

Mapping the Factors that Influence Social Entrepreneurial Intention: A Systematic Literature Review

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Abstract: It has long been understood how crucial social entrepreneurship (SE) is in order to maximize societal benefit. The present study aims to investigate the factors that impact on students' intentions to launch a new venture after completing their studies focusing on social entrepreneurship. A systematic literature review on 503 documents was implemented with a final sample of 47 documents on Social Entrepreneurial Intention and its determinants which were published between 2014 and 2022. The findings give a comprehensive picture of the key topics and recurring trends in Social Entrepreneurial Intention (SEI) research. This study examined SEI documents from the Scopus database which were further analyzed with the content analysis technique to identify the categories and themes to which each item belongs. The results showed that there is a growing research interest on the field although it is mainly focused on developing countries. The most discussed determinants were the personality factors as well as the entrepreneurship education programs which were found to significantly influence students' sustainable entrepreneurial intention. In addition, there were other factors such as gender, students' work experiences, education, and social environment that were found to affect individuals' intention to become social entrepreneurs.

Key Words: Entrepreneurship Education Programs, Social Support, Social Entrepreneurial Intention, Social Entrepreneurship, Systematic Literature review

1. INTRODUCTION

Social entrepreneurship (SE) refers to sustainable ventures that combine commercial principles with a vision for social impact (Wolk, 2008). These businesses use commercial principles to support their activities as they work toward the core organizational purpose of creating social benefit. Organizations placed in the social entrepreneurship zone may be organized as profit-making entities, non-profit enterprises, and some forms of social and government agency services, and they do not include groups that engage only in social activism and organizations that provide social services (Ahmad & Bajwa, 2023). Social entrepreneurship is often demonstrated by success around the world in various fields (education, culture, health, finance, etc.) and different types of crises such as economic or social, underline the need for social entrepreneurs around the world (Al-Qudah, Al-Okaily & Alqudah, 2022; Storr et al., 2022). In addition to transforming existing markets, social entrepreneurship also creates new markets and marketplaces, initiatives such as fair trade and microfinance. Focusing on and actively addressing social issues, social entrepreneurs have been continuously bringing about a significant societal transformation (Zeyen et al., 2013). According to Tiwari et al. (2018), despite the fact that SE is advantageous for the welfare and growth of economies, the current rate of social

entrepreneurial growth is quite moderate. This situation raises a crucial question for academics and policymakers on how can the rate of SE development be accelerated and reinforced. So, it is critical to comprehend the underlying factors that influence a person's thought process in order to encourage and assist social entrepreneurs (Tiwari et al. 2017; Hsu & Wang, 2019). Research confirms that it is important for academics and policymakers to recognize the factors that influence people's intentions to start social businesses (Social Entrepreneurship Intentions-SEI) (Hockerts, 2017). Previous research on entrepreneurial intention has mostly concentrated on one or more of the following five perspectives: theoretical aspects, individual-related variables, entrepreneurial education, situational factors, and intention-behavior connection (Linán & Fayolle, 2015; Ip et al., 2017).

The research question that arises is: "Which factors influence students' intention to be social entrepreneurs?". The aim of the present systematic literature review is to provide sufficient data on the factors that affect students' social entrepreneurial intention. The present study offers a significant contribution to the field of social entrepreneurship as it provides a comprehensive review of the antecedents that influence individuals' social entrepreneurial intentions. The study will identify several factors that influence social entrepreneurial

intention, including personal traits, social networks, education, culture, and social context. The study's findings have important implications for policymakers and educators who seek to promote social entrepreneurship as a means of addressing social and environmental challenges. Overall, the research is a valuable contribution to the field of social entrepreneurship, providing insights into the factors that influence social entrepreneurial intention and a framework for understanding the complex interplay of personal and contextual factors that shape social entrepreneurial behavior.

The structure of the study is organized as follows: The next section describes the theoretical context. Then, the authors describe the research methodology as well as the sample selection and data collection before analyzing the results. Finally, the researchers conclude with a discussion of results, theoretical and practical implications, limitations, and suggestions for further research on the field.

