

BOOKLET OF INSTRUCTIONS ON INTERVIEWING TRADERS AND BUSINESSMEN
WITH SPECIAL RELEVANCE TO THE 1994 RESURVEY OF THE BUSINESS
ECONOMY OF ARNI

0. Introduction

0.1. The business economy has been mapped, classified into detailed sectors, divided into regions and sampled proportionately to sector and region. Random numbers have been used to refer to pages where individual firm types to be sampled are then sought out. Random replacements for unco-operative/absent cases can then easily be sought out using random number tables for the search and scanning of the relevant pages for the case. This will have to be carried out for the silk and rice studies.

0.2. An advance appointment needs to be made to suit the respondent's convenience. (A bicycle may be useful to reduce travel time within the town. There are many cycle hire shops.)

0.3 For this initial encounter it is useful to have a vernacular letter or note with an impressive and academic heading introducing the project, the investigator, the broad kinds of questions to be asked and the outline reasons for them, the reasons for their being selected and the anonymity and confidentiality of the information given (even if the interview is often in some senses public).

(In our case, the project is a resurvey of the economy of Arni after 20 years and 10 years.

The investigators come from the MIDS and Oxford University.

The questions concern the history of the firm, the flows of goods handled, labour and employment, finance, the relation with agriculture, family details and details of social participation. The reasons for these questions are to compare conditions now with those then and to identify the opportunities and problems faced by the people of Arni.

Firms have been selected by chance.

No names are written onto the schedule which is only used for research purposes. We have nothing to do with officials.

People interviewed in the past will know that nothing was vouchsafed to government - which is the best proof we have.)

0.4 The interview will take at the least one hour. (Actually if the firm is large and the interviewee relaxed and informative it can take 2.5 hours but it is best not to say this in advance and use this knowledge only for appointment planning!).

0.5 The interview can be conducted in combinations of numbers of people and 'interview technologies'. I know that the best is two people, each knowing the schedule off by heart, one putting questions and one entering answers into an unmarked notebook and asking supplementaries. But it is unreasonable to assume that everyone can work in this way. For a start it is very tiring. By

contrast, one person armed with a formally laid-out questionnaire is least satisfactory. Compromises can involve one person with a crib (e.g. prompts for all the questions pasted into his book or carried separately - and an unmarked notebook) or two people, one with crib and one with notebooks. All notebook styles of fieldwork require additional time for transcribing - though this is useful as an immediate cross check on gross error, which is then remediable. There are few short cuts in this kind of field research. But at its best it is asborbing and very life-enhancing.

0.6. This may be culture specific, but in the past I have often answered as many questions as I have asked. Star TV may have put paid to this curiosity, or people are busier , or they now mind their own business more than they did formerly. Nevertheless, I would advise the investigator to be as free and open with 'reciprocal interviewing' as s/he can.

0.7 It is important to very thoroughly study this booklet so that the questions and their order come naturally and the reasons for them are well understood. This pays tremendous dividends if you are challenged during the interview because you will be then able to explain the questions in a way which is reassuring. This is a particularly awkward time to be conducting this survey because businesses are refusing to pay Municipal Professional and Property Taxes and because they fear rises in income tax.

0.8. It is equally crucial to go through a period of rehearsal. Ours this time has lasted 4 days. Where I have been conducting the interviews throughout, as in all past experience, this rehearsal has only needed one day. This booklet is written in the light of the salutary latest experience, where someone is being inducted in order to take over completely within a month.

0.9. One stylistic error to avoid is putting an answer into a respondent's mouth. Open ended questioning is to be preferred. However there are two conditions where suggestion is almost inevitable. One is when a respondent is reluctant. The other is when conversational style uses examples.

0.10 Many respondents digress at considerable length with flowery and extended examples to make their point. It requires tact to bring them back to the interview. They may be brought back to the questionnaire at a very different position from when they left it. An apology may be necessary if an abrupt change of subject is required for any further questions from the interviewer to be relevant to the subject matter.

Other respondents do not think in abstract terms or in terms of 'averages' and nothing will force them to do so. We then have to make some sense of stories which consist of ups and downs and rolling of money at varying periodicities.

0.11 In this kind of interview it is important not to be discouraged by the fact that no interview is ever complete. Go to the end of this booklet to see the key questions, where it will be understood how carefully they must be padded, which is not to argue that non-key questions are merely padding. They are not.

