Hidden aspects of social entrepreneurs' life: a content analysis

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Abstract

Social entrepreneurship has been defined as entrepreneurship with a social goal; social entrepreneur is a change agent. Literature shows that social entrepreneurship is treated as a youthful field of study and needs thorough observational appraisals to develop, which proposes a plenitude of research openings (Hoogendoorn, Pennings, & Thurik, ERIM Report Series Reference No. ERS-2009-044-ORG, 2010; Hand & Lewis, Stanford Social Innovation Review, 2016). The work on social entrepreneurship is on the rise; however, little attention was given to the traits and motivational factors for social entrepreneurs. To fill this gap, this study explores the traits and motivations of social entrepreneurs. A content analysis technique has been used to analyse the data. The interviews, speeches and articles on nine social entrepreneurs were analysed. The results indicate education, global exposure, prior work experience, creativity, empathy, community roots and contentment were the main characteristics of a social entrepreneur. Self-transcendence, unique ideas and innovation to solve pain points, inspiration and personal experience motivate an individual to become a social entrepreneur. Findings of this study will contribute to the practical and research in the area of social entrepreneurship. The present research will contribute to the growing literature that attempts to explain the profile of a social entrepreneur and motivational factors.

Keywords: Social entrepreneurship, Social business, Social enterprises, Motivation, Characteristics

Introduction

A social business works for the advantage of social needs that empower social orders to work more productively. According to Professor Muhammad Yunus, social business can be defined as 'A non-dividend company that is created to address and solve a social problem' (Yunus, 2018). The terms social business, social enterprise and social entrepreneurship operate with a common reason and approach and pursuing the same ends of providing benefit to the society, but there are important distinctions among them (Thompson, 2008; Luke & Chu, 2013). Social business and social enterprises word often used interchangeably, but there is one small difference (Yunus, 2010; Thompson, 2008). The primary objective for both social business and social enterprise is to combine commercial and social goals. The social enterprise reinvests the profit in community or company, but in the case of social business, the investment would lead to an increase in social impact (Sea, 2016).

Social entrepreneurship has been defined as entrepreneurship with a social goal; social entrepreneur is a change agent (Thompson, 2002). The term 'social entrepreneur' was first mentioned by Joseph Banks in 1972 in his work named *The Sociology of Social Movements*, where he utilized the term to portray the need to utilize administrative abilities to address social issues, in addition to addressing business challenges (Banks, 1972). Some other researchers view social entrepreneurship as a social enterprise (Nicholls, 2006). Once the social entrepreneur starts generating profit, he/she becomes 'social business entrepreneur' (Yunus, 2008).

Social enterprises are associations utilizing enterprising methods to satisfy a social reason (Dey & Teasdale, 2013; Peattie & Morley, 2008). They are particularly characterized as autonomous organizations set up deliberately for a social mission that produces wages through an exchange of goods and services, and reinvest the profit earned to run the organization (Social Enterprise UK, 2016). A social business works for the advantage of social needs that empower social orders to work more proficiently (Martin & Osberg, 2007). Social business is a cause-driven business. The wholesome of social business is that the investor does not desire for any personal gain, except that the company should cover all costs and earn a profit. The social business accomplishes the social target, for example, medicinal services for poor people, lodging for poor people, financial services for poor people, nourishment for malnourished kids, giving safe drinking water, presenting sustainable power source and so forth in a business way (Yunus, 2007).

Another characteristic of social business which makes it unique is that social businesses do not depend on any kind of donation or on private or public grants to survive and to operate, like, any other business, it is self-sustainable (Yunus & Weber, 2011). There are seven principles of social businesses (Daley-Harris & Awimbo, 2011). They are

1. To work for society (poverty, education, health, environment)
2. Financial and economic sustainability
3. Investors get back their money invested in social business. No dividend is given beyond investment money
4. At the point when venture sum is paid back, organization benefit remains with the organization for extension and change
5. Gender-sensitive and environmentally conscious
6. Workforce shows signs of improvement in working condition
7. Do it with happiness

Absolutely, social businesses are ahead of economic actions; it gives society a positive world-changing arrangement when society requires them. Social business matters since it augments social advantages. It works for the marginal population, women, children and the environment. We need to understand the importance of social business because the scenario at present is very dangerous. Nuclear weapons and intolerance among countries are indicating towards a very dark future. In this scenario, the social business gives the hope for better tomorrow where everyone can survive. We can hope for the better future where everyone can stay happily, with good education, nutritious food and a clean environment.

Existing studies on social businesses or enterprises are centred more on developed nations. There is very less information available on social businesses and their impact on developing nations (Haski-Leventhal & Mehra, 2016). The objective of this paper is to present a systematic view of social business from the viewpoint of the existing social entrepreneurs. Another objective is to find out the characteristics of social entrepreneurship by conducting a qualitative study. We also want to find out the role of motivational factors to influence a person to become a social entrepreneur.

