

Chapter V

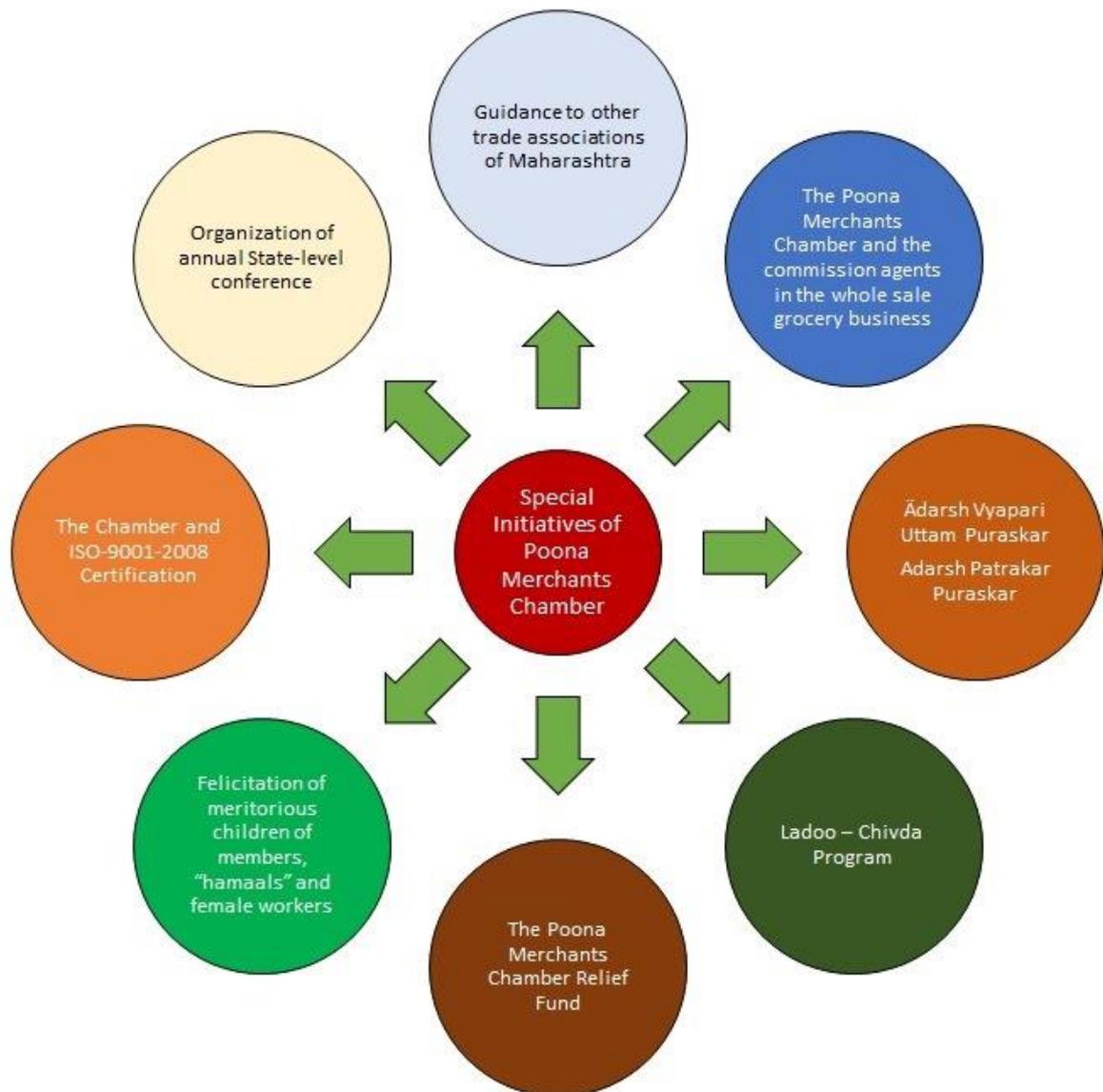
Special Initiatives of Poona Merchants Chamber

