

Social Entrepreneurship In India

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Abstract

Since the Indian government elevated corporate social responsibility (CSR) from a ceremonial obligation to a more practical one, businesses are searching for meaningful ways to contribute to society that would benefit them both financially and socially. Although the idea of social entrepreneurship is not new, it has recently gained unprecedented recognition. As the term "social entrepreneurship" itself makes clear, it's a skillful fusion of social advantages and enterprise. The idea has evolved recently, gaining acceptance in more places and taking on new forms. A number of well-known Indian companies have embraced this style of business and used it to positively impact society. This research covers the ideas of social entrepreneurship, areas that was impacted by social entrepreneurs, possibilities, problems, contributions, and the top social entrepreneurs of this period in order to determine the significance of social entrepreneurs.

Keywords: Social Entrepreneur, Contributions, Challenges, Measures.

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I. Introduction

India holds the top position in the list of countries (including dependencies) by population, with its population equivalent to 17.76% of the total world population. India is ranked 5th in the world's GDP rankings in 2024, boasting an annual GDP growth rate of 6.8%. The country's economy thrives on diversity, propelled by key sectors like information technology, services, agriculture, and manufacturing. (Shantanu et al., 2020) India leverages its broad domestic market, a skilled and tech-savvy workforce, and a growing middle class to drive its economic growth.

(Al-Qudah et al., 2022) The economic progress of any country relies heavily on its industrial development, which in turn hinges on the entrepreneurial skills of its people. Entrepreneurs are typically highly motivated, innovative, and critical thinkers. When these qualities are harnessed to address social issues or drive social change, a social entrepreneur emerges. (M. L. Granados et al., 2011) Social enterprises created by such entrepreneurs are aimed at enhancing societal welfare, thereby contributing to the overall development of the nation. These initiatives often target the bottom of the pyramid, focusing on underprivileged and marginalized groups to bring about positive change at the grassroots level.

II. Social Entrepreneurship

Social entrepreneurship involves individuals, groups, start-ups, or entrepreneurs addressing social, cultural, or environmental issues by developing, funding, and implementing solutions. (Choudhary, 2023) Unlike for-profit entrepreneurs who focus on business metrics like profit, social entrepreneurs measure success by generating a positive impact on society while potentially blending for-profit goals with societal returns.

These initiatives span various organizations, differing in size, aims, and beliefs. They aim to achieve broad social, cultural, and environmental goals, often associated with the voluntary sector. Examples include poverty alleviation, healthcare improvement, and community development.

(Shinde, 2010) Some social enterprises may aim for profit to support their social or cultural missions, not solely for financial gain. For instance, an organization aiding the homeless might run a restaurant to raise funds and provide employment opportunities for them.

Who Is A Social Entrepreneur?

(Ahuja et al., 2015) Social entrepreneurs are innovative individuals who apply business principles to solve social problems and instigate systemic change. (Javed et al., 2019) Their focus is on creating sustainable

models that harmonize profit and purpose, targeting critical issues like poverty, education, healthcare, and environmental sustainability. They use entrepreneurial drive to identify and address social needs, prioritizing societal impact over personal financial gain.

Social entrepreneurs are like economic entrepreneurs in many ways. (Prasetyo & Kistanti, 2020) They identify and pursue opportunities to solve social problems sustainably, continuously innovate, adapt, and learn, act boldly without being limited by available resources, and hold themselves accountable for achieving predetermined social impact while using resources efficiently.

Types Of Social Entrepreneur

1. **Community Social Entrepreneurs:** (Popoviciu et al., 2011) These individuals focus on improving and transforming local communities by tackling specific social issues like poverty, education, or health. They collaborate closely with the community to develop sustainable solutions using local resources and knowledge.
2. **Non-Profit Social Entrepreneurs:** Operating within non-profit organizations, these entrepreneurs use innovative business models and strategies to achieve social objectives. (Alexander Guzman & María Andrea Trujillo, 2008) They rely on grants, donations, and non-commercial funding sources, reinvesting all profits into their social mission.
3. **Corporate Social Entrepreneurs:** (CS Prasad, 2015; Dam et al., 2021) Individuals within large corporations who drive social innovation and responsibility initiatives. They utilize their company's resources and influence to address social and environmental challenges, often aligning these efforts with the company's core business.
4. **Transformational Social Entrepreneurs:** (Chell et al., 2010) These entrepreneurs aim for systemic change by addressing the root causes of social issues. They focus on innovative solutions that challenge societal norms and structures, aiming for lasting impact beyond immediate outcomes.
5. **Global Social Entrepreneurs:** (Kickul & Lyons, 2020) Global social entrepreneurs work internationally, leveraging global networks and technologies to implement solutions across borders. They address universal challenges like poverty, education, and environmental sustainability, aiming for worldwide impact.

