

SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN INDIA: CHALLENGES AND ROAD AHEAD

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ABSTRACT

India is among the world's oldest civilization that began about 4500 years ago. Currently with 356million population India is youngest country of the world. In such a country spirit of social entrepreneurship play a vital role in the overall development of the country. Social or community entrepreneurship is an approach in which entrepreneurs and start-up companies develop, fund and implement solution to social, cultural, or environmental issues. Social entrepreneurs can include a range of career types and professional backgrounds, ranging from social work and community development to entrepreneurship and environmental science that is why sometime it is very difficult to determine who is a social entrepreneur. Social entrepreneurship in modern society offers an altruistic form of entrepreneurship that focuses on the benefits that society may reap. Entrepreneurship becomes a social endeavour when it transforms social capital in a way that affects society positively.¹ The world of social entrepreneurship is relatively new, there are many challenges facing those who delve into the field. Challenges like, it is very difficult to predict future social problems and also still there is lack of eager investors in India. Social entrepreneurship in terms of operation and leadership could be applicable to non-profit organizations as much as for-profit social enterprises although in terms of activities and legal entity they are very different. Model is for social entrepreneurship in India is Social for-profit enterprise, non-profit and hybrid mode. In addition to the above-mentioned models, other ways of creating impact in India are through philanthropy and through Corporate Social Responsibility. The practice of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in India still remains within the philanthropic space, but has moved from institutional building (educational, research and cultural) to community development.

Key Words:

Social entrepreneurship, Society upliftment, Human resource, Green infrastructure, Water management.

INTRODUCTION

Social entrepreneurs act as role models to motivate the youth to initiate action to bring positive social change in the society. The social entrepreneurs address global problems such as poverty, unemployment, gender inequality, inadequate education and health facilities and policies, inefficient governance and so on. Social entrepreneurs play the role of change agents in the social sector by adopting a mission to create and sustain social value, by recognizing and relentlessly pursuing new opportunities to serve that mission, by engaging in a process of continuous innovation, adaptation and learning, by acting boldly without being limited by resources currently in hand and by exhibiting heightened accountability to the constituencies served and for the outcomes created. Social entrepreneurs are reformers and revolutionaries, as described by Schumpeter, but with a social mission. Social entrepreneurship phenomenon has definitely not reached a mature state of development. Social entrepreneurship is a new form of entrepreneurship that exhibits characteristics of nonprofits, governments and businesses. It applies traditional (private-sector) entrepreneurship's focus on innovation, risk taking and large-scale transformation to social problem solving. The social entrepreneurship process begins with a perceived social opportunity is translated into an enterprise concept; resources are then ascertained and acquired to execute the enterprise's goals. Social entrepreneurs sometimes are referred to as "public entrepreneurs," "civic entrepreneurs," or "social innovators". They are change agents; they create large-scale change using pattern-breaking ideas, they address the root causes of social problems, and they possess the ambition to create systemic change by introducing a new idea and persuading others to adopt it. These types of transformative changes can be national or global. They can also be highly localized in their impact. Social entrepreneurs who create transformative changes combine innovative practices, ad deep knowledge of their social issue area and research to achieve their goals. For entrepreneurs working in the social realm, innovation is not a one-time event; rather it is a lifetime pursuit.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The present study is based on specific objectives, which it justifies also. The objectives have been selected to keep the importance and rationality of the research title in mind. Following are the objectives which this research study intends to achieve –

- To study social entrepreneurship with its basic framework.
- To underline the roles and responsibilities of social entrepreneurs in India society

- To study the overall contribution of social entrepreneurship and social enterprises in India.
- To list out the challenges faced by social entrepreneurship in India.
- To give suggestions to face prevailing challenges for social entrepreneurship in India. The study shall be covering all the objectives with with proper explanation, it is very important to note that, though this research paper has said objectives, but it aptly covers the overall sense of social entrepreneurship in India.

CONTRIBUTION OF SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP / ENTREPRENEURS IN INDIA

Social entrepreneurs want to make the world a better place and have a driving passion to make that happen. For instance:

URVASHI SAHNI

Talking about the best of social entrepreneurs in India, Urvashi Sahni definitely tops the list. She is the founder and CEO of SHEF (Study Hall Education Foundation), an organization dedicated to offering education to the most disadvantaged girls in India. Urvashi Sahni has worked with over 900 schools and changed the life of 150,000 girls (directly) and 270,000 girls (indirectly) with her program. She was rightly felicitated with the ‘Social Entrepreneur Of The Year‘award in 2017 for her selfless act of dedication and passion.

