EVALUATION OF SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS IN INDIA

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INTRODUCTION

When Gregory Dees joined the Harvard Business School (HBS) he proposed a new course on social entrepreneurship for the 1989–1990 academic years. It was instantly rejected. Four years later, he reintroduced the course with the title ‘social entrepreneurship’. His research director at HBS said that initiating a course like ‘social entrepreneurship’ was nothing less than committing ‘career suicide’ and recommended it be re-titled to ‘Entrepreneurship in the social sector’ (Worsham 2012). None, including Dees, expected that the field would grow at such a rapid pace it would become the talk of universities and national governments across the globe as a means to fight poverty.

Since social entrepreneurship is driven by market forces, it has started receiving increased attention, especially in the last decade of the new millennium. Governments across the globe, including Europe, the United States and Asia now look forward to promote social entrepreneurship as a driver of innovation that offers a set of solutions to the complex social problems that the world faces today (Defourny and Nyssens 2008). Historically, social entrepreneurship has been placed in the third sector where the role of government institutions is minimal. However, the response of the modern State to social entrepreneurship is quite impressive. For example, the creation of the Office of Social Innovation and Civic Participation by the Obama Administration (Weber 2012), the Social Innovation aspect within the Europe 2020 Flagship Initiative Innovation Union (Zeyen, et al. 2012) or the Indian Government’s plan to set up a venture capital fund of USD 200 million1,2, on impact investment. With increased attention at the field level and with the prediction of growth by national governments, a space has opened up for academic institutions to study the phenomenon and initiate courses to nurture professionalism in the social entrepreneurship space.

The increase in activity around social entrepreneurship is attributed to several reasons including (i) social entrepreneurship is showcased as an alternative to the existing economic order that maximizes financial returns on investment by exploiting market dynamics and opportunities ii) increased attention into the issues related to sustainability: The World Commission on Environment and Development (1987), which is known for its Brundtland Report, emphasized the need for the sustainable development that businesses at different levels need to adopt3. iii) Multiple exclusions: Ever since the Second World War, the societies are scattered based on different dynamics; the lack of opportunities to conceal such problems and the lack of commitment by the scattered communities continue to be a significant problem that would widen the ripple between and among the communities.

With such a background, there is a growing demand that organizations should engage in multiple strategies to achieve sustainable solutions to the social and environmental problems on the one hand, and to foster the needs of the bottom of the pyramid on the other (Haugh and Talwar 2010). Under these circumstances, social entrepreneurship is found to be an innovative solution that is being adopted in several parts of the world and is considered to be a game changer (Zeyen, et al. 2012).

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2 The failure of State at local and national level, apart from markets to address the social needs, is considered to be a prime reason for the creation of social enterprise ventures, Thompson (2002). As part of the growing momentum various national governments have now started to promote such a vibrant field.
3 There is a growing pressure from the global actors to attain sustainable development, and accordingly, the firms which are in operation seem to be quite convinced with the idea. But operational and strategic issues keep them away from what they aim. However, a recent 2010 United Nations Global Compact (UNGC) study by Accenture found that 93% of global CEOs think sustainability issues will be critical to the future success of their business and 96 % believe sustainability issues should be fully integrated into the strategy and operations of a company (Grayson 2010).
SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP: A DEFINITION

In spite of many scholarly efforts to define social entrepreneurship (Dees 2001, Nicholls 2006, Peredo and Mclean 2006), there are differences of opinion that could even be tagged as disputes (Pearce and Kay 2003, Mair and Marti 2006, Nicholls 2006, Nicholls and Cho 2006, Hill et al. 2010). However, for the understanding of current research, we propose the following discussion.

In very general terms, it is believed that ‘Social entrepreneurs strive to address societal problems’ (Dees 1998, Seelos and Mair 2007, Zahra et al. 2009). Social entrepreneurship as a concept denotes a business model of non-governmental entities, aimed at fulfilling social issues and needs, by employing market-oriented and income generation methods that would achieve sustainability (Lehner 2011). Both put together, social entrepreneurs and their enterprises aim to create value in the society by promoting sustainable solutions to neglected societal issues (Zeyen, et al. 2012). In the process, the role that these social entrepreneurs undertake would not simply end when they just promote solutions. Such solutions need to be socially relevant, environmentally friendly and financially viable (Dees 2001). For some authors, social entrepreneurship is a vehicle for creation and promotion of social change (Waddock and Post 1991, Mair and Marti 2006), in the case of others it is propagation of incremental improvements in the efficiency of nonprofits (Dees 2001, Chell 2007). Very few scholars conceive social entrepreneurship as a practice that a person or persons undertake exclusively or partially to create social value of some kind (Peredo and McLean 2006).

From the market’s perspective, social entrepreneurs touch up on problems that have emerged due to the failures of the markets and the State (Austin et al. 2006). Further, Dees (1998) and Austin et al. (2006) opine that the role of social entrepreneurship is balanced between reducing, rather than eliminating the causes and consequences of market failures. It could be thought that social entrepreneurs should get involved in such transformation that is well understood, as demonstrated by Dees in his language of ‘art of creating social change’ (Worsham 2012). In general, social entrepreneurs have two objectives; to solve identified social problem and to create self-sustaining organizations. Thus, social enterprises are known to have a dual identity also referred to as a ‘hybridity’ (Austin et al. 2006, Certo and Miller 2008, Nicholls 2010). In the social entrepreneurship discourse, there has been a lot of debate taking place within the academia to assess the merits and demerits of social entrepreneurship as a field and how it differs from the traditional entrepreneurship.

SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION

According to the Oxford dictionary, Education is a “process of teaching, training and learning, especially in schools or colleges, to improve knowledge and develop skills”. It includes a process or a cycle of learning and practicing such knowledge and values that are relevant to promote human existence. Paulo Frier (1970), believes that, “Education either functions as an instrument which is used to facilitate integration of the younger generation into the logic of the present system and bring about conformity or, it becomes the practice of freedom, the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality, and discover how to participate in the
transformation of their world.” With this, it is clear to understand that education should provide ways for youth to understand existing social order and integrate in the context in which it is present or, to take an active role to lead such transformations that are relevant to promote human existence.

On such a move, any education should prove to realize individuals or learners to take up active role in building the society. But most of the education in the current social order trains professionals to be a part of job hunting in reputed businesses or government agencies. However, a few courses and programs were recently launched to produce change agents. These courses offer different perspectives to the learners to be proactive in bringing change in different spheres. Likewise, courses on social entrepreneurship aim at preparing new change agents not only to lead social organizations, but also to develop such organizations led by others. Though there are many programs or courses that deal with producing such change agents, we did a thorough analysis of existing courses on social entrepreneurship and literature came up with a set of skills that the education should train the students on. Accordingly, we have adopted a running definition of social entrepreneurship education.

Educational programs in social entrepreneurship aim to equip graduates with the vision, knowledge and skills to address social problems. While the concepts covered may vary as per the course objectives, the underlying principle of all such courses is to train students to create social value. Thus, we propose that the ‘social entrepreneurship education’ should aim at promoting the field of social entrepreneurship in different capacities - research, necessary publicity and teaching the aspiring students and social entrepreneurs. Hence, social entrepreneurship education ideally should have four elements viz. social context, entrepreneurship element, managerial expertise and social innovation context.

**RATIONAL FOR HAVING SUCH A DEFINITION:**

1. Social context: In order to understand what is social in social entrepreneurship, the social context from which the problems need to be addressed has to be clearly dealt with.

2. Entrepreneurship: As social entrepreneurship is all about creating sustainable social organizations that requires entrepreneurial thought process (casual or effectual), entrepreneurship becomes a crucial element of social entrepreneurship education.

3. Managerial context: As Schumpeter rightly said, once a social entrepreneur creates a sustainable organization, he/she will become a manager who will run the show. Though the social entrepreneur may continue to experiment with certain innovations, time and again he/she has to become a manager to deal with different issues; especially when the organization is in nascent stage.

4. Social innovation: This is highly perceived as a significant proposition in social entrepreneurship discourse, as innovation would bring long lasting and sustainable methods of addressing social problems.
For understanding the need for social entrepreneurship educational programs, their history and need for such evaluation of these programs, we carried out a thorough review of literature. The review also highlights the ways in which such programs can be evaluated.

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Though the practice of social entrepreneurship may have grown as the need arose in various countries, such activity was first recorded in 1970s (Banks 1972) and became more prevalent after the 1980s. In the early part of last decade, social enterprises in European Union were seen as a set of organizations created to promote work integration and were named Work Integration Social Enterprises (WISE). The Finnish Act on Social Enterprise, passed in 2003, and the Act on Social Cooperatives in Poland passed in 2006 projected such a trend as it reserved social enterprises to the field of work integration (Defourny and Nyssens 2008). In Europe, social enterprise gained ground in the 1990s and has close links with the Italian cooperative movement. In the US too, the concepts of social entrepreneurship and social enterprise met with a very positive response in the early 1990s (Defourny and Nyssens 2008).

Though Ashoka Foundation took the lead in promoting social entrepreneurship in the early 1980s, the social enterprise initiative of Harvard Business School in 1993 brought value addition. The Yale University program for non-profit organizations launched in 1978 was considered as a significant move in the field (Mars and Garrison 2010). However, the credit for nurturing the field within the third sector should go to the Centre for Advancement of Social Entrepreneurship in Fuqua School of Business at Duke University, Yale University School of Management, Babson College, Sterling College and Haas School of Business, the last of which hosts a global social venture competition (Mars and Garrison 2010). Since then, major universities have developed research and training programs, such as the EMES European Research Network, the Social Enterprise Knowledge Network (SEKN), formed by Latin American Business Schools, and the Harvard Business School.

The rigor these academic institutions created has attracted people from various backgrounds. The number of social entrepreneurs attending mainstream entrepreneurship courses has risen sharply in recent years as social enterprises have assumed a stronger identity and more clearly demonstrated its potential for addressing social issues (Tracey et al, 2005). In its September 2007 issue, Fortune Small Business indicated that budding social entrepreneurs should seriously consider programs offered by Babson College, Columbia University, Cornell University, Duke University, Harvard University, New York University, Stanford University, University of Arizona, University of California Berkeley, University of Colorado at Boulder, and Yale University (Dumaine and Pofeldt 2007). This links both academia and practice where the social entrepreneurs learn for the improvement of the society.

