

Chapter 7

A Replicable Evaluation Method of Social Entrepreneurship Centers and Programs

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Abstract Prominent social entrepreneurship centers and programs in North America, Europe, and Asia are examined in terms of their position in the institutional structure, initial and additional funding, teaching initiatives, research achievements, and outreach activities. We computed performance by using a transparent coding scheme. Low correlations with institutional endowment and social entrepreneurship center/program performance offer evidence of discriminant validity of our ranking approach. Performance scores were used to rank-order social entrepreneurship centers/programs. Such an approach to examine social entrepreneurship center/program performance goes beyond the perception-based ranking instruments that popular magazines employ to evaluate subject-specific rankings. We examined data from 28 centers/programs and, in addition to an unweighted approach to ranking, we computed regression-weighted ranking of these centers/programs. The ranking instrument has strong discriminant validity and moderate inter-item reliability. With quickly growing numbers of centers/programs and associated faculty, additional attention and evaluation may be needed for related activities including role modeling, student mentoring by practitioners, and resultant social ventures. Implications for social entrepreneurship centers/programs, social entrepreneurs, social entrepreneurship scholars, and funders are discussed.

Keywords Social entrepreneurship · Rankings · University programs

A growing number of universities have started to support the social enterprise movement and the use of business practices and measures in the nonprofit sector. The *Social Entrepreneurship Education Resource Handbook* provides a compilation of social entrepreneurship initiatives at various levels across universities and institutions across the world. Some of these universities have established centers/programs that are dedicated to study social entrepreneurship. These university centers/programs of

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social entrepreneurship comprise only a small percentage of the much larger number of universities and institutions (Brock and AshokaU 2011) that have any involvement in social entrepreneurship (i.e., universities without dedicated centers/programs, but with other smaller scale initiatives are included in the longer list).

Given that social entrepreneurship and social enterprise, as a matter of both practice and research, are still in their adolescence, there exists no formal initiative to evaluate extant social entrepreneurship centers/programs. Understanding the effectiveness of various social entrepreneurship centers/programs is important for social entrepreneurs and social enterprises seeking advice and support, potential funders seeking to optimize the effect of their philanthropy, and universities supporting the operations of these centers/programs. Our instrument can be adopted to validly and reliably evaluate entrepreneurship centers and also various university programs, some of which may have become puppets of the often-arbitrary ratings and rankings offered by many agencies. For social entrepreneurship centers, this formalized evaluation will not only make clear what matters and how much so, but also enable universities to reach out to funders with a more compelling appeal. Another implication of our findings is that centers that are not doing well in their ranks can identify where they are weak and address those issues more constructively.

Published rankings are commonly used to measure educational program effectiveness. However, while perception-based rankings of the quickly growing number of social entrepreneurship programs may soon be forthcoming in popular magazines (e.g., *Bloomberg Businessweek*, *Forbes*, and *US News and World Report*), the aim of this study is to develop a multidimensional transparent metric to evaluate university-run social entrepreneurship centers/programs. We investigate social entrepreneurship and social enterprise centers/programs throughout the United States and abroad. Our findings will help students, faculty, staff administrators, directors and other stakeholders understand how to increase the effectiveness of social entrepreneurship centers/programs.

We evaluate 28 social entrepreneurship centers/programs and build a performance-based ranking method. We test for the internal consistency reliability of our evaluation criteria. The content validity of this method is ensured by the discussion of our criteria with several social entrepreneurship center directors and through social entrepreneurship conference discussion sessions. The eventual outcome is a formalized evaluation of existing social entrepreneurship centers/programs.