2. THEORETICAL DEVELOPMENT

The role of entrepreneurship in the socio- According to Crudu (2019) the role of entrepreneurship in the socioeconomic growth has been extensively explored, mainly in the post-Schumpeter era. The success of the newly founded ventures is enhanced by many factors such as social norms, personal characteristics, and education with entrepreneurship education programs (EEPs), which also raise people's desire to become self-employed (Bischoff et al., 2018; Xanthopoulou & Sahinidis, 2022; Sahinidis, Polychronopoulos, & Kallivokas, 2019). Social entrepreneurship is often confused and wrongly identified with concepts such as corporate social responsibility or NGOs. However, it is a form of entrepreneurship that includes elements such as profitability, innovation and creativity, but aiming to solve social issues (Wry & York, 2017). According to Zahra et al. (2009), social entrepreneurship refers to the pursuit of chances to increase social wealth through the development of new businesses or the creative management of already-existing organizations. Social entrepreneurship is generally understood to be a process that begins with the formulation of social ideas, recognizing possibilities and solutions for sustainable social development," despite the fact that there are numerous explanations and descriptions. The major objective of social entrepreneurship is to create social value or to address social issues through creative solutions; in fact, this is the key distinction between social enterprises and other types of business (Muñoz &

Kimmit, 2019; Zahra et al., 2008; Alvord, Brown & Letts, 2004). The core focus of social or environmental goals, rather than profit maximization or other strategic factors, is shared by all definitions of social entrepreneurship. Innovation is a further distinguishing feature. Innovation can be sought through brand-new organizational structures and procedures, fresh goods and services, or fresh approaches to societal problems. These many innovation paradigms are often combined in social entrepreneurship projects. Finally, social entrepreneurs diffuse their socially innovative models through performance-driven and market-oriented actions, scaling their initiatives to other contexts through partnerships, in order to achieve broader and more sustainable outcomes (Kimakwa, Gonzalez & Kaynak, 2023).

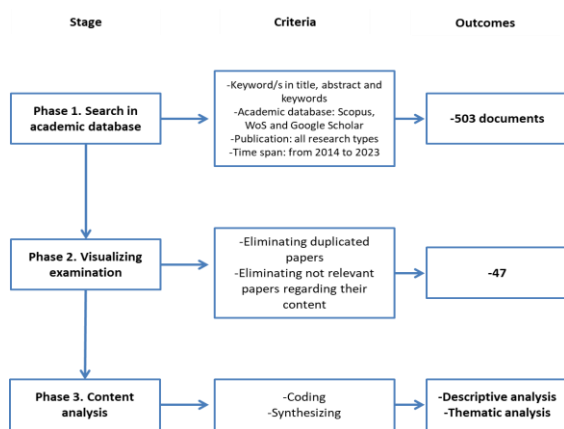
Several academics have investigated entrepreneurial intention (EI) of individuals and its determinants (Lu & Wang, 2018). According to the theory of planned behavior introduced by Azjen (1991), a person's intention is a reliable indicator of their future path of action and refers to the future orientation toward launching a new business and becoming an entrepreneur. Social Entrepreneurial Intention (SEI) describes the psychological behavior of an individual that motivates someone to start a social company through learning, coming up with ideas, and carrying out the social business plan (Mair et al., 2006). A person's belief and ambition to start a new social entrepreneurship initiative can be seen as his/her SEI (Tran & Von Korfflesch, 2016). According to Mair et al. (2006), SEI illustrates people's psychological behavior that drives them to seek out new knowledge, innovative business models and ideas to engage in social entrepreneurship.

3. METHODOLOGY

The analysis of a topic can be carried out based on three main methodologies, qualitative, quantitative and mixed methodology (Timans, Wouters & Heilbron, 2019). The purpose of this research is to study some main factors that, according to the literature, can influence the entrepreneurial intention of individuals for a social entrepreneurial action. Based on this purpose, the research question that arises is "Which factors influence students' intention to be social entrepreneurs?" The systematic literature review was used as it was considered to be the most appropriate method for answering the above mentioned research question. Social entrepreneurial intention studies have shown a gradual growth, as an emerging topic of entrepreneurship study. For this study, the authors have carried out a systematic review of the

literature in order to examine SEI research and its most studied determinants. This comprehensive evaluation of the literature aims in knowledge synthesis and identifies areas for further research (Xia et al., 2018). After the initial search in Google Scholar, WoS and Scopus database platforms, the researchers chose the Scopus platform, due to its wider coverage of documents (Liñán & Rueda-Cantucho, 2011; Dolhey, 2019; Bazan et al., 2020). The three steps presented in Figure 1 describe the review process, adapted from Tan et al. (2020).

Figure 1: Three stages for systematic literature review (Tan et al.,2020).



