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## Entrepreneurship: Native Perspectives

Dr. V. Kulandaiswamy, Secretary, Vivekananda Institute of Management Studies, Coimbatore  
Dr. Rupa Gunaseelan, Director i/c & Professor, BS MED, Bharathiar University, Coimbatore

### REVISITING NATIVE WISDOM

Entrepreneurship is the engine of growth. It is the rare quality of the individual to venture into an untrodden path or unfamiliar terrain. It is the ability to marshal, manage and magnify the four factors of production to establish a successful venture or creating a social capital.

The motive force of Entrepreneurship is creation of wealth. To achieve this goal two fundamental factors are required as suggested by *Muthamozhi Kkaanchi*.

**First** is painful effort; one who wants to earn excessive wealth will never avoid painful effort.

“மிகுதி வேண்டு வோன் வருத்தம் தண்டான்”

(முதுமொழிக்காஞ்சி : தண்டாப்பத்து (6))

**Second** is ability to face challenges. The velocity of one's growth is manifested in the ability to face challenges.

“ஏற்ற முடைமை எதிரகோளின் அறிப”

(முதுமொழிக்காஞ்சி அறிவுப்பத்து (5))

Entrepreneurship finds a prominent place in *Naaladiar*, a well known ethical treatise, which devotes a separate chapter on Entrepreneurship (தாளாண்மை). Views expressed thereat are progressive, unconventional and reflect an egalitarian mind, quite in contrast with the hierarchical social order that prevailed in the Indian social system.

It states as follows :

Relentless effort with single-minded concentration will pay dividends. Those who work tirelessly like the rotating eyes of a dancing girl will never fail in their endeavour. Such people with their wealth, will be able to support their kith and kin, like a pond brimming with water supports the tiny creatures living at its bottom. It may be inferred that :

- constant vigil is the hallmark of entrepreneurship, and
- benevolence is its end result.

கோளாற்றக் கொள்ளாக் குளத்தின்கீழ்ப் பைங்கூழ் போற்  
கேள்வதுண்டு கிளைகளோ துஞ்சப ;  
வாளொடு கூத்தியர் கண்போற் றடுமாறுந்  
தாளளர்க் குண்டோ தவறு. - நாலடியார் 197  
கோளாற்றக் கொள்ளா - நீர் நிரம்பிய  
பைங்கூழ் - சிறிய புழுக்கள்

It is further stated that, single minded devotion, knowledge in the field and hard work are the essential qualities of an entrepreneur. Attributing high or low status to an individual on the basis of birth (caste) is meaningless. Entrepreneurship will bring glory to anyone irrespective of his social status or other such natural endowments. The precious qualities such as concentration, education and ability alone really matter (*Naaladiar* 195).

நல்ல குலமென்றும் தீய குலமென்றும்  
சொல்லள வல்லாற் பொருளில்லை - தொல்சிறப்பின்  
ஒன்பொரு ளன்றோ தவங்கல்வி யாள்வினை  
என்றிவற்றான் ஆகும் குலம் - நாலடியார் 195

*Thiruvalluvar* considers sustained effort and endurance as the most outstanding qualities of successful persons.

Those who make relentless effort will create destiny, and overcome even the worst adversity (*Kural* : 620).

ஊழையும் உப்பக்கம் காண்பர் உலைவின்றித்  
தாழாது உஞற்றுபவர் - குறள் 620  
ஊழ் - விதி உஞற்றுபவர் - முயற்சி செய்பவர்

An entrepreneur should never get perturbed, should possess unwavering mind and should complete the tasks without delay or postponement.

கலங்காது கண்ட வினைக்கண் துளங்காது  
தூக்கம் கடிந்து செயல். (குறள் 668)

*Naaladiar* advocates vociferously in favour of social equity and work oriented values derived by means of entrepreneurship in the following manner :

The greatness of a person is not judged by his birth or lineage but by his achievements. The beautiful flowers of sugarcane is devoid of pleasant smell. Likewise those born in renowned families will not be respected unless they show tangible achievements (*Naaladiar* – 199).

தீங்கரும் பீன்ற திரள்கால் உளையலரி  
தேங்கமழ் நாற்றம் இழந்தா அங்கு - ஓங்கும்  
உயர்குடி யுட்பிறப்பின் என்னாம் பெயர்பொறிக்கும்  
பேராண்மை இல்லாக் கடை - (நாலடியார் 199)  
திரள்கால் - நீண்டு வளர்ந்த ; நாற்றம் - மணம்  
உளை அலரி - பூக்கள்

Entrepreneurship is an admirable quality, irrespective of the magnitude of the enterprise, small or big. Nothing is considered small. *Naaladiyar* gives an advice to small entrepreneurs. The tiger when it has no prey to eat, sometimes catches the frog and eats it. Never consider any enterprise low. By means of ones creative thinking even a small enterprise can flourish into a respectable one. There are ample proof for the above logic. Many enterprises with a humble beginning have grown into mighty empires.

உறுபுலி ஊனிரை யின்றி ஒருநாள்  
சிறுதேரை பற்றியும் தின்னும்-அறிவினாய்  
காற்றொழில் என்று கருதற்க கையினால்  
மேற்றொழிலும் ஆங்கே மிகும்.  
(- நாலடியார்)

Entrepreneurship and risk taking are two sides of the same coin. There is no enterprise which is totally free from risk. The foremost quality of an entrepreneur is to perceive the risk involved in the enterprise, assess the nature and magnitude of risk and take precautionary steps in two ways :

-avoiding risk

-when risk happens to overcome the same.

ஊரொரால் உற்றபின் ஒல்காமை இவ்விரண்டும்  
ஈரென்பர் ஆய்ந்தவர் கோள். (குறள்-622)

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- The *Tirukkural* (Tamil: திருக்குறள்), or shortly **the Kural**, is a classic Tamil text consisting of 1,330 couplets or Kurals, dealing with the everyday virtues of an individual. It is one of the two oldest works now extant in Tamil literature in their entirety, the other being the *Tolkappiyam*. Considered one of the greatest works ever written on ethics and morality, chiefly secular ethics, it is known for its universality and non-denominational nature. It was authored by Valluvar, also known in full as Thiruvalluvar. The text has been dated variously from 300 BCE to 5th century CE. The traditional accounts describe it as the last work of the third Sangam, but linguistic analysis suggests a later date of 450 to 500 CE.
- *Thirikatukam* (Tamil: திரிகடுகம்) is a Tamil poetic work of didactic nature belonging to the *Pathinenkilkanakku* anthology of Tamil literature. This belongs to the 'post Sangam period' corresponding to between 100 – 500 CE. *Thirikatukam* contains 100 poems written by the poet Nallathanaar. The poems of *Thirikatukam* are written in the Venpa meter.
- TEN INDISPENSABLE ACTS (Tamil : தண்டாப் பத்து) - Ancient Tamil Literatures
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