


# Chapter 9

## The Impact of Vocational Training on Rural Social Entrepreneurship

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### ABSTRACT

*Social entrepreneurship leverages the strategies and insights typically utilized by start-up founders and entrepreneurs to create businesses that foster social change or address social issues. The evolution of the social entrepreneurship ecosystem is heavily reliant on such experimentation. Currently, social entrepreneurs are actively engaged in addressing significant societal issues. This paper aims to explore the essential vocational skills required by rural social entrepreneurs and assess their impact. Furthermore, it seeks to contribute existing body of literature on this topic. The study will concentrate on selected rural social entrepreneurs in Odisha, India, with a primary emphasis on the effects of vocational training on these individuals. Data collected from the study areas will be analyzed using the weighted perception method, and the findings will be compared with those from previous similar research. A simple random sampling technique will be utilized for data collection.*

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## INTRODUCTION

India occupies the foremost position among nations (including dependencies) in terms of population, accounting for 17.76% of the global populace. In 2024, India is positioned 5th in the global GDP rankings, exhibiting an annual GDP growth rate of 6.8%. The nation's economy is characterized by its diversity, driven by significant sectors such as information technology, services, agriculture, and manufacturing (Shantanu et al., 2020). India capitalizes on its extensive domestic market, a proficient and technologically adept workforce, and an expanding middle class to foster economic advancement (Al-Qudah et al., 2022). The economic development of any nation is significantly influenced by its industrial growth, which is contingent upon the entrepreneurial capabilities of its citizens. Entrepreneurs are generally characterized by their high motivation, innovation, and critical thinking skills. When these attributes are directed towards addressing social challenges or instigating social change, social entrepreneurs emerge (M. L. Granados et al., 2011). The social enterprises established by these individuals aim to improve societal welfare, thus contributing to the nation's overall progress. These initiatives frequently focus on the most disadvantaged segments of society, targeting underprivileged and marginalized groups to effectuate positive transformations at the grassroots level.

Social entrepreneurship encompasses individuals, collectives, startups, or entrepreneurs who tackle social, cultural, or environmental challenges through the creation, financing, and execution of innovative solutions (Choudhary, 2023). In contrast to traditional for-profit entrepreneurs, who prioritize financial metrics such as profit margins, social entrepreneurs evaluate their success based on the positive societal impact they generate, often integrating profit-oriented objectives with social benefits. These initiatives vary widely in terms of organizational size, objectives, and philosophies, and they strive to fulfill extensive social, cultural, and environmental aspirations, frequently linked to the voluntary sector. Notable examples include efforts aimed at reducing poverty, enhancing healthcare, and fostering community development (Shinde, 2010). Some social enterprises may pursue profit as a means to sustain their social or cultural objectives, rather than for the sake of financial gain alone. For example, an organization dedicated to assisting the homeless might operate a restaurant to generate revenue while simultaneously creating job opportunities for this population.

Social entrepreneurs are characterized as innovative individuals who leverage business strategies to address social challenges and promote systemic transformation (Ahuja et al., 2015). Their primary objective is to develop sustainable frameworks that integrate profit with purpose, focusing on pressing issues such as poverty, education, healthcare, and environmental sustainability (Javed et al., 2019). By harnessing their entrepreneurial spirit, they seek to recognize and fulfill social needs, placing

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