

SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP - THE DIMLY LIT PATH TO DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Sonali Ahuja Dua

Associate Professor, Gargi College, University of Delhi, Delhi, India

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ABSTRACT

The term business entrepreneurship has been well established for ages. We all are aware of businesses set up with the end purpose of earning profits. In the present times of social development, the term social entrepreneurship has become eminent in the business vocabulary.

These enterprises are set up by individuals, groups of people, start-ups, and so on. They formulate, finance and execute strategies to solve the most daunting social, cultural, or environmental concerns. The outcomes stated by social entrepreneurs are innovative, cost-effective, and environmentally friendly.

In this research paper both the types of entrepreneurship - social and business have been discussed. This study also analyses the role of community enterprises on the growth of the unprivileged in the country. Thereby aiming at diversity and social inclusion. The study encompasses the impact of social entrepreneurship on unprivileged communities. Analysis of the insights of consumers and other stakeholders on the products made, accessibility to these products, and suggestions by the stakeholders of social entrepreneurship have also been considered in the research paper.

KEYWORDS: *Social Ventures, Diversity, Inclusion, CSR, Sustainability, People, Planet, Revenue, Double or Triple Bottom Line*

INTRODUCTION

Social entrepreneurship recognises social problems and strives for social change by employing entrepreneurial principles, processes & mechanisms. This is why it is also known as ‘Impact Entrepreneurship.

It has gained popularity with progressive technology-driven and socially responsible leaders worldwide. Given the rapid growth of social entrepreneurship in India in recent years, it has inspired, and a entrepreneurs who firmly believe they can make the impossible things happen.

Social entrepreneurs and their ventures are backed by a strong desire of benefiting the people at the bottom of the pyramid. They do not confine themselves only to social issues but also consider the environmental aspect. The purpose initially might not be to reduce the gap in society as much but to make the lives of underprivileged people better by providing employment opportunities, education, women upliftment, health care, hygiene, food, and many more. The government has been making efforts in this direction but they seem to fall short. Corporates listed on the stock exchanges too are contributing to this cause through the mandatory requirement of CSR.

These entrepreneurs pursue the “triple bottom line- the art of simultaneously pursuing financial, social, and environmental returns on investment” Social entrepreneurship essentially is a venture, which generates income not solely for profit but for positive social outcomes. These ventures are known as Not for profits organizations (NFP). Enterprises following this method are known as “hybrids” (Davis, 1997). The Grameen Bank in Bangladesh and other microcredit lending agencies that give loans to unprivileged who will not be able to procure loans otherwise from regular lenders exemplify the purpose of a social venture. The revenues are reploughed to increase the magnitude of lending.

RATIONALEo

- Examine the relevance of social entrepreneurship in the Indian context
- To examine the contribution made by several famous social entrepreneurs to reduce social inequalities and solve various environmental concerns across the globe.
- To understand the various problems faced by the social businesses.
- Analyse consumer’s perception of activities undertaken by the social enterprises
- To suggest measures that can be taken to improve the visibili of these enterprises.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Daru, Mahesh, and Gour, Ashok in their research paper titled “Social entrepreneurship - A way to bring social change” (2013)

Write about the relevance of social entrepreneurship. They discuss the problems tackled by such businesses in developing countries across the globe.

Drucker, Peter F published a book on “Innovation and Entrepreneurship”. In this book, he has mentioned the relevance of creativity and entrepreneurial interests in the United States of America during the last ten decade and a half.

Tripda Rawal (2018) in her research “A study of Social Entrepreneurship in India” examines that Social businesses can alter the image of the community in the country. She highlights that social entrepreneurship is an exquisite amalgamation of entrepreneurial traits and philanthropy.

Farhana Ferdousi (2017) in his study “Understanding Consumer Behavior toward Social Enterprise Products” concluded that consumers feel that social enterprises will contribute to sustainable growth and practice ethical market operations.

CONTRIBUTION OF SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS IN INDIA DESPITE THE CHALLENGES

This form of entrepreneurship is mostly appropriate in countries which are in developmental stages. India being one of them has its own set of limitations. Social entrepreneurship is the solution to all the prevalent social inequalities. In recent times, some startups have come up bearing community interests in mind and enabling long term solutions to the existing concerns and simultaneously earning revenues.

Some of the entrepreneurial initiatives that have been the game changers have been stated below.