Stage 1. Search in academic database: The basis for choosing high-quality articles for a literature review is thought to be quality journals (Wallace & Wray 2021; Xia et al. 2018). Scopus data set was chosen as a result because of its extensive journal coverage. In a chosen database, the terms "social," "determinants," "entrepreneurship," and "intention" were searched in the title/abstract/keyword field. As a result, 503 documents in total were discovered in the Scopus database.

Stage 2. Visualizing examination: The titles, abstracts and keywords of 503 documents were carefully read to eliminate duplicate and unrelated research. The final sample that was retained for the content analysis was a total of 47 most relevant articles that were focusing on social entrepreneurial intention and mainly on its determinants.

Stage 3. Content analysis: Content analysis was used for the analysis of 47 articles, since this method has the potential to the main areas of the study topic. Content analysis consists of two steps: descriptive and thematic (Tan et al., 2020). The descriptive analysis examines the fundamental data of the chosen documents, including yearly changes in the quantity of research produced and

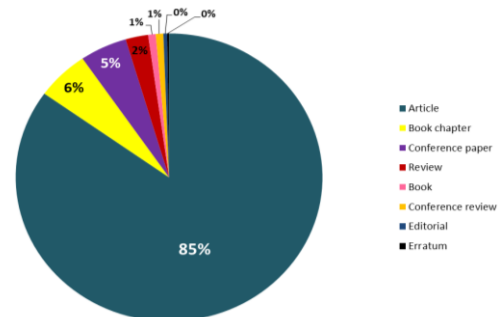
distribution of the chosen publications by region. The authors separately divided the documents into categories for the thematic analysis stage.

4. RESULTS

With the use of SPSS v.20.0 statistical tool, a paired samples T test was conducted in order to find possible differences before and after the intervention relationship. Table 2 shows that there are no significant changes found before the intervention and after that, in all, EI (24 Before and 27 After), PA (21 Before and 20 After), SN (22 Before and 25 After) and PBC (23 Before and 26 After). In order to test the predicting power of the antecedents in explaining EI, the Linear Regression procedure was used. As table 3 illustrates, only one of the antecedents, specifically the "Personal Attraction" was significantly associated with Intention.

The query returned 503 publications that met the search criteria, of which 427 documents were articles, 28 documents were book chapters, 25 documents appeared in conference proceedings, 12 were included in reviews, 4 in books, 4 documents in conference reviews, 2 of them in editorials and 1 document was found in Erratum (Figure 2).

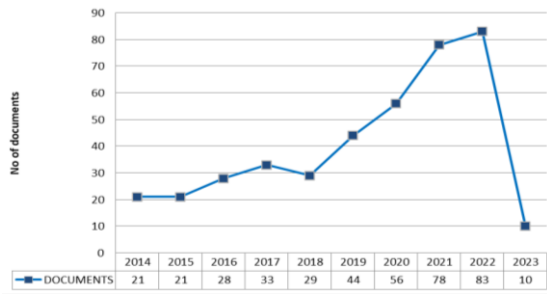
Figure 2: Type of documents on SEI (2014-2023)



The review of the literature demonstrated that, since 2014, social entrepreneurship research has been increased (Figure 3) and moved beyond its previous main emphasis on case studies and definitions (Bacq et al., 2011; Tan et al., 2020). There have been a lot more empirical studies in recent years testing theoretic claims about social entrepreneurship (Shahverdi et al., 2018; Hockerts, 2017; Yang et al., 2015). From 2014 through 2023, the number of papers published each year is presented in Figure 3, which clearly describes a growing popularity of the field. Since 2017, there has been significantly more SEI research published, indicating that the academic community has recently been paying close attention to the SEI topic (Note: The search period ended on February 2023,

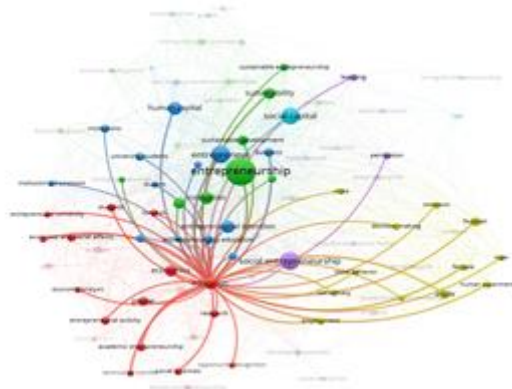
thus the total number of publications in 2023 is not yet complete).

