment.

4. Learning Objectives

This case learnings are as below.

a) Novel Obstacles experienced by Single Mothers:

Analyse barriers such as the glass ceiling, workplace biases, and resource limitations.

b) Evaluate Organizational Practices:

Identify current gaps in inclusive policies and propose strategies to bridge them.

c) Assess Leadership and Decision-Making:

Discuss the role of leadership in addressing the stigma and positioning single mothers effectively in business.

d) Foster Inclusive and Resilience:

Develop frameworks for organizations to empower single mothers and enhance overall workplace culture.

e) Reflect on POSH Issues:

Explore preventive measures and frameworks to address sexual harassment and related workplace issues.

f) Societal Prejudice and Stigma:

Analyse societal biases and stereotypes impacting single mothers in professional settings.

g) Health:

Address challenges of balancing personal health and managing child's well- being alongside work demands.

h) Loneliness:

Explore strategies to combat isolation and foster a sense of belonging in workplace environments.

5. Discussion Questions

Exceptional Resilience and Success Achieved by Single Mothers in Corporate :

Leadership

Unparalleled Resilience [10] [11]

The frequent workplace and home challenges drive single mothers to exhibit the super strong emotional capabilities and highest determinations. While performing one man show at Home and at work, Single mothers they are forced by situation to exhibit the continuous flexibility and adjust ability making them highly dependable in corporate environment.

Exceptional Time Management [12]

With Versatile roles, tasks, situation management, single mothers gain the quality of effective time management. The time management is one of the top priority skills to achieve success in corporate and goals and hence it has its highest importance. Hence single mothers mostly meet the tight deadlines.

.Motivation and Purpose-Driven Efforts [14]

Single mothers have a great urge to provide the security and basic needs to child ie. Food, shelter and cloths. This urge makes them to work hard increasing the dedication and productivity towards goals. This definitely make them as trustworthy and highly dependable resource and looked upon as valuable asset to industry.

Holistic Leadership Qualities

Due to compulsory active participation in constant varied circumstances, single mothers by default develop the empathetic and inclusive leadership style. This leadership style, makes them to accommodate all personality traits positively, make excellent team player, teamwork and grand collaboration in versatile teams.

Problem-Solving Abilities

There is no harm saying the Single Mothers are factory of providing innovative solutions to all the problems overlooking the negativity in problems. They always aim to solve the problem rather than complaining on and about problems. This all happens due to persistence barriers which Single Mother encountered in her personal and work.

Emotional Intelligence

Single working Mothers due to lack of support always have to keep their emotional intelligence at positive and considerate level. This highly strengthened emotional intelligence, maintain positive relationship at workplace enabling high quality of team cohesion, customer relations and great collaboration.

These enhanced or obtained rare skills, makes single working mothers to rise in great roles, chief and responsible positions, attending valuable success for the organisation at various level and industry level.

The Primary Workplace Barriers Faced by Single Mothers and Their Impact on

Performance and Self-Esteem [14]

As discussed above the barriers as bias, Stereotype, glass ceiling, exclusivity, objectionable comments, toxic environment, loneliness, no family support, societal stigma. As a results the Single working mother faces lots of impact consequences as restrictions from promotions, extensive burnout experience, discrimination leading to low self-esteem and low confidence, isolation and demoralization, reduced performance.

Effective Strategies for Leadership Teams to Position Single Mothers for Driving

Organizational Impact [15] [16]

Promote Flexible Work Policies: Provide remote, hybrid, and adjustable schedules, as well as job-sharing and part-time roles tailored to family needs.

Foster a Supportive Culture: Create mentor ship programs and peer support groups to ensure single mothers feel heard and valued.

Provide Access to Resources: Offer on-site childcare and wellness programs to support work-life balance, including mental health support.

Implement Fair Evaluation and Growth Opportunities: Ensure performance evaluations focus on results, not hours worked, and provide skill development tailored for single mothers.

