



SD-4118
M. B. A. (Sem. II) (F.T.) & (Sem. IV) (ATKT)
Examination
April / May – 2011
CP-207 & CP-401 : Research Methodology in Business
(Old Course)

Time : 3 Hours]

[Total Marks : 100

Instructions :

(1)

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| <p>नीचे दृष्टावेक निशानीवाणी विगतो उत्तरवही पर अवश्य लक्षवी. Fillup strictly the details of signs on your answer book.</p> <p>Name of the Examination :</p> <p>M. B. A. (Sem. II) (F.T.) & (Sem. IV) (ATKT)</p> <p>Name of the Subject :</p> <p>CP-207 & CP-401 : Research Methodology in Business (Old)</p> <p>Subject Code No. : 4 1 1 8 Section No. (1, 2,.....) : 1&2</p> | <p>Seat No. :</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"><tr><td style="width: 15%; height: 20px;"></td><td style="width: 15%; height: 20px;"></td><td style="width: 15%; height: 20px;"></td><td style="width: 15%; height: 20px;"></td><td style="width: 15%; height: 20px;"></td><td style="width: 15%; height: 20px;"></td></tr></table> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 15px; padding: 10px; text-align: center; margin-top: 10px;">Student's Signature</div> | | | | | | |
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- (2) Figures to the right indicate marks.
- (3) Both sections carry equal marks.
- (3) Question 1 is compulsory, write any two from Q. 2,3,4.

SECTION - I

- 1 Discuss the importance of research in business. How do you think research is helpful to the manager in decision making ? 18

- 2 Defining the research problem is a very important step in research. How can you develop the problem in a scientific way ? 16

- 3 Discuss the features of good research. How can you ensure them in a research ? 16

- 4 Write short notes : (any two) 16
- (1) Concept and definition
 - (2) Focus group
 - (3) Interview method of data collection
 - (4) Instrument design.

SECTION - II

- 5 Read the case of Helping Hands and answer the following questions the end of the case. 30
- 6 Write short notes : (any two) 20
- (1) Sampling plan
 - (2) Data preparation
 - (3) Report writing
 - (4) Instrument design.

Case Study : Helping Hands

Urmi Patel looked at her husband with defeated eyes. She found it difficult to accept the conclusion that he had reached and that he was trying to make her see the logic of - that her business was not going to take off. There seemed no reason for it not to. Everyone had said at the time that it was a great idea, even her husband. "I do not deny that, Urmi. We all thought so, at the time. Perhaps we should have checked out the market', said her husband, Ratan. It pained him to see the disappointment on her face. But there was nothing for it. The mistake had to be accepted.

Urmi was thinking about the time, five months earlier, when the idea had first come to her. For years now, she had lived in Ghatkopar, a Gujarati-dominated area of Mumbai. The second of three children, she had been born and brought up in East Africa, where her father had been running a thriving business in textiles. She came to India after her marriage twenty-eight years ago, and about fifteen years ago, her parents had also retired to Mumbai, when her two brothers decided to emigrate to the UK. They lived not far from Urmi, and she had been taking care of them all this while. Now that her own children were grown up, she found more time on her hands, and had been helping her husband out with his business, too. Her knowledge of computers came in handy in that work.

Talking to her neighbours and the neighbours of her parents gradually made her aware of one fact : It had become common among Gujarati families for children to go off to the USA or UK after they grew up. Parents looked upon the phenomenon with pride, and getting their daughters married to 'boys in America' was something of a status symbol. One major impact of this new trend was that parents were usually left behind to fend for themselves. In a country like India, where the joint family system has not disappeared completely even now, and where it was the norm for sons to look after aged parents, this socio-economic change was striking at the roots of social and emotional security, specially in communities like the Gujaratis, where the number of emigrants was high. Societal structure was still not geared to cope with this change, and there were not many governmental or voluntary organizations around to take care of old people in an organized manner. Increasing life-expectancy had made the problem more acute. Urmi Patel saw her parents facing this

problem and trying to find ways to come to terms with it. That she was around to lend a hand helped. This set her thinking. What about people who did not have any children living nearby ? Specially those who were really old and not capable of handling the responsibilities of day-to-day living? She herself had been asked by some neighbours and friends of her parents on many occasions to help out with chores like paying the telephone bill, booking the gas, and calling in the plumber to repair a leaky faucet.

