ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL ACTIVITIES PERFORMED BY WOMEN ENTREPRENEUR

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Abstract

Social entrepreneurship has a unique approach in finding solutions to societal and developmental problems that also attracts academic interest. Social entrepreneurship and social enterprise appear to be having an identical meaning, though the former indicates the process and the latter means the organizational form. Neither has a uniform conceptualization because different countries use different legal definitions to define social enterprises. In India too, there are no definite boundaries given to social entrepreneurship and social enterprises. The fact that in India social enterprises are mainly structured as public/private limited companies and only a few are registered as trust or non-government organizations. It is difficult also to define social entrepreneurship based on structural features because then it overlaps traditional enterprises. Thus, an important reflection is that we need to consider the qualitative features over the structural features of social enterprises. This study was conducted on women entrepreneur in Chennai city.

Keyword : Social Women Entrepreneurship, Women Entrepreneur, Social Activities

INTRODUCTION

Bill Drayton, the founder of Ashoka: Innovators for the Public defined social entrepreneurship that *"whenever society is stuck or has an opportunity to seize a new opportunity, it needs an entrepreneur to see the opportunity and then to turn that vision into a realistic idea and then a reality and then, indeed, the new pattern all across society. We need such entrepreneurial leadership at least as much in education and human rights as we do in communications and hotels. This is the work of social entrepreneurs."*

Social entrepreneurship is the process of pursuing innovative solutions to social problems. More specifically, social entrepreneurs adopt a mission to create and sustain social value. They relentlessly pursue opportunities to serve this mission, while continuously adapting and learning. They draw upon appropriate thinking in both the business and nonprofit worlds and operate in all kinds of organizations: large and small; new and old; religious and secular; nonprofit, for-profit, and hybrid. Over the past two decades, the citizen sector has discovered what the business sector learned long ago: There is nothing as powerful as a new idea in the hands of a first-class entrepreneur. Social entrepreneurs often seem to be possessed by their ideas, committing their lives to changing the direction of their field. They are visionaries, but also realists, and are ultimately concerned with the practical implementation of their vision above all else. Social entrepreneurs

present user-friendly, understandable, and ethical ideas that engage widespread support in order to maximize the number of citizens that will stand up, seize their idea, and implement it. Leading social entrepreneurs are mass recruiters of local changemakers - role models proving that citizens who channel their ideas into action can do almost anything.

Women Social Entrepreneurship

Despite the explosive growth of the social entrepreneurship field, the relevance of gender to conceptualizations and analysis in this field are still lacking despite claims that social enterprise can address social issues such as women's empowerment. Thus, while women may be the intended beneficiaries of particular forms of social enterprise, there is not a gender aware framework to examine unvoiced assumptions guiding concepts and research in the social entrepreneurship field more broadly (Brush, De Bruin and Welter, 2009). To address this gap, we focus on gender as central to conceptualizing and understanding social entrepreneurship, given that men and women are positioned differently in societies. Related to this notion, scholars have suggested that existing societal gender orders may become replicated in enterprise activities in different economic, political, and social contexts. It is in this critical vein that we apply feminist theorizing to extend such perspectives in social entrepreneurship and to underscore assumptions related to gender and entrepreneurship more generally. Specifically, we apply feminist perspectives to problematize the gender-neutral and gender-blind assumptions related to the "social entrepreneur" and theorizing in the field of social entrepreneurship. Feminist scholars have already demonstrated that the field of entrepreneurship arose from the "model of economic rationality alleged to be universal and a-gendered" (Bruni, Gherardi and Poggo, 2004). In addition, critical scholars have noted that a hero narrative underscores the approach to understanding social entrepreneurs, particularly by influential foundations and organizations (Nicholls, 2010). While the field of social entrepreneurship may still be in flux regarding a cohesive paradigm, existing concepts of the social entrepreneur envision an *individual* who is particularly adept at the following:

(1) Identifying a stable but inherently unjust equilibrium that causes the exclusion, marginalization, or suffering of a segment of humanity that lacks the financial means or political clout to achieve any transformative benefit on its own; (2) identifying an opportunity in this unjust equilibrium, developing a social value proposition, and bringing to bear inspiration, creativity, direct action, courage, and fortitude, thereby challenging the stable state's hegemony; and (3) forging a new, stable equilibrium that releases trapped potential or alleviates the suffering of the targeted group, and through imitation and the creation of a stable ecosystem around the new equilibrium ensuring a better future for the targeted group and even society at large (Martin and Osberg, 2007).

