

Innovation, Business Models and Entrepreneurship
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Lecture - 18
Social Entrepreneurship

Hello all of you. Now, going ahead with whatever we have been discussing up to now. There is an element of society or social concern at large which must be associated with business, marketing and entrepreneurship. As we have seen in due course that without looking at these aspects of marketing, business and entrepreneurship in coherence with society we will not be able to justify whatever we tend to do and we will not be able to sustain whatever we tend to do.

So, here we are looking at entrepreneurship with a societal perspective and we can call it social entrepreneurship, although there is a larger debate which I will share with you as well a brief of it that why should we call it social entrepreneurship per say. Because every form of entrepreneurship has to be directed towards societal benefit in societal development, but nevertheless let us talk in terms of how should we look at society and entrepreneurship

Now, what is largely social entrepreneurship? There are several definitions which you can find through several sources and you will find on this resource as well. But social entrepreneurship largely it talks of problems which are mainly concerned with society. Now, looking broadly at everything whatever we are doing and then you know in social terms or otherwise individually everything is socially connected largely. So, problems all the problems are largely socially connected and all the problems belong to society.

But then specifically looking at the problems which are intensely or directly or precisely associated with society so that is what social entrepreneurship does it looks at those kind of problems, for example, women, children, poverty. But again as we go along I wish to draw your attention towards you know if you would recall that while discussing the context of definition of marketing or marketing as such in past discussions.

We tend to refer or let us say we tend to acknowledge that today whole of the world academy an industry when they define marketing business entrepreneurship and other

elements what we have been discussing a context of society comes into being. Wherein for example, when we were talking of definition of marketing we said that you know there is a reference to exchanging offerings that have value for society at large.

So, now when we say that the purpose of marketing or business or entrepreneurship is bringing in offerings or talking of offerings or exchanging offerings which have value for society at large then the line between social entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship diminishes where and we can say that business entrepreneurship is to be referred in societal context at large at you know broadly. So, therefore, in principle its quite same when we speak of association of social or societal with reference to marketing or entrepreneurship or just entrepreneurship.

Let me slightly go beyond while talking about this. For example, when we talk of inclusive growth, when we talk of inclusive financial systems then as we have already discussed also briefly that microfinance industry were in you know Grameen Bank of Bangladesh and Khun Danai Francis in his efforts in South India and several other such efforts in Africa and around the world. There is there has been a context of business development with societal development. We have reference to each up all in India; we have reference to husk power systems in India Narayana Hrudayalaya in India and several popular and some not so popular examples as such also.

So, then, but other businesses other forms of businesses which are not so useful apart from being you know looking at the product offerings as utilities they are not so useful to the society. Or some of the businesses definitely for example, tobacco business or let us say alcohol business they can be termed in with reference to being detrimental to society and societal development at large

But then they do exist there is an exchange perspective and value. But then we have to draw a line wherein we have to suggest that everything cannot be you know coherently exists. And after calling entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship with demarked kind of do you know with the reference with wherein this is directly associated with social and that is not directly associated with social or it is that is general after having a debate on this and carrying forward both the concepts together for a very long time for past decade or. So, we have realized that no we should diminish this line and we should

think in terms of everything what we do in terms of business or entrepreneurship or marketing with social benefit in context.

And that is where you know I also wish to draw your attention it is its an individual's choice how to look at things, but once we have burned our fingers so much that you know pollution levels are high, water is depleting, water level is, water pollution is very high. Climate change is a major concern, there is a burden of disease, there is a burden of cancer tobacco infused cancer, there is a burden of alcoholism, there is a burden of so many things, there is a burden of you know gambling on several things, there is a burden of. So, whatever businesses are looked upon with general terms per say, they are infusing a burden on the society and so one has to take a call that how should we carry forward all the things together or should be at all carried forward all the things together or not.

Now, once we again going back to the element of social entrepreneurship once we identify the problems we speak of innovative solutions capacities, resources, social arrangements and transformation of the society as such.

So,, but then how to look at the problems? We have discussed that earlier also that problems they emerge by themselves in due course of time and problems can be looked at with the perspective of barriers, obstacles. But problems are generally the part of life and there is a retrospective analysis associated with how to identify or how should we identify a problem and there is a there is and there is a retrospective element of you know how problems emerge. Especially man made problems or man created problems for example, there has been a debate now that so many disasters are infused by humans themselves and they emerge and evolve and couple of with natural forces and then disasters they happen.

