

Social Equity through Social Entrepreneurship: Enabling Inclusive Growth and Sustainability

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ABSTRACT

The paper delineates each word in the title being self-contained concepts and later focuses on their convergence. The macro-dynamics propelling the advent of social entrepreneurial activities are examined. An attempt has been made to develop a theoretical ground based on the different dimensions of Social entrepreneurship, value generation, Actor network theory, and Business model innovation, and explains how value is created within the social entrepreneurship context. Support is also drawn from Wendell Berry's 17 Rules for a Sustainable Community, Appreciative inquiry, Coleman's boat and business incidence analysis that helps in understanding of management systems and value generation in attaining social equity. While inclusive growth imposes an economic growth process; it encompassing enhancement in quality of life, equal opportunity without discrimination or prejudice, employment, access to health, education, and essential services. In short, empowering marginalized sections alongside others.

The qualitative descriptive research was undertaken by conducting an in depth study of published literature review and secondary data. Next, the paper explored in greater detail the application of social entrepreneurship to the field of health, community banking, bricolage, poverty trap and effectuation. Some of the policies and programs of Government and NGOs towards social equity are briefly dealt with. Implications of strategies that could guide policy makers and practitioners in enabling social equity are discussed. The study highlights crucial aspects of sustainability and how unmet social needs are fulfilled by creating social value with sustainable solutions. Directions for future research have been recommended.

1. INTRODUCTION

The contemporary world is dotted with deep inequities in economic growth, sustainability and distributive justice; in the living conditions, or jeopardizing the prospects of good life in future for the present and the coming generations. These two dominant problems are succinctly called inter-generational and intra-generational injustice. Yet, a planner perceives the city as a hub where investment, production, consumption and innovation take place. While the signs of disadvantaged group is visible by the state of poor health, higher levels of morbidity, under nutrition, mortality rates (Acharya L., 2018), lower access to utilization of both preventive and curative services, education, and health care and in receiving sub-standard

services (Gaitonde R., 2018) . Gartner's four differentiating aspects: the individual, the process, the organization and the environment is one of the ways to address this macro issue.

While economic growth has been significant, the benefits have not accrued to those in the lowest income and wealth categories, not generated enough employment to absorb the surplus rural labor or the new entrants into the labor force. The workers experience insecure livelihoods and poor life conditions. These adversities are experienced disproportionately by those already marginalized/disadvantaged based inter alia on class, caste and gender, and may be expected to impact the pattern of inequities in various other domains.

Review of literature on various sectors having inequities, gives rise to an understanding the patterns and trends. The paper attempted to identify key mechanisms contributing to diverse inequities and measures to combat the same.

Social entrepreneurship provides new solutions to the tribulations of society through transformations even to existing institutions. This paper identifies how a social entrepreneur, has the potential to cause social change. In order to describe the process of value creation; gender inequality, poverty trap, access to health care , education by the marginalized sections and violence against women can be taken and how by creating social value, besides empowering women can eradicate social inequity.

2. Definitions

2.1. Social Equity

Social equity also refers to policy formulation and implementation, public management practices, the provision of public goods and services and administrator/resident interactions that reduce disparity, then ultimately eliminate, marginalization and discrimination while increasing social and political inclusion. Often social equity, as a performance measure, is not completely integrated in the practice of public administration (Beder S., 2000).

An evolved definition incorporates measureable concepts like disparity, discrimination, marginalization and inclusion. These measureable concept aids agencies and administrators in the determination of policy, program, behavioral and organizational impacts on issues of equity. Yet the sustainable development policies adopted by the governments reinforce existing inequities and create new

ones. Eventually, it is only when equity is experienced by those who are most marginalized, or underrepresented that true social equity is achieved.

Equity derives from a concept of social justice: everyone should have equal access to community resources and opportunities, and that no individuals or groups are victims of externalities greater than the rest of the community as a result of government actions.

2.2 Environmental inequities

It exists in all societies: the affluent are better able to combat any externalities in their neighborhood because of access to financial resources, education, skills and the decision-making structures.

2.3. 'Weak/ Strong Sustainability'

The environment is a repository of natural capital available for wealth creation, Future generations should have the same access to create wealth as the present. They would have the option to rely on alternative sources of wealth creation which is called 'weak sustainability'. There are either irreplaceable/irreversible environmental assets e.g., the ozone layer, species and habitats, the climate-regulating functions of ocean phytoplankton, the watershed protection functions of tropical forests, the pollution-cleaning and nutrient-trap functions of wetlands. Another perspective would be to consider future generations inheriting a degraded environment no matter to what extent extra resources for wealth creation are available. This is termed as 'strong sustainability'.

