

An Empirical Study on Street Entrepreneurship At Territi Bazaar

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Abstract : *Street Entrepreneurship is either seen as a residue from a pre-modern era that is gradually disappearing (Modernization theory), or an endeavor into which marginalized livelihood (Structuralist theory). In recent years, participation in Street Entrepreneurship has become a rational economic choice (neo-liberal theory) or as conducted for cultural reasons (post-modern theory). This research paper showcased various reasons why there is a decline in the oldest Street Entrepreneur Market in Kolkata "TERRITI BAZAAR".*

*Territi Bazaar is a Chinese breakfast market which was started targeting 20,000 Chinese migrants who settled during the early 1780s. As days passed people started moving to USA and Canada for better opportunities and living, thus the number of migrants came down to 2000 during 2000s and in the recent years it has fallen down more. The main reasons for the underdeveloped market are **Hygiene, Market decline, Performance, Resource, Cultural values, Socio - economic problem, Location**. The market settles down around 6am – 9am every day, where home cooked foods are served. The prime problem which is the main factor for any sort of eatables is the Hygiene Factor. While doing the survey in the market the findings were like the utensils which are used for serving food and eating are kept on the floor itself. Meanwhile it arises such as when they are unable to maintain the hygiene factor for the vegetables even where unhygienic water is on a continuous flowing momentum. The continuous water flows from the meat market has taken a major role in creating an unhygienic ambience. Face to face interviews were conducted with a various number of vendors in the months of January and February this year. They were not concerned for participation in giving detailed information but cooperated as much they could. The outcome was a call to combine these previous explanations in order to develop a richer and more nuanced theorization of the multifarious motives for street entrepreneurship in emerging market economies.*

Keywords: *Hygiene, Lack of Growth, Location, Socio Economic Problem, Street Food Entrepreneurs*

I. Introduction

Street Entrepreneurship is either seen as a residue from a pre-modern era that is gradually disappearing (Modernization theory), or an endeavor into marginalized livelihood (Structuralist theory). In recent years, participation in Street Entrepreneurship has become a rational economic choice (neo-liberal theory) or as conducted for cultural reasons (post-modern theory). Kolkata, the capital city of West Bengal has always welcomed migrants and has given the space to have their own livelihood, and the food culture of this city especially the acceptance nature of the people of Kolkata has always given rise and motivation to Food Entrepreneurs. And this is how the oldest Chinese Food Entrepreneurs Market of Kolkata took birth, "TERRITI BAZAAR".

II. History of territi bazaar

It all started during the 18th century when a businessman Tong Achew migrated near Budge Budge, Kolkata and fell in love with the place thus he decided to reside over here and after applying for a plot of land he received a plot of 650 Bighas at an annual rent of Rs 45 for sugar plantation from Governor – General Warren Hastings. With time his trade flourished, and Achew brought in Chinese workers along with their families who migrated to Kolkata and settled in Central Kolkata near Hooghly and gave birth to city's oldest Chinatown. Soon Achew died and his land and factory were abandoned and all his workers moved to Calcutta presently Kolkata and still residing. After the death of Tong Achew the place is known as Achipur and today Achipur has only a Chinese Temple and his Horse Shoe shaped grave. There were around 35000 Chinese migrants and to earn their living they started selling authentic Chinese breakfast items and Territi Bazaar was born. Though the timings of Territi Bazaar have always been odd as with the first call of rooster the market comes to life i.e. from 6am and ends around 9am till the stocks lasts, but it never failed to attract it consumers with the perfect blend of flavors of Chinese spices. The concept of Territi Bazaar becomes unique because of it timings and home cooked foods, and everyday stocks are freshly made which shows their strong concept of management. With regular footfalls they got the clear records of how much food they should prepare, and with time the footfalls increased. They prepared a number of authentic Chinese items and the most famous were Fish Momos, Pork Momos, Fish Bowl Soup, Chicken and pork Paw (looks like a big bun stuffed with egg, meat and spices).