HARISH HANDE

Harish Hande is another pioneering social entrepreneur of India and a remarkable committed one. He is the **CEO & Founder of Selco**, a company rendering sustainable energy source to rural regions of the country. This project was the first rural solar financing program in India. Till date, Selco has contributed over 120,000 installations and has more than 25 operating retail and service centres in Karnataka alone.

ANSHU GUPTA

Born in a middle-class family in Uttar Pradesh, took media as a profession and while as an intern he witnessed the need of proper clothing for the poor in rural India. Anshu then founded Goonj, a social enterprise that collects used clothing from the urban crowd, sort them, fix and later distribute among the poor and needy. The relief work was done by Goonj during the times of natural calamities in Gujarat, Tamil Nadu and Kerala have been highly acknowledged.

AJAITA SHAH

Ajaita Shah works with a mission to empower rural India. She started at the grass level and aims to provide the best of technological solutions to the remote villages in India at the cheapest price possible. Ajaita Shah is the Founder & CEO of Frontier Markets that supplies solar energy powered products to rural India at an extremely affordable cost.

Sanjit "Bunker" Roy- One of the most celebrated and well known social entrepreneur of India. He is an Indian social activist and educator who founded the Barefoot College. He was selected as one of Time 100's 100 most influential personalities in 2010 for his work in educating illiterate and semi-literate rural Indians. Bunker is a founder of what is now called Barefoot College.

Devi Prasad Shetty

He has strived to make sophisticated healthcare available to all, irrespective of their economic situation or geographic location. He founded the Narayana Hrudalaya Hospital in Bangalore in 2001. He has built a network of 39 telemedicine centers to reach out to patients in remote rural areas. Sixty percent of the treatments are provided below cost or for free.

Dr G. Venkataswamy

Dr G. Venkataswamy started his initiative only after he had officially retired from public service. Aravind Eye Care Hospital in Madurai set out to eliminate unnecessary blindness provides free, high-quality eye care to 66 percent of the patients. It manufactures interocular lenses to be able to make eye care affordable to the rural poor. The founder of Aravind Eye Hospitals-Dr G. Venkataswamy started his initiative only after he had officially retired from public service. It is now the largest eye hospital group in the world. Also, social entrepreneurs use creativity and ingenuity to solve problems.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Waste Management: In a country like India, solid and liquid waste management are undoubtedly the corner stone for a clean and green India. It is clearly an area of focus.

Deep Cleaning Services: To keep India clean and green Prime Minister Narendra Modi has initiated the Swachh Bharat Campaign. But only initiating such campaign won't make India clean. We need to work together towards this ambition to make our country tidy.

Green Infrastructure: Green Infrastructure is vital in providing and connecting life support systems for urban environments. It includes parks and reserves, gardens, waterways and wetlands, streets and transport corridors, pathways and greenways,

squares and plazas, roof gardens and living walls, just to name a few. This space provides huge opportunities for entrepreneurs to meet India's green infrastructure needs in 2016 and beyond.

Water Management: Water is one of the most important elements of life. But the scarcity of drinking water is appalling. In today's time, access to clean water is the biggest achievement for any family living in remote areas of the country. You, being an entrepreneur, can look into this matter and figure out the best way to solve this problem with the help of your entrepreneurial skills.

Other areas

- Poverty alleviation through empowerment, for example the microfinance movement
- Health care, ranging from small-scale support for the mentally ill 'in the community' to larger scale ventures tackling the HIV/AIDS pandemic
- Education and training, such as widening participation and the democratization of knowledge transfer.
- Environmental preservation and sustainable development, such as 'green' energy projects.
- Community regeneration, such as housing associations.
- Welfare projects, such as employment for the unemployed or homeless and drug and alcohol abuse projects.
- Advocacy and campaigning, such as Fair Trade and human rights promotion.

CHALLENGES FACED BY SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN INDIA

Human Resources: Employing quality workforce including senior managers and junior level executioners is one of the biggest challenges faced by social entrepreneurs.

