

DEVELOPING SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP AMONG THE INDIAN YOUTH

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Abstract :

“Social entrepreneurs identify a problem or opportunity, create change where necessary and spread solutions—sometimes persuading entire societies to take new leaps. Social entrepreneurs in India are proving every day that you don’t need big pockets or big business to create impressive changes. You just need big vision.”

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Youth

INTRODUCTION

Social entrepreneurship is a multi-dimensional venture involving the expression of entrepreneurially virtuous behaviour to achieve the social mission, a coherent unity of purpose and action in the face of moral complexity, the ability to recognise social value creating opportunities and key decision-making characteristics of innovativeness, proactiveness and risk-taking.

In western context, social entrepreneurship is perceived as a non-profit venture to create social value or change that will eradicate social challenges with innovation in new scheme or innovative process or management or funding strategies by those with strong ethical fibre. While in Asian countries, which comprises mostly of developing countries, the definition of social entrepreneurship is similar to above description except that it needs profit for its financial sustainability and it requires not only one leading social entrepreneur but many grass root entrepreneurs. **It is Mohammed Yunus, the founder of Grameen Bank who has contended that social entrepreneurship is not for personal gain but it is a ‘social consciousness driven enterprise’ that can compete with ‘greed based enterprises’.**

Social Entrepreneurship, commonly defined as ‘entrepreneurial activity with an embedded social purpose’ has become an important economic phenomenon at a global scale. Social entrepreneurship is the recognition of a social problem and the use of entrepreneurial principles to organise, create and manage a social venture to achieve a desired social change. It is all about recognising the social problems and achieving a social change by employing entrepreneurial principles, processes and operations. It is about making a research to completely define a particular social problem and then organising, creating and managing a social venture to attain the desired change. The change may or may not include a thorough elimination of a social problem. It may be a lifetime process focusing on the improvement of the existing circumstances. Against this background, the proposed research analyses the possibilities of encouraging social entrepreneurs to undertake business ventures with social orientation to solve social issues that hamper the growth of economy at a pace at which its talent warrants.

Review of Literature:

Social entrepreneurship is seen as different from other forms of entrepreneurship in the relatively higher priority given to promote social value and development versus capturing economic value. Schumpeter (1934) and Baumol (1993) contend that, although the profit motive might be a central engine of entrepreneurship, it does not preclude other motivations. It should, therefore be noted that,

entrepreneurship in the business sector has a social aspect versus personal fulfilment for social entrepreneurship (Venkataraman, 1997). However, this does not mean that social entrepreneurship initiatives should not embrace an earned income strategy.

According to **Seelos and Mair (2005)**, the main difference between entrepreneurship in the business sector and social entrepreneurship lies in the relative priority given to social wealth creation versus economic wealth creation. Thus, in social entrepreneurship, social wealth creation is the primary objective, while economic value creation, in the form of earned income is a necessary by-product that ensures the sustainability of the initiative and financial self-sufficiency. Additional distinctive feature of social entrepreneurship lies in the limited ability to capture the value added. For e.g. social entrepreneurs who address basic social needs such as food, shelter or education very often, find it difficult to capture economic value because even if the customers are willing often they are unable to pay even a small part of the price of the products or services provided.

Objectives of the Study:

To assess the awareness, application and implications of the concept of social entrepreneurship among various categories of respondents in the city of Mumbai.

Universe and Sample:

The study is restricted to the cities of Mumbai and Pune, the two highly developed urban areas with numerous problems that India faces, viz., unemployment, poverty, women backwardness, illiteracy, pollution, etc. All these problems offer an ideal place for studying the concept of social entrepreneurship. Thus, the entire adult population of the city of Mumbai and Pune constitute universe for the present study.

Considering the nature of the concept of Social Entrepreneurship, the researcher shall select samples from three different fields – viz., businessmen, academicians and students community.

Sr. No.	Category	Sample Size	Justification
(1)	Businessman	100	To gauge whether businessmen in India perceive any opportunity in social field to fulfil their economic objectives.
(2)	Academicians	100	To assess the role that academicians can play in popularising the concept of social entrepreneurship in India.
(3)	Students	100	To measure the degree of awareness among youth about the concept of social entrepreneurship and their willingness to experiment it.
	Total	300	

Analysis of the Responses of the Respondents:

Q.1 Are you aware of the concept of Social Entrepreneurship?

