The Makings of a Social Entrepreneur: The Case of Baba Amte

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Organizations are founded and built by one or a few individuals who may be called founders. A founder who plays an active role in shaping an organization's current and future state and who generates the required human and material sources for the organization can be called an entrepreneur. An entrepreneur who creates an organization to fulfill a social mission can be called a social entrepreneur.

In this article, Ranjini Swamy explores some of the motives, attitudes, and abilities of a successful social entrepreneur — Baba Amte. She also discusses in detail the challenges faced by Baba in the process of establishing Anandwan — a home for leprosy patients — and the courage with which he responded to the challenges.

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Planned effort at generating creative solutions to developmental problems within a democratic framework calls for a multipronged strategy in which both government and non-government initiatives are necessary. There is also a growing realization that non-government, voluntary initiatives by individuals and collectivities have to be recognized and nurtured if the benefits of development have to filter down to the grassroots level. It is in this context that the identification, encouragement and development of social entrepreneurs capable of initiating socially purposeful activities becomes a vital concern.

Considerable research has been done to understand the motives, abilities and attitudes of commercial entrepreneurs. Little, however, has been done to analyse the makings of social entrepreneurs. The purpose of this paper is to attempt a more systematic appreciation of the phenomenon through an intensive case study of Baba Amte, the well-known social activist. Data for the purposes of the study were collected through interviews as well as through secondary sources.

Baba Amte: A Profile

Baba Amte was the only child of a rich, land-owning Maharashtrian Brahmin family (Tarnowski, 1971). During his childhood, he was considerably influenced by the thoughts and actions of his mother. From her he learnt that it was good to get but better to give. This giving orientation was directed towards the household servants and the poor in the initial years and later to the tribals and harijans who lived close to his village. He spent much of his holidays with the neighbouring Gond tribals and even participated in some of their activities.

Baba remained concerned for the disadvantaged even after attaining adulthood and even after he qualified as a lawyer. However, he felt only disgust for the legal profession. He felt unhappy that he earned more for 'chattering' for fifteen minutes than did a labourer who toiled in the fields for twelve hours. So he used his legal acumen to defend members of the disadvantaged sections of society. For instance, he organized Indian lawyers to provide free legal aid to freedom
fighters who had been jailed by the British and denied a fair trial (Tarnowski, 1971). Later, when he settled down in Warora to look after his family property, he organized and defended the rights of sweepers and weavers. In recognition of his contribution, he was nominated to a senior position in the Warora Municipal Corporation (Turner, 1976).

Even as a member of the Corporation, Baba experimented with various ways of serving disadvantaged groups. One of his experiments was an attempt to create an intercaste community. Several others tried to dissuade him from going ahead with this experiment. Yet, Baba went ahead. He assembled families of various communities on a piece of land given to him by a friend. Brahmins, harijans, beggars and cobblers coexisted there, worked together and cultivated the land. The produce was sold to the local community.

The area was, however, infested by mosquitoes. Soon all members of the community succumbed to malaria. Collective work came to a standstill and the experiment had to be abandoned. Baba, though disappointed, viewed the whole episode as an important learning experience (Titekar, 1968).

The Decision to Serve Leprosy Patients

It was during this experiment that an event occurred which may have led to Baba's lifelong commitment to the service of leprosy patients.

On one occasion, the Warora Municipal Corporation sweepers struck work on the grounds that they were overworked. They approached Baba to represent them and fight their case. Baba agreed but decided to acquaint himself with their problems first hand. So he took up the responsibilities of a sweeper for some time (Turner, 1976).

One day, as he was cleaning the latrines, he came across a bundle of rags which was moving. On closer inspection, he found that it was a human being in the last stages of leprosy "... a rotting mass of human flesh with two holes in the place of a nose, without a trace of fingers or toes, and with worms in the sores that had once been nostrils and eye-sockets"(Tarnowski, 1971). The person seemed to be in great pain but was unable to express it. Baba took one look at this leprosy patient and ran away, revolted (Tarnowski, 1971).