III. Research Outcomes

3.1 Territi Bazaar At Present

Earlier when Territi Bazaar started early mornings used to be completely crowded with huge number of customers and Chinese families, the families reside beside the market itself near Poddar court, Lal Bazaar police station at Sun Yat Sen Street in a huge building with multiple apartments. But with time the footfall started reducing as the maximum number of Chinese people started moving abroad either Canada or United States of America with better opportunities. Naturally when we get better opportunities we happily accept that for better living standards, children completed their education and moved out with their families and thus this lead to a decrease in the number of Chinese people to around hardly 100 families from 35000 Chinese people.

3.2 New Challenges Of The New Century

It is quite obvious that with time things change and so the scenario of Territi Bazaar also changed and it changing. Recently the market is facing quite a few challenges which is becoming the reason for its contraction. Earlier people were not that conscious about food but in current decade people have become conscious.

The main reasons for the decline of Territi Bazaar are highlighted below:

- Hygiene
- Socio – Economic problems
- Performance
- Cultural Values
- Location

Nowadays the above-mentioned issues are getting highlighted for the downfall of the oldest Chinese market as in recent times people are becoming health conscious so they are quite strict about hygiene and at Territi Bazaar, currently the scenario of the market is quite disappointing as the place where the market sits is attached with other vegetable markets, meat shops and the foods are served open on streets thus the unhygienic waters and particles come in contact with the foods. The utensils which are used for serving food are kept on the floor itself which has a high chance of coming in contact with pollution, moreover the water used for washing the utensils aren't hygienic. Next comes the socio – economic factors, Territi market gives a clear picture that how Socio – Economic factors can affect the whole market. Lack of growth, modification, education etc. discouraged Chinese people from sticking to the market and thus maximum people started moving out of the area, because low standard of living discouraged them from continuing the business. As maximum number of Chinese have migrated to other nations the number of man power has reduced due to which the existing people feel the pressure and aren't able to give the level of effort required which is again a reason for the downfall of the market. We human beings aren't flexible to shift from our cultural values and the same thing happened with the Chinese community at Territi Bazaar, they did not want to leave their comfort zone to grow their market, leaving the locality, cultures, adding new flavors etc. weren't acceptable by them still they tried adding few flavors which would soothe Indian taste buds but somewhere they were and are lacking and this increased their competitor and take their market just like "WOW MOMO".

At Territi Bazaar a plate of MOMOS costs Rs. 40 with 4pcs but still majority of us prefer having 5pcs of MOMOS worth Rs. 150 from "WOW MOMOS".

Lastly the comes the location, this factor plays a major role for the declining market, the market is situated at an odd location due to which customers are find difficult to reach the location at such timings. At that time public transports aren't available and not everyone owns private vehicle and thus the location of Territi Bazaar is becoming one of the reasons for the decline of the market.

3.3 Consumer Study

Consumer feedbacks shows us the clear picture of the current situation and explains the real reasons for the downfall of market. We had face to face interviews will multiple consumers who visit Territi Bazaar frequently, and also explained the same reasons and top most was hygiene. There are few consumers who visit this place on every Sunday, as they keep more number of varieties on weekends. Where there are some consumers who want to visit the place but because of the odd timings and no private vehicle they can hardly visit once in a while.

On 11th February 2018 I visited the place to find out the flaws of the market and surprisingly I found a lot of loopholes. Had it been the place was well organized the number of footfalls would have been increased instead of decrease, distance was no doubt a factor but that I could manage, the major issues lie on the hygiene. The hygiene maintained over there is poor, we consumers can't imagine having food from such a condition, all of us have craze for street foods, different cuisines but if the place is not clean enough we ourselves aren't able to consume the eateries. I could hardly find people eating, everyone was busy taking pictures and gathering information, this is scenario which is repeated every day, people come gather information, click pictures and leave. Population over there were countable, because nobody is working on these loopholes and due to the negligence, the flaws are increasing as time is passing. It is not that the food doesn't taste good, they actually taste soothing by having a piece of Momo you can feel the flavor of authentic Chinese food. People over there are unimaginably hard working, seven days a week without fail the market sits at same place, same time and freshly cooked food. Every night they assemble the raw materials and freeze the foods for the early morning selling. This process helps the foods from getting rotten.