Literature review

Social businesses or social entrepreneurship is a developing field-tested by contending definitions and applied systems (Mair & Marti, 2006). Brock, Steiner, and Kim discussed in their study that the 'social entrepreneurs' and 'social entrepreneurship' has more than a dozen definitions (Brock, Steinder, & Kim, 2008). Though this topic is relatively new, some areas of social business have been studied by different authors, which includes, social business value system (Zahra, Gedajlovic, Neubaum, & Shulman, 2009), opportunity recognition (Corner &Ho, 2010; Shaw & Carter, 2007), return on investment in social businesses (Klemelä, 2016) and new business models (Mair & Schoen, 2007).

Social businesses or social enterprises has been defined as 'no loss, no dividend' business by Prof. Yunus. He believed the main objective of social business is to create a social impact (Yunus, 2010). He also defined another type of social business, which is owned by poor peoples. Under this, the profitability of the organization goes to poor people's (Yunus, 2010). This definition of social business was similar to the other authors' views. Social business focuses on social change and creativity or development in tackling social issues (Dees & Anderson, 2003; Kong, 2010). Social businesses are organizations seeking monetary sustainability of the endeavour, and also the degree to which it is ready to accomplish its characterized social mission (Galera & Borzaga, 2009; Katre & Salipante, 2012). The dual function performed by a social business was always a point of discussion of how the performance of social business could be measured (Luke, Barraket, & Eversole, 2013).

Social Enterprise Governance Theories

Various diverse theoretical frameworks have developed to clarify and analyse governance in social enterprise. Each of these frameworks approaches social enterprise governance in a marginally unique manner, utilizing distinctive terminology and perspectives of social business governance. The most discussed theories under social enterprise are stakeholders' theory (Cooney, 2012; Mason, Kirkbride, & Bryde, 2007; Gonin, Besharov, Smith, & Gachet, 2013), stewardship theory (Mason, Kirkbride, & Bryde, 2007; Low, 2006), institution theory (Tracey, 2011; Gonin et al., 2007), organizational identity (Moss, 2011; Parkinson, 2003; Mair & Marti, 2006), paradox theory (Smith, Besharov, Wessels, & Chertok, 2012; Gonin et al., 2013), behavioural theory of social entrepreneurship (Ebrashi, 2010; Ebrashi, 2013), social enterprise governance theory (Mason et al., 2007), and positive theory of social entrepreneurship (Santos, 2012).

'Any identifiable group or individual who can affect the achievement of an organization's objectives, or who is affected by the achievement of an organization's objectives' are called stakeholders (Freeman & Reed, 1983). Stakeholders for social enterprises are the people who firmly connected with the community they plan to serve. The sole objective of social enterprise is to convey social benefit and maintain a sustainable business. For achieving this goal, social enterprise must be ethical.

The stakeholder theory clarifies how organizations can organize and oversee relations with distinguished stakeholders. Stakeholder theory provides ethical justification for the management of stakeholders. Stakeholders might affect or affected by an organization. Social enterprise governance processes should prioritize their interests (Mason et al., 2007). Also, this theory explains how external stakeholders create pressures on organizations to take care of both social and financial results. There are three approaches to understand the stakeholders' theory: descriptive, instrumental and normative (Donaldson & Preston, 1995).

The descriptive approach of stakeholder theory explains the actual behaviour of managers and stakeholders and their roles and activities. This approach indicates the broad range of organizations that already implant numerous stakeholder needs in their strategic decision making (Rowley & Moldoveanu, 2003). Instrumental studies stress the economic effect of tending to ethical and moral concerns. It looks at how a stakeholder accession influences a company's financial execution (Gonin et al., 2013). This approach also suggests that stakeholders approach should not degrade the company's financial performance (Mitchell, Agle, & Wood, 1997). The instrumental approach set the 'fundamental basis' for the normative approach (Donaldson & Preston, 1995). Issues related to fairness (Driver, 2012), legitimacy (Miller, 2012; Driver, 2012) and reciprocity (Phillips & Freeman, 2008) are the criteria included in normative approach.

The stakeholders' theory has been criticized by the proponents of other theories by arguing that the centre of this theory was on the ceding of resources and benefits to stakeholders, rather than solely to shareholders. Criticisms are proclaimed on legal, economic and moral grounds (Key, 1999; Gibson, 2000). A noteworthy condemnation of this approach is that the management should be more focus on the most proficient method to organize between the groups of stakeholders (Mason et al., 2007).

Stewardship theory was an alternative theoretical approach, which has been supported as a suitable premise of social enterprise governance (Low, 2006). Stewardship theory presents a perspective of governance that occupies from the economic elucidation of affairs inside the organization. The basic assumption made under this theory is that the managers are reliable and they are "pro-organization" (Davis, Schoorman, & Donaldson, 1997). This theory views managers and directors as stewards and their interests are aligned with organizations goal. Stewardship theory lines up with the ethos of social enterprise and the mental and social profile of its managers (Mason et al., 2007). This is maybe because the managers are also individuals from the characterized network that the enterprise serves. The management also need to line up their decisions with the required needs of the community, as it is the core philosophy of social enterprise.