On reflection, Baba could see that this revulsion was in fact an irrational fear of the patient. And the person who had been afraid was none other than the very person whom Gandhiji had not so long ago called "Abhay Sadhak," the same man who had on several occasions in the past put his life in danger to save others' lives and property. For the next five or six months, Baba went through a period of agonizing soul searching and kept questioning himself: "People get inspiration from the ruins of temples. They collect donations for it. But in this human ruin, instead of beauty, why did I experience fear?" Then he asked himself: "What would I have done if my wife or son had leprosy? Would I have thrown them in a gutter and run away?" He realized that he would certainly not have done so. They had sacrificed so much for him that by abandoning them he would actually be disloyal to himself. As he went through these moments of extreme torment, his decision to serve leprosy patients and conquer the fear he had experienced soon became an obsession. There was a lady in the last stages of leprosy who stayed in a cemetery close to Baba's intercaste community. Baba decided to serve her first. He invited her to stay with the community members but she refused to leave the cemetery. Her husband had died and her relatives had deserted her. So Baba himself went over to the cemetery everyday and nursed her till she died. This experience made him realize that leprosy patients were desperately in need of help and that he would also derive happiness by serving them.

Baba had no idea at all about the nature of leprosy or whether the disease would respond to treatment. He feared that he would be putting the lives of his family members in danger. Yet, after long discussions, both he and his wife, Sadhanatai, decided to commit themselves to work among leprosy patients (Tarnowski, 1971).

Baba's decision to serve leprosy patients came at a time when society's image of such patients was very negative. Patients were treated as social rejects and families tried to hide the fact that their family members had leprosy. When this became difficult, they disowned the patient, lest the whole family should come in for ridicule and social boycott. Overnight, the patient would lose his dignity, his self-respect and his family—all aspects so vital for his social survival. Baba related an instance where a leprosy patient was asked never to return to his family. They said they had already performed his last rites signifying that he was dead as far as they were concerned.

Given these circumstances, Baba's decision came in for extensive criticism. His parents were disappointed. They had thought that marriage and children would put a stop to his madness. His decision to serve leprosy
patients, despite being married, therefore, evoked concern. They thought him foolish. Other people were outraged. They thought that with more leprosy patients visiting the town for treatment, leprosy would soon spread to everyone. A section of the people felt angry that Baba was jeopardizing his family's health. They felt he had no right to expose them to such dangers (Tarnowski, 1971). Some of Baba's friends expressed concern over his decision. One of his friends wrote to him asking why he was involving himself in such 'dirty work.' Baba felt a 'righteous anger' at this response. He wrote in reply, adapting a quotation from G K Chesterton: "It is strange that man seeks sublime inspiration from the ruins of old temples or churches, but sees none in the ruins of man."

He concentrated on familiarizing himself with leprosy. He read whatever books he could get on the nature of the disease, the historical accounts of society's treatment of leprosy patients and about people who had sacrificed their lives in the service of leprosy patients. He read about and was inspired by the Jesuit Father Damien's efforts in this area of social concern. He also drew inspiration from the writings of Christ and from Christianity. Of Christ, Baba says: "What did they not do to lepers in His time? Yet this Carpenter's Son cared for them and touched them. That hand is an emblem to me — that hand which cared for the loneliest and lost" (Tarnowski, 1971).

Next, Baba turned his attention to learning how to treat leprosy. It was this experience in the leprosy clinics that propelled him into entrepreneurship.

The Decision to be an Entrepreneur in order to Serve Leprosy Patients

To familiarize himself with the treatment of leprosy, Baba attended a clinic at Warora and learnt the rudiments of leprosy treatment. He knew he had to learn more. He was then advised to seek admission for an advanced course on the treatment of leprosy at the Calcutta School of Tropical Medicine. However, he was denied admission at the Institute initially, since the doctor in charge felt that Baba had at best the experience only of a "Hakim" not even that of a compounder. To this Baba replied: "There is no qualification for seva as yet. Whoever has the desire to serve should be able to do so. Today we have obtained independence and yet our doctors are not willing to serve leprosy patients. How long will missionaries from outside serve these people? As a youth of this country, I want to do something for the leprosy patients. And you don't even want to give me a chance?" In the face of his persistence, the authorities relented and gave him admission. After graduation, Baba went to a leprosy clinic run by a Gandhian in order to gain more experience. Baba's experience so far indicated that leprosy was being treated for its physical manifestation alone. Leprosy patients suffered equally if not more from the social stigma and deprivation that society forced on them. They even dreaded returning to their homes after treatment. Some of them threw away their medicines hoping to delay the cure and thereby their return to society. The patients, in general, longed for a place where they could recover from the physical as well as psychological trauma of the disease and then return to normal lives.