So, for examples we are we are generating electricity through hydropower and we are creating dams which are very useful also, but then they obstruct the flow of the river which has a different kind of an effect. We are touching upon hills which is with the, with construction which is necessary also, but then it has a depleting effect also. So, we have to think in terms of which thing has to be carried forward in terms of development and where and we have to think in terms of avoiding that kind of let us say process of development and still developing the lives of people at large, there comes social entrepreneurship.

And once we look at these kind of things with the problem identification perspective. For example, we look at the financial freedom of women, we look at the children who should go to school rather than working, then there are so many things which one can do. And it is its not only philanthropic actually where in you know some funds have to be raised and then spend on the in the process. If we can add some entrepreneurial aspect to this whole process then this would come to you know different this would take a different kind of a shape.

For example, I would refer to a very small effort, but that has a very large and replicative effect also at this place called small city called Roorkee, where India Institute of Technology Roorkee exists. I have been witnessing a project which is being conducted by Mister Sudhir that is called divine school, and now this project is very important with the perspective of that this project is supposed to or its actually bringing in change which are largely replicative and would you know present the fruits after some time, but those fruits would have a capacity of changing a whole section of the society.

Sudhir brings in small children who are into rag picking to his school, and he arranges for their education he has a he has in due course of time with the help of it the help of society and support of people he has developed the school. He has arranged for good teachers, he has arranged for a very conducive environment, he provides the uniforms he provides the bags and he takes the help of academia donors.

And now he has partially started associating all these efforts with entrepreneurial efforts to make that school self sustainable. And these children who are in to rag picking they sort of you know do not get dissociated with their profession early because otherwise there would be a question of their bread and butter. Some of them you know they stay in very temporary arrangements in makeshift tents made by rejected flex material also besides the canal and besides you know several areas, but these children they are regular attendees of the school, they attend the school regularly. So, he motivates them and bring them you know to a situation where the they start liking gaining education.

And for sure for past several years what I have personally witnessed being you know associated with in whatever terms he desires for, requires for with that school. I have personally realized that children are getting educated at par with any other child who can afford education, and these children they are later they are entering into mainstream and

they are getting away from the kind of compulsive profession, they had to go for of rag picking to feed themselves or their families kind of.

Similar effort, but at a very large level has been acknowledged by everyone around the world Shri Satyarthiji won Nobel Prize on supporting the children you know kind of who enter into several kinds of comp compulsive professions or even trafficking, child trafficking the and in those kind of things they are compelled to go for. So, he has made a difference to the lives of so many people kind of.

So, at a fairly good level wherein Sudhir is running divine school and entrepreneurially associating his efforts with the you know the school. And on at a very large level wherein now Shri Satyarthiji has been able to garner a large support and he still has to go a long way and all of our you know many kinds of people are supporting him. So, that at that level also, an element of society and entrepreneurship is clubbing in.

Now, this is a at a very basic level, then you must have heard of pad man by now and its a popular kind of an effort which was generated at household level to eliminate the problem of a wife by a caring and a loving husband and now a movie is being made on that subject and it hat it has grown big. So, that effort again definitely defines social entrepreneurship at large and there are so many and there are so many. But this is what you know social entrepreneurship entails.

Wherein you know innovative solutions by looking deep into the capacities of an individual, capacities in terms of technology, capacities in terms of how we can garner the support of people who can be, brought in you know with this the kind of effort one wants to do other resources, and social arrangements and rearrangements wherein how we can bring people together and then transformation of whole of the process bringing in, not only bringing in people together, but then transforming their concept.

For example, women liberation in terms of the freedom of women to participate in society has been propelled by so many people since it is and now it has started taking shape. Although it has to go a long way, but it has started taking slight shape wherein you know women are coming to mainstream, and they are participating as entrepreneurs also, as a part of workforce also. And their freedom is being respected and it has been acknowledged for a long time that once women they develop their children definitely

would have a positive effect and their children would grow and play a larger role as far as all of the society goes.

Now, then you know then there is an element of you know if we want to blow this kind of a thing at a larger level there are several efforts which are being made are association of society and societal cause with entrepreneurship. Wherein academia is also playing a particular role, wherein many researches are being conducted in at IIT, Roorkee I have been I have been witnessing several researches are being conducted which have direct positive applications for societal development and future development at large.

