Chapter 4
Social Entrepreneurship Perspective of Social Innovation

ABSTRACT

Social entrepreneurship is often practised in the context of social enterprises which are recognized as vehicles of social innovation. The objectives of this chapter are to describe the trends in social entrepreneurship research as it relates to social innovation and to identify distinguishing characteristics of social innovations arising from social enterprises. To this end, social entrepreneurship research is observed to be consolidating its position as a prominent knowledge cluster within social innovation research, particularly after 2010. The citation network uncovered the presence of nine research domains within social entrepreneurship, organized along three lines of research focus. These are motives, mission, and outcomes of social value creation process; co-creation through networks and partnership; and the effects of institutional actors on the social entrepreneurial process. Social innovation from the social entrepreneurship perspective has been understood as contributing to capacity building among people and communities in resource-constrained environments.

INTRODUCTION

Social entrepreneurship engages in social value creation (Dwivedi and Weerawardena 2018) by identifying innovative and self-sustainable solutions to social problems (Fernandes and Catalão-Lopes 2019). Social entrepreneurship discourse is often concerned with social value delivery approaches, social missions and enterprises, the development of solutions to long-standing problems, and the improvement of communities' living conditions (Macke, Sarate, Domeneghini, and da Silva 2018). Research on social value creation through social entrepreneurship is growing exponentially (Dwivedi and Weerawardena 2018) and positioning itself well within social innovation literature. Indeed, social entrepreneurship and social innovation share many similarities. For example, both can be viewed as a process of identifying and implementing solutions to social issues and needs (Phillips et al. 2015). In general, scholars agree that they are closely linked (Ridley-Duff and Bull 2019) although this is not always be the case (Petrella and Richez-Battesti 2014). Social entrepreneurship is defined in numerous ways. "[Social Entrepreneurship] combines the passion of a social mission with an image of business-like discipline, innovation and determination […]" (Dees 1998b, p. 1). Social entrepreneurship is a dynamic process of social value creation in the market and community pursued by an individual or a team bearing an entrepreneurial mindset and a desire for achievement to address a social challenge (Perrini, Vurro, and Costanzo 2010). Social entrepreneurship is a process of pursuing opportunities through entrepreneurial activities which does not necessarily involve the creation of a new venture (Bacq and Janssen 2011). Social innovation, by contrast, is the collective pursuit of a social goal, involving dynamic interplay between actors whose intentions are to create significant change in systems or institutions.

The social entrepreneurship knowledge cluster comprises of two key lines of research inquiry. The first focuses on the social entrepreneur and social change (e.g. Bornstein 2007; Leadbeater 1997; Martin and Osberg 2007) and the second investigates social innovation within diverse business models. The latter, in particular, offers insights into open innovation and social enterprises as business models (e.g. Chesbrough 2006), social innovation in companies (e.g. Dawson and Daniel 2010), and social innovation as corporate social responsibility (e.g. Fernando 2007). These domains of research inquiry continue to attract academic attention and generate considerable variation

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