1. Notes on the questions and how to ask them

1 a) The standard interview is now divided into sections. These generally mix unsensitive questions with ones which respondents may feel more uncomfortable about answering.

The technique here is to try to approach sensitive issues in a variety of direct and indirect ways. Clearly someone who has no objection to stating what s/he understands as the correct information freely can be asked all the sensitive questions directly and once. Most people, however, have a variety of types of response to sensitive questions so great discretion is required, plus an atmosphere of good humour and a ready and clear explanation to be volunteered about the reasons for the questions.

1b) Experience shows that traders and business people are usually intelligent, even if undereducated. They take delight in catching those unfamiliar with their particular street wisdom out, confounding them and making them look foolish.

The technique is to acquire in-depth knowledge of the field being studied, and to apply this knowledge to the interview - perhaps to ask a willing informant to help with the drawing of a flow diagram of the processes involved - technical terms - average quantities - etc. Alternatively to see over a firm with the opportunity of asking endless questions about process.

In the case of Arni, this would only be possible for the main economic activities for which there are many cases in our sample. Actually our sample is characterised by few cases of a wide variety of types of enterprise..

This section can be prefaced by a brief introduction to the effect that first we would like to ask about your firm's history.

1.TYPE OF FIRM

1.1. what type of a business do you have?

(prompt:
wholesale/
retail/
commission agency/
workshop/
factory
and combinations)

1.2.what are the goods sold or the services provided here?
Make sure that you have all including by-products. Underline the main commodity / service.

1.3. Is the business seasonal? When are the busy seasons? Why is it seasonal?

(The urban economy is just as seasonal as the rural one; and it

is seasonal in more complex ways: agricultural seasonality affects supply of raw materials; festivals affect demand for consumer goods; The salariat consumes and pays in monthly cycles; there are educational seasons; and the periodicities of weekly or biweekly markets from whose historical origins the daily marketplace has grown.

For consumer goods a trading year is 312 days -minus several days more for festivals. For agricultural trades it is often quite as long but may be as little as 240-280 days. Find out.)

1.4. Is the business fixed - if so is it fixed in one site or more than one site (e.g. with branches) - or is it mobile?

1.6. How is your firm organised now?

(This refers NOT to the labour processes within the firm but to the manner of its control. The topic is interesting because it is found that many different types of organisation exist in rather similar transactions costs environments).

(prompt: individually owned/
joint/
family partnership (how many)/
non family partnership (how many?)/
private limited company (family) /
private limited company (non family)/
public limited company/
branch (of what?),
co-operative/
other (please explain what)

1.7 What is your role in this business? (e.g. owner/ manager)

2. HISTORY : Arni's economy is quite transient - we are interested in whether it is becoming more stable over time.

2.1. When did you set up this business?

(date of start means year only... and not day and month!!)

When did you enter the firm full time (if the respondent works in a multigenerational enterprise)

2.2. How much capital did it need to set up?

(This means all capital including loans).

2.3. Where did you get the capital from?

(prompt: quantity/ source/ location

e.g. Rs 10,000/ savings from employment/ Arni + Rs 15,000 / father / village x)

2.4. Why did you think this business would be a good one to set up?

(Or why did your father/uncle decide to set up the business if the family knows the reasons)

2.5. How many other firms were in this business in Arni then?

2.6. How many now?

2.7. How many firms in the same business have gone out of

business in the last 10 years?

2.8. What occupations did you have before you set up this firm? (
prompt: list them and approximate dates or years in each
occupation : a reverse life history)

2.9. Here also is space to set out the history of technical
change in the firm, and the partitioning it may have undergone.

2.10. We will ask about years of experience-gaining as a child
or an apprentice or employee:

Where and for how long did you learn the following aspects of
your business:

information /skills/ contacts

money

reputation/ goodwill

(Often a quasi apprenticeship is performed to gain skill and
information - we are finding that with time such apprenticeships
may take place at greater spatial and social distance from the
family. Money is got from the family -- where from?-- savings--
loans of various kinds. Reputation is much more slippery but very
important and here local family history often plays a role)

Help and Hindrance

Young firms are very vulnerable. Many factors can be involved:

2.11 How did your family help in setting up your business?

2.12 How has caste helped or hindered in settling up your
business ?

2.13 How have other people of your neighbourhood , locality or
village or your friends helped or hindered in setting up your
business?

2.14 Are there any women in your type of business?

(The urban economy is almost completely male except for casual
labour: see also 6.6 Gender)

2.15 How did you obtain the site?

(Was this an entry barrier?)

