



A study on the Social Entrepreneurship in India

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Abstract

Social entrepreneurship is not a newer concept but the positioning of the concept has risen to new heights in recent times. As government of India has made CSR a more realistic responsibility than a mere formality, corporate are now looking for their grater roles in helping the society in a way that is both economically and socially beneficial. As the definition of social entrepreneurship itself clarifies that its fine combination of entrepreneurship and societal gains. In recent times, the concept has taken new identities and shapes, and has been accepted among wider areas. Some of the prominent organizations in India has accepted this form of doing business and shaped the society in a very positive manner. To know the importance of the social entrepreneurs, this study is taken and explains about the concepts of social entrepreneurship, challenges, opportunities, contributions and top listed social entrepreneurs in this era.

Key words – Social Entrepreneur, Contributions, Challenges.

1. Introduction

Social entrepreneurship is, at its most basic level, doing business for a social cause. It might also be referred to as altruistic entrepreneurship. Social entrepreneurs combine commerce and social issues in a way that improves the lives of people connected to the cause. They don't measure their success in terms of profit alone – success to social entrepreneurs means that they have improved the world, however they define that.

Beyond that, however, there are differing opinions about what constitutes social entrepreneurship. Some believe the definition applies only to businesses that make money and work toward improving a designated problem by selling something to consumers. Others say business owners who work to solve a social problem using grant or government money are also social entrepreneurs.

2. Review of Literature

Jürgen Howaldt, Dmitri Domanski and Michael Schwarz (2015) carried out a study on rethinking Social Entrepreneurship: The Concept of Social Entrepreneurship under the Perspective of Socio-scientific Innovation Research. The purpose of the study is to study a systematic connection of these two aspects. Main thesis is from the perspective of socio-scientific innovation research, development, implementation and institutionalization of the concept of social entrepreneurship can be described as a social innovation. Borrowing from Schumpeter, social entrepreneurs create a new type of behaviour, which fulfils an important societal function like the type of business entrepreneur in the economy.

Tripda Rawal(2018) has conducted a study social entrepreneurship in India . He studied in a detailed manner on variety of topics related to social entrepreneurship, including the conceptual framework and process of social entrepreneurship. This research paper also includes the various challenges faced by social entrepreneurs and puts forwards its recommendations to improve the overall situation of social entrepreneurship/entrepreneurs in India.

Komalpreet Singh and Manu Sharma (2019) carried out the study on Social Entrepreneurship in India: Opportunities and Challenges. The purpose of this study is to define the term of social entrepreneurship. This paper derives the necessary information from several research papers. A literature review of secondary data resources is undertaken as relevant to the objectives of study. An entrepreneurial mind set is re-emerging in India. Right from ancient times, India has been entrepreneurial. The study attempts to shed light on the theme of challenges and opportunities facing the social entrepreneurship scene in India. This paper also highlights the successful examples of social entrepreneurs.

Nipun Aggarwal, Shivani Khurana, and Mehak Aggarwal(2020) studied on the topic of the Success Of Social Entrepreneurship In India. This paper will discuss about the various opportunities and challenges before the social entrepreneurs in India. Social Entrepreneurship has the direct and primary objective of serving the society along with the earning profits. So, social entrepreneurship is differing. Success stories of the social entrepreneurs are discussed in this study.

Giuseppina Maria Cardella , Brizeida Raquel Hernández-Sánchez , Alcides Almeida Monteiro and José Carlos Sánchez-García(2021) studied the Social Entrepreneurship Research: Intellectual Structures and Future Perspectives They used the bibliometric method to describe the evolution of social entrepreneurship research. In addition, they used the mapping of knowledge networks through the citations and co-citations analysis to identify schools of thought. The results show that, although the research is still in a nascent phase, it has a multidisciplinary character. Furthermore, social entrepreneurship appears to be a concept closely linked to three schools of thought: commercial entrepreneurship, sustainable entrepreneurship, and social innovation..