5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapters, the researcher has understood the general profile of the wholesale grocery business in Pune city and its development in the last several years. Further, in the light of this, the establishment and working of the Poona Merchants Chamber has also been scrutinized by the researcher. In this chapter, the researcher has sought to understand the special initiatives of the Poona Merchants Chamber, which are unique in nature. These initiatives have enabled the Chamber to earn goodwill and build a good reputation, not only in the state of Maharashtra, but also at the national and international level. Some of these initiatives are for the internal benefit of the Chamber such as getting ISO 9001-2008 certification, while some of the initiatives are for the larger benefit of the society such as the ‘Ladoo-Chivda Program’ of the Chamber. The following are the special initiatives of the Poona Merchants Chamber:-

1. Organisation of annual State-level Conference
2. Guidance to other trade associations of Maharashtra
3. Issue of licenses to the ‘dalals’ or commission agents in the wholesale grocery business
4. Distribution of Award for Ideal Businessman- ‘AdarshVyapariUttamPuraskar’
5. Distribution of Award for ‘Ideal Reporter ‘AdarshPatrakarPuraskar’
6. ‘Ladoo-Chivda Program’
7. The PoonaMerchants Chamber Relief Fund
8. Felicitations of meritorious children of members, ‘hamaals’ and female workers
9. The Chamber and ISO-9001-2008 certification

Chart no. 5.1 Chart showing the Special Initiatives of Poona Merchants Chamber



5.2. Organisation of annual State-level Conference

The Poona Merchants Chamber organises a State-level Conference every year. This conference is organised with the objectives of discussing the current issues pertaining to the wholesale grocery trade and then deciding on a plan of action for resolving those issues. This conference is generally attended by around 400 delegates, representing around 80 trade associations of various districts of Maharashtra like Mumbai, Thane, Sangli, Satara, Kolhapur, Ratnagiri, Ahmednagar, Solapur, Beed, Nagpur, Chandrapur, Chiplun, Nashik, Amravati, Nandurbar, Vahsi, Dhule and Pune.

During the last four years, the following current and important issues have been discussed in the Annual State Level Conference organised by the Chamber.

Table no. 5.1 Issues discussed in Annual State Level Conference

Date of Conference	Issues Discussed
5 th January, 2015	Order of State Government regarding collection of ‘ adat’ (commission) from the purchaser
2 nd April, 2014	Regarding collection of APMC cess on items like jaggery, sugar, aata(rava&maida) , pulses, dry fruits and edible oil. Discussion regarding LBT .
12 th January, 2014	Issues regarding LBT and APMC laws
3 rd February, 2013	Problems in the implementation of the Food Safety & Standards Act, issue of FDI in retailing.
20 th November, 2011	Regarding various issues relating to the wholesale grocery business in Maharashtra

Source: Annual Reports of Poona Merchants Chamber

5.3 Guidance to other Trade Associations of Maharashtra

The Poona Merchants Chamber has never limited its role to Pune city, but whenever the need arose, it has provided leadership to grocery trade associations from places like Sangli, Kolhapur, Chiplun, Hingoli, Jalgaon, Ahmednagar, Shirur, JatTaluka and other towns of Maharashtra. The following are the issues on which the Chamber has provided guidance to other Trade associations of Maharashtra:-

- a. Current issues and problems relating to the wholesale grocery business.
- b. Direct and indirect taxes in the wholesale grocery business
- c. Rates of ‘hamaali’ i.e. wage rates for ‘hamaals’ or porters in the wholesale grocery business, and rates of deduction or levy therein.
- d. Rates of TDS (Tax deducted at source) on payment to the Mathadi Board
- e. Regarding implementation of Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006.
- f. Correspondence with the government regarding maintaining the office of the Additional Commissioner of Sales tax (Appeal) at Nanded or associating it with the office at Aurangabad

g. Regarding ban on the sale of unpacked or loose edible oil.

h. Process of election at the Chamber

5.4 The Poona Merchants Chamber and the ‘Dalals’ or commission agents in the wholesale grocery business

In the wholesale grocery business, most of the business transactions are conducted on the basis of oral agreement. Also, the supplier, trader and customer are located in different geographic locations. Hence the ‘dalals’ or commission agents play an important role in this business. The agent’s role is that of bringing the buyer and seller together and also ensuring that the payment is made by the buyer to the seller, and goods reach the buyer from the seller. Thus the agents play an important role in the wholesale grocery business. In order to ensure the trustworthiness of the Commission agents, the Chamber has authorised them and given them licenses. These agents have to maintain a deposit with the Chamber of Rs. 1,00,000 and get a licence from the Chamber. Thus this also becomes a source of income for the Chamber.