2.16 How do big firms help or hinder in the setting up of small
firms of your type in Arni?

(The presumption is that other firms do not welcome newcomers)

2.17 Did the landlord help or hinder you in getting this site?

(Power relations in the urban land market)

(First questions about gross output. These are asked
historically and by means of the construction of a crude seasonal
profile of turnover)

2.18 When your firm started what quantity / value did it sell in
a day/ month/ year?

(or for a service: what was your income from the service)

(This refers to gross output or gross income from a service. This question has to be asked flexibly according to how the trader perceives his own firm. Some think naturally in terms of daily take home cash and daily costs. Some think like qualified accountants - which they are..)

2.19 Now what quantity / value do you sell/ (or earn from services) on a busy day (or week or month)

What quantity / value do you sell (or earn from services) on a slack day (or week or month)

How many weeks/ months of the year are busy ?

How many weeks / months of the year are slack?

3. ACCOUNTS AND FLOWS OF GOODS (AND SERVICES) PURCHASES

(for services (e.g. doctors, lawyers, barbers, moneylenders etc; please ask these questions (3.1. to 3.11) for any equipment they need to purchase for their profession or service)

3.1. What kinds of raw materials do you purchase? Get rough quantities and values of major items.

3.2. What sort of suppliers do you have ? How many are regular ? What proportion of total purchases is supplied by regulars?

(prompt:
producers (farm/ workshop/ factory)
contractor / master weaver
wholesaler
commission agents
another branch of your firm
other intermediaries (please specify))

3.3. We are interested in the way Arni's trade has changed geographically over time. Please can you try to give a rough estimate of the proportions of the goods in which you trade (or the equipment for your services) which are supplied from the following sources:

- Within Arni itself
- Local villages
(how many miles around?
what are the most important places?)
- Other Taluk head quarters or towns within TS Dt
- Villages in Ambedkar dt
- Towns in Ambedkar Dt (Vellore)
- Madras
- Coimbatore and other Big Towns in Tamil Nadu (give most important names)
- Out of State urban origins (specify)
- Out of State rural origins (specify)

3.4. Contracts and Prices

What are the different sorts of contract or agreement for purchase that you use in your business?

(prompt: commission linked with purchase/ open auction/ one to one closed negotiation/ advance (there are many different types)/ barter/ seasonal fixed contract/contract with delayed payment (how delayed?)/ contract with delay in delivery (how delayed?)/ contract linked with labour services/ contract binding other transactions / contract tied to use of suppliers facilities (storage, transport etc)

Note down the important ones

(INstitutional economics focuses on reasons of relative risk, incentives and supervision costs, asymmetrical information and

power to explain contracts. It has been successful with respect to stylised contractual models. I want to identify what I know is a big range of contractual arrangements within a given marketplace and to have a go at explaining them .)

(Traders talk about 'agreements' not 'contracts'. If there are local technical/ trade or slang terms for such contracts, please write down the Tamil names for the contracts))

Price

For the ones noted, ask whether the price is fixed or whether he can bargain.

Are there price differences according to the form of the agreement?

For which places does he get information so as to fix the price?

3.5. Are any of these contracts written down? (or are they verbal, which most of them are)

(Where verbal contracts rule, the role of trust and honour is the more important and the penalties for betraying trust are thought to be heavy)

3.6. Please explain, if you know, why these contracts are the best ones for you?

and for your suppliers?

(The institutional economics literature distinguishes between contracts as efficient transactions costs minimising responses (Williamson/North) as habituated responses to constraints of cognition and superabundance of information (Simon/ Hodgson) as a reflection of power relations and as mechanisms of social control (Hart). The latter two do not argue that institutions and contracts are necessarily efficient or that they compete in an evolutionary struggle. For them, path dependence and institutional inertia are parametric constraints or enablers. Custom based explanations of institutions require the deconstruction of the trust upon which such routines depend as ascriptive (e.g. via kin) and acquired (e.g. via experience). Power theorists distinguish between power as a threat or an idea and power as experienced co-ercive behaviour. Whether we shall be lucky enough to be in a position to comment on such notions I do not know but at least let us all try!)Thus:

3.7 Can you freely choose the forms of contract you use?

3.8. Are they fixed by routine in the trade? Why do you purchase from regulars?

3.9. Do you feel forced to use these contracts? Is the supplier a monopolist? Do you have no choice?

3.10. Does your agreement carry terms and conditions which affect other transactions between you?

3.11 Do the forms of contracts change seasonally?

COSTS

Now we try to get crude accounts from which certain basic measures like the distributive share may be estimated. There are four components:

- i) raw materials
- ii) trading/ production costs (the important components here being rent/ depreciation on premises (20 yrs) and machinery (10 yrs)/ interest on loans/ telephone/ electricity/ labour/ transport and/or travel/ and appropriate spare parts)
- iii) profits/ net income
- iv) gross output (for goods) - also known as 'turnover' / gross income (for services)

v) assets are also useful and estimated in various ways later.

