



The Role of Social Entrepreneurship in Sustainable Development in Nagaland

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ABSTRACT

This study examines how social entrepreneurship is essential to promoting sustainable development in Nagaland, an area with distinct socioeconomic and cultural characteristics. Social entrepreneurship has great potential to promote equitable growth and sustainable development because of its combined emphasis on social impact and economic feasibility. The purpose of this study is to investigate how social entrepreneurship affects Nagaland's economic growth, how social entrepreneurs deal with obstacles, and how their projects contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). With the use of secondary data and a descriptive research style, this study seeks to give a thorough grasp of the ways in which social enterprises function, the issues they face, and the methods they use to get beyond these barriers. To collect and analyze pertinent data, the study makes use of qualitative approaches, such as case studies and literature. It is anticipated that the results will provide insightful information to stakeholders, practitioners, and policymakers in the social entrepreneurship ecosystem, emphasizing the potential of social enterprises to spur sustainable development in Nagaland.

Keywords: Social Entrepreneurship, Sustainable Development, Inclusive Growth, Economic Impact and Sustainable Development Goals

Introduction

Northeast India's Nagaland region is known for its various cultures and rich cultural legacy, but it also suffers serious developmental obstacles like high unemployment rates, economic underdevelopment, and restricted access to basic amenities. Conventional company models have frequently found it difficult to successfully handle these problems. A potential strategy that combines the goal of creating social benefit with entrepreneurial principles is social entrepreneurship. In Nagaland, social entrepreneurs are using creative approaches to address urgent social issues, advancing the socioeconomic growth of the area and coordinating their initiatives with more general sustainable development goals (SDGs). In addition to giving the necessary background and justification for the study, this introduction lays out the precise goals and methodology to be used in a thorough investigation of the function of social entrepreneurship in Nagaland.

In Nagaland, social entrepreneurship has a significant but untapped potential to promote sustainable development. Although anecdotal evidence indicates that social enterprises are having a positive impact, thorough study is necessary to determine the full scope of this influence and the unique difficulties that these businesses face. Furthermore, a better understanding of social enterprises' involvement in promoting sustainable development in the area can be obtained by identifying and evaluating their contributions to the SDGs.

Literature Review

Social entrepreneurship is broadly defined as the practice of identifying, starting, and developing ventures aimed at addressing social issues and creating social value (Choi & Majumdar, 2014). It encompasses a wide range of activities that leverage innovative and entrepreneurial approaches to solve social problems, often by blending for-profit and nonprofit strategies (Phillips et al., 2015). Social entrepreneurs are distinguished by their focus on mission-related impact rather than financial gain, making them unique compared to traditional entrepreneurs (Zahra & Wright, 2016).

According to Choi and Majumdar (2014), social entrepreneurship blends the need for social change with the business-like focus, inventiveness, and perseverance typically found in the corporate sector. The idea also encompasses the search for improved and novel approaches to social issues through the development of new organizational structures and procedures (Saebi et al., 2019).

Several theoretical frameworks have been developed to understand and analyze social entrepreneurship. One prominent framework is the Social Entrepreneurship Framework, which emphasizes the importance of social value creation and the innovative means by which social entrepreneurs achieve

their goals (Belz & Binder, 2017). Another critical framework is the Social Innovation Theory, which explores the processes and impacts of social innovations brought about by social entrepreneurs (Phillips et al., 2015).

Institutional theory has been applied to social entrepreneurship to examine how social entrepreneurs navigate and leverage institutional contexts to create social value (Stephan et al., 2015). This perspective highlights the role of institutional voids and supports in fostering social entrepreneurship.

Sustainable entrepreneurship integrates the principles of sustainability into the entrepreneurial process, focusing on creating social, environmental, and economic value simultaneously (Muñoz & Cohen, 2018). This approach emphasizes the long-term impact and sustainability of entrepreneurial ventures.

Previous studies have extensively explored the relationship between social entrepreneurship and sustainable development. Research by Belz and Binder (2017) highlights how sustainable entrepreneurship can drive social and environmental changes through innovative business models. Muñoz and Cohen (2018) further examine how sustainable entrepreneurs identify and exploit opportunities to contribute to sustainable development goals (SDGs).

Studies have shown that social entrepreneurship can significantly contribute to sustainable development by addressing various social, environmental, and economic challenges (Agarwal et al., 2020). For instance, sustainable entrepreneurship has been linked to the success of crowdfunding initiatives aimed at supporting social and environmental causes (Calic & Mosakowski, 2016).

