

A Tailored Model for the Long-Term Growth of Social Entrepreneurship in Kerala

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Abstract

Creating a tailored model for the long-term growth of social entrepreneurship in Kerala involves a comprehensive approach that considers the local context, challenges, and opportunities. With innovative schemes and programmes, the Government of Kerala started providing social entrepreneurs with financial support, training and mentorship. The emergence of Incubators and support organisations dedicated to social entrepreneurship enables entrepreneurs to develop their ideas, access resources, and connect with like-minded individuals in Kerala. They provide a platform for social entrepreneurs. It could be observed that many social enterprises in Kerala focus on sustainable development, addressing issues such as environmental conservation, community development, and inclusive growth. This article provides a collective insight into sustainability and how social entrepreneurship has gained popularity during the previous decade.

Keywords: Social Entrepreneur, Sustainability, Model for Social Entrepreneurship, Conceptual framework, Kerala Model

Introduction

Social entrepreneurship involves identifying and responsibly harnessing opportunities to generate positive social and environmental impacts on sustainability. Sustainability in social entrepreneurship entails the continual pursuit of durable remedies for societal, economic, or environmental challenges that have been neglected. Social entrepreneurial sustainability must embrace three fundamental dimensions: social sustainability, economic sustainability, and environmental sustainability. Achieving sustainability is more important than ever since companies, particularly social enterprises, may experience a global economic crisis due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, it is critical to comprehend the fundamental causes that influence social entrepreneurs' capacity for sustainability. Although extensive research on social entrepreneurship and sustainability has been conducted, minimal effort has been made to investigate models that connect these two concepts.

Establishing a conceptual framework that connects social entrepreneurship with sustainability and outlines tailored approaches to support the expansion of social entrepreneurship across the country is essential to address this challenge effectively. This theoretical gap requires further investigation as it has not been thoroughly investigated in earlier studies and techniques. Scholars have proposed theoretical models linking strategies for social entrepreneurship and sustainability (Guleid, 2014; Javed et al. 2019; Ketprapakorn & Kantabutra 2019; Priya and Venkatesh 2019; Zhang and Swanso 2014; Muralidharan and Pathak 2018; Rahdari, Sepasi, and Moradi 2016; Tien et al. 2020; Rey-Marti, Diaz- Foncea, and Alguacil-

Mari 2020), illustrating how they are interrelated. Developing their process models and theoretical and conceptual structures demonstrates a strong interest in this study. It highlights the importance of comprehending the relationship between social entrepreneurship and sustainability. In this context, the present study presents models essential for the growth of social entrepreneurship. It suggests an updated conceptual framework for establishing methodologies for the growth of sustainability-based social enterprises. The authors attempt to propose customised models for the expansion of Social Entrepreneurship. The study is relevant since it addresses deficiencies and gaps in prior publications, providing scholars with a more thorough understanding of sustainable social entrepreneurs. The study aims to discover tailored solutions for expanding sustainable social entrepreneurship in Kerala. This study seems significant in assisting social enterprises after a pandemic and future economic challenges.

Methodology

The research is analytical, and the initial step involved searching online resources, including Google Scholar, Business Source Complete, Research Gate, and Taylor & Francis Online, for a definition of social entrepreneurship. Essential articles and journals in business, management, and social endeavours are available in these databases. The input-process-output model was employed to establish a conceptual framework that connects social entrepreneurship and sustainability. Secondary data sources were investigated to discover the Kerala model for sustainability and social entrepreneurship.

Social Entrepreneurship

Social entrepreneurship is gaining attraction in today's rapidly changing corporate world, dominated by technology and innovation. Seanor and Meaton (2007) stated that a social enterprise prioritises a vital social goal while also aiming to generate profits to continue operations. Graikioti, Sdrali, and Kaminari (2020) observed that community development is critical in social entrepreneurship since it addresses social demands that the market fails to provide. Social entrepreneurs must prioritise fulfilling their objectives while overcoming financial restraints to be sustainable and benefit society.

Social enterprises cannot lead societal growth independently because they depend on government funding and development programs. A social entrepreneur needs to apply a business acumen model to achieve societal transformation, and non-profit organisations need to evolve into social enterprises by adopting a more business-like organisational structure.

Defining Social Entrepreneurship

A social entrepreneur develops original ideas that could solve local issues. These individuals are prepared to take chances and put much effort into improving society. Hence, social entrepreneurs act as models for others to discover themselves and make a difference. In his book "The Wealth of Nations", Adam Smith stated, "It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their self-interest." Inequalities in such availability, the underlying reasons for such social difficulties, or the stigma attached to being in such places can all be areas of focus for a social entrepreneur. The primary purpose of a social entrepreneur is not to gain money. Instead, its objective is to effectuate extensive socioeconomic transformations. To succeed in their cause, a social entrepreneur must have sound financial judgment.

Social entrepreneurship has three characteristics: social innovation, accountability, and sustainability. It is used when social entrepreneurs generate social value by capitalising on opportunities with creative

solutions and limited resources (Peredo & McLean, 2006). Mair and Marti (2006) identified three distinct ideas and definitions in their social entrepreneurship research: social entrepreneur, social entrepreneurship, and social enterprise. The phrase "social entrepreneur" refers to the originator of the effort, whereas "social enterprise" is the tangible consequence of the process or social vehicle of the project.