Table No. 1
Responses on Awareness about the Concept of Social Entrepreneurship

Response	Businessmen		Academicians		Students		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	79	79	72	72	98	98	249	83
No	21	21	28	28	2	2	51	17
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	300	100

Source: Field Survey.

Analysis and Interpretation:

- It was found in the field survey that 79% of the businessmen, 72% of the academicians and 98% of the students were aware of the concept of social entrepreneurship.
- In all 83% of the respondents were aware of the concept of social entrepreneurship while remaining 17% of the respondents were not aware of the concept of social entrepreneurship.

Awareness is the first step in the field survey towards analysing the view of respondents. The three categories of the respondents can be arranged in the ascending order of their awareness of the concept of social entrepreneurship as under:

- Academicians (72%)
- Businessmen (79%)
- Students (98%)

Q.2 Can the concept of social entrepreneurship be applied to business field?

Table No. 2
Responses on Application of the Concept of Social Entrepreneurship to Business Fields

Response	Businessmen		Academicians		Students		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	54	54	88	88	100	100	242	81
No	46	46	12	12	0	0	58	19
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	300	100

Source: Field Survey.

Analysis and Interpretation:

- It was found in the field survey that 54% of the businessmen, 88% of the academicians and 100% of the students opined that it is feasible to practice the concept of social entrepreneurship.
- In all 81% of the respondents opined that the concept of social entrepreneurship can be very well applied in the Indian context. On the other hand, 19% of the respondents were apprehensive of its practical applications.

In the field survey, businessmen were the most apprehensive about the practical application of the concept of social entrepreneurship while students were the most optimistic about the practical applications of the concept of social entrepreneurship. According to businessmen, during the time of rising competition and increasing risks in business, it is difficult to experiment with the novel concept like social entrepreneurship. On the other hand, academicians and students opined that the concept of social

entrepreneurship, being a new concept, has a lot to offer in the developing economy like India which is struggling with numerous problems like poverty, unemployment and hunger.

Q.3 How do you rate the scope for social entrepreneurs vis-a-vis business entrepreneurs in a country like India?

Table No. 3
Responses on Scope of Social Entrepreneurs vis-à-vis Business Entrepreneurs in India

Response	Businessmen		Academicians		Students		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Excellent	12	12	24	24	25	25	61	20
Good	30	30	64	64	42	42	136	45
Fair	20	20	12	12	23	23	55	18
Poor	38	38	0	0	10	10	48	16
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	300	100

Source: Field Survey.

Analysis and Interpretation:

· It was found in the field survey that 12% of the businessmen, 24% of the academicians and 25% of the students rated the scope for social entrepreneurs vis-à-vis business entrepreneurs in India to be excellent.

· 30% of the businessmen, 64% of the academicians and 42% of the students rated the scope for social entrepreneurs vis-à-vis business entrepreneurs in India to be good.

· In all 65% of the respondents rated the scope for social entrepreneurs vis-à-vis business entrepreneurs in India to be good and above while the remaining 35% rated it to be fair or poor.

The researcher asked respondents to rate the scope for social entrepreneurs in relation to business entrepreneurs in India in order to assess the comparative scope for social entrepreneurship ventures in India. When asked to rate the possibility of practical application of the concept of social entrepreneurship in India, 81% of the respondents opined it to be positive but while they were asked it to rate in comparison to business entrepreneurs, only 65% of the respondents rated it to be positive. This shows that most of the respondents (81%) are positive about the practical application of the concept of social entrepreneurship but only 65% of them rate it to be a better option than business ventures.

Q.4 What problems according to you can be solved through social entrepreneurs? (You can choose more than one options)

Table No. 4
Responses on Problems that can be Solved through Social Entrepreneurship Projects

Response	Businessmen		Academicians		Students		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Poverty	44	44	67	67	77	77	188	63
Illiteracy	78	78	89	89	81	81	248	83
Unemployment	65	65	78	78	84	84	227	76
Pollution	54	54	65	65	68	68	187	62
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	300	100

Source: Field Survey.

• Analysis and Interpretation:

- It was found in the field survey that 63% of the respondents opined that issue of poverty can be dealt by social entrepreneurs in India.
- 83% of the respondents were of the opinion that the problem of illiteracy in India can be dealt with by social entrepreneurs while 76% were hopeful of solving the issue of unemployment and 62% of the problem of pollution.