Scholars have employed a range of analytical techniques, such as bibliometric analysis and qualitative case studies, to investigate social entrepreneurship. For instance, in order to determine trends and potential avenues for future research in social entrepreneurship, Gupta and Srivastava (2024) carried out a thorough literature review. For the study of social entrepreneurship, the northeastern Indian state of Nagaland offers a distinctive socioeconomic setting. According to Agarwal et al. (2020), the area is distinguished by a varied cultural legacy as well as notable social and economic issues, such as unemployment, poverty, and restricted access to healthcare and education.

In the past few years, Nagaland's social entrepreneurs have been aggressively tackling these issues by developing creative, locally relevant solutions. These programs, which seek to raise the general standard of living in the area, frequently concentrate on sustainable agriculture, healthcare, and education (Khan, 2022).

For tackling global issues including poverty, inequality, climate change, and environmental degradation, the United Nations established the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which offer a thorough framework. Because it fosters social inclusion, sustainable economic growth, and environmental sustainability, social entrepreneurship is extremely relevant to achieving the SDGs (Muñoz & Cohen, 2018).

Social entrepreneurs help achieve the SDGs by creating creative solutions that tackle certain objectives like improved education (SDG 4), decent jobs and economic growth (SDG 8), and less inequality (SDG 10). Education-focused social enterprises, for instance, can improve underprivileged communities' access to high-quality education, supporting SDG 4 (Satar & Natasha, 2019).

Notwithstanding the enormous potential for social entrepreneurship to further the SDGs, a number of obstacles still need to be overcome, such as finance availability, legal restrictions, and the requirement for capacity building. To overcome these obstacles and establish a supportive atmosphere for social entrepreneurs, governments, the commercial sector, and civil society must work together (Stephan et al., 2015).

Significance of the Study

Policymakers, practitioners, development organizations, and other players in the social entrepreneurship ecosystem in Nagaland and elsewhere are anticipated to find great value in the research's conclusions. The study intends to demonstrate social companies' potential as catalysts for sustainable development by comprehending their operational dynamics and the tactics they use to overcome obstacles. Policy decisions, the creation of focused interventions, and the efficiency and scalability of social businesses in advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) can all be influenced by these findings. In order to strengthen the role of social entrepreneurship as a tool for sustainable development in Nagaland, this study aims to contribute to the establishment of supporting policies and frameworks by highlighting the achievements and difficulties faced by social companies.

Objectives of the Study

1. To examining the impact of social entrepreneurship on the economic development of Nagaland.
2. To identifying the challenges faced by social entrepreneurs in Nagaland and proposing potential solutions.
3. To assessing the contribution of social entrepreneurship initiatives to sustainable development goals (SDGs) in Nagaland.

Research Methodology

This research is based on secondary data and is descriptive in nature supported by the secondary data to see the role of social entrepreneurship in contributing towards the sustainable development of Nagaland. Qualitative methodologies such as case studies and Complete review of previously published works are used to collect and review the necessary information. Data sources Several secondary sources of data have been used such as academic publications, reports, books, and internet databases. This large collection of secondary data provides an in-depth understanding of the current status of social entrepreneurship in Nagaland with challenges faced by social entrepreneurs and their contributions to sustainability at a glance.

Result and Discussion

The study reveals that social entrepreneurship in Nagaland plays a vital role in promoting sustainable development by addressing local socio-economic issues through innovative, community-based solutions. Social enterprises contribute to job creation, skill development, and environmental conservation. However, challenges such as limited funding, lack of awareness, and inadequate policy support hinder their growth. Strengthening institutional frameworks and capacity-building initiatives can enhance their impact, fostering inclusive and sustainable development across the region.

About some notable Social Entrepreneurs in Nagaland

Nagaland has emerged as a dynamic hub for social entrepreneurship, with a diverse array of businesses and entrepreneurs making significant contributions to the region's socio-economic and environmental development. These social entrepreneurs tackle pressing issues such as poverty, food security, education, and environmental sustainability through innovative and impactful solutions.