2.4 Intergenerational Equity

According to Wiess (1990) highlights 'conservation of access' implying not only ensuring current generations equitable access to what has been inherited from previous generations, but the same access should be available to future generations as well.

Sustainable development taken up by governments either reinforce or exacerbate inequities. If equity is to be taken seriously then innovative ways of decision-making through the integration of economic, social and environmental concerns must be found. The multifaceted dimensions associated with the environment must be completely considered and heeded.

2.5. Social Entrepreneurship:

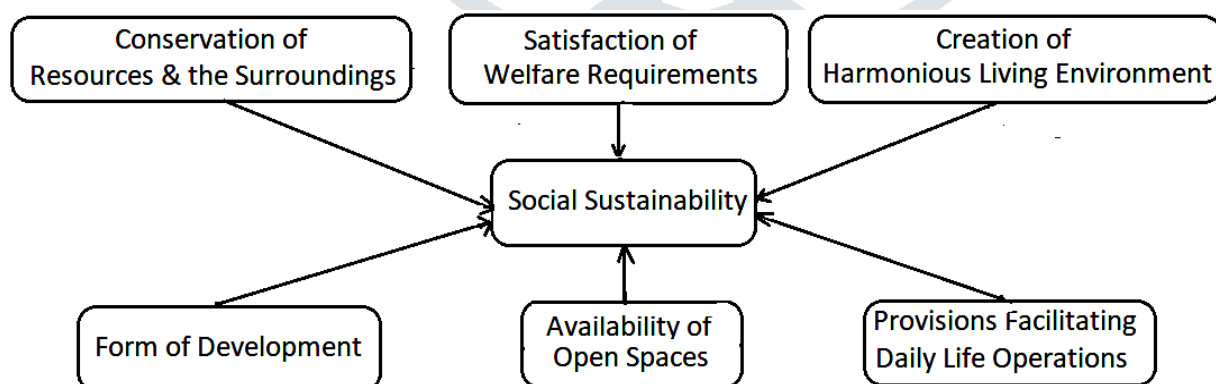
'Social entrepreneurship is defined by its two constituent elements: a prime strategic focus on social impact and an innovatively comprehensive approaches to achieving its mission' (Nicholls 2008, 13). It can

also be defined as the process of identifying, evaluating and exploiting opportunities aiming at social value creation by means of commercial, market-based activities and the use of a wide range of resources. Besides, it involves redeeming social market failures and creating new opportunities to add social value systemically using a range of organizational formats to maximize social impact and bring about change. They draw their strengths from collective wisdom and experience rather than from personal competences and knowledge. They see profit as a means in people's service that has to be reinvested in future profit rather than an end to be distributed to shareholders. Social entrepreneurs are basically driven by a double bottom line, 'a virtual blend of financial and social returns', and profits are reinvested in the social mission. Finally, Brouard (2006) adds that social entrepreneurs put the risk on the organization's assets rather than on personal and investors' funds, and see their freedom limited by donors rather than employer

There are at least three main schools of thought on social entrepreneurship: the Social Innovation and the Social Enterprise Schools in the US; the EMES approach in Europe (Defourny and Nyssens 2008). The contribution of social entrepreneurs to a nation's social, economic, cultural and environmental wealth has rendered it to be recognized as an innovative way of tackling unmet socioeconomic needs and realizing a social transformation (Iyigun & Yalcintas, 2017).

2.6. Exacerbation of Poverty: The Poverty Trap

"Weaker Section" refers to that fragment of the population who is socially, financially, politically and instructively backward as compared to others and have been subjected to exclusion and denied access to the benefits accrued to others in equal measure.



Source: Edwin Chan & Grace K. L. Lee (2008), 'Critical factors for improving social sustainability of urban renewal projects', *Social Indicators Research* Vol 85, No 2, pp. 243–256.

Some of the critical design features for achieving sustainability that emerged from a study carried out at Hong Kong are as given in the figure 1.

