BENEFIT CORPORATIONS AND CORPORATE SOCIAL INTRAPRENEURSHIP

Background and special issue purpose

Social entrepreneurship is considered to be a specific form of entrepreneurship, because the peculiarity of its mission: to accomplish a social goal (Seelos and Mair 2005, Peredo and McLean 2006, Certo and Miller 2008, Austin, Stevenson and Wei-Skillern 2012, Dees 2017). Most scholars strongly believe that social entrepreneurship is a real changemaker (Kickul & Lyons 2016), thus linking the birth of a social start-up to individual characteristics and other personal traits of the entrepreneur.

Though, the field of research is relatively young and was gaining a greater momentum only in recent years. As for such reasons, there are abundant rooms still left for scholars’ investigation, as instance as: providing a sharp and comprehensive definition and a positive theory (Santos 2012), exploring legitimacy implications (Dart 2004), drawing the typology of social entrepreneur (Zahra et al. 2009).

However, one of the most intriguing research questions in this field seems to be the emergence of new social, hybrid legal and organizational forms (Hemphill and Cullari 2014). This epical change affects the governance aspect (Hiller 2013, Ball 2016), and has relevant implications in terms of theory of Shared Value (Porter and Kramer 2011).

Among other social enterprise types, the benefit corporation (Murray 2012, Loewenstein 2013, Grieco et al. 2015) deserves a particular mention. In fact, benefit corporations are deemed as promising, innovative social enterprises’ vehicles (Sabadoz 2011, Munch 2012, Hiller 2013).

In their analysis, Michelini and Fiorentino (2012) finds that social business models are similar in partner networks, knowledge, value chain, social benefits, but they differ for value proposition, governance systems, profits management model, social risks and economic profit equation.

Even though eminent scholars have resonantly recalled the attention on the need to investigate the hybrid social forms, social intrapreneurship is unfairly a still neglected perspective of research (Schmitz and Scheuerle 2012).

The intrapreneur is that individual who creates new structure within an existing organization, in face of the many obstacles linked to inertia and path dependency (Feyzbakhsh, Sadeghi, & Shoraka 2008). The integration between entrepreneurship and strategy means to consider entrepreneurship...
the dominant logic, as it “promotes strategic agility, flexibility, creativity, and continuous innovation throughout the firm” (Kuratko and Audretsch 2009, p. 5).

With this call, we aim to explore the link between the benefit corporation and social entrepreneurship, by understanding the similarities and dissimilarities between the two modes, the dynamics underlying social intrapreneurship and to what extent social intrapreneurship promotes the strategic renewal (Covin and Miles 1999).

**Topics of interests**

- The link between social entrepreneurship and benefit corporation
- Implications for the theory of Shared value
- Social intrapreneurship and organizational structure in social entrepreneurship (including Benefit Corporations),
- The infrastructure necessary for successful corporate social intrapreneurship
- The difference between social intrapreneurship and CSR
- Changemaker characteristics at team-level, individual-level, organizational level that drives social intrapreneurship
- Obstacles to social intrapreneurship, including organizational inertia and path dependency
- Entrepreneurship as the dominant logic in corporate change
- Mindset, creativity and entrepreneurial characteristics in social intrapreneurship
- The impact that social intrapreneurship has on strategic agility, flexibility, and strategic renewal.
- Internal entrepreneurship environment and innovation promotion in benefit corporations
- Similarities and differences between social entrepreneurship and benefit corporation business model

However, the span of interest is not limited to above research questions, so further proposals will be evaluated.

**Guest Editors**

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Deadlines, Submission and Review Process

Authors who are interested in this special issue can contact the guest editors for further enquiries or send an email to Executive Committee (Prof. Beatrice Orlando beatrice.orlando@uniroma1.it; Dr. Nicola Cucari ncucari@unisa.it).

Submissions to this special issue should be prepared in accordance with ERJ’s submission process.

All submissions must be made through the online system at the following link: https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/dgerj and please, make sure to indicate that your submission is for this special issue.

The submission window is from 1st of December 2018 to 1st May 2019.

Publication of this special issue is planned for 2019.

Important Dates

1st December 2018: submission system is open
1st May 2019: deadline for submissions
15th June 2019: notification of acceptance
25th July 2019: deadline for the submissions of revisions
10th September 2019: online preview

References