But this was not to be. Life in the clinics pushed them further away from 'normal life.' Most of the patients, he noticed, merely existed. They were gradually becoming welfare-addicts instead of trying to be contributing members of society. Food, shelter and medicine were at the behest of charity. Further, they felt deprived of freedom and privacy. Women patients, in particular, had no privacy.

Baba felt deeply distressed by this and felt the need for a different environment where they could live as one family with opportunities to give and receive care and affection as well as enjoy more freedom and privacy. He felt that leprosy patients should be given opportunities to learn new skills in order to earn their own livelihood instead of being condemned to bed-ridden confinement.

He tried to persuade the existing leprosy clinics to adopt this approach in their treatment of patients. Only one clinic experimented with his ideas. However, some of the leprosy patients themselves evinced a keen interest in his ideas. The promise of freedom, fresh air and dignity appealed to them strongly. They even expressed their willingness to join Baba in his efforts to realize his dream.

Many attempts were made to dissuade Baba from responding to the aspirations of leprosy patients. Baba approached Gandhiji and Vinobaji for their blessings. Their reactions were cautious but encouraging. Baba along with his family and six leprosy patients from the clinic took the first few steps towards creating a new institution—The Anandwan Treatment-cum-Rehabilitation Centre for Leprosy Patients.

The Creation of Anandwan

When Baba embarked on the mission of building Anandwan, he had just fourteen rupees in the bank and...
the assistance of six leprosy patients apart from his family. Realizing that he needed land for the experiment, he approached the Maharashtra Government and was granted 250 acres of land on lease near Warora in Maharashtra. The land was rocky but was accessible by train. Since leprosy patients were allowed to travel only by train, proximity to the railway station was a major locational advantage.

During the initial years, the neighbouring society maintained a distance from the residents of Anandwan since it was believed that proximity to a leprosy colony would increase the incidence of leprosy in neighbouring villages. Leprosy patients were not allowed to visit the villages even for necessities. For instance, doctors from the neighbouring village requested Baba not to send leprosy patients to the village mill for flour as it was felt that other villagers would stop patronizing the services of the mill. Likewise, very few of even Baba's close relatives visited Anandwan. Those who tried to visit were asked whether they were going to Anandwan because they had developed leprosy symptoms. The few who visited refused to drink tea or eat with the Anandwan residents for fear of contracting the disease.

**The Challenge and the Response**

Survival was a challenge given the physical terrain of Anandwan. The land was rocky and not easily cultivable and the area was infested with panthers, tigers, scorpions, snakes and rats. The nearest source of drinking water was about two miles away.

Baba had to think of overcoming the limitations of the terrain with his limited resources. He first addressed himself to the problems of the patients. He cited the example of a blind boy who had completed his MA while his brother with normal vision had remained an uneducated cowherd. For the blind boy, his blindness had become a source of light. He had lost his eyes but had an enhanced sense of touch. Baba said: "Remember God for what He has given you rather than curse Him for what He has taken away. So what if you do not have seven toes? You still have three." Baba then turned to the urgent requirements of survival and exhorted the Anandwan residents to join him in digging a well to alleviate the water scarcity quickly. A challenging task even for normal people, this involved breaking the rocks before even reaching the soil. But so great was their faith in Baba that they toiled and finally struck water. The success experienced in digging the well restored some confidence of the community members. They started cultivating small patches of land and the produce catered to their immediate needs.

During this time, Baba had to ensure that the patients' insensitive limbs were protected from further injury. While cutting and digging, there was the distinct likelihood of chips of rock getting embedded in their limbs. If undetected, they could cause concern and even infection of the entire limb leading ultimately to amputation. The patients themselves were entirely unaware of the need to protect their limbs (D'Monte, 1984). So, Baba had to look out for chips that might have wedged themselves in the limbs of the patients. Realizing that the patients needed some sort of protection for their feet, he designed and made footwear out of worn-out tyres which was then supplied to all residents.

Besides these internal problems, Baba had to deal with threats from the external society. As mentioned earlier, people from the neighbouring villages had not taken kindly to a leprosy colony so close to them. Groups of villagers tried to intimidate Baba and threatened to kill him. At other times, they set fire to the forest near Baba's hut.

As days passed by, it was becoming difficult to survive. There were days when water boiled but there was no grain. He had no choice but to approach the neighbouring villages for money. When he heard someone in the village was dying, he would request the person to donate something to Anandwan in his name. By adopting these methods, he managed to get a large number of cows, largely old and useless. But he continued to maintain the cows for the manure.