III. Objectives

The current research is grounded in distinct goals, which it also substantiates. These objectives are chosen to maintain the significance and logic of the research title. The following are the aims that this study aims to accomplish:

1. To analyse social entrepreneurship within its fundamental structure.
2. To highlight the areas where social entrepreneurs are making an impact within Indian society.
3. To identify the hurdles encountered by social entrepreneurship in India.
4. To conduct a survey of social entrepreneurs in order to comprehend the difficulties they confront

IV. Review Of Literature

Research delves into the essence and implications of social entrepreneurship, alongside the hurdles encountered in this domain, as depicted in his paper titled "Challenges for Social Entrepreneurship" (Sivathanu, 2013). This study was carried out in Pune, involving a sample of 30 social entrepreneurs selected through simple random sampling. The findings indicate a notable rise in social entrepreneurship, particularly benefiting the disadvantaged segments of society. (J. C. Short et al., 2009) Despite numerous challenges, the study underscores substantial opportunities for social entrepreneurs in India

(Bajaj, 2022) A Policy Framework for Social Entrepreneurship in India, makes an effort to create a conceptual framework for social entrepreneurship and to learn about the latest policy developments for social entrepreneurship in India. The author draws the conclusion that while the governments of certain rich countries are making a considerable effort to build policies, most emerging nations, including India, are either unconcerned about or have no need for social entrepreneurship policy frameworks (Satar, 2016).

In their paper "Social Entrepreneurship-Emerging business opportunities," Earnest and Young (2014) notes that " (Agafonow, 2014) Creating value for society in many countries is shifting towards privatisation of public responsibilities as the government's role in the socio-economic domain shifts towards privatisation." Because of this, public funding for charities has decreased, and social entrepreneurship is growing in popularity around the globe. Studies on the activities of social businesses in Europe reveal that their main priorities are community development, education, employment & training, social services, the environment (including cleantech and biosystems), and social services.

As a social problem-solving effort for the necessary worldwide social transformation, social entrepreneurship is developing as a socially innovative company model, according to (Peredo & McLean, 2006). Given its presumed capacity to address social issues, social entrepreneurship has attracted global interest from academicians and industry professionals alike.

Social entrepreneurship in terms of operation and leadership could be applicable to non-profit organisations as much as for-profit social enterprises although in terms of activities and legal entity they are very different," according to a 2015 Swissnex India report titled "Social Entrepreneurship in India- Unveiling the Unlimited Opportunities." In India, there are three types of social entrepreneurship models: hybrid, non-profit, and social for-profit (*Social Entrepreneurship in India by Swissnex India - Issuu, n.d.*)

Successful Social Entrepreneurship In India

Organization	Introduction	Objective	Vision
Shri Mahila Griha Udyog Lijjat Papad	(Kline et al., 2014) It started its journey in 1959 when 7 women borrowed Rs. 80, as seed capital, from a social worker to buy ingredients for their product.	(Kumar, 2021) Women Empowerment and has employed around 45,000 lijjat sisters till date.	The motto of lijjat papad is Sarvodhya which means Ownership.
Childline	It was established by Jeroo Billimoria, a professor at the Tata Institute of social sciences as an experimental project in June 1996.	A NGO in India that operates a first toll-free 24 hour telephone helpline called Childline, for children in distress.	A child-friendly nation that guarantees the rights and protection of all Children
SELCO	It was co-founded by Harish Hande in 1995, alumnus of IIT Kharagpur having 125,000 homes with solar light systems installed, with the goal of reaching over 200,000 homes by 2014.	To eliminate poverty by promoting sustainable technologies in rural India.	To improve the lives of the undeserving and disadvantaged by providing them with safe, dependable electricity through solar power.
Make Love Not Scars	In 2014, Ria Sharma the founder of MLNS returned to India from UK to make a documentary on acid attack survivors. Affected by the story and daily consequences they are facing, in the same year she founded MLNS to support victims of acid attack.	Help the acid attack survivors who are mostly women mentally as well as physically with the help of crowd funding by reaching volunteers and funders on social media platform.	To establish India's first rehabilitation center for survivor of acid attack and held various campaigns to end the sale of acid.
Goonj	Anshu Gupta founded Goonj in 1999 with 67 garments, and it currently handles over 3500 tonnes of material annually. It is a distinct kind of social business. It addresses the problem of clothes and other necessities for rural Indians. The organisation starts by gathering used clothes from cities. After that, everything is sorted and sent to communities where people are in need.	Goonj uses underutilised materials as a vehicle to spark growth with dignity in order to create an equitable relationship of strength, nourishment, and dignity between the cities and villages.	Using urban surplus material as a tool to address basic but neglected issues of the financially and materially impoverished, they envision growing as an idea across regions, economies, and countries; involving them in designing and implementing their own solutions, with their own efforts, knowledge, and dignity, and material as a reward for their participation.
Teach for India	In 2006, Shaheen Mistri the founder of Teach for India felt necessary to address education inequality issue on larger scale, 17 years after joining Akanksha Foundation. A people's movement was important to provide every Indian child with an outstanding education.	To eradicate educational injustice, provide impoverished children with a high-quality education, and develop a pipeline of future leaders who will pursue educational excellence in India.	One day all children will attain an excellent education and belief to remove illiteracy from the basic level in India.
Ayzh	After giving birth to Yasin, Zubaida Bai had an illness as a result of unhygienic birthing conditions, which "caused her to suffer for years." She was motivated by this to assist rural women in need of healthcare access which lead to create a firm Ayzh in 2010.	(Sofi et al., 2021) Our goals are to increase the survival, health, and well-being of the most vulnerable women, infants, and girls in the world by promoting ACCESS to basic necessities, ADHERENCE to international standards of care and best practices, and ADVOCACY that makes women's health a central global issue. As a little social firm, ayzh has succeeded in breaking into the challenging Indian health sector.	Vision of impacting one billion women, babies and girls by 2030. With the intention of providing the poorest women in India with access to a clean birth kit in a purse and a safe.