5.5 Distribution of Award for Ideal Businessman ‘Adarsh Vyapari Uttam Puraskar’

The ‘AdarshVyapariUttamPuraskar’ has been instituted in the year 1995 in the memory of former President and Founding member of the Chamber, LateUttamchand ‘Baba’Pokarna. Mr.UttamchandPokarna had provided leadership to the Chamber for around 32 years. This award is given for three categories:-

- a. Maharashtra State level
- b. Pune city and district
- c. Member of Poona Merchants Chamber.

The award is given in the form of amemento.

Photograph of ‘ AdarshVyapari ‘UttamPuraskar’ Function



The following table shows the list of Recipients of the ‘Adarsh Vyapari Uttam Puraskar’ during the last five years:-

Table no. 5.2 List of Recipients of the ‘Adarsh Vyapari Uttam Puraskar’

Year	Name of the Recipient
2014	Maharashtra State Level- Mr.AtulChordia Pune City & District- Mr.KrushnakumarGoyal Member – Mr.BalasahebKarnavat
2013	Maharashtra State Level- Mr.Bhanvarlal Jain Pune City & District- Mr.Rameshbhai Shah Member- Mr.DhanrajShrishrimal Special award- Ms.JahnaviRasiklalDhariwal, Mr.Kesharchandji Bora
2012	Maharashtra State Level- Mr.ShantilalMuttha Pune City & District- Mr.HiralaljiMaloo Member – Mr.BabulaljiGugale
2011	Maharashtra State Level- Mr.PratapraoPawar Pune City & District- Mr.Dahyabhai Shah Member- Mr.Deepchand Parekh
2010	Maharashtra State Level- Mr. Mohan Gurnani Pune City & District- Mr.HukumichandChordia Member- Mr. Mohan Oswal

5.6 Distribution of Award for ‘Ideal Reporter ‘Adarsh Patrakar Puraskar’

The Poona Merchants Chamber has instituted the ‘Adarsh Patrakar Puraskar’ in the memory of the Late Mr. Viren Gawadiya, former Secretary of the Poona Merchants Chamber, and editor of ‘Vanijya Vishwa’, the monthly mouthpiece of the Chamber. This award was instituted in the year 1999. This award is given to exemplary reporters in the field of agricultural marketing & distribution, co-operation and related fields. These reporters must belong to newspapers which are published in Pune. This award is also given in the form of memento.

Generally the award distribution ceremony for both the above awards is held in the month of July or August, in the Annual Day Function of the Chamber.

The distribution of Awards of the Chamber has been gaining public attention over the last few years. It has become a public function of recognizing the contributions made by successful businessmen, ideal press reporters and for the Youth Businessmen too. This Function is well reported in the media every year.

The following table shows the list of recipients of the ‘Adarsh Patrakar Puraskar’ during the last five years:-

Table no. 5.3 List of Recipients of the ‘Adarsh Patrakar Puraskar’

Year	Name of the recipient
2014	Mr. Mahendra Badade of ‘Sakal’
2013	Mr. Kishor Barkale of ‘Pudhari’
2012	Mr. Subhash Kiwade of ‘Pudhari’
2011	Mr. Digambar Darade of ‘Dainik Prabhat’
2010	Mr. Parag Karandikar of ‘Sakal’

5.7. The ‘Ladoo Chivda’ Program

5.7.1 Introduction

The ‘Ladoo Chivda’ program of the Poona Merchants Chamber is a prime example of the organisation’s commitment to social welfare. Started in 1987, this program has been reaching new heights every year and has even reached the Limca Book of Records and the Guinness Book. This program refers to the sale of good quality

‘BoondiLadoos’ and ‘Chivda’, on no-profit no-loss basis every year during Diwali. ‘Boondiladoos’ and ‘Chivda’ are special Diwali delicacies, without which the festival of Diwali would be incomplete for the people of Pune.

5.7.2 History of the ‘ Ladoo Chivda’ Program and its Special Achievements

In the year 1987, the people of Maharashtra were faced with a scarcity of essential commodities like oil, sugar on account of famine. The then District Collector of Pune, Mr.ShrinivasPatil suggested that the Chamber should take some concrete steps to help the people. Since it was the season of Diwali, the Executive Committee of the Chamber decided to distribute ‘Boondiladoos’ free of cost to the people. Thus the Program was started with the distribution of 5000 kilograms of ‘Boondiladoos’ in the distribution centre at KachhiLohanaBhavan situated at BhavaniPeth in Pune

From the next year, it was decided to sell the ‘ladooos’ on no profit-no loss basis. The Chamber only includes the direct cost like raw material, direct labor, transport cost and packing cost in the selling price, and bears the amount of overheads.