Social enterprise clubs and social entrepreneurship business plan competitions are now commonplace, particularly in business schools (Olszak and Sidorick 2003). These competitions may range from a small college level competitions worth USD 40,000 to 50,000 as promoted by Global Social Venture Competition (GSVC). The Dell Social Innovation Challenge has amounts up to USD 100,000. There are many such social venture competitions being organized across the globe to promote social enterprise.
Tracey and Phillips (2007) believe that there are a number of ways to incorporate a social enterprise dimension within traditional entrepreneurship programs. Before developing separate programs or centers on social entrepreneurship, many universities tried to bring a curriculum change within the business programs by including social entrepreneurship programs. There have also been significant efforts to integrate sustainability in management education (Benn and Dunphy 2009, Rusinko 2010). However, in most of the cases, emphasis has been on issues such as environmental and economic sustainability (Bansal and Roth 2000; Christmann 2004; Porter and Cordoba 2009) and business schools have paid more attention to the economic issues and laid less emphasis on the human issues associated with managing an organization (Giacakone and Thompson 2006).

The literature indicates that business schools took the lead in promoting social entrepreneurship. A survey carried out by the Aspen Institute for Business Education (2008) found that 35 of the 112 MBA Programs surveyed had a concentration or a major that focused on social and environmental issues. Cheryl Dorsey, President of Echoing Green, a foundation that provides seed money to social entrepreneurs, estimated that there are more than 80 major universities with courses in social entrepreneurship (Murray 2007). The figures show that, as of 2011, more than 148 institutions were teaching some aspect of social entrepreneurship (Kim and Leu 2011). This growth is supported by the students’ increased interest and demand (Worsham 2012).

Several significant factors drive this growth in academia. First and foremost, we must credit it to the increased demand by social entrepreneurs seeking business skills due to the sustainable development discussion. There is an increased focus on social issues within organizations, and students’ have shown strong commitment and desire for a more meaningful education (Mort, et al. 2003, Tracey and Phillips 2007). However, as a matter of setback, social entrepreneurship as an academic discipline faces a lack of agreement among the faculty within universities on the concepts, dimensions and competencies that students need (Short et al. 2009).

Despite the increased popularity, Bloom (2006) denotes that academic field of social entrepreneurship has ‘no clear academic home in most universities’. Social entrepreneurship programs within universities tend to exist in multiple academic domains, often involving faculty from the humanities, social and behavioral sciences, public policy, sociology, urban studies, and management (Miller et al. 2012). However, Dees with his decades of experience in the field believes that business schools are better placed to teach social entrepreneurship compared to any other schools. Nevertheless, such schools need to have faculty from multidisciplinary backgrounds (Worshan 2012).

In order to maintain its significance in the growing practitioner side of social entrepreneurship, academia has to develop students with the necessary competencies that would enhance their capabilities and effectiveness to be social entrepreneurs (Rubin and Dierdorff 2009, Rynes et al. 2003). In addition, social entrepreneur and social enterprises need a dedicated team that works restlessly in promotion of the organizations. This team may consist of top management, middle level managers and key stakeholders. In general, social enterprises, being a hybrid set of organizations, would need two kinds of employees- a) service delivery, and b) supporting staff. Supporting staff would help in running the organizations such as accountants, drivers etc. whereas service delivery staff would be part of the strategy and service delivery such as the middle level managers who are directly in touch with communities. Candidates coming with expertise in social entrepreneurship education must fulfill the roles related to service delivery staff.
There has been a growing debate and discussion that the academic programs on social entrepreneurship should address certain crucial issues such as balancing and managing both commercial and social missions. Students should be shown how to change tracks and choose between social and financial returns and priorities of investment. They may further need to maintain internal conflicts that may originate due to a clash between commercial and social mission of the organization. For example, Lokesh Meal, a budding social entrepreneur who is currently incubated at the Incubation Center at TISS initially hesitated to collect money for the purified water that his venture supplied to the rural villagers in Rajasthan. He had a question—’How can I charge for water?’ So, students should be sensitized about the way impact is achieved by clearly balancing decisions based on social and commercial priorities.

As mentioned above, global movements to incorporate social entrepreneurship as an academic program have influenced many Indian scholars and academicians to work on creating such programs in their respective institutions/ universities. Some existing universities such as Tata Institute of Social Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurship Development Institute have initiated programs on social entrepreneurship. New institutions such as Ambedkar University, Delhi and Deshpande Foundations have created such programs during the current academic years. Currently there are about 26 academic institutions running various programs on social entrepreneurship in India. These programs range from a non-accredited program, a one credit course to a full time master's program. These academic programs generate thousands of graduates annually equipping them with various competencies needed to promote social entrepreneurship. The competencies being taught in these academic programs seem to be diverse, going by the objectives and vision of such programs. Most programs may intend to create social entrepreneurs; however, the outcome seems to fail in achieving the end goals due to the various hurdles. The key hurdle such programs face is lack of a supportive ecosystem that would make these trained graduates take a role in the social movement.

Indian academic programs on social entrepreneurship are about ten years old. In the last few years there has been a significant growth in the number of social enterprises in India (Manimala and Bhati 2011). Social enterprises established within the last decade or so face some crucial issues. A recent study conducted by Intellecap(2012) in India showed that social enterprises are unable to recruit talented/skilled professionals as employees. Team building is one of the foremost and significant competencies social entrepreneurs demonstrate. Filling positions in social enterprises continue to be a critical challenge, given the lack of strong incentive system. Often, vacant positions may be filled, but with reduced or often compromised qualifications and experience. Recruiting is crucial not only for sustaining competitive advantages but also for basic survival of the organization (Taylor and Collins 2000). Sometimes the social enterprises compromise on the quality of candidate to recruit someone whose ideology matches with the social enterprise (O’Reilly et al. 1991). Brown et al. (2004) put forward that compensation remains one of the key factors that influence the recruitment patterns of the social enterprises. Sometimes, even though employees are attracted by the mission of the organization and are happy with the work, the compensation may not be as attractive. This may result in talented people leaving the social enterprises.