Furthermore, the followers of this theory believed that in the long term, social enterprises narrow down their business focus (Dart, 2004). As a result, at board level, managers have a broader set of skills (Mason et al., 2007). The board can use these skill sets

and can maximize the value of social business to its defined communities. To summarize, board members should be sufficiently free and able to deliver increased productivity.

Stewardship theory, as contrary to stakeholders' theory, explains the role of non-economic factors like trust and faith, in facilitating optimum social benefit (Borzaga & Solari, 2001; Low, 2006). Managers are enthusiastic about organizations' goal and they are always not motivated by self-interest (Mason et al., 2007). In context to the social enterprise, this concept is centred on delivering optimum social benefit. This concept links stewardship theory to institutional theory.

Institution theory centres on the connection between the organization and its surroundings. This perspective investigates factors related to the development and survival of institutions and the procedures by which they come to be viewed as genuine (Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Dacin et al., 2011). Institutional entrepreneurship viewpoint is a promising method to comprehend the job of social business in evolving standards, new standards, organizations and structures (Mair & Marti, 2006).

Agarwal and Hockerts advocate the institutional theory as an apparatus for professionals to ponder the authenticity, survivability and versatility of social enterprises. Institutional theory structures can eliminate the dangers related to social enterprise (Agrawal & Hockerts, 2013). Institutional theory in social business research can give helpful experiences into the procedure of authoritative arrangement, vision and mission, personality and culture, procedures and memory. Also, institutional theory extensively ponders the elements between the people of the associations and the institutions (government, showcase, culture, religion). The institutional condition bolsters the qualities that social enterprises are established upon, and it impacts the procedures required to keep up the power of these qualities (Mason, Kirkbride, & Bryde, 2007).

Another theory is organization identity theory, which guide, situate and bring together individuals from an organization to take part in aggregate activity. It refers to the perception of organization members about an organization, its work and their existence, which distinguish this organization from others. Organization identity also explains the going tension within social enterprises (Foreman & Whetten, 2002). The tension could be arising because of normative and utilitarian identities of social businesses create uncertainties and ambiguities (Corley & Gioia, 2004). The tension in the organization could lead to the controversies and conflict between the groups within the organization (Glynn, 2000). Identity prospective research also tells how social organizations communicate with their target audience (Navis & Glynn, 2011).

Paradox theory also explains the tension exists within social enterprise caused by multiple factors, for example, those between social missions and business ventures and inborn inside organization (Smith, Besharov, Wessels, & Chertok, 2012; Gonin, Besharov, Smith, & Gachet, 2013). In a social paradox, contradictory concepts exist simultaneously and endure after some time (Smith & Lewis, 2011). According to Smith and Lewis (2011), 'A dilemma may prove paradoxical, for instance, when a longer time horizon shows how any choice between A and B is temporary. Over time the contradictions resurface, suggesting their interrelatedness and persistence'.

In the short run, organization leaders can resolve these issues by exploring the new opportunities and reallocate the existing certain resources in the most effective ways. In

addition to this, using existing certainty relies upon having investigated new potential outcomes and vice versa (Smith & Tushman, 2005). This concept helps to engage and accept complexities and contradictions and offers an 'invitation to act' (Beech, Caestecker, & MacLean, 2004).

These theories are more focused on the internal functioning in a social enterprise and the tension arises in the organization because of various factors. These theories do not explain the motive behind starting a social enterprise, its elements, structure and performance measures. To explain these concepts, behaviour theory of social entrepreneurship introduces the new approach.

The behavioural theory of social entrepreneurship examines the relevant variables that lead to social endeavour creation, the basic association elements and structures, and how these typologies measure the social effect, activate assets, and realize supportable social change (Ebrashi, 2013). The motive to become social entrepreneurship is individuals' intentions, which are followed by triggering events and leads to opportunity identification. Individuals' intentions are the results of attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control (Ajzen, 1991). These intentions lead to triggering events, which are triggered by knowledge of status quo, community influence, entrepreneurship, social problems, political problems, personal factors, situational factors, etc. (Ebrashi, 2013). These triggering occasions direct the connection between intentions and behaviours and build the consistency of intentions to frame behaviour. The performance of a social business is measured by the sustainable changes made by social enterprises at the community level. Also, social enterprises focus on financial sustainability and efficiency.

Various researchers have worked on intentions behind becoming social entrepreneurs in recent years. A study on Malaysian students' revealed that the students with higher education are more intended towards social entrepreneurship, instead of the traditional entrepreneurship (Rahman, Othman, Pihie, & Wahid, 2016). Another similar kind of study on Indian students' intention to become a social entrepreneur was conducted with the variables emotional intelligence, creativity and moral obligation; attitude towards becoming a social entrepreneur; subjective norms; and perceived behavioural control. The result proposed emotional intelligence and creativity as new antecedents that also explain social entrepreneurial intention formation (Tiwari, Bhat, & Tikoria, 2017). Zakaria and Bahrein in their study proposed a conceptual framework for social entrepreneurship intention and found proactive personality, social entrepreneurial interest, social entrepreneurial attitude and social entrepreneurial education are important factors in determining individuals' intention to become a social entrepreneur (Zakaria & Bahrein, 2018).