There is a very unique university call called Transdisciplinary University in Bangalore which was initiated by the efforts of Mister Sam Pitroda and the present vice chancellor Padma Shri Shri Darshan Shanker ji. The these people they thought of developing the university which can bring scientists together, learned a people together educationists together, who can think in terms of looking at our traditional knowledge and then converting that traditional knowledge for the benefit of masses.

For example, Professor Darshan Shanker when he was visiting our institution once he demonstrated or revealed that they have developed a water purification system which is very cost effective. They have utilized the properties of copper, and they have they have made it with the help of copper and those properties can purify water as good as or better than you know modern water puri purification systems and its highly cost effective.

There are several hundreds of efforts which are being made by TDU as well as several other several other institutions which are working in the similar kind of direction.

And for example, there are efforts being made and it is for a very long time such organizations they exist, in Jaipur one organization exists on you know they develop artificial limbs. And several other organizations they have started utilizing a modern metallurgical methods or you know knowledge of metals or knowledge of materials to develop better organs or artificial organs 3D printing is being utilized for the same purpose as well. And several technological advancements are being utilized for the people who are visually impaired and who cannot see and to support them to read and write as well.

So, several other efforts are being made and when you recall the efforts like Amul and these kind of organizations which have really made larger difference to the society with an entrepreneurial spree, then you realize that there is a huge element of society associated with as far as. There is a wonderful effort which was propelled by Elabhattji who actually propelled Richard Popper to become a larger brand and known around the world and she associated several women to develop you know to be a part of that journey wherein so many people have been benefited all together.

I personally was fortunate enough to work with a UNICEF supported scheme with the department of rural development of the government of Uttarpradesh for a year or so. Wherein, our main job was to commercialize or develop commercial viability of the products which were being developed or produced at household level in whole of the Uttarpradesh.

There was a scheme at that time called development of women and children in rural areas. Now, during that scheme or you know the demand date of that scheme was that women were being provided with desired or let us say required training in traits or functional functional trainings in several areas. And then they were provided with the tools and some seed money for purchasing the raw material and then they start they used to produce and manufacture things whatever they were being trained for. For example, carpets or let us say you know clothes or many other food material and so on.

But then those things had to be channelized at larger level towards mainstream markets otherwise that will not bring the fruits. So, I remember that almost 2 million women were being brought into this pre of training in due course of time and 200,000 of out of those women were actually let us say partially functional and few thousand were fully functional with the help of the local administration of their districts at the block level, and the district level and the village level as such. So, they were trying to do quite ok.

Our job was to bring in larger number of women who could play a major role as far as this whole effort was thought of and then channeling their produced towards the mainstream market. So, we organized so many things, we brought in context of presenting their produce in exhibitions at national and international level we organized the showroom as well, and then we used mainstream market players directly to these women. And then the most important part was that how to actually you know kind of

channelize their produce with regularity you know kind of how to streamline the production with regularity.

So, once markets were streamlined or tend to be streamlined then production could be streamlined. And then there were several other social problems associated with these poor women which had to be catered to in due course of time if at all they had to be roped in for regular produce and so on. Their family support had to be garnered, their social support at the village level had to be garden and that was also a part of our job which had had to be taken care of. So, this is how actually social entrepreneurship comes into being and larger results were met definitely through that effort.

So, now the aspect of as far as social entrepreneurship if we further tend to elaborate in a due course of time is that what kind what kind of efforts are presently being going on and what kind of efforts should be kind of enlarged in terms of as far as entrepreneurial perspective is and how people should be looking at these kind of things. So, that is the one part is that if we look at complete market and business and entrepreneurial scenario we must look at with look at these things with a societal context in mind.

Number two, we should try and bring in larger number of people to the mainstream in association with entrepreneurial efforts and business and market process as such. Number three, we should parallelly develop their skills in terms of you know bringing them to the mainstream thing goes.

And we should remember that social entrepreneurship and societal entrepreneurial efforts they have a longer life if we largely look at those because once people get associated with such kind of efforts they become beneficiaries, market forces they start responding everyone gets associated with a particular kind of a purpose. And the purpose propels whole of this process, as I named Amul or Ligid popper these have become humongous you know kind of efforts now very large and acknowledged globally and people try to understand that how these efforts have been propelled in due course of time to become very large businesses at you know at this level.

So, that the only thing which one can derive out of such kind of efforts as consistent and persistent efforts and associating larger number of people to these kind of processes as beneficiaries while developing everything at large in one go. So, this is what social

entrepreneurship entails at in let us say in a concise form. We will go about it with further elements in our next discussions.

Thank you.