Resham Sutra	Resham Sutra is a social company that was established in 2015 by Kunal and Ratan Vaid with the goal of enhancing the conditions of rural textile makers in India. It has created solar-powered machinery that can boost income and production for rural textile manufacturers by up to 400%.	Bring innovations that raise quality and production to help rural producers earn more money and live more comfortably.	(Subherwal, 2020; Yadav et al., 2019) To use sustainable innovation to allow, empower, and organise the local underprivileged rural artisan community towards self-sufficiency and financial independence.
NextDrop	In 2011, NextDrop was established with a trial project in the Karnataka district of Hubli-Dharwad by Anu Sridharan. After four years, we have 70,000 Karnataka-based users registered with us.	As a for-profit company with a humanitarian objective, NextDrop aims to solve the world's water issues. In order to enhance urban water distribution in developing nations, NextDrop crowdsources water data and develops algorithms and visualisations.	Our goal is to establish a continuous cycle of prompt service delivery and feedback gathering by connecting the public sector, private industry, and government utilities. We want to fill up all the gaps that exist between. And we make an effort to use the newest, most advanced technologies to do this.
BOLLANT INDUSTRIES	With backing from Ratan Tata, Srikanth Bolla founded Bollant Industries in 2012, producing area-based goods and employing several hundred individuals with disabilities.	Eliminating obstacles to work for over a hundred million individuals with physical and mental disabilities and offering competitive, long-term jobs to Indians with and without education.	Establishing a viable business with seventy individuals with disabilities employed. We need to change the way the world views the skills of people with disabilities and provide more sustainable choices for people with disabilities everywhere.

Source: (framed by author)

Areas Where Social Entrepreneurship Is Making An Impact

Social entrepreneurship has a broad and significant influence on society. Solutions to some of the most important issues facing the world may be found by social entrepreneurs by fusing the force of business with social and environmental goals. The beneficial benefits of social entrepreneurship on society are manifold, ranging from alleviating poverty and inequality to enhancing healthcare and educational opportunities and reducing the consequences of climate change. Some areas where social entrepreneurship is making an impact are,

- 1. Job Creation and Social Inclusion:** Social inclusion and employment creation are greatly impacted by social entrepreneurship. By encouraging a shift in perspective, it tackles problems including racial prejudice, physical handicap, and gender inequity. Businesses are actively encouraging inclusiveness, bringing underrepresented groups into the workforce, and eventually changing social norms. Social companies are recognised by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) as intermediaries that help close the gap between the unemployed and the labour market. A number of instances demonstrate this constructive shift: companies that hire people with disabilities and encourage gender diversity in sectors that have historically been controlled by men.
- 2. Financial Inclusion and Microfinance:** (Thompson, 2008) A significant fraction of the population in India, more than any other country, lives below the poverty line, making financial inclusion a critical concern. By offering credit to those without collateral, financial knowledge, or access to conventional loans, social entrepreneurs have addressed this issue through microfinance. The advancement of the economically disadvantaged has been greatly aided by institutions such as SKS Microfinance in India and Grameen Bank in Bangladesh.
- 3. Addressing Climate Change:** (Wang et al., 2020) The over-exploitation of resources and environmental deterioration have led to climate change, which is a worldwide disaster. By encouraging sustainable methods, creativity, and teamwork, social entrepreneurs have proactively addressed this problem. (Hoang et al., 2020) Social entrepreneurship has the ability to help mitigate climate change, as seen by projects like Poonsap Suanmuang's work in Thailand, which focuses on protecting environment through sustainable methods.
- 4. Healthcare Access:** Access to inexpensive, high-quality healthcare is a fundamental human right, yet it is denied to billions of people. Financial limitations sometimes make it difficult for governments to offer solutions. Prominent social entrepreneurs, such as Bill Gates, have directed their resources towards addressing vital healthcare concerns including HIV/AIDS and TB through the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Nonetheless, a comprehensive strategy for healthcare is required, prioritising prevention over treatment.