Eco Wings is an impact venture which initiated producing purses, stationary bags, and purses. These items were made from used rubber tires and tubes. This innovative social venture was started by *Kapil Sharma* in 2010, who understood the amount of environmental pollution and health hazards caused due to disposal of the huge number of used tires. This initiative not only saves the planet but also provides employment opportunities to several people.

Another example of a social venture is Advaita Organics by Ashwin Mahawadi. In 2016, he started Advaita Organics, which works towards more efficient and effective supply chain system in the farming domain.

Aravind Eye Care System: Dr. G Venkataswamy founded Aravind Eye Care Systems in the year 1976. He started with a clinic in Madurai with eleven beds and a strong desire to make eye treatments affordable for everyone.

These are just a few success stories of social businesses. The entrepreneurs despite all the odds decided to take the plunge and contribute to the objective of sustainability. Along the way, they faced numerous challenges. Some of those have been mentioned below:

Ambiguity on the Purpose

Social entrepreneurship is considered as social work. An individual doing social work does not make money. Whereas the reality is that social entrepreneurship is a amalgamation of social and economic values.

Difficulty in Procuring Finance

The banks or the investors interested in the venture/(s) do not trust the viability of the project. Therefore there is difficulty in getting funds for the venture.

Difficulty in the Procurement of Skilled Workforce

It is not possible for such enterprises to bear the burden of high salaries demanded by these skilled workers. Therefore they are unable to get the best people in the field.

Resistance to Change

The targeted people for whom effort is being put to bring about a change are not in agreement to accept the change suggested. They would prefer the old ways of doing things.

Lack of Evidence

Unlike economic entrepreneurship, very few social entrepreneurs have been able to make a mark. The concern here is there is a lack of awareness and also the contribution made by them is not measurable. the

PRIMARY DATA ANALYSIS

To understand the common man's perception of Social entrepreneurship

a primary survey was done. The questionnaire was sent to 200 people in the age group of 18-45 years. Out of these 200 respondents, 170 responded. The responses have been analyzed below:

Gender of Respondents

Out of 170 respondents, 133 respondents (78.5%) were females and the rest of the respondents i.e. 37 were males.

GENDER OF RESPONDENTS:

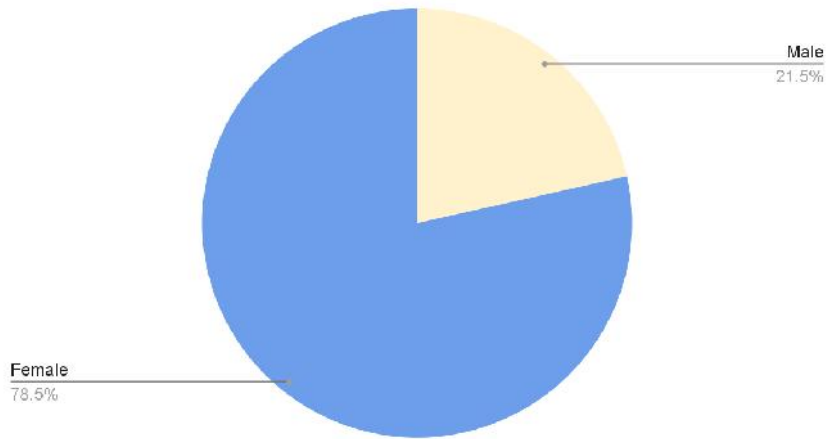


Figure 1.

Do you understand the meaning of social enterprises?

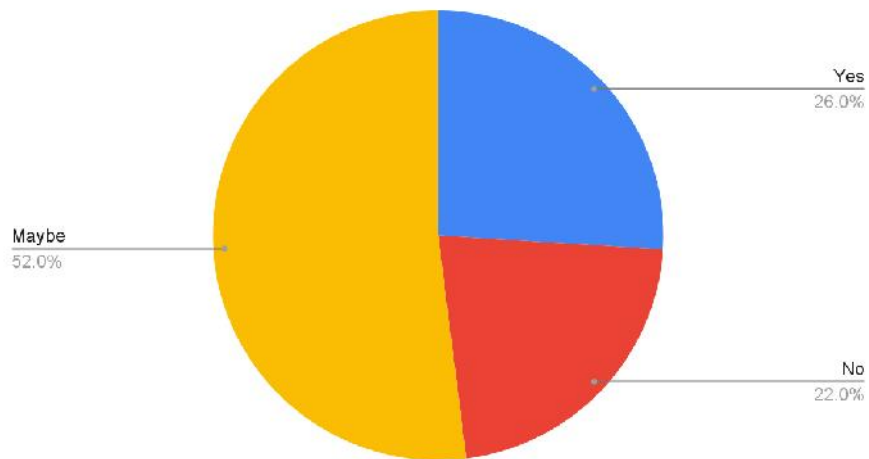


Figure 2.