On the one hand the social enterprise programs produce a good pool of graduates every year who don’t seem to be getting into social enterprises. Though most of these programs claim that they tend to produce social
entrepreneurs, it needs a thorough ecosystem that supports such establishments. At the same time, there is always a shortage of professionals in social enterprises that pose a problem for their growth.

Though the contribution of these programs in preparing social entrepreneurs who in turn build social enterprises is quite evident, their contribution for fulfilling the gap of producing middle level managers needs special understanding. To assess such measurement, there is a larger need to understand whether the graduates coming out of these institutions are equipped with the competencies and skills that the social enterprises sector need.

With this background, we studied the effectiveness of the program on social enterprise market and middle level managers. For assessing such effectiveness, we adopted a competency based approach. A list of 46 competencies was identified after a thorough literature review and two studies conducted by Miller et al. (2012)\(^4\) and Intellecap (2011)\(^5\).

There is a strong relationship between competencies that need to be taught in the social entrepreneurship academic programs (as specified in the Miller et al. (2011) study) and the challenges faced by the emerging social enterprises in India (Intellecap’s (2012) study). It suggests that, understanding the effectiveness of the academic program from the competencies’ point of view would provide a better outcome.

The 46 competencies identified include

1) Build Effective Teams
2) Ability to commit to a collective purpose
3) Optimism
4) Sense of moral imperatives/ ethics
5) Good HR practices
6) Ability to challenge traditional ways of thinking
7) Ability to communicate with customers, suppliers and other stakeholders
8) Empathy or compassion
9) Interpersonal communication skills
10) Ability and desire to grow the organization
11) Ability to build community support
12) Ability to lead/develop others
13) Capacity to measure outcomes

\(^4\) In the study they analysed the responses of 150 social entrepreneurship practitioners and social venture capitalists. They have identified 35 such competencies. All of them have been tested and cross analysed to check their suitability for the Indian context to enable them to be customized for the study. Each competency was then analyzed through personal interviews and the content analysis of the pedagogy and curriculum of the course/program structure.

\(^5\) Intellecap’s study (2012) found that social enterprises in the Indian context struggle to survive due to several challenges such as a) hiring, retaining qualified staff, b) raising capital, c) building the value chain, d) providing the model’s scalability, e) developing/refining a business model, f) managing a team successfully, g) building an organization, h) navigating the regulatory environment, i) collecting information about the target markets, j) finding mentorship and support, k) measuring impact, and l) incorporating the enterprises.
14) Confidence to succeed in a challenging task
15) Desire to create a significant social impact
16) Social skills
17) Ability to develop collaborative relation
18) Ability to make decisions based on relevant information
19) Conflict resolutions skills
20) Identification, evaluation and exploitation of opportunities
21) Innovativeness and creativity
22) Management of employees
23) Building the value chain
24) Good relation with communities
25) Ability to solve problems
26) Impact measurement
27) Manage strategy development
28) Management of logistics and technologies
29) Social capital creation
30) Handle issues related to scaling
31) Building an organization
32) Ability to identify social problems
33) Commitment to helping people
34) Creative use of minimal resources
35) Create/evaluate the feasibility and implementation of a business plan
36) Cultural awareness
37) Incorporating the enterprises
38) Manage administrative work
39) Management of financial capital
40) Value social impact more than financials
41) Willingness to take risks
42) Raising capital
43) Navigating the regulatory environment
44) Ability to see and/or market the organization
45) Develop volunteer support
46) Good rapport with social entrepreneurs

We were cautious about analyzing the academic program in India based on a competencies matrix proposed in the western context. We tried to prove/disprove the validity of these competencies in the Indian context by studying

a) The challenges faced by the Indian social enterprise sector as specified in the Intellecap study, and

b) Interviewing social entrepreneurs in India about the validity of these competencies when their enterprise would like to employee graduates of social entrepreneurship academic programs.
OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

• To understand the relevance and quality of the social entrepreneurship academic programs from the points of view of the stated mission/objectives of programs; students/graduates; and the social enterprises seeking employees

• To analyze the range of activities undertaken by the graduates of the program

• To understand the gap between competencies prescribed by the social entrepreneurs and the actual competencies taught in the courses.

• To analyze the views of actual and potential employers about preparedness of graduates

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study understands the significance of educational programs being offered on social entrepreneurship in India. Here, cases were selected based on the working definition proposed in the review of literature. The aim was to see whether these programs could fulfill the needs of the social enterprise field at practice with respect to talent infusion.

The study included multistage methods and design. Initially, in order to understand the spectrum of educational programs on social entrepreneurship in India, we sent several emails to various online social entrepreneurship groups and more than 3000 individuals (including academicians). We requested information on any social entrepreneurship programs that are offered by academic institution/university/college/ foundation etc. We received responses from 40 people who were either working on similar programs or referred to other people/programs.