The following table shows the contribution made by the Poona Merchants Chamber for the ‘Ladoo Chivda’Program for the last five years:-

Table no. 5.4 Table showing the contribution made by the Poona Merchants Chamber for the ‘Ladoo Chivda’Program for the last five years

Year	Amount of Contribution(Rs.)
2009-10	64092
2010-11	73,141
2011-12	1,03,518
2012-13	1,71,294
2013-14	1,76,164
2014-15	1,72,020

Source: Annual Reports of Poona Merchants Chamber

The quantity of ‘ladooos’ and ‘chivda’ produced and sold every year has been consistently increasing.

The following table shows growth in the quantity of ‘ ladoos’ and ‘ chivda’ sold

Table no. 5.5 Growth in quantity of ‘ Ladoos’ and ‘ Chivda’ sold of Poona Merchants Chamber

Year	Quantity (Kgs.)	Special Achievement
1987	5000 kgs.	-
1995	50,000 kgs	-
2007	1,00,000 kgs	Entry in Limca Book of Records
2012	2,00,000 kgs	Entry in Guinness Book of World Records , expansion in cities like Satara and Baramati
2014	2,05,000 kgs	-
2015	1,00,000kgs.	-

Source: Interviews with Program Officers of Ladoo-Chivda program

In the year 2007, the ‘Ladoo-Chivda’ program gained entry in the Limca Book of records under the category ‘Largest Sale’.

In the year 2012, the Chamber gained entry in the Guinness Book of World Records for ‘Largest serving of ladoos’, for a serving of 408 kilograms of ‘ladoos’ at a time.. The Guinness Book of World Records does not have the category of ‘Largest Sale’ , hence it was decided to compete for ‘Largest serving of Ladoos’.

In the year 2012, the program was expanded to cities like Satara and Baramati with the sale of 5000 kgs of ‘ladoos’ with the support of other traders’ associations.

Thus the program has shown a consistent rate of growth. In fact, the program enjoys such goodwill that there have been corporate orders too. Companies like Tata Motors, D.S. Kulkarni Group of Companies, Office of Police Commissioner of Pune have purchased the products in bulk for gifting to their employees during Diwali.

5.7.3 Special Features of the Ladoo- Chivda Program

The following are the special features of the program, which are responsible for its stupendous success:-

a. Quality of the ‘ladoo’ and ‘chivda’

The Chamber ensures that the ‘ladoo’ and ‘chivda’ are made of good quality. The following are the reasons for the consistent good quality:-

i)The Program Officer and members of the Executive Committee of the Chamber, being grocery traders themselves, have judgment regarding the quality of the raw material that is required to make good quality ‘ladoo’ and ‘chivda’.

ii). The raw material is also procured from places other than Pune for the sake of quality. For example, the ‘chana dal’ is specially ordered from Madhya Pradesh and is freshly grounded.

iii)The Chamber acquires the rest of the raw material from its member-traders, so that the quality does not suffer.

b. Appropriate Price – The Chamber sells the products at a price which is almost 50% lower than the market price. The comparative prices in the year 2014 and 2015 are listed in the table below:-

Table no.5.6 Prices of ‘Ladoo’and ‘Chivda’ in the year 2014

Name of the product	Market price (per kg.)	Chamber price (per kg.)
‘Chivda’	180	Rs. 85
‘Laddoo’	140	Rs. 85

Source: Interviews with Program Officers of Ladoo-Chivda program

Table no. 5.7 Prices of ‘Ladoo’and ‘Chivda’ in the year 2015

Name of the product	Market price (per kg.)	Chamber price (per kg.)
‘Chivda’	200	Rs. 90
‘Laddoo’	160	Rs. 95

Source: Interviews with Program Officers of Ladoo-Chivda program

The price of the products is based on the cost of the raw material, direct labour, transport and packing cost. The Chamber bears the amount of overheads like the rent of hall for production and others.