Once, in sheer desperation, Baba approached a rich man from his village for donations. The man invited Baba to his house and made him wait for four hours. Baba returned to Anandwan without meeting him. He resolved that he will never seek charity from others. In his diary, he wrote: "Charity destroys, work builds."

**Efforts to Make Anandwan Self-Sufficient**

Thus was born the decision to make Anandwan self-sufficient. Baba conceived of a service-oriented production centre. This was no easy task. The first year's audit report showed yawning deficits. The resources were not sufficient to meet the needs of the community. Initially, if a letter had no reply postcard attached, it was not replied to. Every waste had a use, except waste of time. Baba learnt from Gandhiji that those who live on society's funds must make maximum use of it.

A strong sense of kinship kept the people together during times of crises. Baba consciously cultivated it by setting a personal example of the qualities he sought in
others. For instance, Baba and Tai inculcated a caring spirit in others by personally taking care of the ill and wounded residents. Gradually, other residents started sharing the responsibility of caring for the weak. Baba also introduced certain other practices to increase the feeling of kinship among residents. For instance, he disallowed private patients and private kitchens in Anandwan. All residents had to eat together at the community kitchen. At a later time, Baba even allowed marriages between leprosy patients.

Aware that strong kinship ties required de-emphasizing of caste differences among residents, Baba sought to achieve this in various ways. He had, in fact, appointed a Harijan cook in Anandwan as Brahmin cooks of neighbouring villages refused to cook at Anandwan. He used to constantly tell the patients: "The fellowship of pain knows no barriers — no caste, creed, religion, geographic or ethnic barriers. God has given the malady to all. He has spared no caste. If you are affected together, why not live together?"

Meanwhile, Anandwan was gaining reputation as a place where leprosy patients could live with dignity. Baba did not turn away anyone who came to Anandwan in search of a home. Nor did he ask cured patients to leave Anandwan. He knew how they were treated in society. The demands of the community, therefore, increased. For instance, the treatment of patients demanded more time.

The response of the external society, however, remained non-cooperative. The government, for instance, was largely apathetic to Anandwan's requests for funds though they were quick to criticize Baba's treatment of leprosy patients. They argued that he was not a qualified doctor to treat leprosy. Hence, Baba requested student-doctors of some medical colleges to serve at Anandwan but did not receive a positive response. Finally, he was able to obtain the assistance of a dedicated nurse.

**Efforts to Legitimize Anandwan**

Baba then took a series of steps to legitimize Anandwan in the eyes of the rest of the society. He decided to grow crops for the neighbouring society's consumption. But growing crops on a large scale was not easy. Boars and deer, not to mention birds, regularly invaded their fields. On one occasion, all groundnuts sown in the fields were eaten up the next day by boars. Baba devised ingenious ways of keeping these invaders at bay. For instance, a trench was dug to capture a boar. When a boar was captured, its piteous cries were recorded and replayed when the boars were expected next. Hearing the distressed cries, the boars did not venture near the fields.

The fields yielded various crops of high quality. Baba took them to the market for sale at reasonable prices. Though the produce was admired, people did not buy it. Some people asked Baba if he wanted them to contract leprosy by consuming the produce. When Baba found it difficult to dispose the produce, he decided to auction the vegetables at the plots. By this, the villagers could see for themselves how the patients were involved only in certain activities such as planting seeds, plugging the soil, and watering the land without coming into contact with vegetables directly. The bidders were themselves asked to take the vegetables directly from the plots. Since the produce was of high quality and also reasonably priced there was no shortage of bidders (Tarnowski, 1971).

Baba also started a dairy. He bought some high quality cows and did the milk extraction himself and when he was unable to do so, his wife helped him in the task. Positive leprosy patients were not allowed to milk cows for fear of contaminating the milk. Yet, when Baba tried to sell the milk, he found no buyers. However, when the doctors from the villages certified that the milk was not contaminated and bought it themselves, other villagers followed suit.

Baba discovered on one occasion that the village vendor was diluting the milk he procured from Anandwan before selling it. When villagers complained about the declining quality of milk, the milkman shifted the blame to Anandwan residents. Baba immediately stopped the vendor from selling milk. But getting other vendors was difficult. So he decided to close down the dairy rather than risk the reputation of Anandwan. Villagers, however, dissuaded him from closing the dairy.