On the one hand, if the second half of the term is stressed, the social entrepreneurs described as heroic, ambitious, courageous, strong and enterprising—a distinctly masculine description. Subsequently, stressing the social entrepreneur highlights concerns with "exclusion, marginalization, or suffering" and creative, generative activities flowing from such empathy (Martin and Osberg, 2007), which stresses a feminine engagement. Thus the term "social entrepreneur" appears to have complex gender connotations rather than

gender-neutrality associated with it. We argue, therefore, that both the identity of the social entrepreneur and the context in which this actor is embedded warrants analysis from a gender perspective.

Need for the Study

Notwithstanding the growing importance and popularity of women social entrepreneurship both as a practice and as a scholarly field of inquiry, the majority of articles and publications do not adopt a determinants and influencing factors framework (Brush, De Bruin and Welter, 2009). Women social entrepreneurship is influenced by several factors namely entrepreneurial characteristics, entrepreneurial intention, entrepreneurial motivation, perceived behavior control, and social valuation of entrepreneurship. Among the variables, entrepreneurial characteristics is one of the important factors which was determined by the entrepreneurs' self confidence, creativity, locus of control, risk taking propensity, need to achievement, self sufficiency and ambiguity. In general, studies related to various influencing factors of women social entrepreneurship is very less. Few studies have been performed in foreign countries but did not cover the various influencing factors and determinants of women social entrepreneurship (Morris et al., 2006; Blake and Hanson, 2005). In addition to this, studies related to women social entrepreneurship is less in Indian context. Hence, there is a need for probing deeper into this innovative and society oriented area and explore the possibilities of finding out the relationships among different variables taken for the study.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this research, Women entrepreneurs who run any business including trading, industry and service enterprises, has been considered as population. In Tamilnadu, the size of population is more than one lakh. Women entrepreneurs who have registered their enterprises alone have been considered for this study. In this study the respondents are the Women entrepreneurs who run any business including trading, industry and service enterprises. Respondents have been selected from the following top FIVE associations in Chennai based on their familiarity. Chennai is selected because of the number of entrepreneurs is more compared to other cities in Tamilnadu. Moreover, Chennai is a metropolitan city where people from different culture and background can do business. Hence, Chennai is selected as the research area. The researcher adopted proportionate stratified random sampling method to identify the respondents, as the sampling fraction for all the strata are equal irrespective of the strata size. The researcher adopted proportionate stratified random sampling method to identify the respondent s, as the sampling fraction for all the strata are equal irrespective of the strata size.

DATA ANALYSIS

Table 1: Social activities performed by the respondents

Social Activities	Responses	
	N	**Percent**
Education	145	16.3

Awareness	141	15.9
Health Awareness	160	18.0
Road Safety	146	16.5
Child Welfare	89	10.0
Counseling	90	10.1
Fighting Poverty	116	13.1
Total	887	100.0

Table 1 shows the different social activities which was performed by the respondents. It is found from the table that 18.0 percent of the respondent are conducting health awareness program as a social activity, followed by 16.5 percent of them conducting road safety program, 16.3 percent of the respondents are conducting education related program, 15.9 percent of them are doing awareness program, 13.1 percent of the respondent are fighting against poverty and 10 percent of the respondent are doing child welfare activities.

Table 2: No of years doing social activities performed by the respondents

No of years doing social activities	Frequency	Percent
Below 3 Years	116	25.3
3-5 Years	204	44.5
6-10 Years	82	17.9
Above 10 Years	56	12.2
Total	**458**	**100.0**

Table 2 explains that for how many years the respondents are performing the social activities in their business. It is found from the table that 44.5 percent of the respondent are performing the social activities for 3 to 4 years, followed by 25.3 percent of them are performing the social activities for lee than 3 years, 17.9 percent of the respondents are doing social activities for 6 to 10 years and only 12.2 percent of them are performing the social activities in their business for more than 10 years.