3. Objectives of the Study

1. To study the basic concepts of social entrepreneurship
2. To study the challenges faced by the social entrepreneurs
3. To study the opportunities and contributions of the social entrepreneurs to the society.
4. To study the role of top listed Indian social entrepreneur in the year 2022.

4. Research methodology

The data required for the study have been collected from the newspapers, websites, journals and magazines related to social entrepreneurship.

5. Characteristics of Social Entrepreneurship

Social entrepreneurship is the process by which individuals, startups and entrepreneurs develop and fund solutions that directly address social issues. A social entrepreneur, therefore, is a person who explores business opportunities that have a positive impact on their community, in society or the world. Social Entrepreneurship requires people to have the following traits:

Leadership: Each and every business can't meet the goals without a highly motivated team assisting. A good, inspirational leader is must for every cause. They can influence opinions as well as physical outputs.

Emotional Balance: Social work requires both empathy and a practical approach at the same time. A highly emotional person might get overwhelmed, but an emotionally balanced person will handle difficult situations better.

Vision: Visionaries come up with the best solutions to social problems. Because they are thinking of long-term and permanent resolutions.

Ability to Multitask: Entrepreneurship and multitasking go hand-in-hand. Only an exceptional manager can juggle meetings, pitches, on-site activities, sourcing, production and whatnot.

Decision-making: Social entrepreneurs must prioritize and make sound decisions as they affect the lives of people in need. They need to think of a situation holistically and make a sound and rational decision.

Open to Collaboration: Social entrepreneurship cannot be done in isolation. Entrepreneurs need to be open to collaboration and partnerships. Every project needs people with a different expertise and skill set. A social entrepreneur needs to work with a wide range of people to achieve their vision.

6. Types of Social Entrepreneurs

1. Community Social Entrepreneur: Community social entrepreneurs are small-scale change makers. A community social entrepreneur can be young individual teaching underprivileged kids in a town, a group of college students running sanitation and plantation drives in a city or one or more organizations working for social good. Community social entrepreneurs work in specific geographies and communities but for a wide variety of causes. From hygiene and sanitation to employment and food distribution services and from plantation and environment safety to providing employment to deserving ones, they do it all. These types of social entrepreneurs are the ones who bring about instant change and strive for more.

2. Non-Profit Social Entrepreneur: These social entrepreneurs believe in reinvesting profits. So, along with the initial cost, they put their profits into the cause. For instance, if the initial project was to educate kids from underprivileged backgrounds and they received more funds than required to facilitate the initiative, they will utilize the surplus to educate women and expand their portfolio. People who have a business-oriented mindset prefer this type of social entrepreneurship. Not just that, but companies and organizations chose non-profit social entrepreneurship to utilize their social goodwill for the cause.

3. Transformational Social Entrepreneur: These entrepreneurs focus on establishing a business that can solve a purpose that government initiatives and other businesses can't.

Transformational social entrepreneurship is more like running an organization where you hire skilled people, think of newer ways to stay relevant in the market, follow the guidelines issued by governments and do everything that an enterprise does. The larger picture for transformational social entrepreneurs includes a collaborative set-up of multiple businesses serving society collectively and individually. Some examples of transformational social entrepreneurship are CRY (Child Rights and You), Goonj and JusTea.

4. Global Social Entrepreneur: Global social entrepreneurs think on a larger scale and focus on changes required at the global level. They put social responsibility above profits.

They usually collaborate with organizations working on similar causes in specific regions/countries. One of the most relevant examples of this type of social entrepreneurship is the Make A Wish Foundation. Headquartered in Phoenix, Arizona, it actively works in around 50 countries, fulfilling the wishes of critically ill children.

