



EMWOSE
Women from ethnic minorities in social enterprise

Interview form

Overview

Name: Pavitra Sinhala Gurusinghe

Social Enterprise:
Sinhala Shop
Liverpool L2 5QU UK



I am I am a Sri Lankan Buddhist woman.

Hello. My name is Pavitra. I am originally from Sri Lanka. My religion is Buddhism. It is important for me to mention my religion because this involves my social enterprise activity. I live in the Liverpool area, in the UK, where I started my social enterprise several years ago around the Buddhist temple in Liverpool.

I completed my undergraduate degree in education, then I migrated to UK with my husband for him to complete his postgraduate studies. I myself had been thinking about running social enterprises for quite some time. I had experience in teaching school children from various backgrounds in Sri Lanka.

Since I am a Buddhist so I would like to run an enterprise, but at the same time, I would like to dedicate my time to contribute to the development of the Buddhist community in my area especially the ethnic minority Buddhists, who have migrated to UK but seeking for a place to practise their traditional and or philosophical teachings of Buddhism.

Upon migrating to UK, I started the business. My passion was to run a business, while at the same time to make charitable contribution to good causes such as my religion and my temple. I myself believe that I will be able to balance my philanthropic and religious missions, while at the same time creating a justifiable profit.

Interview transcript

Keywords:

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My enterprise is a grocery store, which is a retail shop that sells food, household and religious items. I think it is straightforward to open a grocery business because it does not require a lot of money to open the business; however, unfortunately, it is the most competitive business in the UK. You can find many grocery stores anywhere you go.

My success story is that I feel happy when my business gets very busy, as more people and new customers come to my shop. I also feel happy that more customers come to visit my shops, indicating people care considerably about my social enterprise, especially when they know my charitable mission.

As mentioned previously, grocery and retail businesses are the most competitive businesses in the UK, in which you need to compete with the big players, such as Tesco, Londis and other established corner grocery shops. However, I developed the business to focus on loyal customers and a niche segment. They always come regularly in my shop. Another challenge is the location of the shop, it is also a problem due to crime and theft around the area and we feel it could be life threatening to run a business in such areas these days. So, I feel with my activities in the temple and contributing to the community will help us to spread love, kindness and caring for each other.

Full video [here](#)