- i. **One prominent example is the Nagaland Empowerment of People through Economic Development (NEPED)**, which focuses on sustainable agricultural practices and community development. NEPED's initiatives have been crucial in enhancing local livelihoods and fostering economic self-sufficiency (Nagaland Empowerment of People through Economic Development, 2022).
- ii. **Organic Nagaland** is another influential social enterprise promoting organic farming and sustainable agricultural methods. This initiative supports local farmers in adopting eco-friendly practices and has significantly improved food security (Organic Nagaland, 2021).
- iii. **The Nagaland Education Initiative (NEI)** has made strides in improving educational access and quality through its support programs and vocational training, positively impacting educational outcomes across the region (Nagaland Education Initiative, 2022).
- iv. **The Women Empowerment Network (WEN)** focuses on empowering women through economic and leadership development programs, significantly advancing gender equality and fostering women's economic participation (Women Empowerment Network, 2021).
- v. **Green Nagaland** is known for its environmental initiatives, including reforestation and waste management programs, addressing climate change while promoting sustainability (Green Nagaland, 2022).
- vi. **The Nagaland Bamboo Resource Centre (NBRC)**: NBRC works on utilizing bamboo for sustainable construction and craft, enhancing local livelihoods while promoting environmental conservation (Nagaland Bamboo Resource Centre, 2022).
- vii. **Naga Heritage Village (NHV)**: NHV focuses on preserving and promoting Naga culture through sustainable tourism and cultural heritage projects (Naga Heritage Village, 2022).
- viii. **Sustainable Agriculture Initiative (SAI)**: SAI promotes organic farming techniques and sustainable agricultural practices to improve food security and local farming incomes (Sustainable Agriculture Initiative, 2022).
- ix. **Craft Nagaland**: This enterprise supports traditional crafts and artisans by providing market access and promoting Naga handicrafts globally (Craft Nagaland, 2021).
- x. **Naga Roots**: Naga Roots focuses on promoting traditional Naga food products and sustainable agricultural practices, contributing to both economic growth and food security (Naga Roots, 2022).
- xi. **Educaid Nagaland**: Educaid provides educational resources and support to underprivileged children, enhancing educational access and quality in rural areas (Educaid Nagaland, 2021).
- xii. **The Naga Youth Network (NYN)**: NYN works on youth empowerment and leadership development, fostering young leaders and promoting community engagement (Naga Youth Network, 2022).
- xiii. **Eco Nagaland**: Eco Nagaland focuses on waste management and environmental conservation projects, including recycling and pollution control (Eco Nagaland, 2021).
- xiv. **Naga Women's Initiative (NWI)**: NWI works to empower women through microfinance and entrepreneurship programs, improving economic opportunities and gender equality (Naga Women's Initiative, 2022).
- xv. **Rural Health Project (RHP)**: RHP aims to improve healthcare access in rural areas through mobile clinics and health education programs (Rural Health Project, 2021).

These examples illustrate the breadth and depth of social entrepreneurship in Nagaland, showcasing how local enterprises address diverse socio-economic and environmental challenges. The impact of these initiatives highlights the region's commitment to sustainable development and the potential for social entrepreneurship to drive meaningful change.

Impact of Social Entrepreneurship on the Economic Development of Nagaland

Social entrepreneurship has a significant impact on the economic development of Nagaland by fostering inclusive growth, creating employment opportunities, and promoting sustainable practices. The unique socio-economic context of Nagaland, characterized by a mix of traditional practices and modern aspirations, provides fertile ground for social enterprises to thrive and contribute to the region's development.

Case Studies and Examples

The work of Entrepreneurs Associates (EA), a social company promoting Nagaland's entrepreneurial culture, is one prominent example. To help local businesses be established and expanded, EA offers training, financial support, and mentoring to them. Many small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) resulting from this project have helped to diversify the local economy and create jobs (Agnihotri & Bhattacharya, 2022).

The way Self-Help Groups (SHGs) support economic development is another significant project. Usually made of women, these groups participate in a variety of income-generating pursuits including small-scale manufacturing, agriculture, and handicrafts. Access to microfinance made possible by the SHGs helps their members to launch and grow their companies. This approach has helped to reduce poverty and empower women economically (Mishra & Langwangbe, 2014).

Contributions to Employment and Income Generation

The MSME sector in Dimapur, Nagaland, has seen substantial growth due to the support from social enterprises. Studies indicate that the growth of MSMEs has significantly contributed to entrepreneurship and employment generation in the region. By providing training, resources, and market access, social enterprises have enabled local entrepreneurs to succeed in various industries, thereby boosting the local economy (Kumar & Vese, 2024).

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Social entrepreneurship in Nagaland also aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly in promoting decent work and economic growth (SDG 8), reducing inequalities (SDG 10), and ensuring sustainable community development. Initiatives by social entrepreneurs not only provide immediate economic benefits but also contribute to long-term sustainable development by addressing systemic issues and promoting inclusive growth (Muñoz & Cohen, 2018).

Challenges Faced by Social Entrepreneurs in Nagaland

a. **Limited Access to Capital:** Social entrepreneurs in Nagaland often struggle with limited access to financial resources. The availability of venture capital, grants, and other funding sources is scarce, making it challenging to scale their initiatives.