Address Bias and Build Awareness: Conduct unconscious bias training and challenge stereotypes about the strengths single mothers bring to the workplace.

Advocate for Policy Changes: Collaborate with HR to design inclusive policies and advocate for legal and financial support for single mothers.

These strategies empower single mothers, enhancing their contributions to organizational success

Strategies for solving the barriers [17]

It is advisable for Corporate to brainstorm and build the strategies as below;

Promote Equal Opportunity: Establish mentor ship and sponsorship programs to support career advancement for underrepresented groups.

Implement Bias Training: Conduct regular training on unconscious bias and encourage diverse leadership decision-making.

Offer Flexible Work Arrangements: Provide remote work and flexible hours to support employees with caregiving responsibilities.

Ensure Equal Resource Access: Ensure equal access to training, leadership opportunities, and resources for all employees.

Enforce POSH Policies: Establish and enforce robust Prevention of Sexual

Harassment (POSH) policies to create a safe and respectful workplace. These strategies help promote an inclusive, equitable work environment.

The Role of Technology in Supporting Single Mothers to Balance Work and Life

Responsibilities[18][19]

Digital Transformation tools and technologies can give the great helping hand to support single working mother. By providing remote working while giving vital presence to her child during critical situations. Video conferencing, task management applications, cloud storage helps in saving time projecting the effective time management. Online learning and training platforms help building network and upgrade the skills.

Proactive Approaches Organizations Can Take to Address POSH Issues and Foster a

Safer Workplace for All Employees

Clear and Transparent Policies: Every Organization should have very clear and transparent POSH policies and procedures indicating compliance with straightforward guidelines on objectionable behaviours and actionable action items.

Regular Training and Awareness Programs: Every organisation should have frequent trainings and assessment to make the employees continuously remember the POSH policies and objectionable items, sexual harassment and harassment policies to avoid the unacceptable behavioural traits.

Strong Reporting Mechanisms: There should be strong confidential, easy accessible reporting mechanism and team to report the POSH issues with consoling advice to the victim.

Leadership Accountability and Role Modelling: The Decision Makers and leaders should have unbiased sight towards victim. They should give due respect to victim, assuring the solution and implementation of solution and punishment to terror. Leadership need to involve the external POSH agency member to ensure the unbiased decision making against POSH violation.

Regular Audits and Feedback: The frequent POSH trainings, Feedback, assessments, brainstorming is advisable to maintain the Organisation POSH Compliance. The Leader are also responsible for communicating the solving the POSH reported issue to the victim and frequently assess the environment that victim should not face the POSH harassment again.

6. Application of Learning Objectives Case Write-Up:

o Objective

The objective is to reduce workplace barriers, creating inclusive workplace, ensuring the good productivity while maintaining the emotional status of single working mother.

The policy proposal should include actionable measures:

Flexible Work Schedules: Remote or hybrid options, adjusted hours for children. Soft shits and on – site schedules.

Parental Leave: Now a days we see few organisations give paid leave for all the parents. This policy is appreciable and should continue. Special arrangement as nanny to take care of newborn should be provided. Brainstorming for such needy provisions should be provided to Single working mothers.

Anti-Discrimination Training: There should be periodic trainings and official meetings to convey the anti-bias policies of the organization and special clause to be implemented for single working mothers.

Childcare Support: The innovative solutions such as in-house daycare like Infosys should be provided so that any time during the baby's sickness the mother can go and visit the baby. For on – site tours there should be secured place where the single working mother can keep her baby with all confidence.

Career Development: As there special team works on the individual development plan of employee, similarly there should be special management or department to serve the development of single working mother helping them to solve the problems all over. This team should also help in guiding the promotion programs and the procedures for the same.

Wellness Programs: Depending upon the situation there should be counselling and support program for mental health and these programs should look for calming the mental torture and welfare and speedy recovery.

