Social Entrepreneurship in the Digital Age (SEDA301)

LECTURE 4

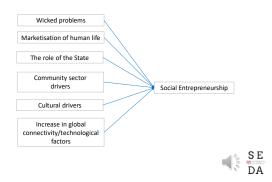UNIVERSITY of TASMANIA | S E DA

Socio-political, economic, cultural and technological factors related to the growth of social entrepreneurship

Dr Sophie Ross

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MODULE 1: Social entrepreneurship and social enterprise as forces for change	
Learning Pathway	**Topics**
Introduction to Key Concepts	• Conceptualizing social entrepreneurship, social innovation and social enterprise
Drivers of Social Entrepreneurship	• Hybridity and sustainable social impact • **Socio-political, economic, cultural and technological factors related to the growth of social entrepreneurship**
The Diverse Nature of Social Enterprise	• Diverse forms of social enterprise • Social entrepreneurship in the Tasmanian, Australian and global contexts • Guest lectures (Tasmanian-based social entrepreneurs)
Developing Innovative Solutions	• Understanding social issues/needs in your local community • How social entrepreneurs develop innovative ideas

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Rise in Social Entrepreneurship

- Wicked problems
- Marketisation of human life
- The role of the State
- Community sector drivers
- Cultural drivers
- Increase in global connectivity/technological factors

→ Social Entrepreneurship

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Environmental context

'Wicked problems are social or cultural problems that are difficult or impossible to solve'
(Kolko 2012)

http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/

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Marketisation of human life

- The rise in capitalism = self-interest

- Businesses criticised for:
  - Ignoring human needs
  - Failing to generate goods/services with a social or environmental impact
  - Facilitating social inequalities

- Growing number of societal challenges

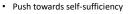Photo by Samson Duborg-Rankin on Unsplash

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The role of the state

- State-based social protection
- Ineffectiveness of efforts to meet social needs
  - Dependence upon state welfare
  - Lack of treatment of people as human beings
  - Limited success at addressing social exclusion
- Reduced government support for social service provision

- Governments as partners in the provision of social services
- Growing government support e.g. SEDIF

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Community sector drivers

- Limited success in achieving sustainable results
- Strings attached – limited autonomy over program design
- Push towards self-sufficiency

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Cultural factors

- Humanization of the economy
  - Cultural emphasis placed upon equality and welfare
  - Growth in a socially responsible mindset

- Growing interest of younger generations in social entrepreneurship

- Gender-related:
  - Increased number of women in the workforce
  - Growing support/acceptance for female entrepreneurs

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- Growing number of social incubator organisations

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Increase in global connectedness

- Growing role of technology:
  - Internet and wireless technologies have widened the awareness of issues faced globally
- Improved networking opportunities
- Shared value creation

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Take home messages

- There are many different factors which are supporting the rise in social entrepreneurship and social enterprise
- Social entrepreneurs seek to address social challenges which are captured in the different Sustainable Development Goals
- Forming a social enterprise helps social entrepreneurs to be self-sufficient, and to overcome challenges associated with uncertain government funding, or 'strings attached'. It also enables them to design programs in a way that they feel is most effective at addressing the targeted problem
- Cultural shifts are seeing greater emphasis placed upon social impact and social responsibility, and we're seeing different types of individuals establish social enterprises
- The heavy embeddedness of technology within our daily lives opens up opportunities for social entrepreneurs to learn about issues, and to develop networks which will enhance the success of their activities

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References

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- Bosma et al. 2015. GEM Global Entrepreneurship Monitor – Special Topic Report Social Entrepreneurship
- Kemp, R., Strasser, T., Davidson, M., Avelino, F., Pel, B., Dumitru, A., Kunze, I., Backhaus, J., O'Riordan, T., Haxeltine, A. and Weaver, P., 2016, September. The humanization of the economy through social innovation. In *SPRU 50th anniversary conference*.

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