



SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCER AS A SOCIAL ENTREPRENEUR AND THEIR ROLE IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

This article aims to conceptualize social media influencers as social entrepreneurs and their role in community development. This article analyses previous research papers and describes their definition and characteristics. Based on previous research how social media influencers are as social entrepreneurs is discussed in different areas like education and food and cooking. At last, how social entrepreneurs play a role in community development is discussed.

Keywords: Social Media, Influencer, Social Entrepreneurship, sustainable development goals (SDG).

INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship term is nowadays in trend in India and all over the world, many things motivate the persons to be an entrepreneur. In the current era, the young generation wants to work for themselves, not for others that motivates them to be an entrepreneur. Entrepreneurship plays a significant role in the development of economic growth; nowadays only economic growth will not make the nation developed. It requires focus on social, environmental and cultural aspects for the overall development of the country. Social entrepreneur's main intention to create social impact and try to solve the problem of society. They establish organization for social cause, few years back social enterprise are like in form of Non-Profit organization or Non-Government Organization. At present majority entrepreneurs use social network or digital platform for their growth (Zhao et al., 2022), and social entrepreneurs are on online platforms, they use online platform for wide reach. More use of online platforms creates opportunities for the influencers. Influencer are now recognized as content entrepreneur and they develop their brand as influencer on different social media platforms (Cheng, Z. M., de Regt, A., & Young, 2024). Now social entrepreneur can reach to the extremely needy person through online platform or social media platforms. Whole world tries to establish equality in food, water, education, gender, sanitation, environment and many more in sustainable development goals and it is famous as SDG 17. These things can be achieved through social entrepreneurship. In this, researcher has discussed the meaning of social entrepreneurship, concept evolution and how it plays a role in community development. How it will create impact on the overall growth of the country. In this article the question is raised: can we consider social media influencer as social entrepreneur, based on characteristics of social entrepreneur and social media influencer.

Definition and concept of Social Entrepreneurship:

Social entrepreneurship plays a significant role in community development by tackling socio-economic problems and providing innovative solutions, like providing education and food, awareness about some social taboo, environmental issues, and cultural issues. Social entrepreneurship helps for sustainable development; it provides economic and social strength to the country. There are many definitions given by different researchers but here brief discussion of social entrepreneurship is written as under.

Social entrepreneurship can be defined as a process where individuals or organizations identify and address social problems in innovative and sustainable ways. Social entrepreneurs aim to create social value by combining resources, implementing new approaches, and developing solutions to societal challenges. These individuals or entities are driven by a mission to make a positive impact on communities, focusing on social change and addressing unmet needs. (Malunga, Iwu, & Mugobo, 2014)

Characteristics of Social entrepreneurship:

From the different definitions given by various authors, following characteristics can be identified from that which is as under (Ramya Thiyagaraj 2024; Social Sector Network. 2020) .

- 1) Passion for Social Change, they want to transform society and try to fill the need gaps.
- 2) They try to get innovative solutions for the need.



- 3) Social entrepreneurs focus on social impact rather than profit.
- 4) Try to maximize social impact from the fund available.
- 5) Expansion and scaling are done through social influence
- 6) They are curious to know and understand the real problem and then serve the community.
- 7) They are resourceful, have adaptability and have good communication skills and convincing power for investment.
- 8) Investors receive only amount invested and not more profitable, it just satisfy to be a part of joy of giving (Nweke Prince Onyemaechi et al., 2021)

Can we consider Social Media Influencers as social entrepreneurs?

People all over the world spend time on social media, it is constantly increasing in the last decade, it fulfills the need of users from different age groups. Many social media influencers play a significant role for the overall world. Nowadays, the majority of companies also use social media marketing for their product and services. There are many factors influence entrepreneur to use social media for performance improvement (Olanrewaju, A. T., Hossain, M. A., Whiteside, N., & Mercieca, P. (2020), but here the concern is, can we consider social media influencer as a social entrepreneur? Past research indicates that social media influencers can be marketers and entrepreneurs (Bi & Liu, 2022). Social media influencers become celebrities and opinion leaders but still they are different from the traditional entrepreneurs (Bi & Liu, 2022). Some social media influencers do some social cause like educate the unprivileged, provide food to needy people, provide information to the community on taboos. This influencer earns from social media through content creation and spent for social causes, this characteristic makes them a social entrepreneur.