7. Factors motivating to social entrepreneurship

Many things may be described as the motivators for these people; however, there are four motivations that may be defined as the most influential. Among these motivations are:

1. The possibility of exploiting change as a new opportunity - Exploiting change as a new opportunity is a motivator for entrepreneurs, but it is not limited to wealth-driven entrepreneurs. Change presents the possibility to create new value in areas that have not yet been explored. An entrepreneur like Nicholas Apostol, the CEO of Environmental Rubber of Puerto Rico, recognized changes in global perception in regards to the environment and impoverished individuals. So, he adopted a new way of disposing of rubber. Instead of burning rubber, which is wasteful and hazardous to the environment, Apostol implemented a recycling practice that was much less hazardous to and offered new uses that create social value while being profitable.

Regardless of whether Apostol's motivation was wealth driven or not, he now embodies a social entrepreneur. His recycling process allows otherwise useless rubber to be used for asphalt, rubber, tires, athletic surfaces, footwear, and fuel. Apostol was not afraid of change. He embraced it as a means of

innovation. His innovation gained him profitability and a favorable public perception while creating social value.

2. Ethical motives and moral responsibility - Ethical motives and moral responsibility are major reasons for motivating social entrepreneur. Founder of Grameen Bank, Muhammad Yunus, is a perfect example of a social entrepreneur motivated by morals and ethics. In 1974, Yunus donated \$27 to 42 different families to create small items for sale without the burden of bank loans or loan sharks. This sign of affection began his idea of issuing microcredit loans to the poor of Bangladesh to help pull its population out of poverty. Previous to the Grameen Bank, all other lenders refused to lend micro loans, especially to the poor due to high cost and the belief that no one would be able to pay them back. Since its inception, the bank has enjoyed a payback rate of well over 90 percent, much to the chagrin of other banks. As of 2010, the Grameen Bank had issued over 7.3 million loans creating unparalleled social value. Beyond this direct impact of social value, Yunus' bank creates social value indirectly. As of 2010, it employed of 24,700 people in over 80,000 villages.

3. Personal fulfillment - Personal fulfillment is another motivation of social entrepreneurs although it can be perceived as selfish reasoning. For example, when one sees a commercial gain in donating to a children's fund, one may not feel morally or ethically motivated to donate. Donating to this cause may fulfill someone personally; it may just make them feel good. This sense of accomplishment may not have the same underlying interests as moral or ethics, yet despite a possibly being considered selfish one may be able to create social value through personal fulfillment.

4. Selfishness - Selfishness is the last motivator for social entrepreneurs. Though this is applicable to social entrepreneurs, it is easier to relate this motivator to current enterprises trying to make efforts to create social value. For instance, Walmart is a company with a highly unfavorable public perception. Though the company has a lot to gripe over, it has added more social value than most people may care to believe. Walmart imposed sanctions over its manufacturers and suppliers in South America from using any resources obtained from the Amazon. According to Green to Gold author, Andrew Winston, this sanction may have

single handedly saved the Amazon. In addition to Walmart, UPS imposed a new rule for drivers: no left turns in cities. What exactly did this accomplish? UPS has saved over 3 million gallons of gas annually, 30 million miles off delivery routes, and 32,000 metric tons of CO₂. Both these companies are not perceived as social enterprises and their changes may have been brought about selfishly (profitability, public perception, etc), but the changes inarguably created social value.

8. Challenges

The word of social entrepreneurship is relatively new, there are many challenges facing those who delve into the field. First, social entrepreneurs are trying to predict, address, and creatively respond to future problems. Unlike most business entrepreneurs, who address current market deficiencies; social entrepreneurs tackle hypothetical, unseen or often less-researched issues, such as overpopulation, unsustainable energy sources, and food shortages. Founding successful social businesses on merely potential solutions can be nearly impossible as investors are much less willing to support risky ventures.

The lack of eager investors leads to the second problem in social entrepreneurship: the pay gap. Elkington and Hartigan note that "the salary gap between commercial and social enterprises remains the elephant in the room, curtailing the capacity of [social enterprises] to achieve long-term success and viability." Social entrepreneurs and their employees are often given diminutive or non-existent salaries, especially at the onset of their ventures. Thus, their enterprises struggle to maintain qualified, committed employees. Though social entrepreneurs are tackling the world's most pressing issues, they must also confront skepticism and stinginess from the very society they seek to serve.