Legal and Financial Aid: Assistance with legal aid, financial planning, and navigating government benefits. Financial aid with legal assistance and government benefits should be provided to single working mothers. For eg. the financial need for example the education fees and procedures for the child of single working mother.

Loneliness Support: Keep Regular team outing, team bonding activities, develop the peer mentor support group, counselling to resolve loneliness should be implemented positively.

Above mentioned policies can definitely work towards solving the workplace and mindset barriers encountered by single mothers.

Examples of Strategies

Creating flexible work policies, such as hybrid or part-time roles.

Establishing subsidized childcare programs or on-site daycare.

Implementing mentoring systems for single mothers to support career growth.

Offering wellness programs and peer-support groups to combat loneliness.

Conducting regular training to address unconscious bias and promote inclusivity.

Role-Playing Exercise: HR Strategies for Single Working Mothers

o **Group Formation**:

Every Business unit should have their own HR department to serve as first aid. For big organizations these sub-unit HR departments can be quickly approachable and can give quick solutions which is the need of the hour.

o Scenario Assignment:

Assign workplace challenges (e.g., bias, childcare issues, career stagnation, loneliness) to each group.

o **Strategy Development**:

For single working mothers, due to constant hurdles all issues are very sensitive. Hence, for all issues, it would be good practice to have root cause analysis and arriving to the amicable solutions using Best HR policies.

o **Presentations**:

Proper preparation for presentation with collaborating entire teams' idea is advisable for effective client presentation. For every presentation the agenda should be finalised first. Wherever is need the training for presentations should be provided.

o Feedback and Discussion:

Peers and facilitators provide constructive feedback on proposed strategies.

o Examples of Solutions:

Flexible work options, childcare programs, mentoring, wellness initiatives, and bias training.

This simplified approach ensures focus on collaborative learning and real-world applicability.

Propose actionable insights for businesses.

o Examples of Insights and Actions

Insight: Organizations with higher gender diversity often report better financial performance.

Action: Establish inclusive hiring policies and ensure gender-balanced leadership teams.

Insight: Flexible work arrangements significantly improve retention rates for single mothers.

Action: Implement hybrid work models and provide robust childcare support.

Insight: Bias training reduces workplace discrimination and fosters a more inclusive culture.

Action: Make diversity training a regular part of employee development programs.

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ZEPTO: the rising star of Q-Commerce on the Indian horizon

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Introduction

With its innovative approach to hyperlocal delivery services, Zepto, an innovative Indian startup, has fundamentally altered the grocery delivery landscape in India. Zepto's quickness, convenience, and cutting-edge technology have allowed it to quickly become a household name in many places.

1. Origin of Zepto

Founders and Early Beginnings

Zepto was founded in 2021 by two young entrepreneurs, Aadit Palicha and Kaivalya Vohra, two Stanford University dropouts. They noticed during COVID Pandemic that grocery apps were struggling to deliver quickly and reliably. They sensed the gap in the current online grocery delivery ecosystem and decided to fill the gap by delivering groceries quickly and reliably. Zepto was earlier

known as Kiranakart. Kiranakart had a tie up with local kirana stores to deliver groceries to customers. This model had its limitations and it was heavily depended on local stores. So they changed the model to dark stores, wherein they had all the control and they could deliver the groceries in 10 minutes. Delivering groceries in less than 10 minutes was Zepto's simple but ambitious concept. They sensed that customers want groceries quickly even if they have to pay little delivery charges to save time to go to market and struggle to find parking space.

Pitfalls faced by E-commerce companies in India

Before Zepto came into picture, BigBasket, Grofers, and Amazon were the main players in the Indian grocery delivery business. They used to deliver the groceries next day. Since customers had no choice for online grocery purchases, they had to wait for the deliveries as scheduled by those players.