2.7 Social Exclusion / Isolation and Marginalization.

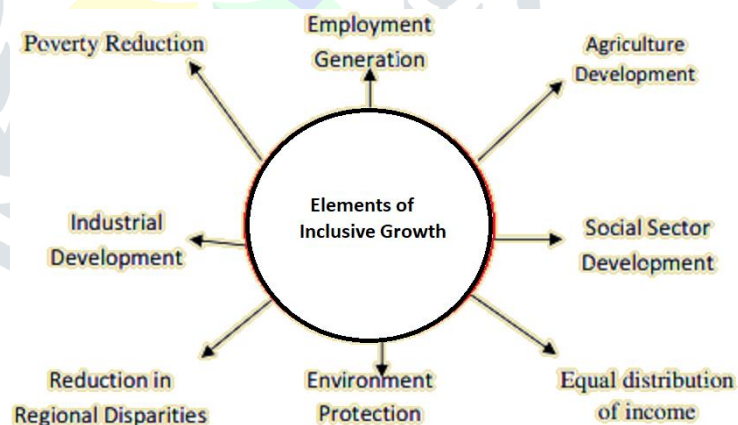
Oppressive social structures hamper equi-distribution of social goods to the disadvantaged sections of the society.

2.8 Redefining Gender Inclusion and Equity

Gender equity is an important component of the social equity agenda of development programs and plans. What is considered “fair” is culture-specific and context-specific. Further, any policy commitment for gendered change would be a novel effort though bringing changes in gender relation is equally complicated. For example, manifestation of inequity can be seen when only 13% of men collect water in India, the rest is done by women. Data report indicates that women take up to six trips a day for collecting water, and in rural areas this averages out to 10 miles a day and 15 L per trip.

The only way to improve the quality of natural environment - is to intensify efforts on controlling industrial activity, introducing fresh control technology, and improving the quality of effluent treatment plants, the creation of new industries encourage use of green technology.

Perhaps, the most efficient mechanisms of mixed load control ecosystem, including regulatory administrative control, measures of regulation and economic incentives market mechanisms and insurance apt.



3. Inclusive Growth

Inclusive growth involves comprehensive, shared, and pro-poor growth. It also means unprejudiced equitable distribution of resources with benefits reaching to every section of the society. Various elements of inclusive growth has been depicted in Figure 2. Physically challenged / minorities and other marginalized groups need to be brought into the mainstream.

Economic growth, is a double-edged sword as it enhances the quality of life in the short-term, yet destroy the very eco-system necessary to derive long-term welfare. More so in the redistribution of the benefits of economic development to the large section of humanity still living in a slough of despondency and poverty.

3.1 Financial Inclusion

Financial inclusion enables access to financial services, at affordable costs, to sections of disadvantaged and low income segments of society to facilitate investment and economic growth. Financial inclusion through social financing institutions can be a viable option for inclusive growth in India.

3.2 Role of Banks

Since banks are central elements of a financial sector, it can play a pivotal role by financing “green” projects thereby facilitating “green economy” in modern society (Khaliun, G., 2015). Investments are needed to offset the irreparable degradation of natural capital, and to maintain robust ecosystems. Case study on Bangladesh micro-finance as ‘Grameen Bank’ is a pioneering example in poverty alleviation. The challenge in preservation and protection of the natural environment can be met.

Inequalities in health, education and living conditions are fuelled by forces of the neo-liberal economic policies that were adopted in India since the mid-1980s (Kaushik,M, 2018). Though there are numerous programs initiated, only a glimpse of those relating to social equity in India are mentioned in Table 1.

A study (Emma Knowles et al 2006), in UK reveals that the greater use of both National Health Service (NHS) Direct and NHS walk-in centers by more socially advantaged groups is widening the inequality of access to health care. The pattern of use shows disadvantaged groups are under-represented and remains an unresolved problem.

3.3 Indian Anti-Poverty and Development Programs

Table 1. Governmental Initiatives

Ser No.	Program
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1.	Jawahar Rozgar Yojna,
2.	Integrated Rural Development Program,
3.	Rural Housing Scheme,
4.	Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana
5.	Pradhan Mantri Gram sadak Yojna (PMGSY)
6.	Integrated Child Development Services
7.	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA)
8.	Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM)
9.	Sukanya Samriddhi Yojna
10.	Mukhyamantri Kanya Suraksha Yojna

Unless relentless efforts from technologically driven services as well as services based on more traditional models of care are undertaken the malady will persist. Innovative approaches are rarely adopted that can help generate the evidence necessary for identifying policy entry points or social action.