Most of the programs referred to are believed to fall under broader social change discipline, whereas a few of them have social entrepreneurship in their title. In addition, we also cross-checked the details we received over the emails through an online search. We used phrases such as ‘social entrepreneurship education in India’, ‘social entrepreneurship in India’, ‘Indian social enterprise’ ‘academic programs on social entrepreneurship in India’, and ‘courses on social entrepreneurship in India’ to search. Finally, we could narrow down the number of programs on social entrepreneurship education to be 26. Though there were more, we debated over what the cases needed to be special on and moreover, what had to be believed as being social entrepreneurship education. Initially, we worked in a direction where we wanted to take all educational programs that worked to build students to understand the society and solve certain social problems. In other words, we took Ashoka’s perspective. However, after deliberation, and based on the suggestions received in the interim presentation and by other experts, we decided to concentrate on only such educational programs that have ‘social entrepreneurship’ in the course/program title. For an in-depth study we created a checklist that helped us.

We considered the learning objectives or goals of educational programs to be the central theme to decide the
kind of questions we wanted to ask educators, graduates and practitioners, and compare the views. Almost all educational programs, (considered for further study), explicitly stated their goals of preparing participants to start a social enterprise or play a key role in building a social enterprise.

As mentioned in the review of literature, we have chosen a set of competencies proposed by Miller et al (2012) and Intellecap Study (2011) and tried to understand, how far such competencies stand when we see in the Indian context. In order to validate such competencies, we selected four social enterprises.

a) Enable India, Bangalore

b) Swayambu Technologies Ltd., Chennai

c) Microspin, Chennai, and

d) Sampurn Earth, Mumbai.

We interviewed the four social entrepreneurs who started these four social enterprises with a structured questionnaire in order to find out the range of relevance of the competencies while recruiting middle level managers. The interview procedure included personal interviewing, Skype and telephone calls.

As the competencies were ranked in order of importance to them, the second step of the research moved to interviewing the representatives who ran various academic programs on social entrepreneurship. Initially, the study aimed to have at least two programs each from full time Master’s programs, credit based course, distance education. However, as the social entrepreneurship education is at nascent stage, we found that there were only two full time programs on social entrepreneurship being run. One is by Tata Institute of Social Sciences at Mumbai and the other by Deshpande Foundation, Hubli. The latter was not taken into consideration because we decided that in order to see the effectiveness in terms of assessing the competencies, at least, one batch of students should have graduated. The Masters’ program initiated by Deshpande foundation was just one year old where not even a single batch has graduated yet.

Hence, it was impossible on to have the second program in full time programs category. So, the Master’s program offered by Tata Institute of Social Sciences was selected for the study. The second set of respondents is credit based courses. For this, using convenient sampling, we chose two courses viz. a course offered by Centre for Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship at IIT Madras and Xavier Institute of Management, Bhubaneswar. For the third set of respondents i.e., a distance program on social entrepreneurship, based on convenient and judgmental sampling we included

a) Entrepreneurship Development Institute (EDI), Ahmedabad, and

b) Narsee Monjee Institute of Management Studies (NMIMS).

However, the EDI expressed its unwillingness to be part of such study whereas due to various logistic related
issues NMIMS could not be studied. This took the total respondents of this category to 3. Following this, the other category respondents this study included graduates of the three academic programs to become a part of the study. An online questionnaire was circulated to all the graduates in three academic institutions with several questions on competencies that have already been shared with both social entrepreneurs and the academic institutions in order to see how well they are learning.

SAMPLE DESIGN

We contacted social entrepreneurs and academic institutions were contacted using our network and graduates were approached by a key informer identified from each institution. With the help of the key informers, we distributed the online questionnaire.

RESEARCH INSTRUMENT AND DATA COLLECTION

We used four sets of questionnaires to collect responses from four kinds of respondents

i) General questionnaire, circulated to around 3000 academicians in the country who were expected to inform about the social entrepreneurship academic programs,

ii) Social entrepreneurs,

iii) Academic institutions, and

iv) Graduates of the program

Before initiating the field work, we did a literature review on academic programs on social entrepreneurship, the growth and strategy, problems faced by social enterprises, the status of social entrepreneurship education in India, competencies that social enterprises need etc. Based on the review, we identified about 46 competencies required for the sustenance of social enterprises. Accordingly, we asked the respondents from all sets to express the extent to which they believed each competency was important using a five point scale, (5 - strongly agree, 1-strongly disagree). In addition, several background questions were posed to all sets of respondents, and accordingly, the data was used for the study as and when needed.
LIMITATION

Though there is no standard definition of social entrepreneurship, the study tried to bring a working definition based on available social entrepreneurship definitions to understand the crux of these educational programs. Exercising caution, only those educational programs that were named after ‘social entrepreneurship/enterprise’ were considered for this study. The current study holds both the list of educational programs and the short listed programs for further study that meet these criteria. However, programs with the name of ‘Social Innovation’ or ‘Social Impact’ were also not considered for the case studies.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

All the social entrepreneurs interviewed felt that there was a real challenge to get second level management and was harder to retain them. All of them felt their organizations functioned with two kinds of employees as mentioned in the review of literature - supporting staff and service delivery staff. Most of these social enterprises that were a part of the study had a total employee count ranging from 10 to 30. These social enterprises recruited people from different education backgrounds as per the job roles needed. However, most of them felt that though they preferred those who had degrees, they also expected continuous commitment towards mission and vision of the organization.

