

Social Entrepreneurial Intention and Entrepreneurial Attitude among Management Students in South India

Makesh K. G.¹, Minimol M. C.²

¹Associate Professor of Commerce, Government Arts and Science College Uduma, Kerala, India
Corresponding Author Email: [drmakeshkg\[at\]gmail.com](mailto:drmakeshkg[at]gmail.com)

²Associate Professor of Commerce and International Business, Central University of Kerala, Kerala, India

Abstract: *The current study focuses on factors affecting social entrepreneurial intention and entrepreneurial attitude among management students in south India. The business operation is considered to be very complex in a competitive business environment which is constantly changing with fast technological advancements. An entrepreneur is expected to interact with these environmental forces which require him to be highly competent in different dimensions like intellectual, attitudinal, behavioral, technical, and managerial aspects. Entrepreneurs are therefore permanently challenged to deploy a set of competencies to succeed in their entrepreneurial endeavors. It is imperative to note that key social entrepreneurial competence that is critical for perceived performance is the willingness to self-correct (self-evaluation), a quality that seems to distinguish a young social entrepreneur and their older and established counterparts. There is dearth of previous literature explaining the factors affecting social entrepreneurial intention. No studies empirically tested the relationship in India. This study intends to address this gap. Specifically, the research question in this study is to identify the factors contributing to social entrepreneurial intention and entrepreneurial attitude.*

Keywords: Social entrepreneurial intention; entrepreneurial attitude; social vision; social innovation orientation; sustainable values.

1. Introduction

Social entrepreneurship, as a domain of research, has earned immense curiosity among the academic disciplines such as management and entrepreneurship. Researchers in other knowledgeable domains, also have found it interesting. As the term itself is closely associated with social transformation and development it has gained interest among policy makers, companies, print and social media, and practicing professionals. As a process it is the same old vine in the new bottle as it focuses on providing a solution to social problems and the term Social Entrepreneurship is a newly coined one (Banks, 1972; Drucker, 1979). For more than two centuries great individuals and groups have tried to tackle the societal challenges, using economic means. For example, the Rochdale Pioneers who inspired cooperative ideals, and Florence Nightingale who changed the patient care landscape (Nicholls, 2006). Social enterprise provides a “business” source of revenue for many types of socially-oriented organizations and activities. This revenue often contributes to the self-sufficiency and long-term sustainability of organizations involved in charitable activities (Kerlin, 2006).

A social entrepreneur is expected to interact with environmental forces which require him/her to be highly competent in different dimensions like intellectual, attitudinal, behavioral, technical, and managerial aspects. Social entrepreneurs are therefore permanently challenged to deploy a set of competencies not only to succeed in their entrepreneurial endeavors but also for the development of the society at large. This study is expected to provide insights in this direction. Social entrepreneurship is seemingly dissimilar to other type of entrepreneurial ventures owing to its unique value proposition. Social entrepreneurs bring together profit motive and social cause in their business enterprise. They try

to instigate social change by resolving social problems. One major reason for the raise of social entrepreneurial ventures is the societal concern for sustainable future. People across the world are now more worried about the socio-economic predicament and so they think that social entrepreneurship is the only way out to sustainability.

2. Theoretical Framework

Social capital theory asserts that social relations are means that can be used for the gathering and advancement of human resources. Social capital in the context of this theory is defined as any characteristic feature of a social relationship that generates procreative values. According to Savage and Kanazawa (2002) and Kanazawa (2009), human beings presumably have developed likings towards general comradeship and specific likings towards pointers of higher order social capital. Since evolved preferences for certain types of social relationships are scientifically proved to exist, one can expect gender differences that reflect the division of labor in foraging societies. Stakeholder theory was propounded by Freeman (1984), suggests that shareholders are merely one of many stakeholders in a company. The stakeholder ecosystem, involves anyone invested and involved in, or affected by, the company: employees, environmentalists near the company’s plants, vendors, governmental agencies, and more. Freeman’s theory suggests that a company’s real success lies in satisfying all its stakeholders, not just those who might profit from its stock. It emphasizes the interconnections between business and all those who have a stake in it, namely customers, employees, suppliers, investors and the community. The business is supposed to serve the needs of the stakeholders, and not just the shareholders. Institutional theory is a theoretical toolbox that researchers can use to study the concept of social