The role of empathy as an important antecedent of social entrepreneurial intention was discussed in a study on university students. It was found that empathy explains social entrepreneurial intentions through two complementary mechanisms: self-efficacy and social worth (Bacq & Alt, 2018). Local traditions and community roots also work as a trigger to start a social business. Indigenous traditions work as a foremost factor in social entrepreneurship (Widjojo & Gunawan, 2019). Skills and knowledge that come from within the local community, supported by the active participation of local people, help to reach multiple goals. Another study discussed the role of courage, confidence, hope, optimism and resilience on entrepreneurship and collectively referred them as psychological capital (Bockorny & Youssef-Morgan, 2019; Mearns & Yule, 2009). They

explored the relationship between entrepreneurs' courage, psychological capital and life satisfaction and found entrepreneurs' courage is related to their life satisfaction; also, the psychological capital moderates the relationship.

A study by Liu, Ip and Liang explored the intentions of former and current journalists to establish social enterprises, using questionnaires focused on personality traits, creativity, and social capital. Results reveal that creativity has a significant influence on the social entrepreneurial intentions of journalists, as does having higher bridging type social capital (Liu, Ip, & Liang, 2018).

A positive theory of social entrepreneurship (Santos, 2012) presents a different view of social business research. In this theory, he explained that social businesses provide sustainable solutions for neglected problems with positive superficiality. He also discussed the external problems, which could be the central goal or logic for social entrepreneurs instead of the commercial entrepreneurs.

The difference between the social business and commercial business is that the first one looks for opportunities for value creation without regard for the potential for value capture. The social business refers to the positive superficiality whose benefit goes to a localized and weak section of the society (poor, long-term unemployed, disabled, discriminated, socially excluded, etc.), which is often neglected by the government (Seelos & Mair, 2005; Certo & Miller, 2008). But logically, benefits of social business are not only concentrated to marginal population. Social businesses could be helpful for the dominant population if it includes tending to issues with positive superficiality with an overwhelming objective of significant value creation (Kline, Shah, & Rubright, 2014; Santos, 2012).

The first objective of a social entrepreneur is to provide a sustainable solution to an existing problem. The second objective is to empower others, both internal and external peoples (Santos, 2012). Now the key question arises, in which areas social businesses succeed? The answer is those areas where there is a possibility to value creation is more than the value capture. In case these businesses are not performing well, it should be taken care by the government, because the problems they are solving come under government central roles (Kline et al., 2014; Santos, 2012).

Motivational factors

Various researchers have endeavoured to plunge further into the attributes of the social entrepreneur. Entrepreneurs enhance social wealth. They create new markets, technologies, industries, jobs and escalate productivity. So we can say that entrepreneurship leads to social welfare (Pirson, 2012). There is no much difference between a conventional and social entrepreneur in terms of talents and attributes (Smith, Bell, & Watts, 2014); however, the catalyst differs for both. The major motivator in conventional entrepreneurship is money, while in the case of social entrepreneurship, the main motivator is 'humanity' or philanthropy (Boluk & Mottiar, 2014; Martin & Osberg, 2007). For commercial entrepreneur value creation is the prime motivator, while for social entrepreneur create value for the society is the prime motivator (Mair & Noboa, 2003; Santos, 2012). Social entrepreneurs create the value without concern for profits and this is because of their motivation to do something for mankind (Ghalwash, Tolba, & Ismail, 2017).

The results of various prior studies show that current social difficulties, individual encounters, individual inspiration and social networks are the main motivator for social

entrepreneurs (Ghalwash et al., 2017). Also, the previous experience in the field of social business, present social challenges and desire were observed to be the key motivational drivers for social business (Ghalwash et al., 2017). Sometimes, the community support in terms of resources, recognition, information and networks also motivates an individual to go for social business (Ghalwash et al., 2017; Sharir & Lerner, 2006). Some personal life experiences also motivate individuals to start social enterprises. One such experience is rural background, which instructs individuals to 'wealth sharing' and the creation of valuable goods for the entire community (Ebrashi, 2013; Hunt & Levie, 2003). Another motivation factor is community roots, which persuades people to respect one's very own community and the production of useful goods for the entire network (Gaglio, 2004; Ebrashi, 2013). Individuals, those who know their traditions and beliefs, and capable of knowing the drawback of their society, seeks these drawbacks as a business opportunity (Zahra et al., 2009). Moreover, another inspiration factor for the social entrepreneurs is the belief in divine power, which is encouraging social entrepreneurs to enhance his or her community (MacDonald & Howorth, 2018; Omorede, 2014; Thompson, 2008).

