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A Study Of The Relationship Of Social Entrepreneurial Intentions Factors

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to identify the relationship between attitudes, empathy, innovativeness, social factors, institutional factors, perceived feasibility, self-efficacy and social entrepreneurial intentions. Data for the study were collected from 700 students (350 from Namibia and 350 from India) and analysed using Pearson correlation and structure equation modelling in SPSS and Start version 4.0 software. The result of the study indicates that The study reveals a significant relationship between most items, except for innovative and attitudes, which have a weak correlation. Social factors and institutional factors have a strong correlation, except for innovation and empathy. The study also reveals that self-efficacy and empathy positively influence students' attitudes towards social entrepreneurship, while innovation negatively affects attitudes. Institutional factors and perceived feasibility have no significant impact on attitude. However, positive attitudes are less likely to be expressed due to perceived barriers like lack of resources, societal skepticism, or high risks, which can diminish intentions. There is a need for targeted interventions and support to foster a positive attitude and intention towards social entrepreneurship.

Keywords: Attitudes, Empathy, innovativeness, self-efficacy, perceived feasibility, Institutional and social factors.

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, social entrepreneurship has garnered significant attention for its innovative approach to solving social and environmental challenges. By utilizing entrepreneurial skills to address issues such as poverty, inequality, and environmental degradation, social entrepreneurs aim to create both social and economic value (Mair & Marti, 2010; Nicholls, 2010). This paradigm shift distinguishes social entrepreneurship from traditional entrepreneurship, which primarily focuses on profit maximization. Instead, social entrepreneurship emphasizes generating positive social outcomes alongside achieving financial sustainability (Dimitra, 2015).

Central to this exploration is the concept of Social Entrepreneurial Intention (SEI), which refers to an individual's motivation and inclination to engage in social entrepreneurship activities (Zulkifle & Aziz, 2023). The significance of studying SEI lies in its potential to illuminate the factors that drive individuals toward creating social ventures. This research is particularly relevant in a context where traditional firms often fail to address the vast employment needs in regions like Africa, thereby highlighting the growing necessity for individuals to create their own opportunities (Alvarez & Barney, 2013).

The field of entrepreneurship research has historically been dominated by descriptive studies focusing on practical aspects rather than theoretical underpinnings. Recent calls for incorporating theoretical frameworks have shifted the focus toward understanding entrepreneurial intentions (Breugst et al., 2012). This shift emphasizes the need to explore how intentions, rather than just psychological traits, influence entrepreneurial behavior (Walker et al., 2020). Understanding these intentions is crucial as they are believed to predict one's propensity to establish new ventures (Bird, 1988). Entrepreneurial intention, therefore, serves as a critical factor in predicting planned entrepreneurial behavior, reflecting a conscious decision rather than a random act (Krueger, 1993).

This study aims to investigate the factors influencing social entrepreneurial intention by examining various elements such as empathy, innovativeness, institutional and social factors, perceived feasibility, and self-efficacy. Each of these factors plays a pivotal role in shaping individuals' intentions to pursue social entrepreneurship.

2. METHODOLOGY

The study employed a quantitative method with primary data collected through online surveys from 700 students in Namibia and India. The authors utilised SPSS, start version 4.0 to process statistical data, assess reliability of the scale, measure correlation and perform structure equation modelling to determine the relationship between the study variables.

3. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

3.1 Measurement Scales

Independence variables

The variables that were considered as independent in this study included attitudes, empathy, innovativeness, institutional factors, social factors, self-efficacy, and perceived feasibility. These variables were chosen based on their potential to influence the dependent variable. Empathy was selected due to its significant role in understanding and responding to the needs of others. Innovativeness was included because it reflects an individual's tendency to generate new ideas and solutions. Institutional factors were taken into account to assess the impact of organizational policies and structures on individual behavior. Social factors were considered to examine the influence of social norms, culture, and peer interactions. Self-efficacy was included to measure an individual's belief in their ability to successfully perform tasks. Perceived feasibility was assessed to determine the perceived ease or difficulty of implementing a specific behavior or action.

3.1.1 Attitudes Towards Social Entrepreneurial Intention

The reliability of the entrepreneurial attitudes scale, consisting of five items, was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha. The analysis revealed a Cronbach coefficient value of 0.802, indicating a significant level of reliability for the scale as it surpasses the minimum threshold of 0.7.

3.1.2 Empathy

Four items were utilized to assess empathy in the study. The reliability of these items was determined by calculating the Cronbach alpha, which yielded a value of 0.722. This indicates that the four items employed in measuring empathy demonstrated consistency and reliability in evaluating participants' empathetic tendencies. A Cronbach alpha value of 0.722 is deemed acceptable and suggests that the items effectively measured the same construct consistently. Consequently, the findings derived from these measurements can be regarded as reliable and valid in comprehending individuals' empathy levels.

3.1.3 Innovativeness

In the study, the level of innovativeness was assessed through the utilization of six items. The obtained Cronbach alpha value of 0.785 indicates an acceptable level of internal consistency. This implies that the six items employed to measure innovativeness were reliable and yielded consistent results. The Cronbach alpha value of 0.785 further suggests that these items effectively captured the same underlying construct. Consequently, the findings derived from these measurements can be deemed reliable and valid in comprehending individuals' innovativeness levels.