entrepreneurship. The theory explains the dynamic relationship between individuals or organizations and the institutions like government, market, religion and culture. Agrawal and Hockerts (2013) used institutional theory parameters like legitimacy, institutional logics, isomorphism and institutional memory to study the concept of social entrepreneurship. The theory of planned behavior assumes that behavioural intention can fairly determine actual behavior. The theory further postulates the three predecessors of behavioural intention such as attitude towards behavior, subjective norm and perceived behavioural control (Ajzen, 1991).

Liu, Huei-Ching, et al. (2018) focuses on the entrepreneurial intentions of present and former journalists towards starting a social enterprise. The authors set their hypotheses in the context of the similarities between entrepreneurs and journalists, and analyze how personal traits, creativity and social capital determine the entrepreneurial intentions of journalists. Anh, Tran and Von Korfflesch (2016) formulated a model of social entrepreneurial intention by adopting intention models in entrepreneurship literature in general and social entrepreneurship in particular to identify gaps in the existing literature. Their study pointed out the linkages between social entrepreneurial efficacy, social entrepreneurial outcome expectation and social entrepreneurial intention. Hockerts (2017) tested the validity of the model suggested by Mair and Noboa (2006) explaining the predictors of social entrepreneurial intention and elaborated the model by incorporating prior experience in social problems. Their results suggested that prior experience predicts social entrepreneurial intention and this relationship is mediated by the antecedents suggested by Mair and Noboa (2006). Shahab, Arbizu, and Haider (2019) presented a moderated mediation model in describing the relationship between entrepreneurial self-efficacy and entrepreneurial intentions in their comparative study of China and Spain. The study pointed out that entrepreneurial creativity and attitude towards entrepreneurship mediates the relationship between entrepreneurial self-efficacy and entrepreneurial intention and entrepreneurial education moderates this relationship. Weerawardena and Gillian (2006) tried to address the research gap in the field of social entrepreneurship and developed a multi-dimensional model of social entrepreneurship using grounded theory method.

Management graduates are expected to start their own entrepreneurial ventures in long-term. However, the need of the hour is not just entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurial ventures with societal focus is recommended from sustainable development perspective of the business. Researchers have done several studies in the foreign countries, to understand this concept and to identify the factors influencing social entrepreneurial intention among students. Indian studies on the subject are rare in nature. Hence it is essential to study the social entrepreneurial intention and social entrepreneurial attitude among management graduates. Specifically, the research question in this study is to investigate whether or not social entrepreneurial intention among management students in India can be predicted using their social innovation orientation, entrepreneurial attitude, subjective norms and entrepreneurial self-efficacy. It also tries to find out the contribution of social vision, sustainable values and financial

returns interest to social entrepreneurial intention of Management students.

3. Materials and Methods

The study used both exploratory and descriptive research designs. It is exploratory in the sense that it intends to explore the various determinants of social entrepreneurial intention. It is descriptive in the sense that it even intends to describe the relationship between social entrepreneurial intention and its various determinants. The research was based on field study, by administering a structured questionnaire. From the perspective of time horizon, a cross-sectional survey was designed for the study. Survey method was used for collecting data from sample respondents. Data source was MBA students in South India. Population for the study was taken as the entire MBA students in South India. Sample frame was the list of students collected from the various B-schools in South India. The sample respondents were selected by using multi-stage, simple random sampling technique. In the first stage, three states [Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka] were selected from South India. In the second phase, 450 management students were selected (150 each from the three sample States), across the States to constitute the sample. Primary data were collected by employing a structured questionnaire on the selected fraction of the population.

The scales used for the measurement of the constructs are given in Table 1.