Table no. 5.8 Average composition of selling price of ‘Ladoo’and ‘Chivda’

Cost	Percentage of selling price
Raw material cost	40
Labour cost	40
Transportation cost	10
Packing cost	10

Source: Interviews with Program Officers of the Ladoo-Chivda Program

c. Leadership provided by the Program Officer and support of the Executive Council and members

Leadership is one of the reasons for the Ladoo- Chivdaprogram to be successful. It rests on the responsibility, foresight and ability to lead the program under the supervision and direct control of the Program Officer, who undertakes the following responsibilities:-

- i)Buying of the raw material of proper quality.
- ii) Arranging for the cooks and other laborers.
- iii) Supervising the production.
- iv)Supervising the distribution to the various distribution centres as per demand.
- v) Arranging Press Conference and maintaining relations with the press.

The grocery business has a peak season during Diwali. Right from the inception of the program, the respective Program Officers, who are mostly grocery traders themselves, have to devote a large part of their time for the program during the ten days of Diwali.

d. Organization and culture of Poona Merchants Chamber-

Right from its inception, the Poona Merchants Chamber has consistently maintained efficiency in its working and commitment towards social causes, in addition to its primary activities for the welfare of the member-traders. Through the ‘ladoo-chivda’ program, the Poona Merchants Chamber has created a unique landmark in itself for its persistent efficiency in working and creating a strong cultural base. The ‘Ladoo-chivda’ program is not only supported by the Program

Officer, but also by the member-traders. During Diwali, the grocery traders face peak season, yet they supply the raw material for the program on no profit-no loss basis. Also, they distribute the 'ladoo-chivda' at their shops without any expectation of profit or commission.

e. Support of the media

The media has always supported the program, the reason being that the program is well managed and it results in selling quality products at reasonable price, which benefits the society. In order to publicise the event, a press conference is arranged. Also the media persons are invited to visit the production centre and see the production process. The program has attracted wide popularity and attention, which is very well grabbed by the media. In fact, this has helped the program to reach the Limca book and Guinness Book of World Records. The Chamber has never given any advertisement for the products in newspapers, yet has received wide publicity.

f. Contribution of the Head Cook and support staff- The raw material is well stored at the production centre under the care of the Head Cook, Babu Maharaj, and the production is undertaken by experienced cooks from Rajasthan. The entire arrangement of cooks and support staff is well planned by the Head Cook. The work takes place in three shifts.

g. Customer support- There has been consistent demand for the product, right from the inception of the program. It results into huge queues at the distribution centres. There has always been a positive response from the people because of the good quality of the products and reasonable price. In fact, the entire production is sold out every year with no closing stock.

5.7.4 Contribution of the 'Ladoo-Chivda' Program for enhancing the goodwill of the Poona Merchants Chamber

The Chamber already enjoys tremendous goodwill in Pune and in Maharashtra. It has around 500 traders as its members and there are innumerable business associations in Maharashtra under the leadership of the Chamber. The Chamber started the 'Ladoo chivda' program purely as an act of fulfilling social responsibility. The Chamber intends to set a positive example for other similar organizations to undertake such programs. The Chamber hopes that the positive publicity would encourage other organizations to undertake such programs.

5.7.5 Future Plans for the ‘Ladoo-Chivda’ Program

‘Ladoo’ and ‘chivda’ are perishable products. Production of ‘ladoo; and ‘chivda’ is not a primary function of the Chamber, it was undertaken only as an act of fulfilling social responsibility. Hence it does not undertake the production for more than 10 days during Diwali. Also, the Chamber has set its own standards to retain the freshness and quality of the products. Hence it is not possible to increase production beyond 2,00,000 kilograms at one production centre, without sacrificing quality.

Due to the above reason, the Chamber intends to expand the geographical coverage of the program. In the year 2012, the program was expanded to cities like Satara and Baramati with the sale of 5000 kgs of ‘laddoos’ with the support of other traders’ associations. The Chamber intends to expand the program to the whole of Maharashtra, under the condition that the quality of the products does not suffer.