Of the four, usually at least three can be striven for in an interview, from which the fourth can be interpolated.

These four components will be estimated / calculated after field interviews and entered on the schedule itself on the costs page. Gross output and raw materials have to be calculated to make the commodity flow data meaningful. These estimated totals can then be entered on top of 3.13. and 3.21.

It is important to assure the respondent that data from individual firms is never put on display. His firm is a more or less rickety building block for the town as a whole.

My experience is that impressions are more accurate than accounts : that an impression (truly rendered) is more nearly accurate than a forbidding and suspicious attempt to get accuracy, especially if it involves peering at official account book representations.

PURCHASE

3.13 Could you give me estimates of the costs of buying:

- raw materials/ equipment
- commissions to agents on purchase
- transport (average costs paid by respondent per / month)
- loading and unloading (per unit)
- travel costs from trading/inspection
- travel costs for information / collection of payments

TRADING

3.14 Could you please give estimates of the costs of trading (either per day week month or year as the trader finds most easy) or costs of providing your service ?

" We wish to compare the costs of trading over time and we think that certain components (e.g. information have declined) and certain others (e.g. Labour) may have increased "

" We have a list of cost components but if you know the total

cost of processing/ production then it is much easier to have the total "

" What are your major items of cost ?"

If traders give a total, then please rapidly check key items from the list like rent, telephone, and electricity to see whether they were included and add them in if not:

- rent
- if rented, shop rent
- type of rental contract
- lump sum deposit (pagudi) and date
- if owned, the date of construction and the costs of construction
- or the year of purchase and the purchase price

(are the shops in this neighbourhood owned by one person or family, or by more people?)

- cost of licences
- (prompt: municipal/ regulated market/ sales tax/ other (specify))

- telephone

- postage telegram (or fax or information bulletin)- special deliveries, information bulletins/ newspaper

(such old fashioned ways of getting information seem now to be superceded by the phone.

- hospitality
- electricity
- diesel
- packaging inc twine/ gunnies/ plastic bags
- working capital
- interest on loans borrowed

(These last two are very sensitive, and the respondent may genuinely not know the answers because he does not account in the way we do.

Ask as a proxy variable for how much money for an average stock and how much interest on an average loan)

- other equipment needed for trading

(ask an open ended question so if we have missed out something important and if they feel charitable our mistake can be rectified)

(specify items and cost)

3.15 Where relevant, please could you give estimates for the

costs of production / processing:

- average costs of processing/ production (including labour)
- average capacity of machinery

(This will be crucially important in the silk industry where you may want to break down costs of production)

STORAGE

3.16 Details of storage - most crucial for agricultural trade
Stock details may already have been asked for under 3.14 working capital. If not:

What is the total value of your stock?

- average costs of storage (rent for the average quantity stored for the average length of time (if over and above shop rental)

(storage costs are rent, labour, fumigation and packaging equipment, physical loss , quality loss or enhancement and interest on money locked up in inventory. The loss and interest components are often metaphysical (needed to be imputed from other data)

What is your storage capacity; how has it expanded?

What is the season in which you store least?

What is the minimum you store and the shortest period?

What is the maximum you store and the longest period?

SALES

(for professionals and services, please ask these questions about clients / customers / patients etc)

3.17 Do you have any non- market exchange? Gifts and donations/ barter? If so how much?

3.18 Could you give me estimates of the costs of selling:

- raw materials/ equipment
- commissions to agents on purchase
- transport (average costs paid by respondent per / month)
- loading and unloading (per unit)
- travel costs from trading/inspection
- travel costs for information / collection of payments

What are the forms of the products you sell (e.g. cloth vs ready mades; rice vs paddy) including by products.