Table 1: Scales used for Measurement of the Constructs

Constructs	Scale
Social Vision (SV)	Nga & Shamuganathan (2010)
Social Innovation Orientation (SIO)	Rantanen & Toikko (2014)
Social entrepreneurial intention (SEI)	Rantanen & Toikko (2014)
Entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE)	Rantanen & Toikko (2014)
Sustainable Values (SVa)	Nga & Shamuganathan (2010)
Financial Return Interest (FRI)	Nga & Shamuganathan (2010)
Entrepreneurial attitude (EA)	Armitage & Conner (1999)
Subjective Norms (SN)	Armitage & Conner (1999)

Source: Compiled by the Researcher

The data were collected during June- August, 2020. SPSS software was used for exploring the linkage among the variables. Regression analysis methodology was used to model the relationship between the exogenous and endogenous variables. The conceptual model used in this study was:

$$Y_t = \alpha_0 + \beta_1 SV_t + \beta_2 SIO_t + \beta_3 ESE_t + \beta_4 SUS_VAL_t + \beta_5 FRI_t + \beta_6 VEA_t + \beta_6 SN_t + e_t$$

where Y_t represent Social entrepreneurial intention. 't' stands for time and e_t is the error term.

4. Results and Discussion

Respondents were classified based on gender. Out of the 450 respondents, 62 per cent [279 nos.] were females. There were 38 per cent [171 nos.] respondents in the male category. Former education stream of the respondents was also enquired into. The respondents were from Commerce and management (54 %), science (11%), engineering (15%), arts and humanities (12%) and other (8%) backgrounds.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics

Constructs	Mean	Standard Deviation	Kurtosis	Skewness	Number of Observations
EA	2.728	1.101	-0.041	-0.574	300
ESE	3.242	1.092	0.485	-0.708	300
FRI	3.209	0.987	0.59	-0.601	300
SEI	3.262	0.966	0.588	-0.912	300
SIO	3.233	1.106	-0.213	-0.679	300
SN	3.428	1.14	-0.618	-0.653	300
SV	3.347	0.952	-0.062	-0.859	300
SVa	3.124	1.051	0.556	-0.674	300

Source: SPSS Results

The kurtosis and skewness (values lie between -1 and +1) results showed that the data were normally distributed. Mean values of all the variable are above 3, except entrepreneurial attitude. For entrepreneurial attitude, the mean value is 2.728, standard deviation of all the variables are within the acceptable limit. Cronbach’s alpha coefficients of all the constructs are above 0.7 and ranged between 0.711 and 0.809.

So, it is inferred that all the measurement instruments are reliable in measuring the constructs and the measurement models are having acceptable reliability. Correlation coefficients show that there was a strong correlation between the latent exogenous constructs and the latent endogenous construct.

Table 3: Correlation between Variables

LV Correlations	EA	ESE	FRI	SEI	SIO	SN	SV	SVa
EA	1							
ESE	0.835	1						
FRI	0.891	0.92	1					
SEI	0.769	0.913	0.89	1				
SIO	0.942	0.795	0.813	0.756	1			
SN	0.872	0.598	0.659	0.58	0.91	1		
SV	0.844	0.627	0.659	0.603	0.791	0.899	1	
SVa	0.897	0.931	0.953	0.874	0.814	0.636	0.649	1

SPSS Results

Analysis of variance was performed to test whether the social entrepreneurial intention and entrepreneurial attitude among management graduates vary according to their former educational background. Mean difference in social

entrepreneurial intention is statistically significant at 5 percent level of significance. Mean variance in entrepreneurial attitude, is also found to be statistically significant.

Table 4: Difference in Social entrepreneurial intention and its Determinants based on Former Educational background – ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Mean SEI	Between Groups	8.706	5	1.741	2.536	0.029
	Within Groups	201.899	294	0.687		
	Total	210.606	299			
Mean SIO	Between Groups	31.834	5	6.367	8.261	0
	Within Groups	226.578	294	0.771		
	Total	258.412	299			
Mean EA	Between Groups	21.534	5	4.307	5.612	0
	Within Groups	225.645	294	0.767		
	Total	247.179	299			
Mean SV	Between Groups	18.098	5	3.62	5.068	0
	Within Groups	209.958	294	0.714		
	Total	228.055	299			
Mean ESE	Between Groups	4.492	5	0.898	1.248	0.287
	Within Groups	211.607	294	0.72		
	Total	216.099	299			
Mean SVa	Between Groups	13.346	5	2.669	2.624	0.024
	Within Groups	299.108	294	1.017		
	Total	312.454	299			
Mean FRI	Between Groups	7.713	5	1.543	2.256	0.049
	Within Groups	201.03	294	0.684		
	Total	208.743	299			
Mean SN	Between Groups	9.597	5	1.919	1.444	0.208
	Within Groups	390.836	294	1.329		
	Total	400.432	299			

