Iranian Evolutionary Educational Psychology Journal
IEEPJ
University of Hormozgan
Online ISSN: 2588 - 4395
Homepage: https://ieepj.hormozgan.ac.ir

Identification of Dimensions, Indicators, and Components of Social Entrepreneurship with a Focus on Social Responsibility in the Welfare of Khorasan Razavi

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Article Info

Article type:

Research Article

Article history:

Received 01 May. 2023

Received in revised form 22 Aug. 2023

Accepted 11 Oct. 2023

Published online 01 December 2023

Keywords:

Social entrepreneurship,
Social responsibility,
Qualitative Study,
Delphi method

ABSTRACT

Objective: The aim of this research is to identify the components and dimensions of social entrepreneurship with a focus on social responsibility.

Methods: The current research is a qualitative study. The target population consists of a group of experts or a Delphi panel (25 individuals). Considering the lack of previous patterns or models in the development of social entrepreneurship with a focus on social responsibility, the researcher focused on identifying the components and dimensions of social entrepreneurship with a focus on social responsibility. In this study, using a qualitative approach and the Delphi method and interviews, the components and dimensions of social entrepreneurship and social responsibility were identified.

Results: The research results showed that social entrepreneurship has three dimensions (individual, organizational, and institutional) and twenty-four components. The organizational dimension has the highest priority with a factor loading of 0.933, while the institutional dimension has the lowest priority with a factor loading of 0.587. Social responsibility has three dimensions (ethical, economic, and legal) and twenty-five components. The ethical dimension has the highest priority with a factor loading of 0.932, followed by the economic dimension with a factor loading of 0.915, and the legal dimension with a factor loading of 0.670 is the lowest priority.

Conclusions: The results can be employed in the formulation of policies and the development of strategies to enhance the sense of social responsibility and the involvement of workers in the pursuit of societal betterment and the fostering of entrepreneurial spirit.

Cite this article: Zoubin, H., Hashemiannejad, F. & SadatNaseri, N. (2023). Identification of dimensions, indicators, and components of social entrepreneurship with a focus on social responsibility in the welfare of Khorasan Razavi. *Iranian Evolutionary Educational Psychology Journal*, 5 (4), 163-180. DOI: https://doi.org/10.22034/5.4.163

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Publisher: University of Hormozgan.

DOI: https://doi.org/10.22034/5.4.163

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[DOI: 10.22034/5.4.163]

Introduction

In the present business environment, which is characterized by intensified competition, globalization, rapid technological advancements, shortened product life cycles, and changes in industry boundaries, entrepreneurship has assumed greater significance at both individual and organizational levels in terms of profitability and economic growth compared to the past. This holds true in Iran as well, where the development and promotion of entrepreneurship are considered critical societal needs. It is essential to identify the factors influencing entrepreneurship development and understand their interplay with one another (Varkianipour et al., 2020). Social entrepreneurship, on the other hand, pertains to the process whereby entrepreneurs establish or transform institutions within local communities, providing practical solutions to address social issues such as poverty, illiteracy, and environmental degradation. By mobilizing human and economic resources, social entrepreneurship effectively addresses the social needs of societies, reflecting a recognition of social responsibility in response to rapid societal advancements (Firouzabadi & Dabaghi, 2015). The comprehensive nature of social responsibility and the complex standards associated with social behavior make it challenging to measure the social, economic, and environmental performance of organizations (Aras et al., 2009). Social responsibility, encompassing concepts like organizational conscience, social performance, responsible and sustainable business practices, citizenship responsibility, and social accountability, involves serving future generations and the broader society itself (Pudineh et al., 2018).

Today, entrepreneurship has emerged as the most strategic and vital catalyst for economic advancement in developed societies. Various global studies and analyses on entrepreneurship highlight a 57% correlation between entrepreneurial activities and GDP in countries such as the United States. Consequently, an increase in entrepreneurial activities is consistently accompanied by an upswing in gross national product, leading to enhanced national income, welfare, and societal well-being. This trend has spurred a surge in entrepreneurship worldwide. For instance, India has established the National Organization of Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development to foster entrepreneurship, while Malaysia has set up the Ministry of Entrepreneurship Development. Other Asian countries, apart from providing financial and legal

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assistance, have also devised and expanded their legal frameworks to foster entrepreneurship (Karami and Agahi, 2015).