3.1.4 Institutional Factor

The Cronbach alpha coefficient for the instrumental factor was 0.937, signifying a strong level of internal consistency. This implies that the items employed to assess the institutional factor were closely related and consistently measured the identical construct. The substantial value of the Cronbach alpha further bolsters the reliability of the findings and augments the overall validity of the study (Coldwell & Fried, 2011).

3.1.5 Social Environmental Factor

The reliability of the social factor in this study is indicated by a Cronbach alpha value of 0.889. This value demonstrates that the items used to measure the social-environmental factor were highly correlated and consistently measured the same construct. Consequently, the high Cronbach alpha value enhances the credibility and validity of the study's results pertaining to the social factor (Coldwell & Fried, 2011).

3.1.6 Perceived Feasibility

Perceived feasibility was assessed through the utilization of five items. These items, employed for the purpose of gauging perceived feasibility, exhibited strong internal consistency, as evidenced by a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.899. Such a high Cronbach alpha value serves to enhance the credibility of the study's conclusions pertaining to perceived feasibility.

3.1.7 Self-Efficacy

The level of self-efficacy or desirability was evaluated through a set of five items, resulting in a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.865. This indicates that the tools employed to measure self-efficacy or desirability were dependable in capturing this particular concept. As a student's score increases, their perception of control over the events in their life also grows. A higher score signifies a greater sense of confidence in the student's ability to influence and navigate their own life circumstances.

3.1.8 Social Entrepreneurial Intentions

The measurement of social entrepreneurial intention utilized a five-item scale, yielding a Cronbach alpha of 0.807. This suggests that the techniques employed to assess this variable were reliable. It can be inferred that the scale effectively captured the social entrepreneurial intention of the students.

Based on the information presented in Table 1, it is evident that each item possesses a Cronbach alpha value exceeding 0.7, indicating that all scales are deemed acceptable

Table 1 Overall Reliability Scale

Overall Reliability of the scale		
Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Attitudes	.802	5
Empathy	.722	4
Innovativeness	.785	6
Institutional Factor	.937	7
Social factor	.889	5
Perceived feasibility	.823	5
Self-efficacy	.865	5
Social entrepreneurial intentions	.807	5

Source: Author's Calculation

3.2 Descriptive Analysis for Factors Influencing (SEI)

Table 2 below displays the descriptive statistics of the summated scales for each construct. The mean values for Perceived feasibility and Empathy are 3.8646 and 3.8329, respectively. This indicates that these two items received higher ratings compared to social entrepreneurial intention, which has a mean of 3.5393. The remaining elements have mean values ranging from 3.4 to 3.78. Furthermore, the skewness and kurtosis fall within the acceptable range of -2 to +2, indicating normality.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics Summary for all Factors

Summary of Descriptive Statistics for all Factors								
	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
ATE	700	1.00	5.00	3.5666	.74163	-.117	.092	.117	.185
E	700	1.75	5.00	3.8329	.76324	-.285	.092	-.673	.185
INNO	700	1.33	5.00	3.7871	.76738	-.519	.092	.258	.185

IE	700	1.29	5.00	3.4865	1.11376	-.429	.092	-.690	.185
SEF	700	1.80	5.00	3.5366	.96667	-.512	.092	-.665	.185
PF	700	1.80	5.00	3.8646	.80168	-.540	.092	-.166	.185
Self-e	700	1.20	5.00	3.7731	.81816	.004	.092	-.975	.185
SEI	700	1.20	5.00	3.55434	.76639	.120	.092	-.557	.185

Source: Author's calculation

3.3 Pearson Correlation

The Pearson correlations among all the elements of social entrepreneurship intentions are presented in Table 3

Table 3 Correlations Among all Factors

Correlations among Factors									
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	Attitudes	1.00							
2	Empathy	.17**	1.00						
3	Innovativeness	.04	.64**	1.00					
4	Institutional Factor	.30**	.29**	.23**	1.00				
5	Social Factor	.26**	.31**	.20**	.72**	1.00			
6	Perceived Feasibility	.27**	.50**	.42**	.46**	.63**	1.00		
7	Self-efficacy	.42**	.49**	.42**	.40**	.48**	.74**	1.00	
8	Intention	-.10**	.16**	.17**	.40**	.48**	.29**	.24**	1.00

Note: N=700, *p<0.05; **p<0.01

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

According to the data presented in table 3, a notable observation can be made regarding the relationships between various items. The majority of the items exhibit a significant correlation, with the exception of innovative and attitudes, which display a weak correlation that is not statistically significant (r=0.04). Furthermore, attitudes and entrepreneurial intention demonstrate a weak negative correlation (r=-10). Additionally, the data reveals a strong correlation between social factor and institutional factor (r=0.72). It is important to note that all correlations, except for innovativeness and empathy, are statistically significant.

3.4 Structure Equation Modelling

Stata version 14.0 software was employed for the purpose of performing structural equation modeling in order to investigate the connections between various factors, specifically emphasizing social entrepreneurship intention as the main variable of interest. The findings have been presented in table 4 below.