Another reason social entrepreneurs are often unsuccessful is because they typically offer help to those least able to pay for it. Capitalism is founded upon the exchange of capital (most obviously, money) for goods and services. However, social entrepreneurs must find new business models that do not rely on standard exchange of capital in order to make their organizations sustainable. This self-sustainability is what distinguishes social businesses from charities, which rely almost entirely on donations and outside funding.

9. OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP:

a) Social entrepreneurship has the biggest opportunity in the developing countries rather than in developed countries as there are more disparities in terms of financial status, educational status and like in developing countries which the social entrepreneurs can exploit to have a sustainable business growth.

- b) They can uplift the society by applying creative solutions and the unique product/service which solve the societal issues and can create social values along with the economic value among the people of the country.
- c) Since the social entrepreneurship has the objective of addressing the societal needs, which basically cater the low-income group of the population. So, it is again an opportunity for the social entrepreneurs as there is huge population under this segment and can exploit the volume by providing the products/services at affordable prices so that maximum individuals get benefitted from them.
- d) Social entrepreneurs can make visible changes in the society as depicted in the success stories discussed above by providing the differentiated and innovative products/services to the population at affordable prices.
- e) Providing employment, and thus creating employment opportunities among the masses thereby, making the all-round development of the country.

10. CONTRIBUTION OF SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP / ENTREPRENEURS IN INDIA-

The social entrepreneurship is most applicable in nations which have developmental issues. India being a developing nation has its own social challenges and social developmental issues. Social entrepreneurship can resolve all the social inequalities which are prevailing in India. In recent times, some startups/new ventures has developed keeping social interests in mind and providing sustainable solution to social issues and earning their profits as well. Since the nature of profit is all, this makes the difference in economic and social entrepreneurship.

Social entrepreneurship in India has wider scope than economic entrepreneurship. The need of social entrepreneurship in Indian context is a very vital as well, as most of the products and services are focused at the higher end customers and the people who have limited means are deprived from their needs due to lack of resources. Social entrepreneurship takes cares of this deprived section of market and provides goods/services to them at their terms and conditions. Such society needs fulfilling becomes very challenging as well, due to no or less profits to begin with. There are many examples where people have opted for social entrepreneurship than economic entrepreneurship, government and other factors have played a lot in doing so. Where ever the societal gaps are wide and societal inequalities are persisting, social entrepreneurship becomes very relevant like in India. Following are arguments which cement the needs for social entrepreneurship in India and places like India all over the world. Following are the contribution made by social entrepreneurship in India-

1. Social entrepreneurship focuses on deprived/weak section of society, India has over 27 crore people living under such conditions. So social entrepreneurship becomes relevant and it is needed the most for uplifting this section of people.
2. Social entrepreneurship sees social benefits as primary and profits as secondary. This helps in getting great products/services on quite affordable prices.

3. Social entrepreneurship address the social problems, such problems may include illiteracy, girl child abuse, financing, health, potable water etc. Social entrepreneurship helps in meeting these social problems by capitalizing the local resources and applying entrepreneurial principles. In that case we need social entrepreneurship, so that we can minimize the impacts the social problems.
4. Social entrepreneurship also innovates like any other branch of entrepreneurship, but this innovation is slightly different. This innovation is termed as social innovation, as they are focused upon the social problems. The social innovation is nothing but finding out the most innovative and unique solution of social problems.
5. One of the most important needs of social entrepreneurship is towards bottom of the pyramid. This bottom of the pyramid referred to the people who have minimalistic income, but high acceptance for social innovations. There are many social enterprises who have prepared their products and services for bottom of the pyramid as well. Social entrepreneurship is the only way to fulfill the needs and demands for bottom of the pyramid; this argument is the strongest for the existence of social entrepreneurship in India.
6. Social entrepreneurship like any other economic activity provides employment the people having basic skills. This also makes social entrepreneurship needed in Indian context as India has the maximum number of people unemployed and this problem can be solved by social entrepreneurship effectively.