Social entrepreneurship presents an alternative approach to economic entrepreneurship. Unlike economic and commercial entrepreneurship, which primarily aims for profitability and individual gain, social entrepreneurship is driven by the objective of addressing social needs, resolving public issues, and achieving societal missions (Doni, 2008). Traditional social and non-profit organizations sought to fulfill social needs and missions through charitable associations and voluntary bodies, without emphasizing income generation or commercial investments (Virawardena et al., 2006).

In order to effectively accomplish social objectives and aspirations, the organization should assume the role of economic entrepreneurs and align their activities with market demands. Additionally, investment in this field is crucial. The attainment of social goals and missions necessitates the adoption of an investment and profit-making strategy. By employing this strategy, one can anticipate the creation and expansion of social values and missions to the fullest extent possible (Drager et al., 2004).

Social entrepreneurship" constitutes one form of entrepreneurship that addresses unmet social needs through an entrepreneurial mindset. Given that the efforts of statesmen, humanitarian actions, and the performance of social sector institutions fall short of meeting expectations, the development of social entrepreneurship is imperative in order to establish new models and methods (Ansari et al., 2010). Social entrepreneurship entails engaging in innovative activities and generating social value, both in non-profit and commercial sectors. Given that social entrepreneurship is now recognized as an effective and sustainable solution for the economic and social advancement of nations, and it garners increasing attention from various segments of society on a daily basis, it is crucial to pay heed to this concept within the Iranian context (Omrani et al., 2010). The term social entrepreneurship refers to the growth of organizations whose objective is to meet the fundamental needs of individuals, such that such needs cannot be fulfilled by commercial organizations or the private sector (Silos et al., 2005). Hence, any definition of community entrepreneurship should supplant the purely economic and commercial approach employed by business entrepreneurs. David Prensky (2005) views social entrepreneurship as a

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process by which organizations design and propose novel programs to tackle social problems. The definition should underscore the fusion of responsiveness, innovation, and change. With these considerations in mind, social entrepreneurs assume the role of change agents in the social sector, and this role is realized through the following factors: a commitment to creating and preserving social values (not solely economic value); identifying and continuously seeking out new opportunities to uphold this mission; engaging in ongoing processes of innovation, adaptability, and learning; operating without being constrained by available resources; and assuming accountability for actions taken and results obtained (Davis, 2002).

Presently, attention is directed towards fostering the development of social entrepreneurship as a social and philanthropic mission, and as a means to address certain problems and social ills. Entrepreneurship has had a positive and direct impact on various activities within countries. On one hand, it stimulates economic development and job opportunities, and on the other hand, it has the potential to fundamentally enhance the social and cultural standing of society (Marjani and Sadri, 2013). One of the most important features of social entrepreneurship is its impact on local development and improving human development indicators. If we consider local development as a planned effort in the field of producing assets such as physical, human, social, financial and environmental capitals, social entrepreneurship provides the tools for this development by organizing the available resources to solve local problems. In this direction, social entrepreneurship develops human resources through entrepreneurial training, strengthening health and security indicators, business creation and youth empowerment, and facilitates the field of expanding literacy, job creation, reducing crime and increasing security. Social entrepreneurship by using the existing social capital in the local community, in addition to individual and intangible consequences such as increasing self-confidence, provides the basis for trust networking and capacity building in local people. In addition to strengthening the local community, this process also paves the way for development. Social entrepreneurship also redistributes resources, income and services among marginal and excluded groups such as women, the disabled, the elderly, immigrants, etc., so that the balance returns to the context of the local community (Firouzabadi and Dabaghi, 2015).

