

Chapter 3

The Social Entrepreneur: Personality Traits and Motivation Factors in Social Entrepreneurship

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ABSTRACT

Although social entrepreneurs have some common characteristics with business or commercial entrepreneurs, undoubtedly they differ in many ways. In this chapter, social entrepreneurs are highlighted with their core personality traits and motivation factors that are different from the other entrepreneurs. In the beginning, the definitions of social entrepreneurs put forward by different authorities were presented. Immediately after these definitions, the three main typologies—social bricoleurs, social constructionists, social engineers—and their characteristics were examined. By its nature and purpose, a social enterprise needs some specific entrepreneurial traits and driving factors. In the last section of this chapter, these personality traits and motivation factors were discussed.

INTRODUCTION

Today, on the one hand scarcity of natural resources against the growing population, the dizzying speed of change, technological improvements and on the other hand financial, political and environmental crises cause to serious social problems such as poverty, unemployment, disability, epidemics or environmental pollution (Bornstein & Davis, 2010). The existence of social enterprises provides a meaningful value in reducing these mentioned problems.

When considering sustainability, there are different definitions and interpretations about social enterprises are included in the literature. Providing social benefits to society, managing social issues effectively are accepted as the most important aims of social enterprises in some literature (Weerawardena & Sullivan Mort, 2001) but in others, social enterprises are defined as sustainable ventures (Wolk, 2008) and their primary aim is to achieve sustainability by realizing both economic and social missions as like in profit organizations (Zhang & Swanson, 2014). According to Burkett (2010) financial sustainability and

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social impact are two precursors of social enterprises' sustainability. Alter and Dawans (2006) associate the sustainability of social enterprises with the integration which places among leadership competence, financial capacity and work-oriented culture (Jamburia, 2013).

Although there are so many factors influence the success of social entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurs' personality traits and motivator factors may seen as antecedant factors. According to Bikse et al. (2015) social entrepreneurs have social vision, high sense of social responsibility, wide range of entrepreneurial skills and social competences. They diagnose and solve social problems not only at local area, but also they are in tendency to expand their activities globally (Bikse, Rivza, & Riemere, 2015).

Risk taking, innovativeness, self confidence and achievement orientation are some of similar personality traits of social entrepreneurs with business entrepreneurs. The nature and main theme of social enterprises require different personality traits such as empathy, compassion and altruism. In terms of motivation intrinsic rewards are more effective than extrinsic ones on the motivation of social entrepreneurs. Prosocial motivation, recognizing social opportunities, personal life experince and close support of the actors in social network can be defined as prominent motivating factors of social entrepreneurs.

BACKGROUND

Social entrepreneurs are different because their main aim is to establish a business which completely concentrates on social concerns, produce sustainable and effective benefits to society. Some of them try to help physically or mentally ill or disabled people, the others interest with environment protection, hunger and poverty, some of them provide education facilities to dropouts, produce medical and assitive devices for needs to ease their life. They place great importance to social values as well as financial ones and invest earnings to their own social mission instead of sharing with stakeholders (Boschee, 2006).

Some may have been influenced by a role model or guide behaviors or considerations in which they have close relationships in childhood, and may have decided to be social entrepreneurs by directing this role model.

Before becoming social entrepreneur, some of them may be working in different professions as designers, engineers, teachers, doctors or business people. They shift to social entrepreneurship because of family crises or problems in their immediate environment. On the other hand, some of them may have been affected by the behaviors or thoughts of a role model, with whom they had a close relationship during childhood. With the guidance of this role model, they may have decided to become a social entrepreneur. Alice Teppe Marlin, is one of these social entrepreneurs. At her young ages, her father and she regularly visited the Lower East Side of New York City where a large number of poor people live in difficult conditions. Whereby these visits, she had the opportunity to meet these people and their needs closely. Today she is founder of Social Accountability International (Bornstein & Davis, 2010).

Social Accountability International aims to enhance and advance the human rights and working conditions at work places in all over the world. SAI established SA8000 Standard which reflects labor provisions contained within the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions and currently helps secure ethical working conditions for two million workers. Forced and Compulsory Labor, Freedom of Association and Right to Collective Bargaining, Child Labor, Discrimination, Health and Safety, Working Hours, Management System and Remunera-

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