India as a developing nation is facing problem of poverty, unemployment, illiteracy and pollution. The Government efforts to tackle these problems have failed to a greater extent as these problems continue to persist in one or the other forms in the country even after more than half a decade of economic planning. In such a situation, a blend of social and economic motives in the form of social entrepreneurship provides a hope for the solution of these problems. When asked about the problems that can be solved effectively through the intervention of social entrepreneurs, the respondents rated major problems in the ascending order of their solution by social entrepreneurs as under:

- (1) Illiteracy (83%)
- (2) Unemployment (76%)
- (3) Poverty (63%)
- (4) Pollution (62%)

Q.5 What are the major problems encountered by the social entrepreneurs in India? (You can choose more than one options)

**Table No. 5
Responses on Problems Faced by Social Entrepreneurs in India**

Response	Businessmen		Academicians		Students		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Lack of Awareness	78	78	68	68	78	78	224	75
No Govt. Support	67	67	55	55	69	69	201	67
No Public Response	29	29	56	56	33	33	118	39
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	300	100

Source: Field Survey.

Analysis and Interpretation:

When asked about the problems faced by social entrepreneurs in India, three main problems were reported. The problems are:

- (1) Lack of Awareness: 75% of the respondents held lack of awareness among people about the social entrepreneurship and its role and significance to be a major hurdle in the promotion of social entrepreneurship in India. This awareness can be created by the joint efforts of NGO's, Government and private organisations by organising various seminars, conferences, campaigns, etc. related to the issues of social entrepreneurship. Also, by including the concept of social entrepreneurship in formal syllabus of educational programmes would help in popularising it in India amongst the masses.
- (2) Absence of Government Support: 67% of the respondents considered lack of adequate Government support as a major hindrance for social business development in India. According to them, the Government has yet to recognise social entrepreneurship as a legitimate field of endeavour. This recognition is an essential condition for finding ways to promote it through fiscal and legislative incentives, including the review of tax laws, the elimination of burdensome regulations and other onerous requirements and inefficient practices that hamper social entrepreneurs.
- (3) Poor Public Response: In the survey, 39% of the respondents held poor public response as a hindrance to social entrepreneurship in India. According to them, the reason for poor public response may be lack of awareness and knowledge on their path regarding this concept which hampers their participation in the field of social entrepreneurship. Thus, it is necessary to educate the masses about the issue of social entrepreneurship and deepen their knowledge in order to secure their active response towards social

entrepreneurship in large numbers.

Suggestions for Promoting Social Entrepreneurship:

(1)The Government, the highest organisation in the Society, has enough power to initiate changes in the social and economic set up of the economy. The Central government in consultation with the respective State Governments should introduce the concept of social entrepreneurship in formal education system.

(2)The government should provide liberal funding to researchers for undertaking research on the issues pertaining to social entrepreneurship. The findings of such research may be useful in developing appropriate models of social entrepreneurship for Indian economy.

(3)The government should encourage corporate houses and professionals to undertake social entrepreneurship projects. For this purpose some positive incentives may be provided to them in terms of subsidies in acquiring land, cheaper electricity, and like.

(4)Corporate houses should come together and devise some training courses in social entrepreneurship for their employees. These training courses can also be outsourced to some educational institution or private training institutions to train their employees.

(5)Corporate houses should also give reference to social projects in their annual report and also report the implications of these projects on the society. This will generate awareness in the society about the significance of socially motivated projects.

(6)Researchers and academicians should seek financial support from the Central government agencies like the UGC and ICSSR to undertake research on Social Entrepreneurship and develop appropriate models of social entrepreneurship ventures for the Indian economy.

(7)The society should adopt a broader perspective and look at entire issue from social point of view rather than economic point of view. Truth and Service for instance can be two values that an organisation may promote.

(8)Film makers should be encouraged to make films based on social values. Special incentives may be given for making value-oriented films, drams, TV serials, etc. as they highly influence the younger generation. Cartoon films should also be censored to ensure that right values are inculcated.

In conclusion it can be said that the joint endeavours of the academicians, corporate world, government and society at large many go a long way in inculcating social values among masses and may motivate them to undertake social ventures.

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