Apart from these, environmental, demographic, personal and psychological factors also motivate individuals to become social entrepreneurs. Environmental factors include role models who were community leaders and contribute with money and efforts in the cooperative (Bygrave, 1997; Ebrashi, 2013). Demographic factors include the roots of social entrepreneurs that we already discussed previously (Gaglio, 2004; Ebrashi, 2013). This affiliation of a social entrepreneur with society influences them to give something good to his society. The personal and psychological variables incorporated a solid need for achievement, and a dream of allowing individuals to choose and take an interest in the inception of social business (Ebrashi, 2013). Another motivator is an internal locus of control, which influences individuals to start a new social enterprise (Ebrashi, 2013; Boateng, 2018).

Entrepreneurs' prosocial motivation was an important factor discussed a lot in recent years. Entrepreneurs with prosocial motives create value in the community by establishing social ventures, which helps peoples who face challenging circumstances (Moroz, Branzei, Parker, & Gamble, 2018). Their main mission is to help people and by doing so, these entrepreneurs can feel good about themselves and thus improve their own well-being (Farny, Kibler, Solange, & Landoni, 2018). Some studies presented a contradictory view. They stated that prosocial motivation negatively affects the entrepreneur's life satisfaction via increased levels of stress (Kibler, Wincent, Kautonen, Cacciotti, & Obschonka, 2019).

All the above literature shows that social entrepreneurship is treated as a youthful field of study and needs thorough observational appraisals to develop, which proposes a plenitude of research openings (Hoogendoorn, Pennings, & Thurik, 2010; Hand & Lewis, 2016). Most of the studies are qualitative and gives an extraordinary explanation of the social business. Nevertheless, existing literature has touched very little on social entrepreneurs' traits and motivations (Omorede, 2014; Germak & Robinson, 2014) compared to commercial entrepreneurs (Germak & Robinson, 2014). In general, a lot of work has been done on social entrepreneurship and theories behind it. The work on social entrepreneurship is on the rise; however, little attention was given to the traits and motivational factors for social entrepreneurs. To fill this gap, this study explores the traits and motivations of social entrepreneurs. This paper intends to recognize features and common patterns of social business visionaries across various social endeavours.

Method

This paper used content analysis techniques to systematically evaluate the speeches given by various social entrepreneurs in the eight social business conference 2018, organized by Yunus Centre and Yunus Social Business. This conference was held on June 28–29, 2018 in Bengaluru, India, at Infosys Campus, Electronic City. The theme for the conference was 'A World of Three Zeros: Zero Poverty, Zero Unemployment, Zero Net Carbon Emissions'. Distinguished and revered speakers from Bangladesh, India, China, Japan, South-East Asia (including Malaysia, Thailand), Australia, Europe, etc., participated in the conference for sharing their experience in social business. A total of 109 speakers delivered their views on this topic. Out of these speakers, 23 were the founders of different social businesses, 18 were academicians, 56 were associated with some social enterprises and 12 speakers were somewhere related to this field. Out of 23 founders, we have randomly picked 9 speakers. The details of the samples are given in Table 1. Apart from this data, some of their interviews and personal details were also collected through different online sources. A total of 43 interviews and articles were collected for this study from different websites, out of which 6 were videos. Their speeches, interviews and articles were recorded and analysed for this study.

The content was analysed with the assistance of the software program ATLAS.ti. It is the powerful software for coding the textual data and for its interpretation. The speeches, interviews and articles were coded at the sentence level. Standard content analysis techniques were used for the coding purpose (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The initial coding was audited by a research scholar who had expertise in conceptual researches. Based on the literature review, the sentences were analysed under the category entrepreneurial characteristics and motivational factors. The sentences were analysed to identify variables such as education, global exposure, prior experience, empathy, innovation, etc. Few variables, which were not found in the literature review, emerged out in our content analysis results and seem significant. These factors were recognized and discussed in the result section.

Results and discussion

Throughout the study, we were eager to know what motivated a person to become an entrepreneur and which characteristics make them different than other entrepreneurs. Figures 1 and 2 are representing the characteristics of social entrepreneurs and motivational factors.

Characteristics of social entrepreneurs

Entrepreneurial characteristics make social entrepreneurs differ from other profit-oriented entrepreneurs. Social business is therefore not just about making a profit, but also do something good for its stakeholders. In this study we found education (Barringer, Jones, & Neubaum, 2005), global exposure, prior work experience (Ghalwash et al., 2017), creative, empathy (Martin & Osberg, 2007), community roots (Gaglio, 2004; Ebrashi, 2013; Widjojo & Gunawan, 2019) and contentment are the main characteristics of social entrepreneur.

