



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

Time Banking and Its Significance

Ms. Disha Harit

MPhil Research Scholar, Social Work
School of Social Sciences,
Jaipur National University, Jaipur, India

Prof. Veena Dwivedi

HOD, School of Social Sciences

Abstract: Time banks are innovative community program which attracted significant interest from the public and voluntary sectors especially in the west. Time banking is the thought where individuals volunteer time for a help and that time is recorded and kept in a record and can be utilized to acquire administrations when a volunteer requires. The paper examines the concept of time-banking and its utility in the Indian context. Timebank is a reciprocal service exchange and promotes equality and dignity of labor. Time bank is based on the notion that every work is equal and everyone has something to offer. Time-banking aims to build community and reciprocity through the exchange of time-based currency. India has rich history of volunteerism and community building and the model of time banking can help to build the social capital in the country. Time banking as concept is based on the foundation of co-production and social exchange.

Index Terms – Time banking, coproduction, community, reciprocity, volunteers, social capital.

I. INTRODUCTION

Time banks are a form of community currency. (Doteuchi, 2002) has defined them as a medium for exchanging goods and services within a community. Time bank can empower the disadvantaged individuals through which they can earn both services and respect within their local community.

A time bank is a work trade system based on reciprocity in which hours are the currency. It is a method of storing and exchanging hours of labor. Time-banking are based on the principles of skills and resource sharing.

Time bank offers an innovative system in which people can participate both as receiver and givers of services. For every hour they are giving services to others they receive an hour of service in return. All work is seen as equal because, regardless of its nature, it earns an equivalent quantity of credit in the form of time.

(Cahn, 2000) listed the various values which form the basis for ideal practice of time-banking in a community.¹

- Asset: Each of us has something valuable to share with others.
- Redefining Work: Some types of function, such as forming good families, reviving neighborhoods, making democracy work and advancing social justice, are difficult to pay with money. Time credits were created to praise that labor.
- Reciprocity: Helping that is reciprocal empowers everyone involved, both the receiver and the provider. Instead of asking, "How can I help you?" we should ask, "Will you help someone too?". Paying it forward guarantees that we all work together to create the world we want to live.
- Social Networks: By assisting one another, we are able to rebuild networks of support, strength and trust. Sinking roots, gaining trust, and forming networks are all steps in the process of forming a community. We can strengthen and support these activities by employing time-banking.
- Respect: Respect underpins all of our values, including freedom of speech and religion. The heart and soul of democracy is respect. We try to respect where individuals are right now, rather than where we hope they will be in the future.

¹<https://timebanks.org/>

Time banking is an international movement and time banks operate in countries across the world including America, Canada, Greece, Holland, Italy, Japan, Tasmania, Finland, Australia, New Zealand and Spain. Time-banking aims to give value to abilities that are often regarded as worthless, underpaid, or invisible in our capitalist system, which is based on the principles of supply and demand, scarcity, and labor exploitation for the largest profit margin. The promise of time banking is that it tries to position everybody on equal footing.

II. HISTORY OF TIME BANKING MOVEMENT AROUND THE WORLD

The first timebanks date back to the Industrial Revolution. The American revolutionary Josiah Warren opened in 1827 a Time Store in Cincinnati. Merchandise was offered in return for the measure of time that it took to deliver them. In 1832 the Welsh social reformer Robert Owen gave Labor Notes. Similar to certified receipts, they addressed the worth of units of 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, 40, and 80 hours of work.

Japan is the country, where time banking is first originated. The development of Japanese time banks can be divided broadly into three waves which coincided with the decades of the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s severally. World's first timebank was started in Japan by Teruko Mizushima in 1973.² She based her bank on the easy idea that every hour of time given as services to others may earn reciprocal hours of services for the giver at some stage within the future. She envisaged that individuals would contribute time when their life were less busy and will facilitate after they required it in maturity. Volunteer Labour Bank (VLB), now the Volunteer Labour Network (VLN) in Osaka was the first time-bank in Japan.

In 1981, Tokyo Assistance in Daily Life Association in Tokyo was established. It was followed by Kobe Life Care Association in 1982. Both focused on aiding the aged with systems that incorporated small gratuities with time savings accounts for volunteer helpers.

In UK, time-banking was introduced by Martin Simon and David Boyle. Time banks has been operating in the UK since 1997 (Oppenheimer, 2011) and there are currently 307 active and registered time banks (Timebanking UK, 2013)³.

Across the UK the time bank model has been used within Youth Justice, prisons (Oppenheimer, 2011), families with a child with a disability (Oppenheimer, 2011), health (Oppenheimer, 2011), young people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities (Oppenheimer, 2011), probation, unemployment, young care leavers and with the elderly.

⁴Edgar Cahn motivation and inspiration is the main force behind the time banking movement around the world and in United States. Edgar S. Cahn coined the term "Time Dollars" in *Time Dollars: The New Currency That Enables American to Turn Their Hidden Resource-Time-Into Personal Security & Community Renewal*, a book co-authored with Jonathan Rowe in 1992. He founded the Time Dollar Institute now known as TimeBanks.org in 1995.

Cahn (2004) subsequently developed the idea of an exchange system that valued both the skills that society deems "worthless" as well as the "throwaway" people - the elderly, people with disabilities, people who are formerly or currently incarcerated - who can utilize the skills that they have.