11. Top Ten Social Entrepreneurs in India 2022

Social entrepreneurs are the entrepreneurs who are adventurous and drive deep into the pressing problems of society and try to find solutions to them optimistically, not by leaving the responsibilities and the job in the controls of the government or businesses, but by trying to change systems and convincing societies to take new initiatives. India's gig economy is flying to newer heights and modern techs, owing to the surge of innovative start-ups and young entrepreneurs who are changing the rules of how businesses functioned. These young people do not only dream to achieve something big in life, but they also nurture their passion to resolve the social inequities holding the country back.

India needs these entrepreneurs to come out with high functioning business models to address environmental and social issues. Being an entrepreneur in any country is challenging, and addressing a social cause through it is undoubtedly going to make the journey more difficult but a fruitful one. As social entrepreneurs in India, one is on a never-ending mission to generate business for a social cause. The job is to implement a low-cost business solution for socio-causes while dealing with the shortage of funds, resources and many more. The problems and difficulties in the way are endless but the idea to change lives for good is the driving force and agenda that helps social entrepreneurs in India to navigate the social entrepreneurship.

1. Akansha Hazari

Akanksha Hazari is a social entrepreneur in India who empowers the poor and contributes to the development of a better India. Akanksha led the team that won the Hult Global Case Challenge in 2011, and President Bill Clinton honored her for her innovative idea for expanding access to clean water in impoverished communities. M.Panni, the resulting company, began in a community outside of Mumbai and implements mobile-based loyalty programs to assist communities in earning development rewards such as safe water, education, health care, and energy.

2. Trilochan Shastry

Trilochan is an outstanding professor at IIM Bangalore who was not happy with the state of the country's political affairs. It began as a PIL against politicians but eventually led to the establishment of ADR (Association for Democratic Reforms). The organization examines the election procedures in India. As a result, his contribution to social entrepreneurship in India is one-of-a-kind. Trilochan is also the leader of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that work to improve the lives of farmers.

3. Anshu Gupta

Third one of the lists of top social entrepreneurs in India is Anshu Gupta. Anshu Gupta is an Indian social entrepreneur who founded Goonj, a non-governmental organization (NGO) headquartered in Delhi. Anshu rewrote many of the norms of growth by focusing on the people – not only as material givers and receivers, but also as the primary source of money, skills, and services. He has devised creative solutions using the urban surplus to address some essential but unmet needs that go outside the development sector's and civil society's radar. Anshu is an Ashoka and Schwab Fellow, as well as one of India's top social entrepreneurs by Forbes Magazine and Fast Company, while Goonj has won key honors, including the World Bank's Development Marketplace award and NASA's Launch award.

4. Urvashi Sahni

Dr. Urvashi Sahni is a disruptive innovator, social entrepreneur, and women's rights activist, working to transform education for 35 years. A pioneer in her field, she's a leading expert and practitioner in education innovation, school governance, curriculum reform, and teacher training. Dr. Urvashi is the Founder and Chief Executive of Study Hall Educational Foundation. She is also a leading expert in school governance, curriculum reform, and teacher training with a special focus on girls' education and the use of technology in education. Currently, her current research focuses on developing and scaling her Girls' Empowerment Program in India.

5. Jeroo Billmoria

Jeroo Billmoria has over twenty years of expertise running systems change organizations and is the founder of several creative and award-winning NGOs. She is a Schwab Fellow, an Ashoka Fellow, and a Skoll Awardee. Child and Youth Finance International (CYFI) and Aflatoun International are two of her organizations. Aflatoun International has worked with global partners to provide social and financial education to over 1 million children in 100 countries, while CYFI has built a global network of partners who have collectively created meaningful change in financial inclusion and Economic Citizenship Education for young people in over 160 countries.