Figure 3: No. of documents on SEI published between 2014-2023



The thematic analysis resulted in four categories (or themes) which refer to the most common discussed determinants of students’ social entrepreneurial intention (Figure 4): Category 1. Social environment (social capital, human capital, support from institutions, social support, social norms), Category 2. Prior work experience (employment, career, income etc.), Category 3. Entrepreneurship education (universities, academic entrepreneurship, students, university students, social sciences), Category 4. Personality factors (self-efficacy, opportunity recognition, empathy, sense of trust, TPB, etc.). The brief content of each theme of the four categories is described below.

Figure 4: Keyword links network map (VOS Viewer)



Category 1. Social environment (9 documents)

Studies in this category analyze the main social support (SS) measures which refer to the level of necessary assistance that a person can expect from their environment or society (Hockerts, 2017) and it has been found as an important determinant of social entrepreneurial intention. Social support can take many forms, including help from family, friends, the government, and social networks (Elali & Al-Yacoub, 2016). Family members can play a crucial role for an entrepreneur in creating a strong network and connecting with the neighborhood, which would be necessary for the entrepreneur to

engage in social activities (Anderson et al. 2005). Following an entrepreneurial mentality, SS is seen as being crucial as a means for an individual to achieve a predetermined social objective (Hockerts, 2017). Family support and social network connections have been demonstrated to have a substantial impact on university students' decision to pursue a social entrepreneurial career in previous research (Yurtkoru et al. 2014). Perceived social support and students' SEI have been shown to strongly and favorably correlate in prior studies (such as Hockerts, 2017; Jadmiko, 2021; Tuan & Pham, 2022; Lee & Oh, 2017; Usman et al., 2022; Solórzano-García et al., 2022).

Category 2. Prior work experience (10 documents)

Other significant and influential factors of SEI are individuals’ prior work experience (PE) which was found in ten documents. Family members are more likely to start their own businesses if they have prior entrepreneurial experience and are actively involved in the family firm (Zhang et al., 2014). Findings of many studies (such as Xanthopoulou & Sahinidis, 2022; Bae et al., 2014; Lacap et al., 2018; Fayolle & Gailly, 2015; Stephan & Drencheva, 2017; Peng et al., 2019; Shumate et al., 2014) showed that prior experience influences pro-social behavior and attitudes, including participating in social recycling programs (Vining & Ebreo, 1989). Knowledge and expose on societal issues is probably going to have an impact on SEI (Hockerts, 2017).

Category 3. Entrepreneurship education (15 documents)

This category includes the largest number of articles that study the impact of entrepreneurship education in forming SEI. The importance of education and its components (such as the courses, the impact of teaching methods and educators’ personality) is considered by a large number of studies as an important predictor of entrepreneurial intention (Tsaknis et al., 2022a; Bae et al., 2014; Astiana et al., 2022; Haddoud et al., 2022; Lv et al., 2021). According to Vodă and Florea (2019), educational initiatives are likely to cause EI. For instance, the entrepreneurial educational program (EEP) has served as a systematic method for providing students with the necessary degree of entrepreneurship knowledge. Cho (1998) wrote that EPPs should support EI since entrepreneurship-related knowledge and ability boost individual motivation to launch a new business. The role of educational institutions in fostering the growth of social entrepreneurship in society is crucial (Lacap et al., 2018). The entrepreneurship education programs (EPPs) increase people’s intention to become entrepreneurs and contribute to the

success of the new venture created (Bischoff et al., 2018; Xanthopoulou & Sahinidis, 2022; Sahinidis et al., 2019; Neneh, 2020; Tsaknis et al., 2022b). Generally, EEPs can create entrepreneurial mindsets and culture among students and help them to improve their career choices towards entrepreneurship (Jardim, et al., 2021), highlighting the entrepreneurial path as a career option (Silangen, 2016; Ahmed et al., 2020; AKHTER, HOSSAIN & ASHEQ, 2020; Kefis & Xanthopoulou, 2015). In recent years there has been an increased discussion of promoting social entrepreneurship careers and the search for more sustainable economic ecosystems. Globally, numerous universities, including Babson College, Harvard Business School, Yale School of Management, and others, have acknowledged the significance of social entrepreneurship (Mars & Garrison, 2009). Entrepreneurship education programs aim to develop students' empathy for social or economic challenges and equip them to recognize entrepreneurial activities that concurrently offer answers to a number of social issues in addition to discovering business opportunities (Hockerts, 2017). As they take classes in social responsibility and corporate social responsibility, university students' enthusiasm and favorable attitudes toward a professional social enterprise may grow as they gain empathy for the injustice and social inequity that today's institutional systems cause. Hence, entrepreneurship education can be beneficial in encouraging students to start a social enterprise (Bazan et al. 2020).