7.1 Contextual Background

The true emergence of social entrepreneurship education took place only in the very early twenty-first century. Brock (2006), in her *Social Entrepreneurship Teaching Resources Handbook*, listed 11 universities with dedicated centers/programs of social entrepreneurship. Brock and AshokaU (2008), in a subsequent revision of this volume, listed 20 universities or institutes with dedicated centers/programs of social entrepreneurship. In the most recent version of the *Handbook* (2011), the list

of dedicated centers/programs of social entrepreneurship expanded to include 54 such institutions. Indeed, if the current growth trajectory in social entrepreneurship programs continues, an established ranking system becomes even more important. However, this list includes programs that appear to be a single certificate or degree, as opposed to an operating center or a fully functional academic program, which our study intends to analyze. For the purposes of developing a valid and reliable ranking method of social entrepreneurship centers/programs, in late 2009 we collected data on 28 centers/programs that we deemed substantive by either having (a) a dedicated center, or (b) a complete undergraduate or graduate program (i.e., a major, not a minor or informal suite of courses).

The 28 social entrepreneurship centers/programs examined herein were founded with aggregate initial funding of over \$ 53 million, and received additional funding of nearly \$ 8 million during 2008–2009. The increasing popularity of social entrepreneurship and social enterprise at universities is also evidenced by the growth in the number of staff and faculty positions. These centers/programs sponsored over 140 courses in 2008–2009, with over 250 associated faculty members (Brock and AshokaU 2008). Brock and AshokaU (2011) reported that there were over 500 associated faculty members in the social entrepreneurship area.

Brock and Steiner (2009) offer an examination of definitions of social entrepreneurship and analyze the core elements of social entrepreneurship education. Brock and AshokaU (2008, 2011) have aggregated lists of courses, faculty and resources for teachers and practitioners of social entrepreneurship and social enterprise. In the most recent version of the *Handbook*, Brock and AshokaU (2011) have suggested that institutional excellence in social entrepreneurship can be evaluated in six categories: (1) teaching and curriculum, (2) research, (3) applied learning and apprenticeship, (4) resources, (5) role models, and (6) community and culture. The validity and reliability of these categories as appropriate evaluation criteria were not reported, but are presented as based on the experiences with Ashoka Fellows and other practitioners. While these reports have made valuable contributions to a field that is in its nascent phase, more empirically grounded research is needed to *evaluate* and *measure* the relative performance of the quickly growing number of funded and staffed centers/programs dedicated to researching and promoting social entrepreneurship at universities globally.

Extant research on program rankings has focused on *entrepreneurship* education, programs and centers, but little research to date has focused on the evaluation of *social entrepreneurship* centers and programs. According to Vesper and Gartner (1997, p. 403), “The top seven criteria suggested for ranking entrepreneurship programs were courses offered, faculty publications, impact on community, alumni exploits, innovations, alumni start-ups, and outreach to scholars.” However, in their study of 146 entrepreneurship centers, Finkle et al. (2006, p. 184) found that “top-ranked centers have three times as many endowed chairs as nonranked centers. Top-ranked centers also offer more comprehensive graduate programs.” The implication seems to be that more resource-endowed centers will be more productive. Thus, we consider the initial and additional funding as proxies for center/program strength. In addition to funding size, structural distance from the institutional power

core is an often-neglected dimension of program strength. Thus, we account for this aspect by calculating the structural distance of social entrepreneurship centers/programs from the power core.

Given the lack of research on social entrepreneurship programs, and the enormous growth of social entrepreneurship and social enterprise education throughout the world, we surveyed the social entrepreneurship and social enterprise centers/programs in the United States and abroad. To date, this is the first attempt to rank and analyze these centers/programs in the literature.

7.2 Developing the Ranking Instrument

Our instrument is designed to rank only centers/programs fully or partially dedicated to social entrepreneurship. In our first step to devise a ranking system, with an eye towards past categorizations (e.g., Brock and AshokaU 2011), we qualitatively assessed the various activities that 28 social entrepreneurship centers/programs engaged in and noted the resources that are needed to succeed in such activities. Table 7.1 presents the 28 evaluated centers/programs, in alphabetical order.