(Often by products are the key to the profitability of a mill)
Main quantities of main forms:

3.20 What sort of purchasers do you have? How many are regular? What proportion of total sales is with regulars?

(prompt: consumers

processors/ factories/mills/workshops
contractor / master weaver
wholesaler
commission agents
another branch of your firm
other intermediaries (please specify)

3.21 Please can you try to give a rough estimate of the proportions) of the goods in which you trade which are supplied to the following destinations:

- Within Arni itself
- Local villages
(how many miles around?
what are the most important places?)
- Taluk head quarters or towns within TS Dt
- Villages in Ambedkar dt
- Towns in Ambedkar Dt
- Madras
- Coimbatore and other Big Towns in Tamil Nadu (give most important names)
- Out of State urban origins (specify)
- Out of State rural origins (specify)

3.22. What are the different sorts of contract or agreement for sales that you use in your business?

(prompt: commission linked with purchase/
open auction/
one to one closed negotiation/
advance/
barter/
stock on limited credit to repay in given period/
seasonal fixed contract/
contract with delayed payment (how delayed?)/
contract with delay in delivery (how delayed?)/
contract linked with labour services/
contract binding other transactions /
contract fixing source of information/
contract tied to use of suppliers facilities (storage, transport /
hire purchase/
installment repayment etc)
(please write down the Tamil names for the contracts ; note down combinations and indicate relative importance)
It will rarely be as complicated as it looks here.
If it IS complicated then please get information for the main forms of contract or agreement.

3.23. Are any of these contracts written down? (or are they verbal)

3.24. Please explain, if you know, why these contracts are the best ones for you?

With your purchasers?

3.25 Can you freely choose and vary the forms of contract you use?

3.26. Are they fixed by routine in the trade?

3.27. Do you feel forced to use these contracts?
3.28. In an average day's selling by how much will prices vary according to different contracts?
3.29. Do your sales contract vary seasonally?
3.30. For which places do you get price information
3.31 This can mostly be completed afterwards. Which of the following activities do your business carry out: prompt: produce, sell, buy, broker ,transport, store, process, finance production by others, finance business of others, provide a service (e.g. doctor/ lawyer/ barber etc) ?

(The reasons for this question is an interest in the complex, diverse and often unique combinations of activity found to be performed by individual firms - relating to expectations derived from vernacular classifications only in a loose way and preventing many sorts of comparisons between firms, because they cannot be supposed to have similar objectives.)

4. UNCERTAINTY

Much writing about trade in India assumes commerce to be a risk free tactic of accumulation, while literature in the west is obsessed with risk, uncertainty and opportunism. We have no idea what risks are important in Arni's firms so will ask a very open ended question.

4.1. Do the following types of business uncertainty affect your firm? If so how?

- uncertain supplies (prompt: seasonality/ quality/ quantity/ adulteration)

- uncertain suppliers (prompt: screening and selection of suppliers)

- uncertain demand (how does demand fluctuate?)

- physical losses

- role of weather

- accident and fire

- tricks with weights and measures

- crime

- corruption, bribery and the government

Explain in detail how the most important factors affect the firm (affecting price - how / stocks / costs etc)

4.2. How can you protect your business against most important uncertainties?

4.3. What kind of losses has your business had to sustain over the last few years , why and how much ?

4.4. How frequent are disputes in your business? Over what? HOW would they be dealt with?

5. PROFITS/ NET INCOME

This is a very sensitive subject.

People lie. But some don't know because they conceive of profit as family expenditure and savings in their business. The profit of others fluctuates greatly and may dip into temporary loss and it is difficult to summarise.

I am suggesting:

" These next questions are about profits. We know they are sensitive. We are not officials and we don't need to know exactly (unless you can tell us exactly - when it will be helpful) ! We want to know about Arni's economic development and the profitability of business is the key to this."

Then try in a number of different ways (there is no need to ask all of these questions) : e.g.

5.1. How have your profits changed over the last 5 years?

or

5.2. Do you have seasonal changes in profitability? If so what sort and magnitude?

or

5.3. What is the minimum net profit per unit (e.g. bag) below which you will not sell?

OR

what is the minimum net profit you get at the end of the day?

or

5.4. What are your average net profits (per year/ week/ day as appropriate)?

5.5. What is your maximum profit per unit or per day?

OR

ask within the ranges on the schedule per day or per year . I have not worked out what these are per month.

6. LABOUR

Although this comes as light relief, the issues of pay, agents and unionisation can be sensitive to some.