Have you bought a product or service from a nonprofit organisation?

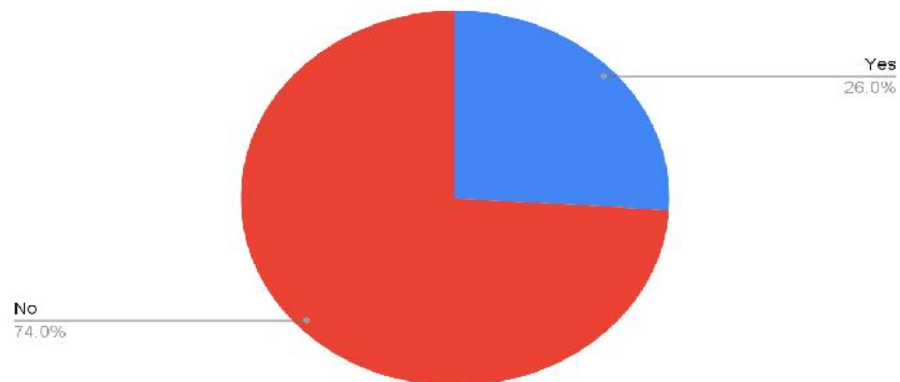


Figure 3.

Would you say that social venture goods are simple to acquire for you?

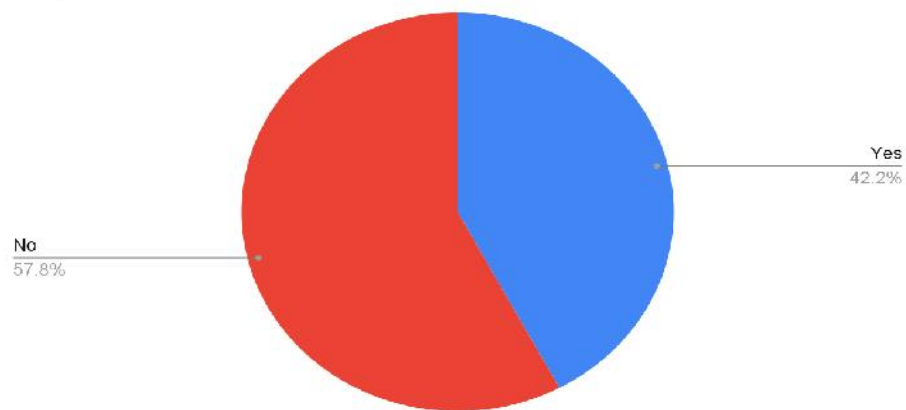


Figure 4.

Do you believe that the quality of goods produced by social businesses is comparable to that of other goods offered in the

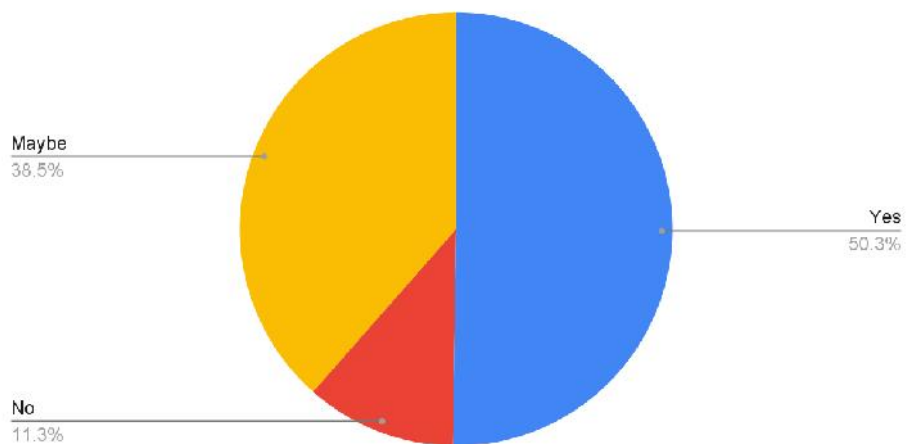


Figure 5.