Badaghi et al. (2010) by designing a model to promote the social responsibility model for education in the social security organization, stated the research findings of 6 basic dimensions including

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humanitarian, economic, legal, ethical, social justice and therapeutic justice, which for the first time In the dimensions of organizational responsibility, there are 33 indicators. Sharafati Nejad et al. (2020) by designing a model of organizational entrepreneurship in Iran's textile industries, stated that the results of this study showed the great role of structural and environmental factors in textile industries, as well as the strategy and components of organizational entrepreneurship on textile industries. Also, Sobhani et al. (2020) by designing a social responsibility model for Iran's government organizations with an ethical and strategic approach, stated that the effectiveness of the ethical approach and organizational social responsibility strategies from the bottom to the top have a positive effect on all dimensions of social responsibility.

Hosseini Gohri et al. (2019) by presenting the structural equation model of personality characteristics of transformative leaders and social responsibility; The mediating role of organizational entrepreneurship stated that the personality characteristics of transformational leaders directly predicted the social responsibility of universities and organizational entrepreneurship played a significant mediating role in this regard. In this line, Parsanjad et al. (2019) with integrated modeling of factors affecting the failure of entrepreneurs and its financial, social and psychological consequences stated that wrong strategies, incorrect marketing, difficulty of the industry, poor product and financial factors were among the factors of entrepreneurs' failure. Among the consequences of failure, the biggest cost imposed on the entrepreneur has been psychological and then social and financial costs. Correspondingly, Gudarzi et al. (2018) presented a framework for the development of university entrepreneurship in humanities in Iran and stated 7 dimensions of entrepreneurship development, including entrepreneurial culture, the role of the government, the structure of universities, university teaching methods, research and commercialization, external communications and financial infrastructure for development. Entrepreneurial University was recognized in the field of humanities.

Zare et al. (2017) investigated the mediating role of responsibility in the relationship between knowledge management and communication skills of employees and stated that knowledge management is a positive and significant predictor of communication skills and responsibility of employees; Responsibility is a positive and significant predictor of communication skills; And

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finally, accountability plays a mediating role in the relationship between knowledge management and employee communication skills.

Mester et al. (2021) in research entitled the effect of social entrepreneurship on the performance of the organization: the mediating role of corporate social responsibility stated that social entrepreneurship is an important way to deal with social problems caused by the latest economic crisis. However, social entrepreneurship is more about economic results that contribute to the supporting activities of the organization. The obtained results confirm the positive effect of social entrepreneurship on economic performance and show the mediating effect of corporate social responsibility practices.

Ficher and Tieman (2018) in a research titled "Factors affecting university support for sustainable entrepreneurship" identified four areas that are effective on entrepreneurship transformation, which are: 1) environmental framework that includes potential factors such as the national university, innovation or entrepreneurship policy, strategies regional development or regional innovation systems; 2) the infrastructure framework of the university, which consists of the strategies, structures and culture of the university; 3) University members as activists in various academic fields (education, research, transfer or support in the establishment of a new company); 4) External interactions between university members and external factors such as companies, research organizations, business development organizations or sponsors. Reeder and Vandersij (2017) in the research entitled "Raising the level of awareness of entrepreneurship and e-commerce: a case study in student entrepreneurship" showed that competition between students is an opportunity to raise awareness about entrepreneurship among them.

Sheikh (2017) found in research that the level of awareness of students regarding the development of organizational entrepreneurship is very low; And management students with the necessary skills and knowledge of the business environment and different aspects of business can achieve this knowledge. Song et al. (2017) found in research that used different networks and knowledge acquisition in order to identify entrepreneurial opportunities; Therefore, people who are interested in marketing should try to gain knowledge from the least opportunity.

Zhang Li and Yu (2017) in research titled "Cultivation of sports talents with innovation and entrepreneurship in large Chinese universities" found that the cultivation of sports talents in

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universities requires the reform of physical education with the focus of innovation and entrepreneurship.