6.1. What are the working hours for the firm?

6.2. What is the number of shifts and duration in busy season?

6.3. What is the number of shifts and duration in slack season?

FAMILY LABOUR

6.4. With respect to your family, how many family members work in the firm?

6.5. What job does each member do?

6.6. A question about the role of women in the firm. The urban economy is almost exclusively male, but the role of women is important. Experience suggests it takes one of more of a combination of forms

- dowry enables start-up or significant expansion

- wife cooks food for kind component of wage labour (may have disappeared)

- wife's name used for benami firm (this would be obvious and needn't be asked about)

- women work as managers or clerks (rare but found in 1983)

- women are petty traders

- women form significant part of the casual labour force

REGULARLY PAID LABOUR

6.7. how many people are paid on a regular basis (weekly or monthly)?

6.8. For each regular worker please can you give:

- the type of job (prompt: manager, _

- fitter, _

- engineer, _

- driver, _

- accountant, _

- clerk/ maistry, _

- watchman, _

- sweeper _

- (many other types : specify))

- the number of men/women doing this job

- their pay in cash per week or month (specify)

- and in kind

- their perks (some employers provide a miniature welfare state for certain employees (while they may deliberately casualise others). Benefits include Pongal bonus, Deepawali bonus, Provident Fund, ESI and personal accident insurance, 'dividends' and 'shares' ad hoc medical and accident expenses, educational expenses for children and they may also reinforce the loyalty of employees with loans)

- the years worked

- their caste

- their home location

- whether they have land

6.9. How do they negotiate terms and conditions of work with management?

AGENTS

I am told this is a sensitive question.

6.10. How many agents do you employ on piece rates or commissions at maximum?

6.11. What are their commissions?

6.12. What is the maximum working capital you lend to any one agent?

6.13. What would be an average monthly earning from you by an agent in the busy season?

CASUAL LABOUR

For complex firms casual labour may not be the correct category. For instance with respect to silk, the correct data refers to weavers etc.

6.14 In the busiest time, what is the maximum number of men you employ?

Women?

Children or young people under 16?

6.15 In the slackest time, what is the minimum number of men, you employ?

Women?

Young people?

6.16 Could you explain for AVERAGE conditions how many people of what sex perform each type of job?

How are they paid?

(prompt: daily/

piece rate (what is the piece rate and what is the average take home pay?) /

group contract /

(other please specify)

Do they ever get perks/ bonuses? If so what, when, worth how much?

(ome employers provide a miniature welfare state for certain employees (while they may deliberately casualise others). Benefits include Pongal bonus, Deepawali bonus, Provident Fund,ESI and personal accident insurance,'dividends' and 'shares', ad hoc medical and accident expenses, educational expenses for children and they may also reinforce the loyalty of employees with loans)

Can they borrow money from you?

What castes perform casual labour for you?

How is the casual labour recruited?

Where do they come from?

What other jobs do they work at during the year?

Do any have land?

How are they organised for bargaining and negotiation

(prompt: by unions? how many?

by gangs?

not at all?

are there differences between men and women? on what issues has their union been active)

7. MONEY

Questions about money are difficult to answer because the financial dealings of businessmen become increasingly complex. Thus we are looking for some summary indicators. The reason for this prurient interest is the same as for profit - that if you are interested in economic development you need to know how money circulates and grows within the town. That, as they will appreciate, the banks which keep information for their official planning documents are only a small component of the story and that to get the haziest image of the rest of the financial economy we have to ask some questions.

In the past most financial dealing was from private parties to businessmen and from businessmen and pawnbrokers to agricultural labour and small producers. Now the financial economy is more complex with new institutions and more money circulating purely within the town.

In the past data on finance has been patchy in quantity and quality and we have used it by way of case study. However the totals of usually quite inadequate renderings of the loans and borrowings profile of firms usually suggest an important basic fact: that the so-called 'informal financial economy' about which so little is known is quantitatively as important as is the formal one controlled by 'policy'.

Did you have to borrow money when you started up this business? (how much? From where?) should have already been asked in connection with starting up. If it didn't get asked then , please try to ask it now.

7.1. Have you taken out any relatively big, medium or long terms loans for your business over the last 10 years (or since the firm was set up) ? (If so please give for each

- the quantity,
- purpose,
- from where - its source,
- from where- location
- years
- collateral - this means his guarantee (it can be stock, land, future crop, reputation, support of MLA etc)
- interest
- and - payback period)

Try to distinguish different sorts of borrowings, though there is not a lot of space on the form. Use the comments page at the back if necessary.