In Spain, the country first time-bank was established in district of Horta-Guinardó (Barcelona) in 1998. Since 2010, an online cartography of time shows that more of time bank initiatives in Spain are concentrated especially in the regions of Catalonia, Madrid and Andalusia. Time banks in Spain has been emerged out of Italian women's movement of early 1990s. Time Banks in Spain operates in close contact with the various social organizations, NGOs and with local authorities too. Elvira Méndez was the pioneer of time banking movement in Spain.

In China, time banks emerged in 1990s and since spread across the nation. Time banks in China have taken on a portion of the assignments that had been the safeguard of neighbourhood councils. There are a few equals between them and neighbourhood relationship in Japan.

III. TIME BANKING IN INDIA

India has always been known for its helping nature and charity. A country where volunteerism and community building had a glorious past and a country who believes in neighborhood and family value system. The movement and idea of time banking is yet to gain recognition and popularity in India as compared to its west counterparts. Being the largest democracy in world and the second most populated country after China, India needs innovative concepts like time banking and alternative currencies to tackle its various problems. Time serves as currency in time banking system and are usually established by local NGOs and social activists. Time banking is the finest example of coproduction which helps in creating reciprocity among the communities and is equally beneficial to all the sections of society.

² <http://intersections.anu.edu.au/issue17/miller.htm>

³ [Fair Shares | Time Bank Resource Sharing Gloucestershire](#)

⁴ Calm was a former speechwriter for Robert Kennedy as well as the Co-founder of the David A. Clarke School of Law at the University of the District of Columbia, a law school largely dedicated to social justice issues.

In 2019, Madhya Pradesh government Happiness Department opened a time bank in the State. ⁵Madhya Pradesh become a first State in India to have a time bank and initially more than 50,000 volunteers has already registered with the department. Madhya Pradesh is also the first in the country to have a "Happiness Department" established in 2016. The Happiness Calendar are also prepared by the state government for its citizens to stay happy and healthy.

Time-Banking as a movement, motivate and mobilizes groups of people to make better use of their time and skills to help each other.

In 2018, an expert panel of NHRC recommended to adopt the time-banking model of Switzerland for elderly in the country especially those who are living alone.

⁶Time Bank of India Trust, a Jaipur based NGO is the first full-fledged Time Bank in India working for elderly citizens in the country. The Trust was established in 2018, when the founder gets his inspiration from WhatsApp message, where a student at Switzerland shared his experience with his elderly landlady who was serving other elderly persons and saving her time with Time Bank. It has more than 1200 active members throughout the country and has its presence in various cities. Registration process is available online at the website and can also be done offline by filling and submitting registration form.

The development of time banking is in infant stage in India due to unfamiliarity and lack of proper research and efforts by the voluntary and social organizations. Though the time-banking model is more than three decades old and is very well established in other parts of the world, the presence of time banking is almost negligible in India. Time Banks and their local networks could become very beneficial for marginalized sections of the society in a vast country like India.

IV. CONCLUSION

Time Banks has established themselves as an ideal model for community building and foster social exchange and social capital. It provides a 'work like' earning and spending system where every work has equal status. People exchange their skills and services and rewarded for their contribution. It acts like a bank where we deposit our money. Here in Time banks volunteers deposit their time and one hour of time volunteered is equal to one time credit. Equality and valuing everyone potential and capabilities are central to the theme of time banking.

Time banks can provide ways to improve social welfare services and strengthening community ties and local support networks for socially excluded and marginalized. By adopting time banking model in community, citizens can lessen the administrative and financial pressure of the governments. Time banking experiments are continue to increase across the countries as effective model for social innovation.

REFERENCES

- [1] Cahn, E. (2000). No more throw-away people: The co-production imperative (2nd Edn.). Essential Books Ltd; 2004.
- [2] Cahn, E. and Rowe, J. (1992) Time Dollars: The New Currency that Enables Americans to Turn Their Hidden Resource - Time - into Personal Security & Community Renewal. Emmaus, Pennsylvania: Rodale.
- [3] Doteuchi, A. 2002. Community currency and NPOs: A model for solving social issues in the 21st century. *NLI Research*. No. 163, 1-11.
- [4] https://everythingexplained.today/Time-based_currency/
- [5] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Time-based_currency
- [6] <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/mps-happiness-dept-to-open-time-bank/article29369985.ece> Accessed [20 May, 2021].
- [7] <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/mps-happiness-dept-to-open-time-bank/article29369985.ece> Accessed [20 May, 2021].
- [8] https://www.anandsansthamp.in/web_components/pdf/RAS-Time-Bank-en.pdf.
- [9] Kulkarni, A. (2018, August 20). Is timebanking the currency of future? *Qruis*.
<https://qruis.com/is-timebanking-the-currency-of-the-future>
- [10] Kim, H.K. (2019). Exploring Social Innovation and Time Bank: Focus on the Elderly Healthcare in the Gangwon Province, *Asian Journal of Innovation and Policy*, 8.2:208-237.

⁵ <https://www.timebankofindia.com/>

⁶ <https://www.anandsansthamp.in/en/anandsansthamp-time-bank>

[11] Timebanks.Org

<https://timebanks.org/> Accessed [21 May, 2021].

[12] Time Bank of India

<https://www.timebankofindia.com/> Accessed [21 May,2021].