Shepherd et al. (2015) by summarizing the research conducted on the innovative ways of decision-making by entrepreneurs have reached the following results: 1- Entrepreneurs use innovative ways much more than managers. 2- Entrepreneurs can use innovative ways faster and without access to information. enough and especially to make decisions in ambiguous and uncertain conditions. 3- Innovative ways have double effects on entrepreneurs' decisions. On the one hand, they enable them to make easier and faster decisions in difficult situations, and on the other hand, they make them vulnerable to decision-making biases. According to its stated objectives, policies, and strategies, the welfare organization has implemented measures to provide optimal services to marginalized groups, including those with low income, injuries, and disabilities.

In light of the significance of social entrepreneurship within this institution, it can be regarded as a viable solution for fulfilling its mission. Consequently, a scholarly investigation has been conducted by a researcher to explore the dimensions, components, and indicators of social entrepreneurship and social responsibility in this organization. Social entrepreneurship is a burgeoning topic in entrepreneurship literature. Nevertheless, the growing importance of social entrepreneurship in various societies has surpassed previous levels, captivating the attention of policymakers across different domains. Given the contextual nature of social entrepreneurship, it becomes imperative to comprehend its specific processes and mechanisms for its advancement in any given context. Thus, it is crucial to discern the prerequisites and lay the groundwork for the establishment of this novel form of entrepreneurship, with the aim of fostering economic growth and enhancing the welfare of individuals from low socioeconomic backgrounds. Notably, the welfare organization of the country, being a key custodian in attending to those with low income and disabilities, can play a significant role in institutionalizing social entrepreneurship nationwide and promoting entrepreneurial activities among diverse segments of the population, including the impoverished, homeless, and underprivileged individuals, as well as working children and disabled individuals. In light of this, the objective of the present study was to identify the dimensions and components of social entrepreneurship, adopting a social responsibility approach, within the welfare organization of Khorasan Razavi.

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[DOI: 10.22034/5.4.163]

Materials and Methods

The current study is a qualitative inquiry in terms of methodology. It is worth noting that due to the absence of previous patterns or models in the advancement of social entrepreneurship with a social responsibility approach, the researcher has identified the constituents and dimensions of social entrepreneurship with a social accountability approach. In this investigation, the constituents and dimensions of social entrepreneurship and social responsibility were identified using a qualitative approach, the Delphi method, and interviews. This section presents the methodologies and instruments employed in the qualitative portion of the study, such as the Delphi method, the introduction of the Delphi panel or the members of the expert group, the steps and techniques of the Delphi approach, and so forth.

The implementation process of the Delphi technique In order to identify and determine the significant and influential dimensions, constituents, and indicators in social entrepreneurship and social responsibility, it is now necessary to obtain the opinions and perspectives of experts in relation to the designed dimensions, constituents, and indicators. The qualitative section's statistical population, which essentially consists of a group of experts or a Delphi panel, must include individuals who possess knowledge and expertise in their respective field and also uphold expert opinions. These individuals, known as the Delphi panel, establish the framework of the statistical community in the qualitative section. Indeed, the selection of qualified members for the Delphi panel represents one of the most crucial stages of the Delphi technique, as the credibility of the research outcomes hinges upon the competence and knowledge of these individuals. In fact, one of the steps that greatly influences the quality of responses is the accurate selection of experienced and knowledgeable individuals in the field under study. Initially, the criteria for selecting individuals must be determined. Therefore, the selected sample of experts in the qualitative section or the chosen Delphi panel were recruited for this study using non-probability sampling, specifically a combination of targeted and judgmental methods. Consequently, the statistical community in the qualitative section (Delphi panel) comprises experts in the field.

In this study, 25 qualified individuals who were part of the statistical population in the qualitative section were chosen as the sample for the qualitative section or as selected members of the Delphi panel, with the assistance of respected professors and advisors. The process of analyzing data and

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the ultimate outcome of any investigation are the findings, which serve to validate and establish the existence of the research. The findings of each study encompass a series of explanations regarding the deductions drawn from their distinctions and connections. In this particular study, the qualitative data is analyzed using the Strauss and Corbin (1990) approach, which involves three stages of coding: open, axial, and selective. Once the collected interviews have been examined, the initial step of open coding is undertaken, wherein each component pertaining to the research question is attributed a descriptive label. This process is then repeated for all interviews, allowing for the grouping of similar codes in order to establish classes, features, and dimensions for axial coding. During this stage, more abstract concepts are employed to enhance the categorization and encompass a wider range of similar codes.