Photograph of Ladoo-Chivda Program gaining entry in the Guinness Book of World Records



5.8 The Poona Merchants Chamber Relief Fund

The Poona Merchants Chamber has a Relief Fund from which activities of social welfare are funded. Today the Chamber has around Rs. 1 crore in the fund and all the activities are funded from the interest income of the fund. This Relief Fund was established in the year 1996. Donations to the Relief Fund are eligible for 50%

deduction under Sec. 80G of the Income Tax Act. The Chamber contributes to the following social activities from the fund:-

- a. Relief work during natural calamities in Maharashtra and other parts of India
- b. Providing help to patients.
- c. Providing help to poor students for education
- d. Providing help to organisations for the blind, mentally retarded and others.
- e. Contribution to other relief funds for social service

The following are the details of contribution from the Poona Merchants Chamber Relief Fund for the past five years:-

Table no. 5.9 Details of contribution from the Poona Merchants Chamber Relief Fund for the past five years

(Amount in Rupees)

Year	Purpose				Total
	General social welfare	Medical help	Help for education	Other	
2014-15	8,000	27,500	26,000	-	61,500
2013-14	16,000	36,000	57,000	5,00,000 Scholarship scheme of ‘ Sakal India Foundation’	6,09,000
2012-13	97,885	51,500	19,000	-	1,68,385
2011-12	1,09,000	61,000	75,000	-	2,45,000
2010-11	1,11,951	24,500	29,201	-	1,65,652

Source: Annual Reports of Poona Merchants Chamber

The table given on the next page shows the noteworthy activities undertaken by the Poona Merchants Chamber for social welfare in the last five decades.

Table no. 5.10 Noteworthy activities undertaken by the Poona Merchants Chamber for social welfare in the last five decades

Sr. no.	Purpose	Amount (Rs.)
1	Constructing six primary schools each in Anjar and Gandhidham at the time of earthquake in Kachchh	10,00,000
2	Financial Assistance to the organisation 'Virayatan' situated in Bhuj, Gujarat	8,00,000
3	Donation to Maharashtra State Relief Fund	2,00,000
4	Donation in the form of food grains to Maharashtra State Relief Fund	3,18,000
5	Providing fodder and water to animals in drought relief camp at Morgaon in Pune District	4,10,000
6	Providing fodder and water to animals in drought relief camp at Pabal, Indapur, Ambai, Nira in Maharashtra	2,79,000
7	Constructing water tank in Shree KshetrapalPratishthan, Lonikand	2,00,000
8	Constructing water tank in JeevrakshaPratishthan, Pabal	2,00,000
9	Financial Assistance to 14 families of martyrs of Indian Army – Rs. 11,000 each	1,54,000
10	Financial Assistance to the flood affected small traders and businessmen of Chiplun, Sangameshwar and Khopoli	2,25,000
11	Donation to ShethTarachand Hospital	5,00,000
12	Financial Assistance to the cyclone hit schools of Konkan	1,25,000

Reference: Annual Reports of Poona Merchants Chamber

In addition, the Poona Merchants Chamber organises the following activities every year which are financed from the fund:-

- a. Organisation of blood donation camps
- b. Providing help for education of the wards of the 'stree kaamgaar' (female workers), 'Hamaals'(porters) and other poor and needy people.
- c. Providing medical help at concessional rates through tie- up with the Poona Adventist Hospital, Salisbury Park, Pune.

d. The members of the Poona Merchants Chamber also jointly providing lodging and food facility to 'warkaris' during their 'Pandharpuryatra'.

e. Also the Poona Merchants Chamber has donated to other organisations like the 'Sakal India Foundation'.

Blood Donation Camp organised by the Poona Merchants Chamber



5.9 Felicitation of meritorious children of members, 'hamaals' and female workers

The children of members who have achieved outstanding marks in the 10th and 12th standard examination and also at graduate and post graduate level, Chartered Accountancy and others, are felicitated in a function organised by the Poona Merchants Chamber. Reputed people from the field of education, literature and business are invited as Chief Guest and they can also interact with the students and encourage them. This program was started in the year 1997. The meritorious students are given a small memento and a cash prize of around Rs. 1,000/- per student.

Photograph of Felicitation of Meritorious children



5.10 The Poona Merchants Chamber and ISO-9001-2008 certification

In the era of globalization, the ISO certification has become the order of the day. On the successful completion of the diamond jubilee, the Poona Merchants Chamber has obtained ISO 9001-2008 certification in the year 2009-10. The assessing body for the certification was Quest International, which is based in Bangalore. Expert Consultants were appointed to guide in the process of obtaining certification. The certification is to be renewed initially after two years, and then every year.