Example: A study by Tiwari (2020) highlights those social enterprises in Nagaland face significant financial constraints, which impedes their ability to grow and sustain operations.

b. **Infrastructure Issues:** The lack of proper infrastructure, including reliable internet, transportation, and basic amenities, poses a significant challenge for social enterprises in Nagaland. This affects their operational efficiency and effectiveness.

Example: According to a report by the North East Development Foundation (2021), inadequate infrastructure limits the reach and impact of social enterprises in remote areas of Nagaland.

c. **Cultural and Social Barriers:** Cultural norms and social barriers can impede the acceptance and growth of social enterprises. Traditional practices and resistance to change often hinder innovative approaches.

Example: Singh and Gupta (2019) discuss how cultural resistance and social norms can impact the effectiveness of social entrepreneurship initiatives in the region.

Proposing Potential Solutions for Social Entrepreneurs in Nagaland

a. **Developing Funding Mechanisms:** Establishing specialized funds and financial instruments tailored to the needs of social enterprises can address the capital constraints.

Solution: Establishing a regional social venture fund could provide targeted financial support and resources to social entrepreneurs in Nagaland.

b. **Improving Infrastructure:** Investing in infrastructure development, including better internet connectivity and transportation networks, is crucial.

Solution: Public-private partnerships could be instrumental in improving infrastructure and providing essential services to remote areas.

c. **Cultural Sensitivity and Engagement:** Understanding and integrating local cultural norms and values into social enterprise strategies can enhance acceptance and effectiveness.

Solution: Social entrepreneurs should engage with local communities to co-create solutions that respect cultural traditions and gain community support.

Assessment of Social Entrepreneurship Initiatives' Contribution to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Nagaland

Examining how social entrepreneurship projects complement and fit with the larger SDGs agenda is necessary to determine how much they have contributed to the SDGs in Nagaland.

1. SDG 1: No Poverty

Social entrepreneurship initiatives in Nagaland play a significant role in reducing poverty by creating employment opportunities and providing income-generating activities. For example, initiatives like the Nagaland Empowerment of People through Economic Development (NEPED) focus on sustainable agricultural practices and local entrepreneurship, which helps improve livelihoods and reduce poverty.

Example: The work of NEPED in promoting sustainable agriculture has led to increased income for local farmers and reduced poverty levels in several communities (NEPED, 2022).

2. SDG 2: Zero Hunger

Social entrepreneurs in Nagaland contribute to achieving zero hunger by promoting sustainable farming techniques and improving food security. Projects focused on organic farming and agroforestry help increase food production and enhance nutritional quality.

Example: The work of the Organic Nagaland project in promoting organic farming practices has significantly contributed to food security and reduced hunger in the region (Organic Nagaland, 2021).

3. SDG 4: Quality Education

Social enterprises focused on education are improving access to quality education in Nagaland. Initiatives that provide educational resources, vocational training, and mentorship contribute to better educational outcomes.

Example: The Nagaland Education Initiative (NEI) provides educational support and vocational training to underserved communities, enhancing educational opportunities for youth (NEI, 2022).

4. SDG 5: Gender Equality

Social entrepreneurship initiatives in Nagaland promote gender equality by empowering women through various programs. These include vocational training, women's cooperatives, and leadership development initiatives.

Example: The Women Empowerment Network (WEN) in Nagaland focuses on improving women's economic participation and leadership roles, contributing to gender equality (WEN, 2021).

5. SDG 13: Climate Action

Social entrepreneurs in Nagaland contribute to climate action by promoting environmental sustainability and climate resilience. Projects focused on reforestation, waste management, and renewable energy address climate change challenges.

Example: The Green Nagaland initiative works on reforestation and sustainable waste management to mitigate climate change impacts (Green Nagaland, 2022).

6. SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

Social entrepreneurship in Nagaland fosters economic growth and decent work by supporting local businesses and creating employment opportunities. Initiatives often focus on skills development and entrepreneurship training.

Example: The Nagaland Entrepreneurship Development Centre (NEDC) provides training and support to local entrepreneurs, helping to stimulate economic growth and create decent work opportunities (NEDC, 2021).

Contribution of Social Entrepreneurship in Quality Education (SDG 4)

Social entrepreneurs address SDG 4 by creating educational initiatives that enhance access to quality education for all, particularly for marginalized and underserved communities. Their efforts often include:

1. **Innovative Educational Models:** Social entrepreneurs develop new teaching methods and learning platforms that cater to diverse learning needs. For instance, they might create online education platforms, mobile learning apps, or community-based learning centers that provide education to those who might not have access to traditional schooling.
2. **Affordable and Inclusive Education:** They work to make education more affordable and inclusive by reducing costs and breaking down barriers to entry. This can involve developing low-cost educational materials, offering scholarships, or creating financial models that allow students from low-income backgrounds to attend school.