Efforts to legitimize Anandwan in society received an impetus when a group of volunteers from an international agency contributed their labour and constructed some buildings in Anandwan. Earlier, Baba had asked the local masons to undertake this work but they had refused. On hearing that these foreign volunteers were doing similar jobs in Gandhiji's Şewagram Ashram, he approached them for assistance. They agreed to help. For three months they stayed at Anandwan and built some residential quarters and a clinic. The villagers were surprised to see a group of foreigners staying at Anandwan for so long. They be-
came curious about Anandwan. When the foreigners fell short of food, the villager* came to Anandwan and supplied them with rice and dal. This gave them an opportunity to see Anandwan. They realized that it was like any other community, perhaps only better run. (Tarnowski, 1971).

Baba also introduced other programmes to cater to local needs. He set up a tin-can workshop where sieves and such other kitchen items were made. Some craftsmen, meanwhile, agreed to teach the patients some crafts. They were trained in carpentry, tailoring, cobblerly, well-maintenance and other skills that were in great local demand.

But Baba continued to be dissatisfied. He believed firmly that it was good to get but better to give. He wanted the inmates of Anandwan to contribute something to society in return for what society had given them. So, during the Indo-China war, they staged a play and collected Rs 2,500 which was given to the Indian Defence Fund. Later, Baba suggested that the patients should build a college. They agreed to contribute their labour towards the construction of a college. The college now attracts students from all over the country. Baba's desire was that the students of this college would ultimately become ambassadors not only for Anandwan but also in the war against leprosy. Baba initiated schools for other physically handicapped people and even set up an orphanage for children. Though these institutions were started on compassionate grounds, the underlying motive was to help people to see leprosy as any other physical handicap. Baba, in fact, dreamt of a future where homes like Anandwan may become redundant, where leprosy patients could get treated and return to normal life in society — a dream he shared with Gandhiji.

The Makings of a Social Entrepreneur: The Baba Amte Syndrome

The purpose of this paper as stated earlier is to make an attempt to arrive at a more systematic understanding of social entrepreneurs through an intensive case study of Baba Amte. The first part of this paper has focused on the case of Baba Amte. The second part will analyse the Amte case in order to develop what can be termed as the "Baba Amte Syndrome" or the "Social Entrepreneur Syndrome." It will be my endeavour to do this by looking at Baba from the perspective of the following three factors which constitute the basis of social entrepreneurship as depicted in his case:

- The motives which drove him to realize his mission.
- The abilities which helped him to achieve his objectives.
- The attitudes which sustained him during his mission.

Motives

Some interesting insights have emerged on the motives which impelled Baba Amte: They are presented below:

The Need to Conquer Fear

Baba's decision to serve leprosy patients reflected a strong need to conquer fear. This strong need enabled him to face the social pressures against his decision to serve leprosy patients. When people pointed out the dangers of working with leprosy patients, it only fuelled his need to serve them through which he was able to conquer his own fears.

Strong Urge to Fight Injustice

Baba had a strong inner urge to fight injustice meted out to disadvantage sections of society. He believed that everyone had a right to dignity and freedom. If a section of society was being deprived of this right, they were being treated unjustly. He felt strongly impelled to right this injustice by restoring the dignity and freedom of leprosy patients.

The Urge to Experiment

Baba's decision to be an entrepreneur reflected an urge to experiment with some of his ideas. He realized that these patients needed a home where they could recover from this trauma and regain their dignity and confidence. He sought the cooperation of formal mechanisms like clinics in experimenting with his ideas. On failing to elicit cooperation, he did not give up but decided to experiment with these ideas on his own.

Abilities

An analysis of the Amte case enhances our understanding of the abilities which help social entrepreneurs to achieve their objectives.

The Courage to Withstand Social Censure

Baba's decision to serve leprosy patients through Anandwan reflected enormous courage to withstand social censure. At the time, society's attitude to leprosy patients was marked by ridicule, disgust and misconceptions. Therefore, any attempt to serve them was
considered socially reprehensible. Yet, Baba remained firm in his decision.

Later, when he created Anandwan, social censure took other forms. Baba's relatives would not visit him even when his wife delivered their second child. Groups of villagers came to assault Baba and set fire to the forest close to his hut. Yet, Baba did not buckle under these pressures.

**A Sensitivity to the Feelings of Others**

At each stage of becoming a social entrepreneur, Baba demonstrated a sensitivity to the feelings of others. Baba's initial response on seeing a leprosy patient in a gutter was to run away. But later he felt extreme remorse for having done so and wondered if he would have responded similarly if his wife or son had leprosy. He realized he would not have done so — that would have meant being disloyal to himself. This incident played a critical role in his decision to serve leprosy patients.