5.10.1 Reasons for taking certification

The following were the reasons or objectives of obtaining ISO certification by the Poona Merchants Chamber:-

- a. Obtaining credibility-** The certification helps in obtaining goodwill, trust and respect, hence while interacting with Government officials or while making representation, or at the international level, also the certification is helpful.
- b. Maintaining high standards-** Since the Poona Merchants Chamber is an apex body of traders of Maharashtra, it has the responsibility of maintaining high standards, hence the certification was necessary.
- c. Improvement in internal administration-** Also, the certification helps in maintaining proper procedure of internal audit, and also administrative aspects.

d. International recognition- The certification was also helpful for the Chamber in obtaining the entry in the Guinness Book of World Records, for its 'Ladoo-Chivda' program.

5.10.2 Responsibility for ISO

The Managing Committee of the Chamber is responsible for the maintenance of records and control of systems and processes as per the standards prescribed by ISO 9001-2008. Particularly, the Vice President and Joint Secretary, with the assistance of the Office Secretary are responsible for maintaining proper systems and processes as per the standards prescribed by ISO 9001-2008.

5.10.3 Steps taken by the Chamber to obtain ISO 9001-2008 certification

The following steps were adopted by the Chamber for obtaining ISO 9001-2008 certification, and continue to do so every year.

a. Proper maintenance of records and accounts

All the records and accounts of the Poona Merchants Chamber are maintained in a proper way.

b. Feedback form for members

For the Chamber, the 'Quality' aspect of ISO is concerned with the communication of Chamber with its member, its responsiveness, speed of response towards their problems, whether members are satisfied with the services of the Chamber, and related aspects. Hence the Chamber has made a feedback form for its members, and it is circulated to the members every year and the satisfaction level of members is gauged.

c. Internal audit

Internal Audit is conducted by consultants, as per the requirements of ISO 9001-2008.

d. Proper assignment of responsibility

The Chamber has defined the responsibilities and duties of each Committee member and office staff. The Managing Committee works on honorary basis, while only the office staff are paid employees of the Chamber.

e. Proper infrastructure

Basic maintenance of the premises of the Chamber, including the halls and installation of close circuit cameras on the premises are also a part of the ISO 9001-2008.

5.10.4 Quality Policy of Poona Merchants Chamber

The Poona Merchants Chamber is committed to providing excellent service to all its members and for this, the following aspects will be fulfilled:-

- a. Providing proper guidance to all members regarding various laws related to the business.
- b. Resolving any doubts of the members in a satisfactory manner.
- c. Removing all defects in the services provided by the Chamber and its working.
- d. Helping in social welfare activities through its Relief Fund.

All the members of the Executive Committee of the Poona Merchants Chamber and its employees are committed to follow this policy and enhance the satisfaction of members.

5.10.5 Quality Objectives of Poona Merchants Chamber

- a. Resolving doubts of members within one month.
- b. Enhancing satisfaction of members regarding the services of the Chamber (reducing the number of complaints).
- c. Continuous improvement in the working and services of the Chamber.
- d. Ensuring the collection of annual membership fee and 'dalali' fee by 31st May every year.
- e. Informing and guiding the employees of the Chamber regarding the above objectives.

5.10.6 Benefits and Future

The ISO certification is yet another landmark in the history of the Poona Merchants Chamber. It has not only put a professional system in place, but also given world

wide recognition to the Chamber. In the era of globalization, the Poona Merchants Chamber is now being acknowledged on the world trade map.

5.11 Conclusion

Every Chamber of Commerce makes an effort to provide services as per the needs of its members. The Poona Merchants Chamber fulfils the basic functions for its members, and at the same time it has taken various special initiatives. The Poona Merchants Chamber today is recognized as a leader of all the Chambers of Commerce of Maharashtra. It has been providing important guidance to all the Chambers from time to time. The distribution of Annual Awards has been yet another unique initiative of the Poona Merchants Chamber, which is looked upon with respect by the society at large. The initiative of the ‘Ladoo-Chivda’ program has a very important social touch for the ‘have nots’ of the society. The Poona Merchants Chamber Relief Fund has been a strong hand of support in the unfortunate event of disaster for the common citizens of the state of Maharashtra and other areas too. Felicitation of meritorious young children of member-traders, hamaals and female workers together has created a unique bonding and family ties amongst the stakeholders of the Chamber. These special initiatives reflect the values and vision of its founding members as well as the Office Bearers of the Chamber, from time to time.

In the forthcoming chapters, the analysis and interpretation of the primary data collected by the researcher has been presented.