Here let's discuss a few social media influencers as Social Entrepreneur, these are on various platforms like YouTube, Instagram, Facebook etc. Majority social media influencers have the same trait as traditional entrepreneurs like need for achievement, locus of control, Tolerance of Ambiguity, Visionary, Persistence, Resilience, Innovativeness and Risk Taking (Adenola, J. T. ,2019). These social media influencers are also considered as micro celebrities who influence positively in food, nutrition, diet, health (Truman, E., 2022). Success and growth of social media influencers are depends on personal traits and their shared content (Boufares Tayaa, S. and Bouzaabia, R. 2022)

Social Media Influencers as Social Media Entrepreneurs

In field of Education:

Dr. Vikas Divyakirti: He is a teacher and he was in Indian Administrative services for a few years and then he has started to teach IAS aspirants to achieve their goal, he has started YouTube channels to provide guidance to aspirants free of cost. He has tried to solve the problems of IAS aspirants at lower cost. He is very passionate about his work, trying to serve the society and provide solutions at lower cost. (Vikas Divyakirti, 2022)

There are many more like Khan Academy which are run by the Khan Sir, his intentions are also same like Dr. Vikas Divyakirti to provide education and difficult concepts in simplest language and at nominal cost and free of cost.

In field of Food/cooking:

It is studied that social media influencers create impact in food and nutrition (Alwafi, H & etal. 2022).

Village Cooking Channel: It is run by grandpa from southern India, Group of people come together and create content on village style food along with entertainment. They have more than 25 million subscribers on YouTube, they have pages on Facebook, Instagram and twitter as well. They cook in bulk and then they provide this cooked food to hospitals and needy people, so they create money from social media and use it for needy people. This indicates that they are creating values; they are sharing cultural aspects of that region and traditional cooking style which will educate about their tradition to their next generation and also to the world. This channel tries to provide food, transform culture, and help society.

There are other channels also like from the western part of India "Village Rasoi", this channel is run by six village boys from Gujarat, their main motive is to provide food to poor and needy people. This social media channel is also the same as a village cooking channel. They are inspired by that channel so looking at this context it motivates others for some community work. There is one more channel "Veg Village Food", where one granny prepared food along with her grandson in village style and serve to unprivileged people, so she can be considered as a social entrepreneur.

Role of Social Entrepreneur in Community Development

The aim of the social entrepreneur is to solve the problems of people, fill the gaps which exist in society and try to empower the vulnerable group. They try to provide employment; economic growth along with social development social entrepreneurship helps every country to solve their issues, for social enterprise economic development is not important, humanity is most important (Lombard & Strydom, 2011). Social enterprise tries to solve the health and poverty problems which are directly associated with economic conditions. Social entrepreneurs have solved the issues of health, housing and education in the Cape Town Metropolitan



Municipality area in South Africa (Ngatse-Ipangui & Dassah, 2019). Even in developing countries social entrepreneur tries to set equality among gender, caste and, empowering marginalized.

CONCLUSION

Social entrepreneurs always help the country in balanced growth, Social Enterprises try to solve social problems in economic ways, even though they face major difficulty to raise funds from the investors (Hakami, 2021), they try to use resources in optimum way. They try to enter the area which is neglected by the corporate and government, it helps to develop untouched gray areas for communities like cultural, environmental (Maniam, Engel, & Subramaniam, 2018) and many more. At present social media influencers play a significant role in the corporate world, even for social cause. Many social media influencers are creating content for women empowerment, food, health, education, and many more areas. It helps to increase awareness about this area along with detail information. so here it was discussed that social media influencers can be social entrepreneurs with some examples along with the platform and work they do.

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