

Social Entrepreneurship: A Reflection of Societal Beliefs and Attitudes

What and What for?

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Abstract

Social entrepreneurship is all about bringing a positive change to the society, with a zeal of applying knowledge to transform an innovative thought to a business idea for the benefit of the society.

This spirit takes birth from our very own society and the challenges faced by the people who constitute it, the human community.

Keywords: society, entrepreneurship, business, innovation

We all know, “man is a social animal”. So, whatever a man does or believes, i.e. his thoughts and actions, have a great impact on the society, directly or indirectly. People are not alike throughout the world; they have different mindsets, different aspirations and different conditions. These forces make them think and act differently. These thoughts and actions can be positive, i.e. in the benefit of the fellow beings, or negative, i.e. to harm them. There is one more category of being indifferent to the society. Since society is created by the interaction and mutual relationship of these categories, it certainly affects them.

People in the first category believe that they can take a stand for the society and utilize their leadership qualities and their knowledge, as a foundation to build an innovative marvel, which acts as a solution to the issues and challenges faced by the society. They stand against anything that they see and understand what is hampering society to grow, and thus allows for a diversion to have a healthy environment.

For example, in the environment of exchanges, people exchange goods and services with a motive. This is the world of business, where consumers buy the required products and services in order to satisfy their need. Here, it may happen that the environment in which the goods and services are provided are inefficient to keep a healthy balance between different sections of the society, or, the offerings can be enhanced and optimized with innovative and environment friendly, technological solutions that may prove to be beneficial to the consumer and much more valuable against the price they pay for it. So, here comes the positive thinkers and well-wishers of the society, the social entrepreneurs, who consider themselves the branches of the tree, *the society*, and thus feels responsible to nourish its roots, with their passion, positive attitude and hard work, to grow the fruits of success –not for an individual, not for a group, not for a nation but for the entire humanity, and to conserve the very well thought of “being human”.

Negative and indifferent thinkers are just survivors and while the former tries to harm the society with their negative thoughts and actions, the latter “*do not simply care*” of what is going on in the contemporary world, and what to build to conserve the future.

Want to work for a cause?

While every business cannot be based on societal benefits and “non-profit making attitude”, still, there can be a foundation based on positive attitude towards the society, and an optimization to keep a balance between profit and social responsibilities.

It can be selling pizzas to run an old age home - started by Padma Srinivasan, 73 and Jayalakshmi Srinivasan, 75 , Pizza Haven pumps in the revenues that it earns by catering to school kids and software companies (like HP) to running an old age home – Vishranti. A for-profit model makes this home’s future secure. But there is a more important lesson. Sustaining a social initiative doesn’t always need a complex innovation! (Think Change India, n.d.)

Or, in the form of a program named *Aahar: Meals for Poor at Rs. 5*, focusing on providing low cost nutritious meals to slum dwellers and employing local women to produce the food packets. (Think Change India, n.d.)

Another live example can be Aravind Eye Care System, network of not-for-profit hospitals and vision centers that performs 300,000 eye surgeries each year — 70% for free — using broadband connections to on-call doctors in city hospitals for instant diagnosis. Camps in rural areas screen thousands of patients weekly. (Think Change India, n.d.)

An optimized way of thinking and implementing change can be seen in The Environment Planning Group Limited (EPGL), which is a socially minded for-profit company incorporated in Ahmedabad, India. EPGL’s vision is to manufacture, install and operate 3,000 Reverse Osmosis (RO) water purification systems in rural and urban India over the next five years to provide pure, low salt, soft, micro-organism-free, safe drinking water to over five million people at an average consumer price of US \$0.004 per liter or US \$0.25 per person per month. (Think Change India, n.d.)

Concept of “giving back to society” envisions the future and inherits Indian heritage based on societal culture and values.

The understanding of the fact that we are, what we are, because of the society, leads to mutual respect, mutual appreciation and encouragement to build a healthy and strong society.

It structures an aspiration to build an environment, where people can trust and admire each other. The cooperation and success that you get through this is beneficial to all.

References

Think Change India. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://thinkchangeindia.wordpress.com/page/4/>