Source: SPSS Results

Independent sample t test was carried out to test the statistical significance of gender-wise variance in social entrepreneurial intention and entrepreneurial attitude among the respondents. The results reveal that the mean difference in social entrepreneurial intention and entrepreneurial attitude, based on gender are statistically significant at 95 percent confidence level.

Table 5: Gender-wise Difference in Social entrepreneurial intention and its Determinants: T-Test

	F-static	Sig.	T-static	Sig.
Mean SEI	1.292	0.256	2.022	0.043
Mean SIO	0.460	0.498	0.902	0.067
Mean EA	2.529	0.112	1.174	0.241
Mean SV	1.437	0.310	1.998	0.021
Mean ESE	0.678	0.194	2.162	0.002
Mean SVa	0.549	0.427	2.530	0.032
Mean FRI	1.493	0.765	1.877	0.042
Mean SN	2.301	0.416	1.943	0.165

Source: SPSS Results

Determinants of Social entrepreneurial Intention and Entrepreneurial Attitude

Three different models were run to confirm the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The first model explains the relationship between all the independent variables such as entrepreneurial attitude, entrepreneurial self-efficacy, financial returns interest, social innovation orientation, subjective norms social vision and sustainable values with social entrepreneurial intention of management graduates. The results are given in Table 6.

Table 6: Determinants of Social Entrepreneurial Intention - Model 1

Source	SS	Df	MS	Number of obs = 450 F(7, 442) = 282.069 Prob>F = 0.000 R-Squared = 0.871 Adj.R- squared = 0.868 Durbin Watson= 0.666		
Model	3578.216	7	511.174			
Residual	529.170	442	1.812			
Total	4107.387	449				
SEI	Coeff.	Std.Err.	t	P> t	95% Conf. Interval	
SV	0.108	0.027	1.697	0.091**	-0.007	0.097
SIO	0.374	0.045	6.441	0.000***	0.200	0.376
ESE	0.064	0.065	8.182	0.000***	0.404	0.660
FRI	0.567	0.052	8.200	0.000***	0.325	0.530
SVa	0.128	0.056	1.595	0.112	-0.021	0.200
SN	-0.197	0.051	-3.6105	0.002***	-0.258	-0.058
EA	-0.726	0.060	-8.267	0.000***	-0.610	-0.376
Constant	0.556	0.341	1.630	0.104	-0.115	1.227

*** significant at 5% level of significance
** significant at 10% level of significance
Source: STATA Output

The results reveal that all the independent variables are statistically significant in predicting the social entrepreneurial intention among management students, except sustainable values. Social vision is significant at 10 percent level of significance while all the other independent variables are significant at 5 percent level of significance. All the coefficients were positive except coefficients of Subjective norms and entrepreneurial attitude. Thus, we can infer that subjective norms and entrepreneurial attitude negatively contributes to social entrepreneurial intention, which means

that even management students who are not having any particular interest towards entrepreneurial activities displayed social entrepreneurial intention.

A second model was run to test the significance of relationship between social entrepreneurial intention and the independent variables rooted on social aspects such as social vision, social innovation orientation, sustainable values and subjective norms. The results were given in Table 7.