In addition, they were also expected to have openness to learn new things and be part of the organizational growth. All the respondents were of the view that a simple degree in social entrepreneurship would never make a candidate eligible to become an employ in their organization whereas graduates of social entrepreneurship with work experience in social enterprises would always be preferred. For that matter, any graduate, with enormous field experience would also be considered for the positions in the organizations.

All the social entrepreneurs interviewed were aware that several courses were offered by various academic institutions in social entrepreneurship. Though they agree that they may see value addition in social entrepreneurship education in future, at this stage, they were not clear about its value. A respondent felt that, though few of his employees were provided with social entrepreneurship certificate course training by one of the reputed institutions, he couldn’t see much change in the employee’s perspective or working conditions.

They also have interns who work with them for a few months and they found that these interns were coming in just to fulfill their academic norms. They never showed great commitment during their internship. However, Enable India and Sampurn Earth retained few of the interns to join in certain key positions of the organization.

While responding to a question about how far they get volunteer support, one of the respondents said they really did not believe in volunteers as they may not take any responsibility because they would not necessarily own the initiation or the work that they were assigned to do. Hence, though having volunteers always carried some advantages they did not want to simply believe and leave things to them. Though all the social enterprises we interviewed were less than 10 years old, two of them were operating only for the last three years. We also inquired about whether the remunerations paid to employees had any role to play in lack of interest from the professionals.
Two organizations said they paid competitive salaries yet, they faced problems. These social enterprises sent new recruits to a special training program or kept them under serious observation in order to confirm their employment.

**COMPETENCY ANALYSIS**

Among the 46 competencies identified and circulated to all the actual and potential social entrepreneurs, the analysis reveals that building effective teams takes the lead. The social entrepreneurs believed that the middle managers that they would like to recruit needed to have clear agenda to build effective teams. The second competency being rated was ‘ability to commit to a collective purpose’. The organizations believed that the middle managers should be an individual committed to the collective purpose that the organization deals with.

‘Optimism’ was rated as the next significant competency. Social entrepreneurs saw that whether things work or not, middle level managers should always have positive thinking and be optimistic about the activities that they undertake. They needed to be optimistic about the innovative experiments that the organizations undertook, even during the situations when they did not get any support from anyone. In addition, these employees must adhere to moral imperatives and ethics.

Hence, the next competency as per the rating was ‘sense of moral imperatives/ethics’. The social enterprises, being well known for their transparency and accountability, needed such moral standards to be followed by all the employees. The entrepreneurs themselves focused on such ethics as the entire idea was driven by him/her. However, in order to ensure that the ethical imperatives were given priority, the respondents believed that this element of competency was significant.

The respondents believed that ‘Good HR Practices’ was another competency that needed to be imparted to these graduates. Since the organizations interviewed were in their early stages, all of them believed that their middle managers, especially those who came with a social entrepreneurship background, had good knowledge over HR related issues.

The sixth competency in the priority was ‘ability to challenge traditional ways of thinking’. This proved that these organizations were looking forward to impart new ways of problem solving and that they wanted these middle managers to challenge traditional ways and be innovative while addressing the social issues and organizational management.

The seventh competency in the order of importance was the ‘ability to communicate with customers, suppliers and other stakeholders’. The social entrepreneurs believed that whatever they undertook, the middle managers must be in a position to communicate it with all the stakeholders in a significant manner.

The eighth competency that the graduates should be taught was ‘empathy or compassion’ where these graduates would need to have an ability to understand things, social dimensions and political contexts in which they operated. ‘Interpersonal communication skill’ was rated high as the ninth competency that needed training in. Without good communication skills, any amount of interacting and integrating with the communities would fail.
The tenth competency was ‘ability to desire and grow the organization’. The social entrepreneur program graduates, being the second level leaders in the organizations, needed to have a continuous desire to grow the organization.

A list of competencies as per the order of preference for the respondents is given in case of all 46 competencies.

While building effective teams is the top most priority (average rating of 4.75) for the social enterprises, academic institutions seem to have neglected this competency (3.33). The graduates of the programs believe that their learning rating for the same competency is 3.13. Though there is a larger gap between competencies needed to actively take part in social enterprise space and the competencies believed to be taught in the academic programs, and though the actual learning curve of such competencies varies significantly from each other, there is a strong case for academic institutions to learn from the field and act accordingly.

The data shows that there is a large difference in the competency priority that the social enterprises need and the academic institutions teach. (Refer Table 1 for ratings)

Competencies such as
- Build effective Teams
- Good HR
- Ability and Desire to Grow the Organization
- Ability to Lead, Develop Others
- Capacity to Measure Outcomes
- Social Skills
- Ability to Develop Collaborate Relation
- Ability to Make Decisions Based on Relevant Information
- Management of Logistics and Technology
- Building an Organization have been grossly neglected by the academic institutions.

On that other hand, competencies such as
- Identification, Evaluation and Exploitation of Opportunities
- Innovativeness and Creativity
- Social Capital Creation
- Scaling related Issues
- Ability to Identify Social Problem
- Commitment to Helping People
- Desire ability to Create a Significant Social Impact
- Creative Use of Minimal Resources have been overemphasized.

What academic institutions believe to teach to their students somehow seems to be nearer to what social enterprises need, when compared to what graduates believe that they have learned. However, there is a large deviation from all three view points. Surprisingly, the opinions of academic institutions and graduates also differ
quite significantly. In some cases their priorities in classroom teaching and curriculum seem to highly deviate from graduates' learning. For example, the priority that academic institutions believe to give to few competencies and the actual learning students acquired was significantly low in case of competencies such as ‘empathy and compassion’, ‘Desire ability to create social change ‘Commitment to helping people’.