V. Challenges Faced By Social Entrepreneurship In India

Even while social entrepreneurs operate in extremely fulfilling fields, there are challenges. (Oberoi, 2016) India's social entrepreneurs confront a range of difficulties, including lack of government assistance, unfavourable financial institution attitude, political meddling, and similar issues. All of these issues obstruct the growth of social entrepreneurship by putting obstacles in their way. The following is a discussion of some of the main obstacles that social entrepreneurs must overcome:

1. **Absence of financial support:** (Singh, 2022) The absence of funding sources continues to be one of the issues facing Indian business. SME's that provide a distinct product or service make it more difficult to obtain financing from the well-known financial institutions. This is a grave circumstance and a major factor in India's underdevelopment of social entrepreneurship.
2. **Inadequately trained labour force:** Social enterprise alone is faced with this extremely special problem. (P Sarathi Roy, 2012) People often enter the workforce in order to earn a good wage and benefits, but social entrepreneurship makes this more difficult. Since obtaining social rather than self-advantage or benefits is the main goal of social entrepreneurship. It is rather difficult to recruit employees in this situation for the company.
3. **Insufficient knowledge about entrepreneurship:** The primary means of encouraging entrepreneurship is education, although India continues to use a traditional educational framework. India's entrepreneurial sector is still struggling and undeveloped as a result of the country's continued absence of specific course content on entrepreneurial growth in the educational system.
4. **Absence of government assistance:** The government's lack of interest in and support for social entrepreneurs is a significant barrier to the growth of social business in India. (Shinde, 2010) People are not as interested in or as enthusiastic about being social entrepreneurs as they once were because of the rigorous rules and regulations designed specifically for them.
5. **Absence of strategy:** In India, social Lack of planning is one of the biggest issues Indian social entrepreneurs deal with. It takes a lot of thought and perseverance to bring about change in society. (Dam et al., 2021) Due to a shortage of trained labour, social entrepreneurs encounter difficulties creating appropriate business strategies, which hinders them from reaching their objectives.
6. **Absence of cultural and social support:** Social entrepreneurs in India occasionally have to deal with social and cultural obstacles. Despite their efforts to effect social change, they have been unable to effectively manage their business because of a lack of public knowledge and acceptance. The neighbourhood was unable to distinguish between a social enterprise and a typical profit-oriented firm. Therefore, in order to fulfil their objective of bringing about social change, a social entrepreneur must become conscious of their business within society.

VI. Measures To Face Challenges Effectively

Even if this is not an exhaustive list, social entrepreneurship still faces a number of additional difficulties. The key premise is how to get over the obstacles that India's social entrepreneurship faces. A few actions or strategies may be taken to address the current issues facing social entrepreneurship in India:

1. **Appropriate training and development facilities:** (Management, 2016) The government needs to set up a few specialised councils and facilities to promote social entrepreneurship in a methodical manner. While some institutions focus on economic entrepreneurship, others need to be opened up to social entrepreneurship as well.
2. **Mass awareness creation:** In order to prevent people from confusing social entrepreneurship with social work, steps should be done to raise public understanding about social entrepreneurship. For the same purpose, various vehicles, social media, and media can be used.
3. **Infrastructure and basic facilities provision:** The government and other interested parties must endeavour to provide the necessities for social entrepreneurship. These resources have the potential to inspire individuals to pursue social entrepreneurship, which will double the phenomenon's growth.
4. **Programmes for the development of social entrepreneurship:** (Agafonow, 2014) Just like for the development of entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurship programmes need to be arranged periodically to support social entrepreneurship. The total motivation of social entrepreneurs will rise with the support of such an organisation.

VII. Conclusion

Scholars, practitioners, and legislators are becoming more and more interested in social entrepreneurship. This essay has provided an understanding of the definition of social entrepreneurship in India as well as a few instances of it. Additionally, it explains the challenges of social entrepreneurship and suggests potential measures for its progressive solutions. Several Indian businesspeople have stepped up to take on and effectively handle some of the world's most difficult difficulties in India, including Srikanth Bolla, Anu Sridharan, Zubaida Bai, Shaheen Mistri, Harish Hande, and others.

The goal of these social entrepreneurs is to improve everyone's quality of life within society. The various ideas surrounding social entrepreneurship are a fascinating subject, and reading this article will help us get closer to encouraging social entrepreneurship as a means of producing both social and economic value as well as an area of study. With more young social entrepreneurs carving their own paths, India's future seems brighter.

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