4. Methodology

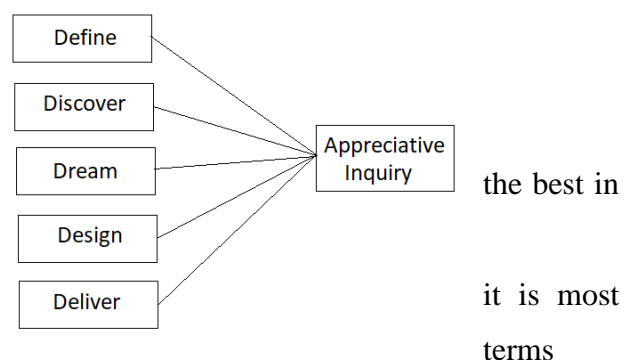
This paper is a descriptive and qualitative review of literature available online and various other secondarily available data. This paper draws conclusion in support of various articles, published journals, international papers, and research papers. Thus the methodology used to reach up to the conclusion for set objectives are secondary reliable sources of information and the sources are all in bibliography.

4.1 Benefit Incidence Analysis

Using the benefit incidence analysis to determine who benefits from expenditure on health care throws light on the fact that lack of access to effective health care is now well recognized as a major cause of poverty (Pearson M., 2002).

4.2 Appreciative Inquiry (Ai)

It is the cooperative and co-evolutionary search for people, organizations, and the world around them by systematically discovering what gives a system 'life' when effective and capable in economic, ecological, and human



(Fitzgerald et al. 2001). It also involves the art and practice of asking questions that strengthen a system's capacity to heighten positive potential. This could be a potent tool for planners and policy makers (Whitney, Diana, & David Cooperrider, 2011).

4.3 *Coleman's boat* helps to shape various social macro/micro mechanisms; the institutional focus and the intersectional lens as critical components to any approach it is able to engage with the complex phenomena of various inequities in a meaningful fashion. Macro is at the top; micro is at the bottom; and arrows are possible pathways

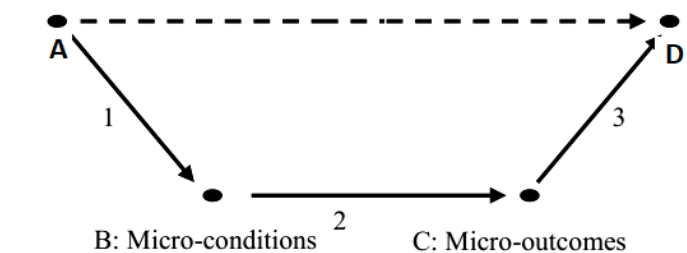


Figure 1 Coleman's diagram.

of causal influence.

4.4 Wendell Berry's Principles

It can be applied to rural communities, and traditional family farms for the preservation of ecological diversity and integrity, based on cultural and local economies. Alterations relating to creation of common wealth by utilizing locally available resources within the community through reciprocal collaboration having priority for exhausting local demands is through value-adding industries for local products. The process takes care of any environmental externalities. Preference for self-sufficiency in local energy generation, and ensuring the benefits are cycled within the community. Thus reducing any expenditure outside the community. On networking with community-minded people in nearby towns and cities, rural economy could be sustained through urban consumers loyal to local products. Therefore, it be an economy that will always be more cooperative than competitive.

5. FINDINGS

Empirical studies and scholars in addition to environmentalists, conservationists are in consensus when it comes to protection of natural capital for the present and the future generation as discussed earlier.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Equity an important component of sustainability has to be viewed as one of three pillars alongside environment and economy. Sustainability being a multi-dimensional, multifaceted concept is dependent upon a strong economy, inclusive society, and sound environment.

6.1 Strategies for Social Equity

Strategy 1: Create general awareness for gathering support, mobilizing resources and solidarity towards the movement.

Strategy 2: Integrate social equity into sustainability plans through an inclusive growth oriented open and transparent process such that the benefits are reaped by all sections of the society.

Strategy 3: Equity goals targeting marginalized sections are formalized by exhausting all alternatives.

Strategy 4: Ecologically sustainable development policy must embed ecosystem resilience program.

Strategy 5: Internalized environmental externalities are factored into costing economic activity, to reflect the true liabilities for environmental damage. Carbon markets need to be paired with the regulation of land use, safeguarding biodiversity, and the development of “green standards”.

Education is an important dimension and indicator of human development and well-being that enhances returns to work and workers. It is also instrumental for achieving long-term sustained inclusive economic growth. There is sufficient literature around health inequities along several axes. These needs to be translated into actionable knowledge, implementation of meaningful policies, programs and interventions (Ravindran et al. 2018).

Future research can be taken up using any of the aforementioned models in isolation or in combination.

CONCLUSION

A multi-faceted, multi-dimensional study was undertaken utilizing various tools in different perspectives for examining issues on social equity, sustainability and inclusive growth. Strategies for policy makers and planners and social entrepreneurs have been recommended for the attainment of social equity. (2375 words)

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