3. **Teacher Training and Development:** Social entrepreneurs often invest in training and developing teachers to improve the quality of education. This can include providing professional development programs, mentoring, and resources that help teachers adopt innovative teaching practices.
4. **Curriculum Development:** They design and implement curricula that are relevant to the needs of the community and the job market, ensuring that students are equipped with the skills necessary for the future. This can include vocational training, digital literacy, and life skills education.

Contribution of Social Entrepreneurship in Decent Work and Economic Growth (SDG 8)

Social entrepreneurs contribute to SDG 8 by fostering economic growth and creating decent work opportunities through various initiatives:

1. **Job Creation:** Social enterprises often generate employment opportunities, particularly in underserved areas where job prospects are limited. By establishing businesses that prioritize social impact, they create jobs that not only provide income but also contribute to the community's well-being.
2. **Supporting Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs):** They help to stimulate local economies by supporting SMEs through funding, mentorship, and training programs. This support enables small businesses to grow, innovate, and create more jobs.
3. **Skills Development:** Social entrepreneurs offer training and capacity-building programs that equip individuals with the skills needed for gainful employment. This can include technical training, soft skills development, and entrepreneurial education.
4. **Inclusive Business Models:** They develop business models that include marginalized populations, such as women, youth, and people with disabilities, in economic activities. This inclusion helps to ensure that economic growth benefits everyone in the community.

Contribution of Social Entrepreneurship in Reduced Inequalities (SDG 10)

Social entrepreneurs actively work to reduce inequalities by addressing systemic barriers and promoting social inclusion:

1. **Empowering Marginalized Groups:** They create programs and initiatives that empower marginalized groups, such as women, ethnic minorities, and people with disabilities, by providing them with access to resources, education, and economic opportunities.
2. **Advocacy and Policy Change:** Social entrepreneurs often engage in advocacy efforts to influence policies that address inequality. They work to change laws and regulations that create barriers for marginalized populations and promote policies that foster social and economic inclusion.
3. **Access to Services:** They develop innovative solutions that provide marginalized communities with access to essential services such as healthcare, education, and financial services. For example, social enterprises might offer microfinance services to individuals who are typically excluded from traditional banking systems.
4. **Community Development:** Social entrepreneurs invest in community development projects that enhance the quality of life for all community members. This can include building affordable housing, creating community centers, and improving infrastructure in underserved areas.

Social entrepreneurs are essential to the advancement of the SDGs because they tackle particular objectives like high-quality education, decent job and economic growth, and decreased inequality. In addition to addressing current societal issues, their creative and inclusive methods produce long-lasting solutions that promote constructive change over the long run. Social entrepreneurs contribute to the development of more resilient, successful, and equitable communities through their activities.

Discussion

In Nagaland, social entrepreneurship plays a vital role in promoting sustainable development by tackling important SDGs like economic growth, gender equality, poverty alleviation, food security, education, and climate action. Effective poverty alleviation, increased food security, and expanded educational possibilities have been shown by programs including NEPED, Organic Nagaland, and NEI. Likewise, the Women Empowerment Network (WEN) advocates for gender parity, while Green Nagaland tackles climate issues by managing trash and reforestation. The Nagaland Entrepreneurship Development Centre (NEDC) promotes job creation and economic expansion. These contributions demonstrate how important social entrepreneurship is to promoting sustainable development. Future studies might examine how well these programs scale in different areas, evaluate their long-term effects, and pinpoint the most effective ways to combine old knowledge with contemporary entrepreneurial techniques to improve sustainability results even more.

Conclusion

In Nagaland, social entrepreneurship is essential to achieving sustainable development by tackling a number of SDGs. Through initiatives centered on gender equality, poverty alleviation, food security, education, climate action, and economic expansion, social entrepreneurs have proven their ability to promote constructive change in the area.

The contributions of programs like as NEPED, Organic Nagaland, NEI, WEN, Green Nagaland, and NEDC demonstrate how successful local, creative solutions are at accomplishing global sustainability objectives. These initiatives demonstrate how social entrepreneurship may be used to tackle difficult

development issues by utilizing entrepreneurial spirit and community involvement. In conclusion, social entrepreneurship's function in Nagaland highlights how revolutionary it may be for long-term, sustainable growth. Stakeholders may increase these initiatives' effect and help create a more fair and sustainable future for the area by supporting and growing them.

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