Measuring Impact: The evaluation of impact is neither immediate nor objective, how does one differentiate between the increments in the reading score of an underprivileged student who is provided quality education by a social enterprise versus the sparkle in the eyes of another young child, with similar circumstances, as she reads her first sentence.

Funding: For the ventures which don't have a self-sustaining revenue stream, funding and investments continue to be one of the biggest challenges. Even after crossing the early hurdle of getting the initial investment or grant funding for the idea, procuring growth capital can be a constraint in accomplishing success. Social Entrepreneurs are

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mostly financed by foundations, philanthropists, or governments whose typical aids are modest in size and relatively short term.

Resistance and delay in bringing about change: Social Entrepreneurs sometimes need to change people's thinking and behaviours to make a social impact. Since changing how people behave in the society is very challenging, the benefits take considerable time to materialize. In addition, people do not readily believe in new things until they have had a long experience of them

Implementation Hurdles: Many noble ideas for social impact sound promising in the beginning and get off to a good start but get watered down in the implementation. There could be several reasons for implementation failure such as inability to grow and maintain the quality, hardships of being able to afford experienced people, waning motivation, external hurdles such as political upheaval or stock market plunge or a natural disaster, insufficient financial human resources, and apathy and opposition from various sources. The idea needs to continuously evolve and adapt to the circumstances, failing which success becomes difficult to maintain.

Lack of Market discipline: Discipline of the market applies less to the social entrepreneurs. Several incompetent and unsuccessful social entrepreneurs can continue way longer than their commercial counterparts as results take time to show. Excessive focus on the social mission may sometime derail the social entrepreneur from the key success generating pillars of any institution, such as accountability, high performance and the punitive discipline that is expected from any commercial venture. Some argue that for social entrepreneurs there is a greater appetite among the capital providers for a margin of error and a greater forgiveness factor since performance is difficult to measure

MEASURES TO FACE CHALLENGES EFFECTIVELY

There is no doubt that social entrepreneurship is subject to many challenges and these challenges are growing with time and dynamics of society. Social entrepreneurs have to take care and keep note of tiny details to face the prevailing (above mentioned) challenges. Although the list of challenges faced by social entrepreneurship is not completed, some other challenges are there apart from the listed ones. The important proposition is how to overcome the challenges which are faced by social entrepreneurship in India. There are few steps/measures which can be practiced to face the prevailing challenges of social entrepreneurship in India-

Proper training and development institutions: Government must open some specialized councils and institutions for systematic development of social entrepreneurship. Some of

the institutions are working in the area of economic entrepreneurship; some must be opened for social entrepreneurship as well.

Inclusion of social entrepreneurship in course syllabus- One of the most effective way of disseminating awareness towards social entrepreneurship is to include a paper/subject on the same at higher education level.

Creation of mass awareness- Steps should be taken to make the mass aware towards the social entrepreneurship, so that people do not get confused between social entrepreneurship and social work. Media, social media, other vehicles can be deployed for the same.

Providing infrastructure and basic facilities: Government and other stake holders must work on the basic facilities to the social entrepreneurship. These facilities can attract people towards becoming social entrepreneurs, thus the spread of social entrepreneurship will increase to multi folds.

Funding to social entrepreneurship-If the funding issue of social entrepreneurship is resolved, the maximum level of challenges faced by social entrepreneurship can be managed properly.

Awards and public felicitation- Time to time on proper and prestigious platforms social entrepreneurs must be publically awarded for their exception/distinct contribution as a social entrepreneur.

CONCLUSION AND FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Social entrepreneurship can change the face of society in India, there have been many such examples and projects which run under the banner of social entrepreneurship and proved to be life altering for people of that vicinity. In India especially social entrepreneurship has better prospects as the social problems are at full swing here. Social entrepreneurship is a unique combination of entrepreneurial traits and philanthropy. In social entrepreneurship products and services are designed to make maximum social impact along with making considerable profits for the firm. Here the working area of firm is typically the area/region which is generally ignored by big firm of economic entrepreneurship. In a way the product and service offerings of social entrepreneurship is quite unique and caters the societal requirement better than economic requirements. This is an exact situation of entrepreneurial traits being implemented for a social cause/problem. Other than that all the basic elements of entrepreneurship are similar to its parent entrepreneurship. If the government and other stake holders can work out the challenges of social entrepreneurship effectively, then social entrepreneurship is beyond

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any doubt is the most important tool which has the full capacity to change the very face of society in India.

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