Zepto's founders addressed this dilemma by setting up a productive supply chain that could promptly complete orders and store goods in small warehouses known as "dark stores." It purchases stock and keeps it in its dark stores, which are visible on its app. After placing the purchase, the delivery person arrives at the store, gathers the things, and departs to deliver. Some industry reports claim that this process takes less than 60 seconds to complete. Zepto claims that orders can be delivered from its closest dark outlets in less than 12 minutes.

Zepto's Seed Funding and Initial Growth Story

Zepto started operations in April 2021 after raising about USD 730K in its first round. The company raised USD 60 million and USD 100 million in October and December of the same year, bringing its valuation to USD 570 million. In addition to individual backers Lachy Groom, Neeraj Arora, and Manik Gupta, its principal investors include Glade Brook Capital, Nexus, and Y

Combinator. It helps Zepto expanding its operations in other cities quickly.

Despite being a new player in the highly competitive quick commerce industry, Zepto was able to make its name quickly and have a substantial loyal customer base because of its unique value proposition of hyperlocal delivery within 10 minutes.

2. Strategy Used for Growth and Expansion by Zepto Market Entry Strategy

Zepto's operational workflow is streamlined and efficient, which is the foundation of its company success. Having an app is the first step. A grocery app can help you grow your business more quickly and efficiently. Zepto takes a similar approach, offering a user-friendly interface that allows users to peruse a well arranged selection of products. After choosing an item, it is placed in a shopping cart. After that, a number of payment alternatives are presented during the checkout process. A well-planned network of micro-fulfillment centres makes sure that every item is processed, packed, and delivered as quickly as possible, enabling Zepto to fulfil its delivery guarantee of 10 minutes. All of this is made possible by the app.

Unlike traditional e-commerce models that relied on large inventory warehouses, Zepto was able to reach delivery speeds of less than ten minutes by strategically deploying micro-warehouses near densely populated surroundings. Their unique approach helped them stand out from competitors in the crowded market.

Zepto's Business Model and Operational Strategy

Zepto has made a name for itself not only by entering the Quick Commerce market but also by redefining how the sector might function in relation to everyday necessities and foodstuffs. Since the Zepto app's business model guarantees deliveries in a matter of minutes, it may immediately meet a crucial client requirement. Thanks to its advanced logistical network and features, the app is dedicated to speed and efficiently managing the fleet of local delivery partners.

Zepto's micro-fulfillment centres, which are positioned strategically to cover large urban regions and deliver products in minutes, form the foundation of their business model. Faster grocery delivery is the secret to business success since it attracts clients who are too busy to attend food stores or supermarkets these days. As a result, micro-fulfillment centres are more numerous, smaller, and located relatively close to customers than typical warehouses. As a result, they significantly shorten delivery times and help Zepto keep its competitive advantage in the last- minute delivery market.

Technology and Infrastructure Investment

The core of Zepto's operations and commercial strategies is technology. The business relies on sophisticated algorithms based on artificial intelligence and data analytics for everything from inventory management to order processing and delivery logistics. They enhance client experiences and streamline operations with the help of these technologies. With this kind of technology advantage, Zepto can better predict demand, manage inventory in real time, optimise delivery routes, and guarantee efficiency and sustainability in its business model.

Zepto's Customer-Centric Approach

Zepto has always placed a topmost focus on customer's satisfaction and convinience. Customers keep on coming back to Zepto because of the user-friendly app and getting groceries in few minutes. Zepto's website and mobile app are very easy for customers with features like order tracking, tailored recommendations, and easy navigation. Zepto pay special attention to customer feedback, allowing them to quickly adapt to change as per customer

preferences and market trends. This has been essential for building customer trust.

Geographic and Market Expansion

Zepto is operational in approximately 20 cities, having recently launched in Nashik, Chandigarh, Ahmedabad, Rajkot and Surat, among others. They are about to launch in Tier-2 cities like Vadodara, Kurukshetra, etc.