The four categories we established are (1) Outreach, (2) Teaching, (3) Research and (4) Strength. The measures included within these four categories cover all of the six elements presented by Brock and AshokaU (2011), and we include additional information on institutional level and funding, both of which are important factors in sustaining and embedding a program or center. Social entrepreneurship centers/programs aim to help social entrepreneurs through various facilitating roles such as incubator services, sponsoring business pitch/plan competitions, and hosting conferences and symposia. We include these elements under the Outreach category. Besides such outreach activities, social entrepreneurship centers/programs may also offer formal courses (i.e., Teaching category) and sponsor scholarly research published or presented in various social entrepreneurship venues (i.e., Research category). To succeed in such activities, social entrepreneurship centers/programs must be supported by considerable initial and ongoing funding. Also, in order to execute its strategies, the center/program must have considerable organizational power. The relative influence of the center/program is closely linked to its proximity to the power core (i.e., a program that is a part of a center, which in turn is a part of school that is part of the university, is much farther away from the power core than a center which reports directly to the university). We include these elements under the Strength category. Table 7.2 offers details on the nine-item instrument.

The strength category covers three items: level of affiliation, amount of initial funding, and amount of ongoing funding in the past 2 years. While funding announcements are positive and are usually publicly disclosed, we found that some institutions were reluctant to share this information. However, since updating publicly available data is not only an obligation, but also a privilege for social entrepreneurship centers/programs considered in this study, we included non-respondent social entrepreneurship centers/programs and ranked them along with social

Table 7.1 Alphabetical list of the evaluated centers/programs

Center/Program	University	Country
Canadian Centre for Social Entrepreneurship	University of Alberta	Canada
Center for Nonprofit Management	Northwestern University	USA
Center for Social Entrepreneurship	Miami University of Ohio	USA
Center for Social Entrepreneurship and Service-Learning	Belmont University	USA
Center for Social Innovation	Stanford University	USA
Center for Social Innovation	Adelphi University	USA
Center for Social Value Creation	University of Maryland-College Park	USA
Center for Sustainable Enterprise	University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill	USA
Center for the Advancement of Social Entrepreneurship	Duke University	USA
David O'Brien Center for Social Enterprise	Concordia University	Canada
Fowler Center for Sustainable Value	Case Western Reserve University	USA
Global Center for Social Entrepreneurship	University of the Pacific	USA
Helene and Grant Wilson Center for Social Entrepreneurship	Pace University	USA
INSEAD Social Entrepreneurship Program	INSEAD	France
Johnson Center for Philanthropy	Grand Valley State University	USA
Lewis Institute for Social Entrepreneurship	Babson College	USA
Mandel Leadership Foundation Center for Social Entrepreneurship	Ben-Gurion University	USA
Midwest Center for Nonprofit Leadership	University of Missouri, Kansas City	USA
Nonprofit Center	La Salle University	USA
NUS Center for Social Entrepreneurship and Philanthropy	National University of Singapore	Singapore
Program on Social Enterprise	Yale University	USA
RGK Center for Philanthropy and Community Service	University of Texas, Austin	USA
Schulich's Sustainable Enterprise Academy	York University	Canada
Skoll Centre for Social Entrepreneurship	Oxford University	UK
Social Enterprise Initiative	Harvard University	USA
Social Enterprise Institute	Northeastern University	USA
Social Enterprise Program	Columbia University	USA
Stewart Satter Program	New York University	USA

entrepreneurship centers/programs that confirmed and/or updated their information. Among the strength items, data on affiliation level was determined by analyzing the organizational hierarchy of each center/program within its university. If the social entrepreneurship center/program was supervised at the university level, then a raw score of "2" was given; if the center/program was supervised at the school level, then a raw score of "1" was given; if the center/program was supervised at a level below the school level, then a score of "0" was given. Initial funding data is retrievable by searching (a) webpage of the center/program, (b) press releases, and (c) Lexis-Nexis (keyword: *center/program name* and/or *institution name*). Additional