Table 4 Factors that influence the social entrepreneurship intentions of students

Outcome	Observed variable	Coef	95% CI	*p*-value
Self-efficacy	Empathy	0.549	0.478, 0.620	<0.001
Attitude	Self-efficacy	0.431	0.345, 0.517	<0.001
	Empathy	0.067	0.021, 0.155	0.135
	Innovation	-0.207	-0.291, -0.123	<0.001
	Institutional factors	0.159	0.094, 0.223	<0.001
	Social environment	-0.072	-0.152, 0.006	0.072
	perceived feasibility	-0.071	-0.159, 0.018	0.117
Social Entrepreneurship	Attitude	-0.110	-0.190, -0.031	0.006

Source: Author's Calculation

The outcomes derived from the structural equation modelling (SEM) analysis offer valuable insights into the interconnections among the variables within the model. A higher level of self-efficacy positively impacts attitude ($\beta = 0.431$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that individuals with enhanced self-efficacy are more likely to hold positive attitudes towards social entrepreneurship. Empathy also has a positive effect on both self-efficacy ($\beta = 0.549$, $p < 0.001$) and attitude ($\beta = 0.067$, $p = 0.135$). Conversely, innovation exerts a negative influence on attitude ($\beta = -0.207$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that as individuals perceive innovation less favorably, their attitudes towards social entrepreneurship tend to diminish. Institutional factors have a positive impact on attitude ($\beta = 0.159$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that a supportive institutional setting nurtures positive attitudes. Social and environmental factors, along with perceived feasibility, do not demonstrate statistically significant effects on attitude. Transitioning to social entrepreneurial intention, attitude negatively affects social entrepreneurial intention ($\beta = -0.110$, $p = 0.006$), implying that individuals with more positive attitudes are less inclined to express a strong intention to partake in social entrepreneurship. Perceived obstacles, such as inadequate resources, societal skepticism, or high perceived risks, may contribute to negative attitudes towards social entrepreneurship, thereby reducing individuals' intentions to engage in such initiatives. Furthermore, the absence of supportive environments, limited role models, and educational or cultural factors that do not prioritize social impact initiatives can further influence negative perceptions.

4. DISCUSSIONS

All items are statistically significant except, innovativeness and empathy which has r=0.72 which is high than the threshold value. Social factor had a strong correlation with social factor, it is obvious because these factors are the same. The results of structure equation modelling found out self-efficacy positively influences attitude ($\beta = 0.431$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that individuals with a higher sense of self-efficacy tend to have more positive attitudes toward social entrepreneurship. Empathy also positively influences both self-efficacy ($\beta = 0.549$, $p < 0.001$) and attitude ($\beta = 0.067$, $p = 0.135$. Innovation has a negative impact on attitude ($\beta = -0.207$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that as

individuals perceive innovation as less favourable, their attitudes toward social entrepreneurship tend to decline. Institutional factors positively influence attitude ($\beta = 0.159$, $p < 0.001$), reflecting that a supportive institutional environment fosters positive attitudes. Social and environmental factors, as well as perceived feasibility, do not exhibit statistically significant effects on attitude. Moving on to social entrepreneurial intention, attitude negatively influences social entrepreneurial intention ($\beta = -0.110$, $p = 0.006$), suggesting that individuals with more positive attitudes are less likely to express a strong intention to engage in social entrepreneurship. Perceived barriers, such as a lack of resources, societal scepticism, or high perceived risks, may contribute to negative attitudes toward social entrepreneurship, consequently diminishing individuals' intentions to engage in such endeavours as supported by (Dacin, Dacin, & Tracey (2011) . Additionally, the absence of supportive environments, limited role models, and educational or cultural factors that do not emphasise social impact initiatives can further influence negative perceptions (Liñán& Fayolle, 2015, Wei et al., 2020).

5. CONCLUSION

self-efficacy emerges as a positive influencer of attitude, indicating that individuals with higher self-efficacy are likely to harbor more favourable attitudes toward social entrepreneurship. Empathy also plays a crucial role, positively influencing both self-efficacy and attitude. However, the impact of innovation is negative, suggesting that individuals perceiving innovation less favourably tend to have a decline in their attitudes toward social entrepreneurship. On the other hand, institutional factors, reflecting a supportive environment, positively influence attitude, fostering a positive outlook. Interestingly, social and environmental factors, along with perceived feasibility, do not have statistically significant effects on attitude. The study also revealed on social entrepreneurial intention, a noteworthy finding is the negative influence of attitude. Individuals with more positive attitudes are less likely to express strong intentions to engage in social entrepreneurship. This may be attributed to perceived barriers such as *lack of resources, societal skepticism, or high perceived risks*, which contribute to negative attitudes and subsequently diminish intentions. Furthermore, the absence of *supportive environments, limited role models, and educational or cultural factors* that do not emphasize social impact initiatives can further contribute to negative perceptions. There is a need for targeted interventions and support to foster a positive attitude and intention towards social entrepreneurship.

Conflicts of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest of publishing this paper

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