


# Chapter 14

## Social Entrepreneurship in Himalayas: A Case of Ladakhi Women's Travel Company, India

**Narendra Kumar**

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3325-3448>

*Amity University, Noida, India*

**Swati Sharma**

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2949-2363>

*Amity University, Noida, India*

### ABSTRACT

*This chapter explores the impact of social entrepreneurship in the Himalayan region, focusing specifically on the Ladakhi Women's Travel Company (LWTC), a pioneering organization in Ladakh, India, dedicated to promoting sustainable tourism while empowering local women. The study examines the socio-economic and cultural challenges faced by the women of Ladakh and how LWTC addresses these through its innovative business model. Through qualitative analysis and case study methodology, this chapter highlights the successes and challenges of LWTC, offering insights into the broader implications of social entrepreneurship in remote and marginalized communities. The findings suggest that social enterprises like LWTC can play a crucial role in achieving sustainable development goals, particularly in regions with limited access to mainstream economic opportunities. This study contributes to the growing body of literature on social entrepreneurship by providing a detailed account of how a localized, women-led initiative can drive socio-economic transformation in the Himalayas.*

### INTRODUCTION

Social entrepreneurship has gained significant attention in recent years as a means to address social and environmental challenges while also promoting economic development (Ahmad & Bajwa, 2023; Antoniuk et al., 2023; Arejiogbe et al., 2023; Jørgensen et al., 2021). Several studies (Mahato et al., 2024; Ramsuraj, 2023; Scheyvens & Russell, 2012; Tam et al., 2024) have explored different aspects

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of social entrepreneurship to understand its impact and potential for fostering positive change. (Ihsan et al., 2023) emphasize the importance of education in fostering an entrepreneurial spirit among the younger generation. The study highlights the role of education in preparing individuals to face challenges and adapt to rapid economic changes, ultimately encouraging entrepreneurial endeavors. (Hussain et al., 2023) conducted a systematic review of the literature on crowdfunding for social entrepreneurship. Crowdfunding has emerged as a popular method for social entrepreneurs to raise funds and support their initiatives, showcasing the evolving landscape of financing options for social ventures. (Mir et al., 2023) focused on the influence of perceptual and demographic factors on the likelihood of individuals becoming social entrepreneurs in Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries. By examining individual perceptions and characteristics, the study aimed to identify factors that contribute to the decision to pursue social entrepreneurship. (Wei et al., 2023) explored the relationship between natural disasters, personal attributes, and social entrepreneurship from an attention-based view. The study delved into how personal characteristics and external factors, such as natural disasters, can shape individuals' attention towards social entrepreneurship opportunities. (Iskandar et al., 2023) examined sustainable HR practices in Indonesian MSMEs from a social entrepreneurship perspective. By exploring the interactions between training, recruitment, employee engagement, and social impact on local communities, the study aimed to understand how MSMEs can integrate sustainable practices into their operations. (Nuchian et al., 2024) focused on assessing the social impact performance of social enterprises to identify characteristics of an ideal social entrepreneurship model. By utilizing a contemporary design and triangulation approach, the study aimed to validate information from various sources to understand the key attributes of successful social entrepreneurship ventures. (Prabawanti et al., 2023) analyzed the role of stakeholders in the development of social entrepreneurship. Understanding the contributions and dynamics of stakeholders is crucial for fostering a supportive ecosystem for social entrepreneurship to thrive and create sustainable impact. (Tam et al., 2024) explored the mediating effect of psychological strengths and resilience on enhancing youth employability through social entrepreneurship education and training. By focusing on psychological factors, the study aimed to understand how building resilience and strengths can empower youth to pursue social entrepreneurship opportunities and enhance their employability.

## **Woman Entrepreneurship in Ladakh**

Ladakh, a region in Northern India known for its stunning landscapes and unique culture, has seen several initiatives promoting sustainable tourism and empowering local women. We have collected some of the prominent organizations that work for the betterment of Ladakh people with a major focus on Ladakhi women.

- **SECMOL (Students' Educational and Cultural Movement of Ladakh)**

Founded by Sonam Wangchuk, SECMOL focuses on reforming education in Ladakh. Beyond education, SECMOL runs eco-friendly campus tours and promotes sustainable living practices. SECMOL encourages the participation of local women in its programs. Women are trained in sustainable farming, solar energy usage, and handicrafts, enabling them to generate income and gain confidence.

- **Ladakh Women's Travel Company (LWTC)**

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