Table 7.2 Social entrepreneurship center/program ranking instrument

Items	Categories	Coding mechanism	Source
Affiliation level	Strength	University level = 2; School/Unit level = 1; Below School/Unit level = 0	Institutional website
Initial funding	Strength	Total initial funding in US \$	Center/Program webpage; institutional press release; Lexis-Nexis
Additional funding	Strength	Total additional funding in two recent calendar years	Center/Program webpage; institutional press release; Lexis-Nexis
SE courses	Teaching	Count of SE courses (generic foundation courses are not counted) (multiple raters preferred)	Center/Program webpage
SE faculty/fellows	Teaching	Count of SE faculty or fellows (faculty can be engaged in teaching or research)	Center/Program webpage
SE books/articles	Research	Count SE books + Count of SE articles	Google Books; Business Source Premier
SE conference papers	Research	Count of SE conference academic papers	3 academic conferences: Satter (NYU), CASE (Duke), and SERC (Oxford) [ISIRC from 2010]
SE conferences/symposia	Outreach	Count of SE conferences + count of SE symposia (academic or non-academic)	Center/Program webpage
SE incubators/business plans	Outreach	Count of SE incubators + count of SE business plan competitions	Center/Program webpage

funding data for the last 2 years was also gathered using the same method. During the month-long phone and email survey phase of this study, first-hand updates from centers/programs were useful in populating the funding columns.

The Teaching category includes two items: number of social entrepreneurship courses and number of social entrepreneurship associated faculty. Of the many courses that each center/program offers, not all are on the topic of social entrepreneurship. We subjectively evaluated all such courses to determine the list of social entrepreneurship courses per center/program. Data on courses and affiliated faculty were retrieved from the website of each center/program.

The Research category covers two items: number of social entrepreneurship papers published in peer-reviewed journals and book chapters, and number of social entrepreneurship papers presented. For published papers, we used *Business Source Premier* as our source database and searched for all papers with any of the following keywords: *social entrepreneurship* and *social enterprise*. Data on these are based on a simple count of publications or presentations by scholars in the journals, books, and pre-specified conferences. We specified the domain of social entrepreneurship paper presentations to include the following academic conferences: Satter (NYU), CASE (Duke) and SERC

Table 7.3 Regression-based relative weights

Ranking items	Beta	Significance	t-Statistic	Relative weight (%)
Affiliation level	0.218	0	11.293	12.46
Initial funding	0.261	0	10.287	11.35
Additional funding	0.184	0	9.516	10.50
SE courses	0.23	0	9.835	10.85
SE faculty/fellows	0.235	0	9.901	10.92
SE books/articles	0.229	0	6.847	7.56
SE conference papers	0.177	0	5.491	6.06
SE conferences/symposia	0.356	0	13.694	15.11
SE incubator/business plan	0.312	0	13.757	15.18
Constant	0.129(0.017)	0.853	-0.188	
			Total	100

(Oxford). Multiple authors were counted only once for each associated center/program (i.e., two authors from one center/program were counted as one publication).

The Outreach category includes two items: number of social entrepreneurship conferences or social entrepreneurship symposia hosted in the past year and number of business plan/pitch competitions in the past year. With various social entrepreneurship centers/programs focusing on subtly different activities, it is critical to keep the outreach items broad in nature. Data on outreach activities were retrieved from the website of each program. The March 2008 version of Brock and *Ashoka's Social Entrepreneurship Teaching Resources Handbook* was used to crosscheck the information.

Once the secondary data was collected, each social entrepreneurship center/program was contacted for verification. During this month-long phase, 17 of the 28 centers/programs responded; 16 either confirmed or updated their information, and one claimed the secondary data was mostly incorrect yet did not offer any evidence-based updated information. We audited the updated data provided to us by the 16 centers/programs to ensure accuracy before entering into our dataset. For the remaining 12 social entrepreneurship centers/programs, we used unconfirmed data gathered by the methods detailed above.