3.4 Repositioning For Growth

From the whole study it can be understood that still there are chances to save an entire Chinese community and their culture and cuisines by taking necessary steps. Concentrating on the hygiene factor and correcting the flaws can upgrade the market and this can be a big step for the market which would help the community to save. As maximum number of children of these Chinese family are moving abroad due to lack of growth in their career, correcting these loopholes can help them hold back. There are a number of stalls which are taken over by the Indian helpers of those families and few stalls are left which are run by few Chinese owners but their next generations aren't available to take forward their stalls, thus it is necessary that we should start working on this situation which can improve the situation by concentrating on the hygiene and increase the employment which can also increase their standard of living. If needed repositioning of the location can help save the oldest Chinese market in Kolkata.

3.5 Back To The Drawing Board

The Chinese breakfast market which is almost 60years old in Kolkata is an attraction for every individual because of the unique structure, how everyday a group of people manage to prepare fresh foods and make sure the stock clears within 2 hours, how accurate they can be.

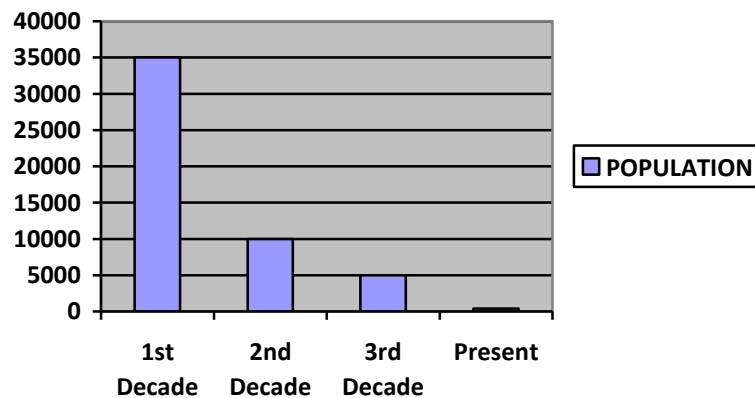
Many individuals took attempt to understand the whole structure but the Chinese community were hesitant to reveal the whole data to individuals, they seemed to be conservative to disclose information. Lack of job opportunities and growth have make them hesitant to trust to reveal information and thus the whole community is hurt.

Face to face conversations were done in friendly manner rather foods were also purchased to make them comfortable and gain their trust but nothing worked. We could not arrange the exact data from them and thus we have to rely on secondary data and the few information we received from them.

With the unrevealed data and other information Territi Bazaar left me with number of unanswered questions. Will they increase their Market further? How would they save the 60year old market from decline? What are their future plans for this market? How are they planning to compete with other known branded Momos?

IV. Figures and Tables

Population of Chinese people at Territi Bazaar



V. Conclusion

Territi Bazaar shows how a flourishing market declines with lack of seriousness, whereas the market served the authentic Chinese food at reasonable prices, foods are fresh and especially home cooked. There are drawbacks of this market like the Hygiene factor which they do not maintain and in today's scenario people are quite serious about their health thus they prefer eating from "Wow Momos" with thrice the higher price than this market. Territi Bazaar has to be flexible in case of their taste as not everyone prefers authentic Chinese flavor as we all know that Chinese flavors are blunt in taste.

References

- [1] The information's in this article are based on one to one conversation with vendors and resident at Territi Bazaar Mr. Lorenz Ho and
- [2] Times of India newspaper (10th February, 2018), "Chinese Whispers: Flight of the young ones".