Results and Discussion

In this section, firstly, some of the demographic characteristics of the members of the expert group are given in the Delphi technique, and then the implementation steps of this technique are presented.

Description of experts group: In this section, to get to know the expert group and their characteristics, descriptive statistics related to gender, age, education, position and career history of the expert group members are presented. The people who participated in this research with the title of expert, 18 people were over 40 years old and 22 people had more than 10 years of work experience in this field, which shows that the mentioned people had enough experience in this field. Graphs 1-4 to 4-3 depict the frequency of education, work experience and age of people.

Summary of findings based on research questions

Question 1: What are the dimensions of social entrepreneurship with the approach of social responsibility in the welfare of Khorasan Razavi?

The research results showed that social entrepreneurship has three dimensions (individual, organizational and institutional); These results are consistent with the research of Sharafati Nejad et al. (2019), Zia and Tajpour (2014), Perez-Quintana (2017), Rudi (2013), Hosseini Gohari et al. (2018), Mester et al. (2021), Guderzi et al. (2017) and Ezarli and Rivenberg (2016) are in the same direction.

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Question 2: What are the components of social entrepreneurship with a social responsibility approach in the welfare of Khorasan Razavi?

The research results showed that social entrepreneurship has twenty-four components; These results are consistent with the research of Sharafati Nejad et al. (2019), Zia and Tajpour (2014), Perez-Quintana (2017), Rudi (2013), Hosseini Gohari et al. (2018), Mester et al. (2021), Guderzi et al. (2017) and Ezarli and Rivenberg (2016).

Question 3: What is the priority of each dimension of social entrepreneurship with the approach of social responsibility in the welfare of Khorasan Razavi?

The research results showed that the highest priority is with the organizational dimension with a factor load of 0.933, and the lowest priority is with the institutional dimension with a factor load of 0.587; These results are in line with the research of Zia and Tajpour (2014), Hosseini Gohari et al. (2018) and Master et al) .. (2021).

Question 4: What is the priority of each of the components of social entrepreneurship with the approach of social responsibility in the welfare of Khorasan Razavi?

The results of the research showed that the highest priority is to solve the problems and loopholes related to the law with a factor load of 0.789 and the lowest priority is regarding the excellence of the organization with a factor load of 0.421; These results are in line with the research of Godarzi et al. (2017), Zia and Tajpour (2014).

Question 5: What are the dimensions of social responsibility in the welfare of Khorasan Razavi?

The research results showed that social responsibility has three dimensions (moral, economic and legal); These results are in line with the researches of Sobhani et al. (2018), Ghorbani et al.

Question 6: What are the components of social responsibility in the welfare of Khorasan Razavi?

The research results showed that social responsibility has twenty-five components; These results are in line with the research of Sobhani et al. (2018), Ghorbani et al.

Question 7: What is the priority of each dimension of social responsibility in the welfare of Khorasan Razavi?

The results of the research showed that the highest priority is the moral dimension with a factor load of 0.932, then the economic dimension with a factor load of 0.915 and the legal dimension with a factor load of 0.670 is the last priority; These results are in line with the research of Sobhani et al. (2016) and Ghorbani et al. (2015).

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Question 8: What is the priority of each component of social responsibility in the welfare of Khorasan Razavi?

The results of the research showed that the highest priority is respect for upstream managers with a factor load of 0.663 and the lowest priority is attention to talent cultivation with a factor load of 0.406; These results are in line with the research of Badaghi et al. (2016) and Ghorbani et al. (2015).