Considering the infancy of social entrepreneurship education, it is not surprising that there were only 28 social entrepreneurship centers/programs dedicated to social entrepreneurship education (i.e., this list was compiled in 2010). Of these, 22 are located in the United States, and 6 were abroad (5 in Europe and 1 in Asia). Ranks were determined in two ways: (1) assigning equal weights to the nine items and (2) determining regression-based weights for the items. For the latter method, we regressed our nine ranking criteria against our computed rank. The t-statistics for the nine items were scaled to percentage points (see Table 7.3 for regression-based weights), which were multiplied to the respective items to compute the regression-weighted scores of each item.

Tables 7.4 and 7.5 report on the pairwise correlations among rank and instrument items. While within each category the inter-item correlations are moderate to high, between categories the inter-item correlations are relatively lower.

Table 7.4 Pairwise Pearson correlations of weighted rank and all items

	Mean	Standard deviation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1 Unweighted rank	0.533	0.283										
2 Affiliation level	0.643	0.356	-0.169 (0.390)									
3 Initial funding	0.175	0.302	-0.536** (0.003)	0.364 (0.057)								
4 Additional funding	0.084	0.202	-0.281 (0.147)	-0.135 (0.494)	0.353 (0.065)							
5 SE courses	0.3	0.261	-0.354 (0.065)	-0.203 (0.301)	-0.244 (0.211)	-0.193 (0.325)						
6 SE faculty/fellows	0.192	0.249	-0.481** (0.010)	0.389* (0.041)	0.349 (0.069)	-0.085 (0.669)	0.292 (0.132)					
7 SE books/articles	0.098	0.239	-0.418* (0.027)	-0.171 (0.385)	0.095 (0.631)	0.236 (0.226)	-0.101 (0.611)	0.194 (0.322)				
8 SE conference papers	0.085	0.207	-0.403* (0.033)	-0.013 (0.947)	0.038 (0.848)	0.181 (0.357)	-0.09 (0.651)	-0.044 (0.824)	0.783** (0.000)			
9 SE conferences/symposia	0.285	0.357	-0.727** (0.000)	-0.139 (0.481)	0.355 (0.063)	0.173 (0.380)	0.316 (0.101)	0.034 (0.863)	0.023 (0.908)	0.102 (0.607)		
10 SE incubators/business plans	0.286	0.371	-0.478* (0.010)	-0.25 (0.199)	-0.046 (0.818)	-0.089 (0.654)	0.403* (0.033)	0.09 (0.647)	-0.067 (0.734)	-0.146 (0.459)	0.549** (0.002)	

*p<05

**p<.01

***p<.001

Table 7.5 Pairwise Pearson correlations of weighted rank and all items

	Mean	Standard deviation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1 Weighted rank	49.391	26.317									
2 Affiliation level	0.073	0.03	-0.087 (0.658)								
3 Initial funding	0.02	0.034	-0.486** (0.009)	0.167 (0.395)							
4 Additional funding	0.009	0.021	-0.275 (0.156)	-0.104 (0.599)	0.357 (0.062)						
5 SE courses	0.032	0.028	-0.395* (0.038)	-0.199 (0.310)	-0.244 (0.211)	-0.195 (0.320)					
6 SE faculty/fellows	0.021	0.027	-0.438* (0.020)	0.033 (0.867)	0.352 (0.066)	-0.083 (0.674)	0.29 (0.135)				
7 SE books/articles	0.007	0.018	-0.275 (0.157)	-0.16 (0.416)	0.096 (0.627)	0.235 (0.230)	-0.103 (0.603)	0.192 (0.328)			
8 SE conference papers	0.005	0.013	-0.234 (0.231)	0.076 (0.702)	0.038 (0.847)	0.178 (0.365)	-0.092 (0.640)	-0.046 (0.817)	0.784** (0.000)		
9 SE conferences/symposia	0.043	0.054	-0.798** (0.000)	-0.021 (0.916)	0.354 (0.064)	0.176 (0.369)	0.314 (0.104)	0.035 (0.858)	0.021 (0.917)	0.098 (0.618)	
10 SE incubators/business plans	0.043	0.056	-0.631** (0.000)	-0.195 (0.320)	-0.047 (0.810)	-0.086 (0.663)	0.403* (0.034)	0.09 (0.650)	-0.067 (0.734)	-0.146 (0.457)	0.550** (0.002)