6. Ajaita Shah

Ajaita Shah is a social entrepreneur in India whose objective is to empower rural India. She started from the ground up, with the purpose of bringing the best technology solutions to India's distant communities' at the most affordable prices. She is the CEO and Founder of Frontier Markets. Frontier Markets is a social tech commerce enterprise building access to last-mile products and services, to rural villages through rural women entrepreneurs called Saral Jeevan Sahelis. Present in 2,000 villages in India with 10,000 Digital Sahelis helping 700,000 customers adopt products and services in agriculture, digital inclusion, home appliances, clean energy solutions, since COVID, essential services, and finance. She is the recipient of prestigious awards including Forbes 30 under 30 Social Entrepreneur of the Year, Women Transforms India Award, Digital Women of the Year, CNBC's Women Entrepreneur of the Year, L'Oréal Women of Worth, and more.

7. Santosh Parulekar

Next on the list of top social entrepreneurs in India is Santosh Parulekar. Santosh Parulekar is the Co-Founder and CEO at Pipal Tree Ventures Private Ltd. Pipal Tree Ventures is a private limited organization backed by institutional investors and well-established corporate entities from the construction industry, having its corporate office in Mumbai, India with our branches all over India. He began 'Pipal Tree', an organization that plans to grant formal preparation to the adolescent and gives those trustworthy positions in organizations the nation over. Since 2007, Pipal Tree has prepared more than 1,500 specialists and plans to open instructional hubs in India in the coming years.

8. Hanumappa Sudarshan

Hanumappa Sudarshan was born in 1950 and graduated as a doctor in 1973. He turned his back on the possibility of lucrative urban practice in favor of working with poor communities, and in 1979 he arrived in the B.R. Hills to work among the Soliga. In 1981, he founded the Vivekananda Girijana Kalyana

Kendra (VGKK), with a mission of sustainable development of tribal people through rights-based approaches to health, education, livelihood security, and biodiversity conservation. It has since grown into a sustainable tribal development program.

9. Harish Hande

Harish Hande is an Indian social entrepreneur, who co-founded SELCO India in 1995. He was awarded the Ramon Magsaysay Award for 2011 for “his pragmatic efforts to put solar power technology in the hands of the poor, through his social enterprise SELCO India. Having installed the first 1,000 home lighting systems on his own and over 2,10,000 households now through his company SELCO India, Harish is known as a pioneer of rural energy service across the globe. He and his company have received many national and international awards, including the Ashden award (2005 and 2007), The Tech Museum award (2005), Khemka Social Entrepreneur of the Year (2007), and the Financial Times–ArcelorMittal Boldness in Business Award (2009).

10. Sumita Ghose

Sumita Ghose is the founder and managing director of Rangсутra, a social enterprise that engages both the community and the market to bring about socio-economic development and inclusive growth in rural India. Over 1,000 craftspeople, most of whom are women, own Rangсутra. Other owners include like-minded organizations and individuals dedicated to establishing sustainable livelihoods for India’s rural craftspeople. As a social entrepreneur in India, Sumita through Rangсутra helps crafters with design, marketing, technical, and organizational support. Rural industries were also connected into profitable firms so that rural artisans may have regular home and village-based work.

12. Conclusion

Social entrepreneurship has become the buzz word in India and around the world. People have found this concept of philanthropy a bit intriguing in nature. In recent times, the concept has taken new identities and shapes, and has been accepted among wider areas. Some of the prominent organizations in India has accepted this form of doing business and shaped the society in a very positive manner. The top social entrepreneurs from India were driven by an individual and strong desire to bring changes in the lives of people and their necessities, instead of waiting for someone else to bring those reforms. The future of India is on the brighter side with new social entrepreneurs following their paths in their ways.

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