Table 7: Determinants of Social Entrepreneurial Intention - Model 2

Source	SS	Df	MS	Number of obs = 450 F(4, 445) = 146.924 Prob>F = 0.000 R-Squared = 0.666 Adj.R- squared = 0.661 Durbin Watson= 0.8659		
Model	2734.685	4	683.671			
Residual	1372.702	445	4.653			
Total	4107.387	449				
SEI	Coeff.	Std.Err.	t	P> t	95% Conf. Interval	
SV	0.216	0.039	2.317	0.021***	0.014	0.1667
SIO	0.113	0.063	0.935	0.035***	-0.065	0.183

SVa	0.704	0.046	10.747	0.078**	-0.021	0.200
SN	-0.212	0.078	-2.175	0.030***	-0.324	-0.016
Constant	2.522	0.526	4.799	0.000***	1.488	3.557
*** significant at 5% level of significance						
** significant at 10% level of significance						
Source: STATA Results						

In this model, the independent variables social vision, sustainable values, social innovation orientation and subjective norms are statistically significant in explaining the social entrepreneurial intention among the respondents. The model reveals that it is not essential to have entrepreneurial attitude or higher levels of entrepreneurial self-efficacy to venture into social entrepreneurship.

A third model was run with entrepreneurial attitude as the dependent variable to test whether the independent variables social vision, sustainable values, social innovation orientation, entrepreneurial self-efficacy, financial returns

interest, and social entrepreneurial intention and subjective norms contribute to the respondents' entrepreneurial attitude.

The model revealed that the independent variables social vision, sustainable values, social innovation orientation, financial returns interest, social entrepreneurial intention and subjective norms are statistically significant in explaining the entrepreneurial attitude among the respondents. However, the model also confirmed that the variable entrepreneurial self-efficacy is not a good predictor of entrepreneurial attitude among management graduates. Thus, we can infer that even management students with lower level of entrepreneurial self-efficacy is aspiring to be entrepreneurs in the future.

Table 8: Determinants of Entrepreneurial Attitude - Model 3

Source	SS	Df	MS	Number of obs = 450 F(7, 442) = 857.300 Prob>F = 0.000 R-Squared = 0.854 Adj.R- squared = 0.851 Durbin Watson = 0.763		
Model	3578.216	7	121.221			
Residual	529.170	442	1.414			
Total	4107.387	449				
EA	Coeff.	Std.Err.	t	P> t	95% Conf. Interval	
SV	0.223	0.022	6.148	0.000***	0.093	0.180
SIO	0.374	0.039	7.378	0.000***	0.210	0.362
ESE	0.064	0.063	-1.596	0.112	0.404	0.660
FRI	0.045	0.052	9.540	0.000***	0.338	0.513
SVa	0.438	0.042	10.702	0.000***	0.369	0.535
SN	-0.079	0.045	-2.060	0.040***	-0.182	-0.004
SEI	-0.261	0.047	-8.267	0.000***	0.404	0.660
Constant	-0.165	0.302	-0.546	0.000***	-0.476	0.293
*** significant at 5% level of significance						
** significant at 10% level of significance						
Source: STATA Results						

Implications

The study helps to extend the growing body of research that has established a link between social entrepreneurial intention and its determinants. The study validates the model of determinants of social entrepreneurial intention and , the model of determinants of entrepreneurial attitude which will help to reflect the significance of exogenous constructs such as, social vision, sustainability values, financial returns interest, social innovation orientation and subjective norms in contributing to the endogenous variable social entrepreneurial intention and entrepreneurial attitude Understanding the determinants of social entrepreneurial intention and entrepreneurial attitude is practically important as it helps management graduates to develop a social inclination. Identification of linkage between social entrepreneurial intention and its determinants allows them to understand the relevance of social vision, sustainable values financial returns interest, social innovation orientation, subjective norms, entrepreneurial self-efficacy and entrepreneurial attitude in inculcating social entrepreneurial intention. It is also important to have an understanding of social entrepreneurial intention that ultimately contributes to social performance of

the business, which in turn will definitely provide a competitive edge to management graduates as potential entrepreneurs. The study results may help the academia, trainers and researchers to identify new ways of developing social vision, sustainable values and financial returns interest and social innovation orientation among potential entrepreneurs. It will also help them to focus on training programmes, that focuses on development of social entrepreneurial intention and entrepreneurial attitude and to come out with tailor-made solutions to the social problems faced by social entrepreneurial ventures.