*p<.05

**p<.01

***p<.001

Table 7.6 Discriminant validity

	Unweighted score	Unweighted rank	Weighted score	Weighted rank
Institutional endowment	0.02	0.02	0.05	-0.1
Institutional student body size	-0.18	0.24	-0.17	0.2

We rank ordered the social entrepreneurship centers/programs as determined by (a) equally weighted ranking criteria and (b) regression-determined weights of the ranking criteria. The unweighted scores and the weighted scores have a correlation of 0.83; the unweighted ranks and the weighted ranks have a correlation of 0.82. We believe that the weighted approach offers a more accurate picture of the social entrepreneurship center/program ranking. We feel it would be against the spirit of this research to present the actual rank order of the social entrepreneurship centers/programs, as it will shift focus from the development of our ranking instrument to the ranking outcome.

7.3 Validity and Reliability

Previous rankings of entrepreneurship centers have reported a high correlation with institutional endowment (Finkle et al. 2006). When a ranking instrument measuring academic center/program strength and performance yields ranks that highly correlate with institutional endowment or university student body size, that instrument has weak discriminant validity. Of existing ranking approaches, even the most sophisticated (e.g., *Financial Times* full-time MBA rankings) do not test for their validity or reliability. We addressed these gaps by testing for the discriminant validity and internal consistency reliability of the instrument. For discriminant validity, we examined whether a weak correlation existed between performance score/rank of social entrepreneurship centers/programs and institutional endowment/student body size. The correlations between unweighted scores/ranks and institutional endowment/student body size range from 0.02 to 0.24. The correlations between weighted scores/ranks and institutional endowment/student body size range from 0.05 to -0.17. The low correlations evident in Table 7.6 suggest that our instrument has sufficient discriminant validity.

To test for internal consistency reliability, we computed Cronbach's alpha for the three Strength items, two Teaching items, two Research items, and two Outreach items in our social entrepreneurship center/program ranking instrument. Cronbach's alpha of the three Strength items (i.e., affiliation level, initial funding, and additional funding) is 0.42; Cronbach's alpha of the two Teaching items (i.e., social entrepreneurship related courses and social entrepreneurship faculty/fellows) is 0.45; Cronbach's alpha of the two Research items (i.e., social entrepreneurship books/articles and social entrepreneurship conference papers) is 0.87; and Cronbach's alpha of the two Outreach items (i.e., social entrepreneurship conferences/

symposia and social entrepreneurship incubator/business plan competition) is 0.71. These statistics suggest that internal consistency reliability is adequate for the research and outreach items. However, the strength and teaching items have inadequate reliability in our instrument's current version. While revising the strength and teaching items to improve their respective Cronbach's alpha score is a possible avenue forward, the logical connection of the strength items and the teaching items suggest no conceptual reason to discard these items right away. Rather, we believe that a more realistic approach would be to simply acquire data on additional social entrepreneurship centers/programs (as they are established) and re-compute the internal consistency reliability of the strength and teaching items.