Education and prior work experience help social entrepreneurs to develop the vision and set the objectives for the business. These characteristics also help them to identify the opportunities, business environment, occasion, resources and operations of new

Table 1 Profile of speakers

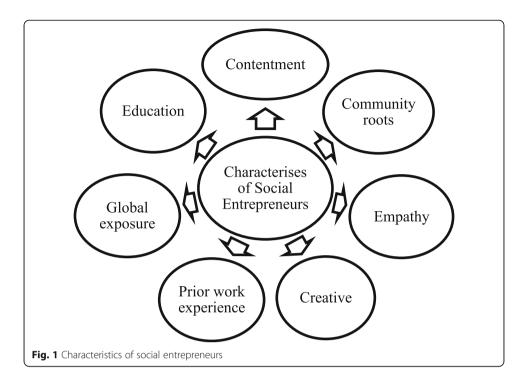| S. No	Name	Education	Association	Country	Area of work
1	Prof. Muhammad Yunus	Ph.D. in Economics	Grameen Bank, Yunus Centre	Bangladesh	Microfinancing
2	Chetna Gala Sinha	Master's in economics	Founder and Chairperson, Mann DeshiMahilaSahkari Bank	India	Microfinancing
3	Takuya Kawamura	Economics graduated	President, Founder and Co CEO, Sunpower Corp, Grameen Japan Auto World, World Recycle Car Parts Association	Japan	Development in developing countries, recycling, and waste management
4	Ms. Karen James	Masters in Environmental Engineering, MBA,	Founder and CEO, On Purpose Hub	Australia	Management consulting
5	Deng Fei	Bachelor of Journalism	Founder, Free lunch for children	China	Works on issues such as child hunger, food security and malnutrition to support children in poverty build a better future
6	NurfariniDaing	B.Sc (Accounting and Finance), INSEAD (SG)	Co-founder and CEO, myHarapan, Youth Trust Foundation,	Malaysia	Non-profit organization management
7	Christian Vanizette	Master Degree in Business	Co-founder, MakeSense.org	France	Global social and environmental issues
8	Dr. Devi Prasad Shetty	MBBS, post-graduate in General Surgery	Founder and Managing Director, Narayana Hrudayalaya	India	Health care
9	Ravi Kailas	Master's degree in Business, Stanford University	Founder and Chairman, Mytrah Group	UK	Renewable energy, electric vehicle

Source: Secondary data

enterprises (Kinias, 2013). Prior work experience also helps in managing the various stakeholders, knowing the risk and problems associated with the business (Barringer, Jones, & Neubaum, 2005). A lot of research argues that the quality of social ventures largely depends on the entrepreneurs' education and prior work experience (Serneels, 2008; Mosey & Wright, 2007). The following statement comprehensively explains the above discussion on prior work experience:

> '…. has 14 years' of start-up experience and also did training and coaching for small enterprises and unemployed graduates.'
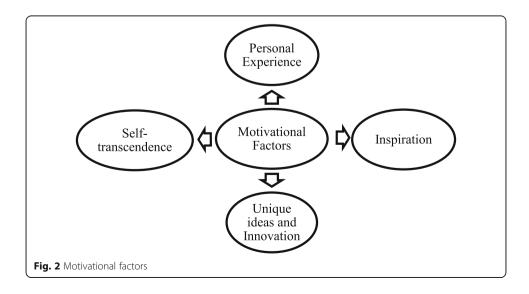
> 'He now boasts of 25 years of entrepreneurial experience in various sectors including telecom, software, franchising, digital media, real estate, financial options, and infrastructure.'

An empathy and community root of social entrepreneurs makes them different from commercial entrepreneurs. Empathy is an emotion which allows individuals to understand

Fig. 1 Characteristics of social entrepreneurs

others, their needs and position. Empathy is a vital characteristic of a social entrepreneur's characteristics (Bacq & Alt, 2018). For becoming a successful social entrepreneur, one needs to understand the community, their problems and then make solutions for those problems. By grasping empathy, social ventures can guarantee that they remain consistent with their community and causes. Empathy plays an important role in the decision-making process of a social entrepreneur (Chandra & Aliandrina, 2018). Social entrepreneur from a healthcare organization mentioned:

> '…..was keen to help the poor, all our efforts in the field of medicine are aimed at reducing healthcare costs for the benefit of poor patients.'

Fig. 2 Motivational factors

'If healthcare solutions cannot be afforded by the poor, then it is not a solution. The solution will be when everyone is able to afford it.'

A community root in this study prospective is about knowing the struggle that your people have gone before you and understanding the problems of your community. Everybody wants to be a piece of an assorted spot so you can expand your viewpoints. But one should never forget his roots, because sometimes if you forget to look back, you can end up being lost. Social entrepreneurs with this characteristic want to do something useful for their own community. Community root characteristic of an entrepreneur influences him to do something meaningful for their society (Gaglio, 2004; Ebrashi, 2013). Individuals who know their community and problems lying over their can find opportunities out of those problems (Zahra et al., 2009). An article on a social entrepreneur shares the same set of beliefs with a strong stance:

'......resigned from his job in 1972, because..... (Country name) became independent. Disenchanted by the formal economic theories, he decided to work with the poor, particularly poor women in the neighbouring village to help them overcome poverty.'

Another social entrepreneur said

'Through this, we're also trying to showcase...... (Country name) on the global stage.'