She began to realize that here was the opportunity for an innovative business. She could offer to take care of these tasks for old people in her neighborhood, at a price. She discussed the idea with her husband and a few trustworthy friends. They agreed that it could be a very profitable business idea, though, of course, like any business idea, it needed to be worked upon. Urmi felt that in this way, she would be providing a much-needed service to the community and, at the same time, making some money. She sat down and made a list of the various tasks she usually had to perform for her parents and their neighbours on a regular basis, and the frequency of each task. She estimated the time she had to spend on each task. Working out the cost of each task was a bit difficult, till her husband suggested that she could follow one of two approaches: either ask various artisans how much they would charge for each such task and cost it accordingly, or estimate the cost of her time on the basis of the salary she would expect to get per month for a full time, eight-hour-a-day job. She opted for the second method, since it was not possible to get correct estimates from others for all the tasks on her list. Having calculated the costs on this basis, she now had the list of services she could offer, the frequency with which she would offer them, and the prices

she would charge. She was now all set to make a beginning. She decided that she would offer her services at \$ 100 per month, in American currency, for a standard set of services (Table 1.3).

This would cover most of the routine requirements, and the \$100 charge would pro-vida her a tidy profit. Additional services, such as banking, were optional and would be charged extra on a prorated basis. She would visit each subscribing household once a week to check up on their requirements. In addition, she was always available on call, and arranging for medical and would be on a priority basis, any time of the day. Urmi decided that she would approach the children settled abroad for subscription to her

Table 1.3 List of Services Offered

| Service | Frequency |
|--|------------------------|
| - Shopping for provisions | - once a fortnight |
| - Shopping for vegetables | - one a week |
| - Other shopping | - once a month |
| - Payment of electricity and telephone bills | - once a month |
| - Plumbing / electrical repairs and carpentry work | - once a fortnight |
| - Booking of gas | - once a month |
| - Outing for the couple (to temples, etc.) | - once a month |
| - Group outing / picnic for all clients | - once in three months |

services for their parents. On the basis of her experience with her own parents and their friends, she was quite sure that there was a good market for her services, which she decided to name 'Helping Hands'. Given the financial position of most of the Gujaratis abroad, and the peace of mind her services would provide, she was confident that the \$100 charge would not be found excessive. She estimated that in the first year, she would be able to obtain at least 30 such subscriptions, which would give her a monthly profit of about Rs. 2,000 per subscribing household on an average. She got 500 copies of an attractive brochure printed at a cost of Rs. 15,000, and mailed them to her brothers for distribution. Even though she found the printing costs rather high, she realized it was important for the brochures to be eye-catching and classy looking. She also devised an attractive advertisement in the form of an open letter, and advertised in India Abroad and two other similar magazines with NRIs as the target audience. She then sat down to wait for the response she was sure would follow.

Nothing happened for two months. Urmi was beginning to despair, when the phone rang one morning. A Mrs. Shah was in the line from London, enquiring about details relating to Helping Hands. A friend who had come across the advertisement in India Abroad had told her about it. Enthusiastically, Urmi told her about it, and offered to send her the brochure. Mrs Shah was interested, but through that \$100 per month, or its equivalent in pounds sterling, was a bit on the high side for such a service. She asked Urmi to send a copy of her brochure. She would discuss it with her

husband and get back to Urmi within ten days, if they were interested in subscribing. That was the only call she ever received, till the younger of her brothers had called that morning. He had inquired with some friends, he said, people he through would be interested. But he had come up against an unexpected difficulty. People were not very willing to let strangers walk into a house inhabited by just old people. He had tried reassuring them, saying it was his sister offering the service, so there was no risk. But a friend of his had asked right out how she could guarantee the reliability of the people she would have to employ - the plumbers, the electricians, etc. Urmi was aghast. The possibility had never occurred to her. 'Can you not explain to them that would be my responsibility ?' she asked her brother. 'After all, such services are fairly common in the West'. 'I did try, Urmilaben. But to tell you the truth, I would feel the same concern for our parents, about letting some unknown workers into the house, if you were not around to supervise, along with Ratanbhai or Rakesh,' he said, referring to her husband and son. 'It is different out here because most of these services are provided by the borough councils, which are official bodies.' And that was that. If acquaintances had that fear, she had no hope in the world of being able to guarantee reliability to unknown people. That was perhaps why nobody had subscribed. She mentioned the conversation to her husband in the evening and, as she had been dreading, he agreed with her brother. 'You should have surveyed the market,' he said. Despite the disappointment, Urmi knew he was right. All the effort, the planning and the expenditure on promotion, had been in vain. As things stood, there was no market for her idea.

Questions :

- (1) Given the amount of information Urmi Patel had collected before launching her business, do you agree with her husband's view that she should have conducted a survey before launching the enterprise ? Why ? List the specific benefits that would accrue from such a study.
 - (2) If Urmi Patel has to conduct a survey, how should it be designed ?
 - (3) How could the data from the study be utilized in developing the business plan for Helping Hands ?
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