7.2. During the last year, for the biggest loan you took out?

In which season?

Its purpose?

From where - its source?

From where - its location?

What security or collateral did you give?

At what interest was this loan?

What proportion has been repaid?

7.3. Have you ever found it impossible to get a loan when you needed it?

7.4. Do you take loans from government sources or a nationalised bank? If so, what would be their average size?

7.5. What is the largest total debt you have taken out at one time?

7.6. Over the last 10 years what are the largest loans you have given out

(Twenty years ago this was relatively simple. Now this includes advances in agricultural trade, delayed payments by customers, consumption loans, credit accounts installment payments and hire purchase)

In which season?

Its purpose?

To where - its destination/ type of creditor?

To where - its location?

What security or collateral did you give?

At what interest was this loan?

What proportion has been repaid?

7.7. During the last year, what was the largest loan you lent out?

In which season?

Its purpose?

To where - its destination?

To where - location?

What security or collateral does the borrower provide you with?

At what interest was this loan?

If it was not at interest what were the terms and conditions?

What proportion has been repaid?

7.8 Do you ever have surplus money, in excess of what is loaned out, which could be lent?

What is the largest amount you have ever totally lent out?

Value of Business

We know that it is hard to value the business. We don't mind if you answer within a range of values.

7.9. What is your estimate of the present value of your business if you sold up?

(prompt: assets, stock, own working capital, loans out)

If shoulders are shrugged, eyes rolled to heaven and 'I can't say' repeated obstinately , one poor proxy is to ask how much it would take to set up in this business now.

7.10. How relatively important is this business in the portfolio of your family?

INVESTMENTS

7.11. We would like to know the contribution of Arni's businesses to the development of the local economy. Unless you want to tell us then all we want to know is the type of investment you have made.

(prompt:

- diversification of your business (this means adding more - product lines) /
- other businesses (specify) /
- land (urban or rural) /
- property (urban or rural) /
- vehicles (lorries, cars, motorbikes, cycles, carts as appropriate) /
- finance (share in finance company/ies) /
- stocks and shares (we have already met someone with shares) /
- education (are they paying for private education and/or are they or have they paid for higher education) /
dowry (are they saving for a dowry? or have they given one for this generation? - number of dowries) /
- high tech consumption (TV/ video / camcorder etc) /
- jewellery (merely do they save in this form ?) /
- tourism / pilgrimage / (this is often a substantial item and also reveals how far people have travelled - e.g. a case today to the Himalayas and to Singapore!)
- bank savings (do they have an or several accounts?) /
- other (have we missed something important out?))

(Here please obtain the TYPE of investments first and then enquire whether the respondents would estimate the value of the major types of investment)

7.12. Can you estimate for me the present worth of your / your family's whole portfolio?

(This means the entire investment bundle)

7.13 How is its ownership organised? self (which bits) joint (which bits) partnerships etc

7.14 If you were investing now (say if you won a lottery) how would you use this money?

(This is an open ended question about ambition)

8. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AGRICULTURE AND TRADE (which 20 years ago was very close. Of course the relationship between the urban economy and agriculture takes a variety of forms : direct ownership of land, indirect control through production loans, consumption loans and other finance, dependence on agricultural supplies of raw materials, dependent on the incomes of agricultural producers and labourers for consumption goods and services, dependence upon agricultural demand for capital goods of infrastructural goods and services. The terms and conditions upon which such exchanges take place determines the generative or parasitic nature of urbanism and is affected by agrarian structure and now by the structure of the urban economy itself and by the state. The terms and conditions of exchange are not uniform for urban and rural populations and in turn depend on class position. Here we are ONLY interested in the direct relationship of land ownership. Other relationships are ascertainable in different ways through the schedule and those to whom it is canvassed).

8.1. How much land do you have? Wet/ dry/ garden

8.2. Under what tenurial arrangement is it farmed? How is labour organised? What are their contracts and average wages ?

8.3. How many acres of land have you / your family purchased over the last 10 years?

8.4. How many acres of land have you / you family sold over the last 10 years?

8.5. How many tractors/ pumpsets/ lorries do you have?

8.6. How important is agriculture in your family's income?

9.FAMILY DETAILS

9.1. What is your age please?

What are your educational qualifications?

What is your caste?