Global exposure, creative and contentment are the new variable, which emerged out from this study. Social entrepreneurs need to always keep themselves abreast with what's going on in the industry, both inside the nation and globally. The objective of social enterprise is to design operations to profit for both social impacts and for the survival of the organization (Sea, 2016). Global exposure helps social entrepreneurs to expand their business and provides them the awareness of social and work-related protocols worldwide. Global exposure gives an opportunity of networking with globally prominent ecosystem enablers as well as it helps to give a more open-minded outlook. Global success stories of Grameen Foundation and Grameen bank highlights the importance of global exposure of the founder. The following statements support our discussion:

'....Japanese firms in automobile-related industries are set to join........(foundations name) in the establishment of an automobile repair facility in.... (Country name).'

'He lives between San Francisco, London, and Hyderabad, and is rushing to catch a flight – has taken persistent efforts. But now that he is sitting on the opposite side of the desk, he seems relaxed and happy to talk about his company.'

'This is when he took four years off, in 2005, when he was living in San Francisco, to relax, study, reflect, run marathons, hike, go fishing and meditate.'

Both creativity and contentment are vital characteristics of social entrepreneurs. Creativity as characteristics of a commercial entrepreneur was discussed in previous research also (Fillis & Rentschler, 2010; Tu & Yang, 2013; Tagraf & Akin, 2009). The creativity of the founder becomes a very important factor in the context

of social business also (Tiwari et al., 2017; Liu et al., 2018). He earns profit for the survival of the organization altogether with the social well-being. If we think that the customers who will be most benefited by taking our services are not able to pay for it can be a difficult obstacle. Therefore, the founder needs to be utmost creative to develop a sustainable business model, which can fulfil his/her, both the goals. The creative revenue model to run the business allows meaningful impact and financial stability. Another important characteristic of the social entrepreneur we found in this study was contentment. Social entrepreneurship is not only about making the money, but also solving the social issues and problems, building a greater thing, which makes a better world. But why only a few people choose entrepreneurship? They do not want to earn money a luxurious world? The answers to these questions hide in the following statements:

> 'Our education should not be just for our pleasure and comfort but it should be for the greater good of humanity.'

> 'Making money is happiness; making other people happy is super happiness.'

The speeches and articles on social entrepreneurs analysed for this study indicate that all social entrepreneurs are very happy and satisfied with their work. They want to expand their work for humanity and mankind. 'Social businesses are for the people and by the people.' This is their main mantra.

Motivational factors for social entrepreneurs

The following factors related to social entrepreneurship motivation have emerged out of the data analysis: self-transcendence, unique ideas and innovation to solve pain points, inspiration and personal experience.

In Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory (Maslow, 1943), self-actualization works as a motivational factor for any individual and it is the highest level need. One unpublished paper by Maslow extends this model to the next level and mentioned a new need, which he placed above all needs was self-transcendence (Santi, 2015). At self-transcendence level, individuals put their needs aside to a great extent and work for others (Santi, 2015). The desire to do giving back to the society without expecting anything in return reflects the self-transcendence motive of social entrepreneurs.

> 'I'm encouraging young people to become social business entrepreneurs and contribute to the world, rather than just making money. Making money is no fun. Contributing to and changing the world is a lot more fun.'

> 'If you want to change something, you need to keep walking, progressing. Amidst this, there will be successes and failures. But, as long as the intention is good, things will happen. You just need to keep walking.'

Sometimes social entrepreneurs get motivated through their unique ideas and innovative solutions to solve pain points in the society. The following statements indicate towards this motive:

'…designed an accessible, yet highly structured approach for social entrepreneurs worldwide to resolve strategic and operational challenges.'

'He chose wind energy as the business; he wanted to set up because it was the cheapest and most accessible method of supplying power.'

'Instead of having 2000-3000 beds isolated hospitals in a city, if we have one 10,000 bed hospital that has 2000 for heart surgeries, 1000 to perform cataract operations, 1000 for orthopaedics after accidents and so forth, we can reduce costs by sharing the infrastructure costs of one.'

Social entrepreneurs often work for issues like poverty, energy, waste, water, education, financing, and skill development. These problems are complex in nature and require an innovative and creative solution. These social entrepreneurs have an innovative solution, using technology or community engagement to solve age-long social issues. The innovation could be economic innovation, technical innovation, social innovation, economic-technical innovation, social-economic innovation, social-technical innovation or social-technical-economical innovation (Schmitz & Philiomondo, 2015).

Another motivational factor for social entrepreneurs is the role model influence. The influence of role models was explained in earlier studies of commercial entrepreneurs also (Linan & Fayolle, 2015; Bosma, Hessels, Praag, & Verheul, 2012). Role models influence the commercial entrepreneurs, in similar ways social entrepreneurs and their thoughts motivate others to start a new social venture. As analysed by the data:

'….reading Professor Yunus' book, creating a world without poverty, almost 8-10 years ago, during my stay in the US transformed the vision of my work.'

The stories of role models reflect the high and low of his career and the decisions taken by him shows his grit and innovation. These stories transport the inspiration to other social entrepreneurs through his journey.

In the end, the last motivating factor found in the present study was an entrepreneur's personal experiences. Their own life experiences, pains, problems, etc. motivate them to find out the solution for social problems. In such experiences, the background of the entrepreneur plays an important role.