5. Conclusion

The overall purpose of the study was to analyze the determinants of social entrepreneurial intention and entrepreneurial attitude among management graduates in South India. The focus of this study was to investigate whether or not social entrepreneurial intention among management graduates can be predicted using their social innovation orientation, entrepreneurial attitude, subjective norms and entrepreneurial self-efficacy. It also tries to find

out the contribution of social vision, sustainable values and financial returns interest to social entrepreneurial intention. In addition, the study also focused on testing and validating the theoretical models explaining the linkages between social entrepreneurial intention, entrepreneurial attitude and their determinants. Efforts were also made to identify whether there is any significant difference in social entrepreneurial intention and entrepreneurial attitude of the management graduates based on their gender and previous educational background.

The authors declare that they have no competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

References

- [1] Agrawal, A. & Hockerts, K. (2013). Institutional Theory as a Framework for Practitioners of Social Entrepreneurship, DOI: http://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-36540-9_11.
- [2] Ajzen, I. (1991). The Theory of Planned Behavior. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 50, 179-211. DOI: [http://doi.org/10.1016/0749-5978\(91\)90020-T](http://doi.org/10.1016/0749-5978(91)90020-T).
- [3] Anh, T.P. Tran & Harald, V. K.(2016). A conceptual model of social entrepreneurial intention based on the social cognitive career theory. *Asia Pacific Journal of Innovation and Entrepreneurs*
- [4] Armitage, C. J., & Conner, M. (1999). Distinguishing perceptions of control from self-efficacy: Predicting consumption of a low-fat diet using the theory of planned behavior. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 29(1), 72–90. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1559-1816.1999.tb01375.x>.
- [5] Banks, J.A. (1972). *The Sociology of Social Movements*. London: MacMillan
- [6] Drucker, P. (1979). *The Practice of Management*. London: Pan Books.
- [7] Freeman, R.E. (1984). *Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach*. Pitman: Boston
- [8] Hockerts, K.(2017). Determinants of Social Entrepreneurial Intentions. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, available at <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/276893417>, accessed on March 28, 2019
- [9] Kanazawa, S. (2009). Why nobody seems to know what exactly social capital is. *Journal of Social, Evolutionary, and Cultural Psychology*, 3 (2), 118-132.
- [10] Kerlin, J. A. (2006). Social enterprise in the United States and Europe: Understanding and learning from the differences. *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, 17(3), 246-262.
- [11] Liu, Huei-Ching, et al. (2018). A New Runway for Journalists: On the Intentions of Journalists to Start Social Enterprises. *Journal of Entrepreneurship, Management and Innovation*, 14(2), 83. <http://www.gale.com/apps/doc/A541103489/AONE?u=anon~b1adcd74&sid=googleScholar&xid=af79de37>. Accessed 10 Aug. 2021.
- [12] Mair, J. & Noboa, E. (2006). Social entrepreneurship: How intentions to create a social venture are formed. DOI: <http://doi.org/10.1057/9780230625655-8>.
- [13] Nga, J. & Shamuganathan, G.(2010). The influence of personality traits and demographic factors on social entrepreneurship start up intentions. *Journal of Business Ethics*. 95, 259-282, DOI: <http://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-009-035>.
- [14] Nicholls, A., Cho, A.H. (2006). Social entrepreneurship: The Structuration of a Field. In A. Nicholls, (Ed.), *Social Entrepreneurship: New Models of Sustainable Social Change* (99–118). Oxford University Press, Oxford, UK.
- [15] Rantanen, T., & Toikko, T. (2014). Entrepreneurship, social welfare, and cultural values: Young peoples social attitudes in Finland. *Advances in Business-Related Scientific Research Journal*, 5(1), 13–24.
- [16] Savage, J. & Kanazawa, S. (2002). Social Capital, Crime, and Human Nature. *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice*. 18, 188-211.
- [17] Shahab, Y., Chengang, Y., Arbizu, A.D. and Haider, M.J. (2019). Entrepreneurial self-efficacy and intention: do entrepreneurial creativity and education matter?. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research*, 25(2), 259-280. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJEBR-12-2017-0522>.
- [18] Weerawardena, J, and Gillian S. M. (2006). Investigating Social Entrepreneurship: A Multidimensional Model. *Journal of World Business* 41(1), 21-35.