What is the form of your family (prompt : nuclear/ joint in one place/ joint but in more than one place)

9.2. For the other family members, please give details of your family size and composition (how many adult men, women ? how many children? What are their educational levels - in years or qualifications)

(Make sure they talk about female adults and children as well!)

What are the main occupations of your family members?

9.3. What are the occupations of your sondakaran?

About locations and migration:

9.4. Where is your native place? (If not Arni then when did your family come to Arni?)

10 PARTICIPATION

10.1 What groups or associations or institutions do you belong to or have office in:

(prompt: religious (e.g. on temple board) /
caste/
sports/
social (Lions Rotary, Masons, Jaycees etc) /
educational (e.g. school governor) /
commodity (e.g. rice millers association) /
general business (e.g. Chamber of Commerce)/
co-operative/
local government/
political party/
cultural/
first-aid (Red Cross) or medical (hospital board) /
other specify)

10.2 If you are an office holder or knowledgeable about any of these associations then please can you explain:

- the date started
- the present number of members
- the costs of membership
- the purposes of the institution

(prompt: to negotiate with labour
to represent trade when threatened by the state
suggest changes to the government policy
set rules for the trade
enforce rules, decide in disputes, punish miscreants
organise security
circulate information
standardise weights and measures
deter undesirable people
organise insurance (for death or accident e.g. and for members or for their employees)
support legal costs of penalised member
organise philanthropic events (e.g. eye camps)
collect money for disasters)
< these will have changed over time and the organisation may not do many of these activities: try to get as much detail as possible>
- other (specify)

(On the schedule there is room for two examples but there is always the 'comments' page for more space).

10.3 What kind of contact do you have with government:

(prompt: regulation of business
civic services, taxation, loans, inspection)

10.4 What are the most important difficulties you face with the government?

10.5 To which political parties do you contribute funds?

LOCATION AND PARTICIPATION

We are interested in why firms do or do not cluster together spatially.

11.6 In what ways is this site and location advantageous for your firm ?

11.7. Does Arni have market power in your business? If so how does it work? Is Arni well known for the service you render or the goods you sell? Is your firm important in Arni's market? How far will people travel to obtain the good you sell/ service you render? (Like the purchase and sales question but general).

11.8 Under what circumstances (if ever) would you work co-operatively with other traders

(prompt :

mind their shop/

lend them money/

lend facilities or labour/

supply information (what sort is freely shared?)/

fixing prices/

other - please specify)

11.9 How do you compete with firms in your neighbourhood?

(price, finance, advertising, brand creation, quality, hospitality etc)

KEY CORE QUESTIONS FOR THE 20 YEAR COMPARISON

When these are listed the reasons for the length of the actual questionnaire become apparent:

- origins of starting capital
- details of accumulation including finance
- commodity flows
- basic accounts including estimates of gross output and profit assets
- labour: employment and wages
- family size and composition
- n.p. agriculture and migration

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ARNI'S CIVIC SERVICES

This is a sore point. Private cleanliness co-exists in Arni as elsewhere with increasingly unhealthy public squalor. With population growing at a fast rate (though the census must be a severe underestimate : 71 36,000/ 81 49,000/ 91 53,000 - and it's thought that there are 1 lakh in Arni including a floating population of c. 15,000) the urban economy depends crucially on the terms of fulfillment of basic needs and civic services. In the light of the pilot, we propose to investigate this with a selective questionnaire to 20 respondents rich and poor in various quarters of the town and to ask people about the conditions around their shops and their homes.

Basic information:

sl no of respondent in main survey (for the investigator to insert.)

Family size: adults/ children

Monthly income for household expenditure

(may be possible to insert from the main survey)

Location of shop and location of house.

At the site of your shop and at the site of your home, how do you and your family gain access to the following civic services and basic needs:

- housing
- electricity
- health
- education
- water
- rice
- drains - waste water
- sewage - waste organic matter
- garbage - waste inorganic matter
- public hygiene - sweeping and cleaning
- road lighting
- transport
- recreation (e.g. cinema / other specify)
- security/guarding/policing

For each service or basic need, please explain whether you get access through

- government provision
- private provision
- community provision (co-operatives or local groups)
- through the work of the household itself
- or by other means (please specify in detail including combinations).

Please tell us about the monthly cost of such access .

What kinds of problems do you face in gaining access to the

service or basic need?

How are disputes about the service or basic need resolved?

Thank you very much for your consideration

BHW Oxford/ MIDS

file ends