On the other hand graduates' opinion that competencies such as

• Social skills,
• Ability to make decisions based on relevant information,
• Identification, evaluation and exploitation of opportunities, and
• Impact measurement

have been learned is significantly high than what is believed to be taught by academic institutions.

Disturbing phenomenon emerges when we compare what social enterprises need and what graduates have really learned. In case of ‘Build effective teams’, the deviation between two averages is significantly high (4.75 to 3.13). The other competency that lacks expertise in graduates is ‘Good HR Practices’. The deviation stands at 0.79. Ability to communicate with customers, suppliers and other stakeholders also has significant deviation. Likewise, several competencies such as ‘Management of Employees’, ‘Ability to identify social problems’ have been over emphasized. This means, there is a higher emphasis in both academic and graduates learning than what is needed. The other competency that is overemphasized by both academic institutions and graduates is ‘Good rapport with social entrepreneurs’.

Please refer to Table 1 below for full details.

Table 1.
The list of competencies as rated by social entrepreneurs, academicians and graduates of the programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. no.</th>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>Rating Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Social Entrepreneurs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Build effective teams</td>
<td>4.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Ability to commit to a collective Purpose</td>
<td>4.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Optimism</td>
<td>4.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sense of moral imperatives/ ethics</td>
<td>4.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Good HR practices</td>
<td>4.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Ability to challenge traditional ways of thinking</td>
<td>4.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Ability to Communicate with customers, suppliers and other stakeholders</td>
<td>4.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Empathy or compassion</td>
<td>4.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Interpersonal communication skills</td>
<td>4.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Ability and desire to grow the organization</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Ability to build community support</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Competency</td>
<td>Rating 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Ability to lead/develop Others</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Capacity to measure outcomes</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Confidence to succeed at challenging task</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Desire ability to create a significant social impact</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Social skills</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Ability to develop collaborative relation</td>
<td>3.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Ability to make decisions based on relevant information</td>
<td>3.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Conflict resolutions skills</td>
<td>3.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Identification, evaluation and exploitation of opportunities</td>
<td>3.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Innovativeness and creativity</td>
<td>3.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Management of employees</td>
<td>3.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Building the value chain</td>
<td>3.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Good relation with communities</td>
<td>3.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Ability to problem solve</td>
<td>3.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Impact measurement</td>
<td>3.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Manage strategy development</td>
<td>3.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Management of logistics and technologies</td>
<td>3.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Social capital creation</td>
<td>3.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Scaling related issues</td>
<td>3.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Building an organization</td>
<td>3.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Ability to identify social problems</td>
<td>3.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Commitment to helping people</td>
<td>3.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Creative use of minimal resources</td>
<td>3.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Create/evaluate the feasibility and implementation of a business plan</td>
<td>3.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Cultural awareness</td>
<td>3.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Incorporating the enterprises</td>
<td>3.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Manage administrative work</td>
<td>3.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>Management of financial capital</td>
<td>3.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Value social impact more than financial</td>
<td>3.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>Willingness to take risks</td>
<td>3.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>Raising capital</td>
<td>3.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>Navigating the regulatory environment</td>
<td>3.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>Ability to see and/or market the organization</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>Develop volunteers support</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>Good rapport with social entrepreneurs</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Academic institutions have opined that competencies such as ‘Ability to Identify Social Problem’ and ‘Commitment to helping people’ stand at the top, which may be relevant for those who would like to become social entrepreneurs. However, while recruiting people, the social enterprises studied in this paper do not see it as a worthy competence compared to 30 other competencies listed in Table 1.
The graduates' perspective is entirely different. Out of total 17 respondents, 9 graduates have studied a minor/elective on social entrepreneurship whereas 8 graduates have studied full time Master’s program on social entrepreneurship. One respondent has become an entrepreneur, five of them have initiated various social ventures on their own, and four have become employees in various corporate entities, and one respondent has been employed in a project initiated by a government agency. Half of the total respondents mentioned that they have worked in social enterprises (Figure 1). But none of them could continue. A few of them said, they initially worked with social enterprises in order to get work experience that would be helpful for them to initiate their own organizations.

Of the total respondents, 56% said they selected social entrepreneurship education because the subject was interesting to them and 19% graduates mentioned that they have studied it because their teacher inspired them whereas 37% respondents opined that they wished to start a social enterprise. Most of the respondents (13) said that they had teachers who would help them to get into social entrepreneurship space. Most of the respondents said they joined the course to get first hand information about the phenomenon of social entrepreneurship. However, a large portion of the respondents also claimed that they have joined the program with a clear intention to start a social enterprise.

The data reveals that there is a larger gap between the requirements of the social enterprises, competencies taught by academic institutions and what graduates of the program are actually learning. Academic institutions are of the view that they want to produce social entrepreneurs and not the employees in the sector. However, the data shows that not every graduate becomes social entrepreneur, due to several reasons. Hence, the academic institutions must also prepare these students to become employees, if not social entrepreneurs. The courses should make sure that the graduates would be useful for the promotion of the sector. But, as the data shows,
except 40% who have started social enterprises, remaining graduates are working in different spaces. For that, the academic programs must change their curriculum wherein the competencies required for the promotion of the field would be added. It will then be useful for both middle managers including the service delivery staff and the social entrepreneurs.