7.4 Discussion and Conclusion

Until now there existed no formal initiative to evaluate extant social entrepreneurship centers and programs. Herein we examined centers and programs in terms of their position in the institutional structure, initial and additional funding, teaching initiatives, research achievements and outreach activities. With this data, we computed the performance of social entrepreneurship centers and programs by using a transparent coding scheme. Our approach to examining these centers/programs goes beyond the perception-based ranking instruments that popular magazines employ to evaluate subject-specific rankings. In our analysis, low correlations with institutional endowment and social entrepreneurship center/program performance offer evidence of discriminant validity of our ranking approach. In addition to an unweighted approach to ranking, we also computed regression-weighted ranking of these centers/programs.

Previously, compilation efforts like the Social Entrepreneurship Education Resource Handbook (Brock and AshokaU 2011) offered an overview of the state of social entrepreneurship. The *Handbook* provides various lists of global universities with centers, initiatives, masters, minors and certificates in social entrepreneurship, and goes so far as to present "six elements of excellence" (p. 11), which are based on the experience of and with Ashoka Fellows and practitioners. All six of these elements are considered in our evaluation method. However one particular element which demands more exploration is what we would term *mentoring* and which Brock and AshokaU call *role models*. This type of resource or service proves difficult to measure quantitatively. While centers/programs may invite speakers and nurture relationships with social entrepreneurs, it is difficult to weigh the meaningful impact and connection that these individuals are making, in particular with the students involved in the centers. It is not rare to see a speaking engagement at a university where the speaker is relatively isolated from student contact, or a practitioner relationship that is solely with organizational leadership in lieu of students. There is only anecdotal information available on institutionalized mentoring programs within these centers; therefore, this may be an area for future exploration and may merit student survey.

The performance and achievement of a social entrepreneurship center/program can be captured by a number of criteria: citation count (i.e., in *Google* and *Google Scholar*, *Lexis-Nexis*, etc.), funds generated over and beyond initial seed money, publications (i.e., in books, journal articles, proceedings, and conferences), number of courses introduced, number of social entrepreneurs brought in as residents/in-house, number of seminars/conferences per year, etc. Our social entrepreneurship ranking system has nine items, which are grouped into four categories. Additional items may be added to refine or grow these categories to include activities such as mentoring, role models, and resultant social ventures. Also, as social entrepreneurship centers/programs evolve over the years and their operational scope increases, a new category of items may be added to properly rank social entrepreneurship centers/programs.

Social entrepreneurship's status as a distinct subject area has recently come under scrutiny (Dacin et al. 2010; Dacin et al. 2011). Based on a detailed review of the literature on social entrepreneurship, Dacin et al. (2010) argue that "while it is not a distinct type of entrepreneurship, researchers stand to benefit most from further research on social entrepreneurship as a context in which established types of entrepreneurs operate." While it is unlikely that social entrepreneurship centers/programs would operate in a sufficiently different manner than traditional entrepreneurship centers/programs, the teaching, research, and practice of social entrepreneurship may not necessarily coincide with the teaching, research, and practice of traditional entrepreneurship within academia. Whether entrepreneurship center/program rankings will strongly correlate with social entrepreneurship center/program rankings is an interesting empirical question that can be addressed in future research utilizing the ranking method presented here.

Social entrepreneurship centers/programs are a relatively new phenomenon in colleges and universities. Our transparent instrument underscores the dimensions along which social entrepreneurship centers/programs can work and make their mark. In addition to the performance dimensions, we include in our ranking a resource dimension, which is important because initial and ongoing external funding is critical to achieve various outreach, teaching, and service activities. Future research might examine the relative efficiency of various social entrepreneurship centers/programs by computing the return on investment of the centers/programs which may include a measure of the number and success of resultant social ventures.

Understanding the effectiveness of various social entrepreneurship centers will advance social entrepreneurship practice and scholarship. In developing an instrument to evaluate social entrepreneurship centers/programs, we fully disclosed our criteria, data sources, and coding scheme, to ensure complete transparency. Transparency of the instrument should not only assuage concerns for self-serving bias, but also allow others to readily utilize this instrument to expand on our data coverage into the future as more social entrepreneurship centers/programs are founded.

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