3. Zepto's Unique Value Proposition

Zepto's unique selling proposition is it's lightening fast deliveries. Zepto guarantee to deliver groceries in less than 10 minutes. Now a days, customers are becoming very demanding and they want things immediately, Zepto understood that need and distinguishes itself from its competitors with lightning-fast delivery, which also meets customers' increasing demand for convenience.

Other essential elements of Zepto's value proposition are as follows:

Freshness:

Zepto places a strong emphasis on the freshness of its goods, especially perishables like dairy, baked goods, fruits, and vegetables.

• Variety:

While offering a smaller selection than traditional supermarkets, Zepto offers a well- curated assortment of popular items that customers need most frequently.

Practicality Powered by Technology:

Order tracking, AI-powered recommendations, and a user-friendly smartphone interface enhance the customer experience.

4. Comparison with Respect to Its Competitors

Zepto has direct competition from well-known grocery delivery services like Blinkit (previously Grofers), Swiggy, Instamart, and BigBasket.

Flipkart and Amazon: Both Amazon and Flipkart are well-established online retailers in India that provide grocery delivery services. However, Zepto's model is faster than theirs. Amazon's grocery product might take longer to develop, but Flipkart's grocery sector is still expanding.

Dunzo: Dunzo has primarily positioned itself as a delivery service for a range of items, including groceries, food, and prescriptions; however, in some areas, it also offers hyperlocal delivery. Conversely, Zepto is a highly specialised yet niche operator because it has focused just on groceries and promises delivery within ten minutes. In this competitive market, Zepto's primary differentiators are its delivery speed, customer- first mentality, and technological infrastructure, all of which combine to provide clients with superior value.

5. Challenges Faced by Zepto

Despite its rapid rise, Zepto has faced several challenges:

Operational Difficulties:

• Complexity of Logistics:

Managing logistics is the biggest challenge. It requires solid logistical infrastructure.

• Problems with Scalability:

Business of this stature cannot be confined to few cities. Investors have invested heavily in a hope that this is a scalable business and can be expanded rapidly to ensure them faster and handsome return on their investment.

Competitive Pressures:

This is a highly competitive place where Zepto is facing a tough competition from well established players like Blinkit, Swiggy Instamart and BigBasket. So Zepto have to move much faster than their competitors to gain market advantage.

Scaling and Logistics:

Managing hundreds of dark stores in different cities, huge fleet of delivery boys, their safety, keeping the right product mix at each dark store and delivery within 10 minutes and customer satisfaction and retention is a every day challenge which keeps Zepto always on edge.

Regulatory Challenges:

Zepto, a quickly growing firm, must abide by several laws related to taxes, logistics, and consumer protection. This is especially difficult in a market like India, where regulations may differ from one state to another.

Customer Engagement and Retention:

Zepto has been successful in quickly acquiring new customers, but it struggles to retain its current clientele. Maintaining client expectations and offering the same level of speed and ease everywhere will be essential to long-term success.

6. The Road Ahead

In order to keep pace with the competition and to stay ahead, Zepto will have to move quickly to new geographic areas and also need to expand in other categories. Key strategies for the future consist of:

Zepto's ability to swiftly scale in new cities will be a key driver of company growth. Expanding into Tier II and Tier III cities is another significant opportunity to access uncharted territory. With a rising reliance on e-commerce and digital transactions, Zepto is well-positioned to capitalise on the growing need for quick deliveries.

Like Zomato, Zepto can also think of entering into food delivery business, which has a big potention.

Conclusion

Zepto's success in the Indian hyperlocal delivery industry is proof of the value of innovation, customer focus, and technical integration. The company has established a reputation for itself in a cutthroat industry by providing the unique service of ten-minute product delivery. To scale operations and maintain its edge in the face of fierce competition, it will need to continue making investments in technology, infrastructure, and customer satisfaction. As it expands its footprint, Zepto must adapt to the challenges of logistics, customer contact, and sustainability while seizing new opportunities in a market that is always shifting.

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