If the product offerings of a corporate organization and a social organization are the same then how likely are you to purchase the product/service from a social organization rather than a corporate organization? (1 being the lowest, 5 being the highest)

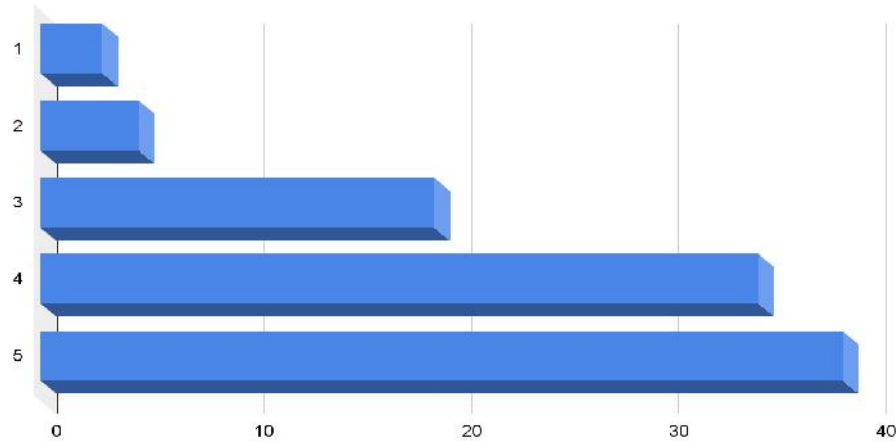


Figure 6.

RESULTS AND SUMMARY

In the survey, it was found that 26% of the respondents are familiar with the idea of social entrepreneurship whereas 22% of the respondents are completely unaware of the same. The remaining 52% of the respondents have a partial grasp of the idea of social entrepreneurship.

Compared to other age groups, respondents who are between the ages of 18 and 45 have a substantially more vivid grasp of social entrepreneurship.

Only 26% of the respondents have purchased from a social enterprise in the past. Whereas, 74% of the respondents have never purchased from a social enterprise.

The reason given by them was a lack of awareness about social enterprises. Many of these people also responded that there was an absence of such businesses in and around the respondents' area. Another reason behind the non-purchase is that they find the quality of the product to be low and the packaging to be extremely primitive.

When asked about the quality of products offered by such enterprises, 50.3% of the sample size responded positively and stated that the product quality of social enterprises is at par with the quality of the products from corporate enterprises. On the other hand, 11.3% of the respondents have observed that the product quality is not at par with the products in the market.

The aforementioned remark is the subject of a split view from 38.5% of respondents.

54.25% of the respondents would prefer the online mode to purchase products from a social enterprise. Whereas, 45.75% of the respondents prefer to purchase the products physically from such enterprises. They prefer looking at things to be able to assess them in a better manner and then purchasing them.

At the higher end of the spectrum, 77.7% of the respondents said they preferred social products to other ones on the market. 4.7%, however, are at the lower extreme for the same.

Our observations have led us to the conclusion that 42.2% of respondents have easy access to social businesses whereas 57.8% of the respondents do not find them to be easily accessible.

RECOMMENDATIONS

a) Creation of Mass Awareness

Consistent efforts should be put to enhance the awareness of impact ventures especially in the today's younger generation. Several media platforms can be tapped to promote the presence of these enterprises.

b) Funding of Social Enterprises

Social entrepreneurs often struggle to get financial assistance from established financial institutions due to their unconventional products and services. These entrepreneurs require seed capital for the setting up of the business. Government should roll out schemes to financially help in growth of such businesses. The process of getting loans from financial institutions should be simplified.

c) Dedicated Workforce

The individuals working for social enterprises should feel satisfied while serving the cause. Appropriate monetary compensation should also be taken care off.

d) Inclusion of Social Entrepreneurship in Curriculum

An effective way of spreading information of social entrepreneurship is to include it in the academic curriculum.

e) Training and Workshops

Training programs and workshops should be conducted frequently across the country. This will increase awareness amongst people and will help in motivation.

g) Awards and Public Felicitation

Awards should be given to the entrepreneurs for their exceptional work.

CONCLUSION

From the above discussion it is quite clear that there is a huge gap between the required social entrepreneurial activities and existing social entrepreneurial activities in the developing countries. These can substantially help in decreasing the wide disparities present in the society. The people from different socio-cultural and financial background at the bottom of the pyramid would be largely benefitted from the efforts put in the impact entrepreneurs. For this, consistent efforts have to be put, so that more and more people decide to follow this path. Though it has not been given its due importance, and thus this path is dimly lit, the enhanced visibility of these enterprises will promote the cause and also result in social enterprises earning higher profits. The entrepreneurs can utilise the profits by providing services that add value.

Thus Social Entrepreneurship is paving a way to an inclusive society.

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