Even during his tenure at leprosy clinics, Baba's ideas about a better future for leprosy patients evolved from his sensitivity to their plight. The patients especially women patients were deprived of privacy and freedom. Baba wondered how he would have felt if his daughter had been subject to these conditions. This realization led to his creation of Anandwan. Again, it is Baba's sensitivity to society's treatment of leprosy patients that led him to accommodate all those patients who sought shelter though Anandwan faced an acute resource shortage initially. Nor did he ask cured patients to leave Anandwan.

**Ability to Persevere**

Baba's perseverance in the face of odds is amply demonstrated in the following illustrations:

When Baba realized that he was not qualified to serve leprosy patients, he applied to the Calcutta School of Tropical Medicine for admission to a course on treatment of leprosy. Though he was not given admission initially, he persevered and secured a seat.

Later, while creating Anandwan, he faced a hostile physical terrain and an equally hostile neighbourhood. He had few resources of his own and was unable to generate much resources from the neighbourhood. Also, their fields were constantly attacked by boars, deer and birds. Yet, he persevered and was able to develop the land.

**Ability to Develop and Articulate a Clear Vision**

When he set out to be an entrepreneur, Baba had a fairly clear vision of the way leprosy patients should be treated. He promised the patients freedom and illustrated this in their daily lives — the patients were given freedom to rear animals, to choose colours of the clothes they wore and to work in the open air. He provided an opportunity for them to regain their dignity as human beings by developing relevant skills and more positive attitudes. Some patients were so inspired by the promise of freedom, fresh air and dignity that they were willing to leave the clinic and work with Baba towards realizing this vision. It was perhaps this promise of dignity that attracted patients from all over India to Anandwan.

**Ability to Instil Confidence in Others**

Baba's ability to instil confidence in others is most evident in the initial years of Anandwan's existence. Initially, the leprosy patients who joined Baba had no confidence in themselves. They had become welfare-addicts and found it difficult to visualize themselves as useful people. Baba changed this attitude by providing them with various opportunities to use what they had. They started with the task of digging a well. Later, using technological aids, Baba created a situation where a patient could manage a field single-handedly. The patients also collectively built a college within Anandwan. On completion of each activity, their confidence gradually increased. Once the patients became confident of their abilities, they were able to assist Baba towards generating resources for Anandwan.

**Ability to Think Creatively, to Look at Constraints as Opportunities**

Many incidents during the creation of Anandwan reflected Baba's ability to think creatively and to be resourceful.

For instance, Baba employed various ways to create strong kinship ties within Anandwan especially by encouraging marital alliances among residents. A number of constraints were turned into opportunities.

**Ability to Identify and Meet the Needs of the People**

After the initial years of struggle for survival, Baba concentrated more on seeking legitimacy for Anandwan in society. He sought to achieve this by making Anandwan a service-oriented production centre. This also enabled Anandwan to generate resources for its continued survival. His success in this effort reflects an
ability to identify and meet the needs of the people. For instance, he identified the need for vegetables, milk, grain and stud-bulls in the neighbouring villages and resorted to various steps to meet these needs.

Ability to Put in Long Hours of Work on a Sustained Basis
This ability is particularly evident in the initial years of Anandwan. Baba put in 18 hours of work a day in those initial years. It was necessary as certain tasks, such as milking the cows, could not be given to leprosy patients. Also, the patients were not qualified to perform some kinds of tasks, such as nursing wounds. Lastly, he felt he had to set an example to others by working hard himself.

Attitudes and Beliefs
Several attitudinal orientations are discernible in the course of Baba's service to leprosy patients. Some of the more significant manifestations of his attitudes are presented below:

A Belief that Responsibility is not Transferable
Baba's decision to serve leprosy patients is perhaps indicative of his belief that responsibility is not transferable. He was deeply affected by the physical deformities and mute suffering of leprosy patients. What was the force then that impelled Baba to commit his life to the service of leprosy patients? It was evident that Baba felt responsible or what occurred around him, and it was this feeling that urged him to initiate steps to alleviate the sufferings of leprosy patients.

Were it not for this strong belief, Baba would have confined himself to being passively sympathetic to the suffering around him and may not have committed his life to the service of leprosy patients.