Sustainability

The study of sustainability in social entrepreneurship has aroused academic interest worldwide since it is vital in attaining positive growth and development for social enterprises. Regarding sustainability and sustainable development, there are social misconceptions. Diesendorf (2000) observed that economic and social policies supporting sustainable development prioritise social justice and environmental conservation. Since sustainable development considers the four pillars of the sustainability lens—resources, health, policy, and trade—the abundance of literature on the subject is restrained in this analysis. The United Nations put forth these more significant issues on sustainable development in their 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to eliminate poverty and protect the planet. Academics must create theoretical techniques to build sustainable social initiatives due to the high rate of failures and low percentage of sustainability (Dacin et al., 2010). With the worldwide threat of company failures caused by the COVID-19 epidemic, there is a need to look into the critical link between social entrepreneurship and navigating through this unique moment.

Connecting Social Entrepreneurship to Sustainability.

Zhang and Swanson (2014), in their research on social entrepreneurship and sustainability, found that social companies aim to meet social and economic goals, making them naturally sustainable. Graikioti, Sdrali, and Kaminari (2020) describe social entrepreneurship sustainability as attaining a social goal while being financially viable. In this study, social entrepreneurial sustainability refers to developing long-term solutions to social, economic, or environmental issues through operational efficiencies (Burkett, 2010; Santos & Roberts 2013). Tiwari, Bhat, and Tikoria (2020) found a lack of a unified framework for social entrepreneurship, leading to several competing conceptions and definitions.

The input-process-output model helps establish a framework linking social entrepreneurship with sustainability. The input-process-output model is chosen for its ability to organise and document parts of a transformation process. (Rögelberg 2017). A conceptual framework combining social entrepreneurship and sustainability has been established by using four essential elements in defining social entrepreneurship, social business processes, and methods of social impact measurements (Figure. 1)





Figure 1. A conceptual framework connecting social entrepreneurship and sustainability.

Social Entrepreneurship in Kerala

The growth of social entrepreneurship in Kerala is affected by regionally specific historical, social, and economic circumstances. Kerala has an extensive record of social reform movements going back to the early twentieth century. These movements, led by social reformers like Sree Narayana Guru and Chattampi Swamikal, sought to overcome social disparities and caste prejudice while promoting education and social justice. The cooperative movement has played an essential part in Kerala's socio-economic growth. The cooperative projects in Kerala, notably in agriculture, dairy, and banking, have strengthened local communities, encouraged economic self-sufficiency, and established a culture of community ownership and cooperation.

With high literacy rates and political engagement, the state of Kerala became a pioneer in empowering both economically and socially through Women's self-help groups (SHGs) and microfinance institutions. These efforts could help women access loans, skill training, and business possibilities. Kerala's natural beauty and ecological variety have sparked environmental protection and sustainable development initiatives. Eco-tourism, organic farming, waste management, and renewable energy are other notable initiatives of social entrepreneurs in Kerala. These programs strive to strike a balance between economic development and environmental sustainability.

The Kerala government has supported social entrepreneurship ventures through various laws, programs, and financing schemes. Social entrepreneurs are supported by initiatives such as the Kerala State Industrial Development Corporation (KSIDC), Kerala Startup Mission (KSUM), and the District Poverty Eradication Mission (DPEP), which offer finance, incubation, and capacity building. Overall, the growth of social entrepreneurship in Kerala reflects the state's abundant social capital, dedication to social justice, and cooperative spirit. With ongoing support and investment, social entrepreneurship has enough potential to generate inclusive and sustainable development in Kerala.

Kerala Model for Sustainable Social Entrepreneurship

The Kerala Model for Sustainable Social Entrepreneurship is a comprehensive framework tailored to Kerala's unique socio-economic and environmental context. This model integrates sustainability principles, social impact, and economic viability to foster inclusive and resilient development. The thrust areas of this hypothetical model include:

- Focus on social impact: Businesses stress tackling social concerns and making a profit to improve the lives of poor populations.
- Community involvement: Businesses regularly connect with local communities to ensure their needs and aspirations are included in corporate decisions and operations.
- Environmental sustainability: Businesses use strategies to reduce environmental damage and support ecological protection.
- Collaboration: Fostering partnerships between the government, corporations, social groups, and academic institutions to build a conducive environment for long-term social endeavours.
- Leveraging traditional knowledge: Incorporating local knowledge and practices into corporate models to promote cultural sensitivity and environmental adaptability.

Conclusion

It is critical to conclude that academics are increasingly interested in research and literature linking social entrepreneurship to sustainability. Creating a tailored model for the long-term growth of social entrepreneurship in Kerala involves a comprehensive approach. The emergence of Incubators and support organisations dedicated to social entrepreneurship indicates that the Government of Kerala has shown interest in promoting social entrepreneurship. The incubators and support organisations provide a platform for social entrepreneurs to develop their ideas, access resources, and connect with like-minded individuals. Most of the social enterprises in Kerala focus on sustainable development, addressing issues such as environmental conservation, community development and inclusive growth. This article provides collective insights into sustainability and social entrepreneurship, demonstrating the growing interest of the Kerala state.

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