'I suffered the first setback when the RBI rejected my application, in 1996, on the grounds that some of the promoting members were non-literate.'

'While growing up, I witnessed many poor people dying at a young age because they could not afford medicines and medical treatment.'

Some life experiences are traumatic. They change the individuals view towards the world and make them work for the people who are suffering from the same. In a study conducted in China, it was discussed that educational opportunities, unemployment experience, rural poverty experience and start-up location hardships

could be the reasons which motivate individuals to start a new social venture (Yiu, Wan, Ng, Chen, & Su, 2014).

Conclusion

The aim of this paper was to introduce a systematic view of social business from the perspective of the current social entrepreneurs. Further, through an empirically investigate, was to identify the various characteristics and motivation elements, which drive an individual to turn into a social entrepreneur.

We explore the backgrounds of social entrepreneurs, speeches, articles and interviews about them, particularly to identify their characteristics and motivation factors. We have explored nine social entrepreneurs' data for this study. With the help of the software, we coded the data, and our research found some common features and patterns among them.

This study identified seven entrepreneurial characteristics of social entrepreneurs. They are education, global exposure, prior work experience, creative, empathy, community roots and contentment. Also, the empirical data identified four entrepreneurial motivations for social entrepreneurs, namely, self-transcendence, unique ideas and innovation to solve pain points, inspiration and personal experience. Figure 1 represents characteristics of social entrepreneurs and Fig. 2 represents motivational factors for social entrepreneurs.

There were common characteristics which was discussed in earlier studies on traits of social entrepreneurs, such as education (Kinias, 2013; Serneels, 2008; Mosey et al., 2007), prior work experience (Barringer et al., 2005; Serneels, 2008; Mosey et al., 2007), empathy (Chandra & Aliandrina, 2018) and community roots (Gaglio, 2004; Ebrashi, 2013). These characteristics were well explained in the previous sections.

Global exposure, creative and contentment are a few new characteristics of social entrepreneurs, emerged out of this study. Global exposure gives the insides of global ecosystems. It helps to give a new horizon to social entrepreneur a look at the problem areas and their solutions. Social entrepreneurs with global exposure would be in a better place to understand the global laws and regulations, and can put their efforts in the right directions. Sometimes, global exposure can also help social entrepreneurs to understand the new social business models running in different countries and can give them a chance to do collaboration with global social businesses. Creativity as characteristics for commercial entrepreneurs was already been discussed in previous studies (Fillis & Rentschler, 2010; Tu & Yang, 2013; Tagraf & Akin, 2009). Social entrepreneurs are more creative in comparison to the commercial entrepreneurs because they are serving the community and generating profit out of it. They are more creative in all areas like business models, revenue models, and employment generation. Contentment was another characteristic of a social entrepreneur, which was not been pointed out by other studies. Contentment is a feeling of satisfaction and happiness with one's work. Doing something good for the community gives them happiness. Moreover, social entrepreneurs' intention to make a real and lasting impact on people's lives gives them maximum satisfaction with their work. This is a very unique characteristic of social entrepreneurs, which makes them differ from commercial entrepreneurs in true sense.

Other findings of this study were motivational factors, viz., self-transcendence, unique ideas and innovation to solve pain points, inspiration and personal experiences. Except

for self-transcendence, other factors such as unique ideas and innovation to solve pain points (Schmitz et al., 2015), inspiration (Linan et al., 2015; Bosma et al., 2012) and personal experiences (Ebrashi, 2013; Yiu et al., 2014) were discussed in previous studies. The self-transcendence motive of social entrepreneur motivates them to reorient from self to something which is more valued then oneself. Maslow defines self-transcendence as a state where an individual wants a cause which he should keep ahead of himself and wants to share the benefit with all the people of the world (Maslow, 1968). An individual with the transcended motive has the ability to see the world and his or her actions on the planet in connection to other people. They have a conviction that they can have an effect, not only inside their own geological limits or culture, but also throughout the world.

Limitation and implications

This study is not free from the limitations. The first limitation was with the data we used for the study. We have analysed the secondary data of nine social entrepreneurs, including their speeches, interviews and articles. The second limitation is about the codes used for the content. The codes used were based on researchers' own interpretation of data. Although the codes were rechecked by another research scholar also, everyone could have their own interpretation on coding. Finally, the qualitative nature of this study may raise the question on the reliability, but according to Bryman, qualitative content analysis comprises underline themes in the content analysed by the researcher (Bryman, 2008).

Despite the limitation, the findings of this study will contribute to the practice and research in this area. The characteristics of social entrepreneurs may benefit the new start-up ventures to develop similar skills. The institutions can work on to develop these characteristics among their followers so in the future we can see a number of social enterprises. The motivational factors such as inspiration from a social entrepreneur story could be discussed in institutions to motive the number of followers. They can motivate the followers to give an innovative solution for existing problems in the society and they can help them to develop their social business based on it. Apart from this, the present research will contribute to the growing literature that attempts to explain the profile of a social entrepreneur and motivational factors. This research can be useful for future researchers who want to work in this area of social entrepreneurship.

Competing interests

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