Everything is a Resource
This attitude is evident in some of his responses during the creation of Anandwan. In the initial years, the leprosy patients did not see themselves as useful people. But Baba made them aware of what they had and gave them opportunities to use them. Gradually, they started believing that they could evolve into being resourceful people.

When people from the neighbourhood donated old cows to Anandwan, Baba realized that these cows could be useful sources of manure and retained them. The land was not very fertile and so the manure, was used as fertilizer.

A Do-and-Show Orientation
During conversations, Baba frequently said, "I do not tolerate a yawning gap between thoughts and actions." He had no sympathy for people who said: "Do as I say," because he himself believed in the dictum, "Do as I do." Thus, when Baba visualized Anandwan, he wanted it to have a 'do-and-show' orientation. He did not want it to be an ashram where people advised others but did not do anything themselves. He sought to achieve this by setting a personal example.

Many instances during Anandwan's creation reflect this orientation. If Baba said that dignity could be obtained only through work, he worked to set an example. If he expected others to be honest, he practised it by refusing to bribe the officials, by insisting on a voucher after purchases and so on. If he claimed that leprosy was not contagious (especially after treatment was initiated), he demonstrated this by living among the patients. If he voiced the opinion that residents must take responsibility for each other's welfare, he demonstrated this by nursing the weak and ill patients and by showering them with his affection. If he said that residents must not discriminate between each other on the basis of caste, he practised it by dining with all the inmates irrespective of their caste.

Given the hostility of society towards leprosy patients and towards Anandwan, it was perhaps imperative that the patients should draw sustenance from each other in order to survive. This required the development of a cohesive community which required the inculcation of certain common values and a commitment to a common purpose. As a leader, Baba had to practise these values himself, before convincing others to follow suit.

Life is a Challenge, an Adventure
"Life is like a stud-horse — once you mount it and control the reins, you can have fun. You may get thrown off ninety-nine times. But you may succeed in the 100th attempt. You have to keep trying till you succeed." This statement by Baba was amply demonstrated by his responses to certain situations during the creation of Anandwan. For instance, when a rich man in the village refused donation, Baba saw this as a challenge. He decided that he would never seek charity again and resolved that Anandwan would move towards self-sufficiency. Again, when the villagers rejected the leprosy patients and did not allow them access to the village, he again saw this as a challenge. He decided that he would equip the patients with certain skills so that the same
villagers who rejected them earlier would seek them out for their skills.

**From Baba Amte to the Baba Amte Syndrome**

The analysis of the Baba Amte case has helped in arriving at what can be termed as the "Baba Amte Syndrome" or the "Social Entrepreneur Syndrome." Table 1 presents the motives, abilities and attitudes which together formed the basis of the social entrepreneur characteristics discernible in Baba's life and mission.

**Implications for Research and Practice**

The development of the "Baba Amte Syndrome" or "The Social Entrepreneur Syndrome" has interesting implications for development researchers, development trainers and funding agencies.

- It has been pointed out that this study is exploratory in nature. The "Baba Amte Syndrome" which has been developed here has to be validated through replication of this study among several social entrepreneurs.
- Measures will also have to be developed for each of the variables identified in order to facilitate research on social entrepreneurs.
- It may be necessary to repeat this study in different contexts in order to see whether variations in environments call for variations in the elements of the Baba Amte Syndrome.
- An interesting research question which emerges is: If the entrepreneur faces a skeptical client system instead of a hostile external society, would the elements of the Social Entrepreneur Syndrome be the same?
- If the Social Entrepreneur Syndrome can be validated through the research process, this could aid funding agencies in the identification and selection of social entrepreneurs for development projects.
- The Social Entrepreneur Syndrome will also be of use to development trainers. Social Entrepreneur Development Programmes can either simulate or put trainees through real life social situations in order to develop requisite motivation, abilities and attitudes.

**References**


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**Table 1: The Social Entrepreneur Syndrome**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motives</th>
<th>Abilities</th>
<th>Attitudes/Beliefs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The urge to conquer fear</td>
<td>Courage to withstand social censure</td>
<td>A belief that responsibility is not transferable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The urge to fight injustice against the disadvantaged</td>
<td>Sensitivity to feelings of others</td>
<td>Everything and everyone is a resource</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The urge to experiment</td>
<td>Ability to persevere</td>
<td>A do-and-show orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ability to develop and articulate a clear vision</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ability to instil confidence in others</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ability to think creatively</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ability to identify and meet needs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ability to put in long hours of work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>