Category 4. Personality factors (13 documents)

Personality characteristics may alter how businesspeople perceive risk when making decisions (Mahfud et al., 2020). Entrepreneurs have been found to score better on measures of self-efficacy, risk tolerance, internal locus of control, proactive personality, and need for achievement than non-entrepreneurs. According to the literature, an individual's personality traits are very important in determining whether or not they would start a business. Self-confidence is a crucial personal quality that boosts achievement because it makes people happier, makes them more persuasive and has a positive influence on others, and inspires people to take action and accomplish their objectives (Ozaralli & Rivenburgh, 2016). The 13 documents on "personality factors" outline the distinctive personality traits of social entrepreneurs and potential social entrepreneurs. For instance, Preethi and Priyadarshini (2018) used the Big 5 model, which includes extraversion, openness to experience, neuroticism, conscientiousness, and agreeableness, to measure five SEI dimensions:

social vision, financial returns, social networking, innovation, and sustainability. Wu et al. (2018), in contrast, evaluated the five personality traits from the Big 5 model. Then, specific personality traits that have been connected to SEI have been researched, including propensity for taking risks and creativity (Politis et al., 2016; Chipeta & Surujlal, 2017) emotional intelligence and self-efficacy (Tiwari, Bhat & Tikoria, 2017) and moral judgment competence (Bacq & Alt, 2018).

5. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

One of the government's strategic objectives is to encourage entrepreneurship because it boosts economic growth and lowers unemployment and poverty (Shkabatur, Bar-El, & Schwartz, 2022). An unsolvable issue continues to be the surge in unemployment brought on by the global economic crises, population growth, and a lack of open positions. In addition, the emergence of crises such as the environmental, the pandemic, etc. highlight even more the need to promote and develop social entrepreneurship (Storr et al., 2022).

The development of social entrepreneurship can be a solution for increasing global economic production and reducing social problems, through the development of innovative businesses. Based on the 47 documents gathered from Scopus database, the authors observe that SEI research began to receive a great academic attention in 2017 and has grown rapidly in the following years. With the advent of numerous papers and publications advancing knowledge on this subject and laying the groundwork for future research, SE research has so far experienced an increasing trend. The areas of emerging nations (mostly Asian) make up the majority of the locations that contribute to SEI research. This study applies content analysis to review SEI research with four categories identified as Category 1. Social environment (social capital, human capital, support from institutions, social support, social norms), Category 2. Prior work experience (employment, career, income etc), Category 3. Entrepreneurship education (universities, academic entrepreneurship, students, university students, social sciences), Category 4. Personality factors (self-efficacy, opportunity recognition, empathy, sense of trust, TPB, etc). Entrepreneurship education and personal traits/characteristics were the most examined determinants of SEI. Regarding the impact of entrepreneurship education on students' social entrepreneurial intention, literature and research showed that entrepreneurial education and courses related with entrepreneurship had a significant

effect on individuals' social entrepreneurial intention. The impact of education on students' entrepreneurial intention is under question for some researchers, for example Nabi et al. (2018) found that entrepreneurship education had a negative impact on college students' entrepreneurship intention, however, the majority of studies confirm a positive relationship between entrepreneurship education and social entrepreneurial intention (Chang, Wannamakok & Kao, 2022; Solórzano-García et al., 2022).

Then, for many scholars, personal traits and PBC are the most important factors in shaping social entrepreneurial intention as social entrepreneurs or future social entrepreneurs are people who frequently show high levels of emotional intelligence and empathy for the problems of others. These characteristics enable people to recognize the social issues they want to address and to feel strongly enough about them to act to address them. There are several limitations that should be mentioned. First of all, the data came from a single database, thus future research could use a variety of databases such as WoS and Google Scholar, when more published articles become available. Generally, the systematic literature review as a technique has advantages and disadvantages. One of the advantages of this systematic technique is that it enables the search and synthesis of the existing literature to answer the research objectives.

The review of the literature has, however, been constrained by the key phrases and key terms employed to locate the required material. Because of this, the authors acknowledge that the synthesis might have left out some trustworthy sources. Future research should go beyond personality factors to look at the influence of socioeconomic circumstances and demography on people's tendency to engage in social entrepreneurship (Sengupta et al., 2018). However, there is currently a lack of empirical research on the importance of prior knowledge in this process as well as how entrepreneurs recognize and seize chances in the face of complex macro and micro contextual circumstances.

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