**CONCLUSION**

As described in the introduction, it is proved that the social enterprises are unable to attract professional middle level managers. Though they have a set of qualities they really look at before admitting someone as service delivery staff, they also believe that those who come with certain educational background in social entrepreneurship would bring value addition. However, so far, these social enterprises simply adjust with the talent they get. Those recruited without sufficient competencies are asked to undergo certain trainings. Nevertheless, they felt social entrepreneurship education without certain commitments would not be respected.

The academic institutions’ commitment to contribute to the promotion of field is quite evident. However, they do not display any relevance when it comes to fulfilling the gap of lack of middle level managers in the field. In addition, there is a lot of divergence from the competencies required for the field to what the academic programs teach. At this juncture, academic programs must understand the need from field and run the programs accordingly. It is found that the academic curriculum is influenced by the western ideology and literature on social entrepreneurship. Hence, there is a need to develop case studies and curriculum based on Indian social enterprise sector and the same has to be adopted by the academic programs.

When it comes to the graduates, most of them join the programs with the intention to contribute for the sector or they want to gain awareness about the field. There is a relatively substantial support system that is initiated for promoting these graduates to start their own social enterprises. But, there is no such system created to place them in social enterprises as employees. Moreover, the competencies highlighted by social enterprises to those taught in academic programs and the ones that the students are learning differ in most of the cases. Hence, the academic institutions must collaborate to minimize the gap. Further, the academic institutions, graduates and social enterprises must work together to make sure that each contributes to the promotion of the field by helping others. If academic programs understand and serve the needs of the social entrepreneurship field then, the graduates would be helpful for the existing social enterprises by becoming service delivery staff of the organizations.
REFERENCES


Business Standard. ‘Rs. 1000-Cr Innovation fund in Three Months’. 7, March 2011


Rubin, RS., and Dierdorff, EC. (2009). How Relevant is the MBA? Assessing the Alignment of Required Curricula and


# APPENDIX I

Table: List of Social Entrepreneurship educational programs / courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. no.</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Social Entrepreneurship Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Full time SE degree</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>TISS</td>
<td>Two Year full time Master of Arts in Social Entrepreneurship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Deshpande Education Trust</td>
<td>Master of Social Entrepreneurship (MSE), a two year residential program affiliated with Karnataka University Dharwad and approved by the Government of Karnataka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Ambedkar University</td>
<td>1) School of Business, Public Policy and Social Entrepreneurship (SBPPSE) - offers two-year (full time) MBA program - integrates elements of public policy and social entrepreneurship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minor / Electives / Foundation course</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>IIT Madras</td>
<td>Three semesters integrated minor in Innovation and Social Entrepreneurship primarily for B. Tech Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>IIT BHU</td>
<td>Course on ‘Social Enterprises Development’ for management students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>XIMB</td>
<td>Elective on Social Entrepreneurship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>XLRI</td>
<td>Elective on Social Entrepreneurship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>MDI Gurgaon</td>
<td>Course Civil Society Organizations and Social Entrepreneurship - Public Policy and Management Program, Elective on Social Entrepreneurship in FPM, Sessions as part of CSR course in PGPM, PGPHR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>IIM- Ahmedabad</td>
<td>Elective course on Social Entrepreneurship for second-year PGP students, as well as another condensed version of the same for the Executive program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>IIM Bangalore</td>
<td>Elective in Social Entrepreneurship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Institute of Rural Management, Anand</td>
<td>Courses titled ‘Entrepreneurship’ and ‘Social Entrepreneurship’, as IV/V term electives under area of General Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>SIBM, Pune</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>SP Jain Institute of Management and Research, Mumbai</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>IIM Indore</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>IFIM Business School</td>
<td>Centre for Social Entrepreneurship and Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>IIM Calcutta</td>
<td>Social Entrepreneurship course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>IIFM Bhopal</td>
<td>Elective on Social Entrepreneurship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>KLS IMER, Belgaum</td>
<td>Centre for Entrepreneurship development offers course in Social Innovation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>BVB</td>
<td>Social Innovation course for first year engineering students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Part time / distance learning</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>EDI</td>
<td>1. One compulsory course on Social Entrepreneurship and CSR for students pursuing their PGDM in Development Studies and SE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Students (PGDM in Development Studies and SE) who want to specialize in SE have to opt for three additional courses in the area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. Six months distance learning diploma in social entrepreneurship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4. International training program on Social Entrepreneurship.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>NMIMS</td>
<td>Part time MBA (Social Entrepreneurship) - Three years, Diploma in Social Entrepreneurship – weekend – One year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>IGNOU &amp; CED (Tamil Nadu)</td>
<td>MBA (Social Entrepreneurship)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Non-accredited**

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>CSIM (Centre for Social Initiative and Management - ManavaSeva Dharma Samvardhani Trust) – Chennai</td>
<td>Social Entrepreneurship Outlook Program (SEOP) – Four months regular Social Entrepreneurship Online Program Post Graduate Program in Social Enterprise Management (PGSEM) – One year part-time diploma program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Dasra</td>
<td>Social Impact program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Villgro, Loyola Institute of Business Administration</td>
<td>SEED (Social Entrepreneur and Enterprise Development) – Eight-month program to prepare early stage social entrepreneurs to sharpen their model and raise first round of funding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
http://www.villgro.org/research-papers