Conclusion

One of the most significant aspects of social entrepreneurship is its impact on local development and the enhancement of human development indicators. When considering local development as a deliberate endeavor encompassing the generation of various assets such as physical, human, social, financial, and environmental capitals, social entrepreneurship equips itself with the necessary means to foster such development by effectively organizing the available resources in order to address local issues. In this regard, social entrepreneurship nurtures human resources through the provision of entrepreneurial training, the reinforcement of health and security indicators, the establishment of businesses and the empowerment of young individuals.

Furthermore, it serves as a catalyst for the expansion of literacy, the creation of employment opportunities, the reduction of crime rates, and the enhancement of security. By leveraging the existing social capital within the local community, social entrepreneurship not only yields individual and intangible outcomes such as increased self-assurance, but also lays the foundation for establishing trust networks and enhancing the capabilities of the local populace. In addition to bolstering the resilience of the local community, this process also paves the way for development. Moreover, social entrepreneurship plays a pivotal role in redistributing resources, income, and services among marginalized and excluded groups such as women, individuals with disabilities, the elderly, immigrants, and others, thereby restoring equilibrium within the context of the local community (Firouzabadi & Dabaghi, 2019: 29). Presently, entrepreneurial activities have been identified as the key driver of innovation, job creation, and economic growth worldwide. Consequently, social entrepreneurship has emerged as a noteworthy form of entrepreneurship that has recently garnered attention from researchers. The underlying objective of social entrepreneurship is to foster a deeper comprehension of societal needs on the part of entrepreneurs

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and to cultivate a sense of social responsibility towards society. The prevalence of high levels of social entrepreneurship can be regarded as a hallmark of a thriving society (Ehsani et al., 2016). If individuals, groups, organizations, and institutions within society acknowledge their responsibility for various events, incidents, and crises and strive to address these challenges, many crises can be resolved within a short span of time, ultimately leading to the establishment of a healthy and harmonious society. The organizational landscape is rapidly evolving, with current trends leaning towards global trade and multinational organizations with expansive supply chains, thereby intensifying these transformations.

A growing number of organizations have recognized the direct economic value of social responsibility, and by incorporating it as a strategic investment within their business and management practices, they can exert a positive influence on society and the environment, while simultaneously bolstering their reputation and credibility. By adopting this approach, organizations not only generate immediate profits, but also secure their future position. Social responsibility encompasses a comprehensive array of fundamental principles that organizations are expected to embrace and manifest in their actions. These principles encompass the notions of human dignity, ethics, equitable treatment of human resources, society, customers, suppliers, as well as stakeholders within the environment, and environmental preservation. These principles are not only morally commendable and desirable objectives, but also pivotal determinants in ensuring the long-term survival of organizations, as society benefits from these endeavors and the conduct of the organization itself.

Based on the outcomes of the investigation and the recognition of the various aspects of social entrepreneurship (namely, individual, organizational, and institutional) in the well-being of Khorasan Razavi, it is recommended that managers and officials, in consideration of individual advancement within the organization, encourage the implementation of knowledge management practices, establish a platform for organizational learning, foster the necessary coordination among organizational units, and adopt a future-oriented mindset towards entrepreneurship in order to devise plans aligned with the advancement of social entrepreneurship. Based on the research findings and the prioritization of social responsibility dimensions, it is advised for managers and officials to uphold organizational values, assist colleagues in their professional endeavors, show deference to higher-ranking supervisors, maintain punctuality at work, and seek consultation on

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pertinent matters. Paying heed to these aspects is of paramount significance for the organization to witness heightened efficacy.

Data availability statement

The original contributions presented in the study are included in the article/supplementary material, further inquiries can be directed to the corresponding author.

Ethics statement

The studies involving human participants were reviewed and approved by ethics committee of Islamic Azad University. The patients/participants provided their written informed consent to participate in this study.

Author contributions

H.Z, F.H. and N.S contributed to the study conception and design, material preparation, data collection and analysis. The author contributed to the article and approved the submitted version.

Funding

The author did (not) receive support from any organization for the submitted work.

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