Table 3: Persons who motivate the respondents to perform the social activities

Motivate you to do Social Activities	Frequency	Percent
Self	186	40.6
Parents	116	25.3
Friends	97	21.2
Relatives	59	12.9
Total	458	100.0

Table 3 shows the persons who motivate the respondents to perform the social activities in their business. It is found from the table that 40.6 percent of the respondents are motivated by themselves to perform the social activities. 25.3 percent of them are influenced by their parents, 21.2 percent of the respondents are

motivated by their friends and 12.9 percent of the respondents are influenced by their relatives to perform the social activities in their business.

Table 4: Respondent's reason for performing the social activities in their business

Reason for Social Activities	Responses	
	N	**Percent**
Self Satisfaction	240	31.2
Publicity	112	14.6
To Obey Govt. Rules	143	18.6
To Earn More Profit	96	12.5
To Attract our Customers	177	23.0
Total	**768**	**100.0%**

Table 4 explains the respondent's reason for performing the social activities in their business. It is found from the table that 31.2 percent of the respondents are performing the social activities for their self satisfaction. 23.0 percent of the respondents are doing social activities to attract their customers, 18.6 percent of them are doing these types of activities only to obey the government rules, 14.6 percent of them are doing for publicity and 12.5 percent of the respondents are performing social activities in their business to earn more profit.

FINDINGS

- It is found that 18.0 percent of the respondent are conducting health awareness program as a social activity, followed by 16.5 percent of them conducting road safety program, 16.3 percent of the respondents are conducting education related program, 15.9 percent of them are doing awareness program, 13.1 percent of the respondent are fighting against poverty and 10 percent of the respondent are doing child welfare activities.

- Result shows that 44.5 percent of the respondent are performing the social activities for 3 to 4 years, followed by 25.3 percent of them are performing the social activities for lee than 3 years, 17.9 percent of the respondents are doing social activities for 6 to 10 years and only 12.2 percent of them are performing the social activities in their business for more than 10 years.

- Study reveals that 40.6 percent of the respondents are motivated by themselves to perform the social activities. 25.3 percent of them are influenced by their parents, 21.2 percent of the respondents are motivated by their friends and 12.9 percent of the respondents are influenced by their relatives to perform the social activities in their business.

- It is found from the study that 31.2 percent of the respondents are performing the social activities for their self satisfaction. 23.0 percent of the respondents are doing social activities to attract their customers, 18.6 percent of them are doing these types of activities only to obey the government rules, 14.6 percent of them are doing for publicity and 12.5 percent of the respondents are performing social activities in their business to earn more profit.

SUGGESTIONS

1. Though government is giving more importance to social entrepreneurship, it is in the hands of entrepreneurs to take it in a manner where doing social activities gives self satisfaction as public in India need social awareness in diverse fields.

2. Since, women entrepreneurs find difficult to access government licensing option and integrating technological innovation to business process, government should concentrate on regulatory framework system to make the licensing options easy, and reduce bureaucratic procedures. Government should also assist the women entrepreneurs in integrating technological innovation process in their business, because contemporary business scenario integrates technological innovation process in all the fields to improve the quality of the products and also services. As women entrepreneurs require incentivizing them with new sources of funding, government should motivate or encourage the women social entrepreneurs by generating funds from various sources. Government may also allocate some percentage of funds in its budget to motivate the women social entrepreneurs. It can also assist women social entrepreneurs by directing the corporate business enterprises to do business with social entrepreneurs, so that the process of buying, selling and doing other business activities is easy for social entrepreneurs.

CONCLUSION

Social entrepreneurship is attracting a new generation of leaders, who are all young, passionate with full of energy and want to make societal difference. Indian women social entrepreneurs are skilled and knowledgeable and they know how to prioritize their needs based on their ventures they implement. From the findings of the study, it is observed that social entrepreneurship in India is gaining momentum, and particularly women social entrepreneurship is at its forward trend. Women social entrepreneurs are establishing their name in several fields like import and export trade, wholesale and retail business, technical and engineering services, education and training services, and also computer related services. Presently women social entrepreneurship focuses on different social activities like health awareness programme, road safety programme, education related programme, poverty eradication programme, child welfare programme, etc. They also play a strong role in generating social inclusion benefits, community strengthening and develop a positive impact in India. They demonstrate a genuine commitment to their mission as well as clear understanding of their individual challenges and support needs.

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