

Resource utilisation and innovation in social entrepreneurship

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Abstract

Purpose: This study examines social entrepreneurship with a particular focus on the innovative utilisation of resources by empirically examining the phenomenon in the particular context of Egypt. It aims to explore and understand the role of innovation in social entrepreneurship processes through research orchestration in the Egyptian developing economy.

Design/methodology/approach: This research is essentially qualitative, aiming to understand the social innovation process. It uses a triangulation methodology across datasets and reintegrate with previous research in a thematic analysis. This study uses 5 cases of innovative social enterprises. It adopts a purposive sampling (rather than probability or random) approach, suggest from the population of social entrepreneurs in Egypt. The sample was selected as providing deep data on creative social entrepreneurship projects. The processes of case selection, transcribing of in-depth interviews and writing up of codes and common patterns and themes that guided the cross-case analysis in the discussion and analysis.

Findings: The analysis reveals the prominent role of human and social resources, including trust and reputation to the social entrepreneurship in Egypt. Those intangible resources have been orchestrated in an innovative manner to build legitimate status that helped social entrepreneurs to access finance and other valuable resources such as knowledge sharing. The proposed conceptual framework shows the social innovation by illustrating the social entrepreneurs' creativity and ability to innovate by orchestrating tangible and intangible resources to produce the desired outcomes.

Limitation: Generalisation from any case-based research involves its re-contextualisation beyond the context and culture of Egypt; lessons for other contexts and cultures must take account of variance and not simply be transposed. However, this research aimed to provide insights and recommendations related to specific context of developing countries and Egypt in particular.

Practical Implications: The findings of this research coincide with that of literature, which specifies a focus on developing the social entrepreneur and their resources. Based on these findings it could be recommended that a social entrepreneur could use social and human resources to start a social enterprise or the government must look at financial support and could make provision to help individuals with social goals. The findings of this research could also be used to inform the current debate on the role of social entrepreneurs in Egypt. It could be used as a base for policy formation as well as future research on the phenomenon within the Egyptian context.
