

Social Entrepreneurship among Youth as a Factor of Sustainable Development of Regions: Main Motives and Visible Barriers

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Abstract: This article, based on the results of the research "Sociological diagnostics of youth involvement in social entrepreneurship" conducted by the authors in the Belgorod region, attempts to substantiate possible motives, as well as perceived barriers to engaging in entrepreneurial activities in the social sphere. The starting point for identifying motives for the possible realization of oneself as a social entrepreneur was a combination of three types of motivation sources: fulfillment of the social mission, economic (business) motivation, and innovativeness. The authors conclude that the readiness to engage in entrepreneurship in the social sphere is caused not so much by external motives associated with the lack of decent offers in the labor market as by the desire for independence, independence from external actors' economic activity. The reluctance to engage in social entrepreneurship is mainly based on internal motives related to the perceived lack of necessary qualities for an entrepreneur. This suggests that both readiness to entrepreneurship and rejection of relevant practices are based not primarily on external factors but the existing attitudes, predisposition, and proactive strategies ingrained in mind.

1 INTRODUCTION

The presence of a social problem in society is the starting point of the social entrepreneur's activities. Where public sector institutions are ineffective and do not contribute to solving or mitigating social problems, the most fertile environment is created for the emergence and active development of social entrepreneurship.


At present, several sustainable projects are operating in Russia, mainly in the areas of farming, processing of some types of household waste, support for the disabled, older adults and graduates of orphanages, revival of crafts and folk crafts, local tourism, but even they cannot boast the absolute success, the scale of activities, and even less the replicability of their experience.


To increase the share of social entrepreneurship, it is necessary to create conditions for the


development of entrepreneurship in the social sphere, creating new production technologies and new jobs.

2 RESEARCH METHODS

As part of the study of youth involvement in social entrepreneurship, the authors conducted a sociological research, "Sociological diagnostics of youth involvement in social entrepreneurship," in the Belgorod region by questionnaire survey. The research aimed to identify the degree of involvement of the younger generation in social entrepreneurship. The implementation of the research objectives was achieved based on empirical measurement of youth readiness for entrepreneurial activity in the social sphere, conducted by the authors in January-February 2020. The research included methods of system analysis, sociological survey, method of quantitative

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and qualitative data processing. The sample size was 800 respondents between the ages of 16 and 35.

3 FINDINGS

In modern conditions of development of the Russian society, social entrepreneurship is a link between the state, business, and society in solving social problems of different population categories. Orientation towards the complex solutions of acute social problems, networking principle of dissemination, ability to actively integrate into existing projects makes social entrepreneurship a powerful source of civic initiatives.

The revision of the role of social entrepreneurship as one of the key factors in the country's socio-economic development has led to a reassessment of the importance of entrepreneurial activity and entrepreneurial intentions. This determines the relevance of youth social entrepreneurship research as a new phenomenon in the youth environment, identifying the factors contributing to its development and the limitations on the path of formation of domestic social entrepreneurs.

The concept of "social entrepreneurship" began to be used in the 60s and 70s. In the 20th century, but only 20 years later, the term was widely acknowledged in the foreign management literature. Thus, at the present stage, foreign economic literature presents many definitions of the concept of "social entrepreneurship", but there are no clearly defined boundaries of this term. The difficulty of forming the concept of social entrepreneurship is related to creating a theoretical basis on practical knowledge and analysis of existing cases. The lack of a generally accepted interpretation of the term and its boundaries leads to a blurring of the boundaries between social entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship in the social sector.

For the first time, the problem of social entrepreneurship was addressed by G. Dees. The researcher pointed out that "the phenomenon of social entrepreneurship has always existed, but earlier scholars simply did not address this issue" (Dees, Emerson, 2002). In 1963, B. Drayton described the social entrepreneur as "an innovator for society", defined him as an individual who combines the practical and result-oriented methods of a business entrepreneur with a social reformer's goals (Alvord, Brown, 2004). Before 1990, social entrepreneurship was considered to research social movements and certain values (Reutov, Reutova, 2017).

Interest in social entrepreneurship grew most strongly in the 1990s. At this time, the first attempts to define the term and the first studies appear. Social entrepreneurs have been defined as "change agents in the social sector who discover and allocate undervalued resources or change the allocation of scarce public resources" (Bacq, Hartog, 2016). At the beginning of the second millennium, scholarly works emerged that sought to fully justify the issues and problems of social entrepreneurship. These works already use measurement tools - quantitative and qualitative research methods. Social entrepreneurs are defined here as "leaders who use an entrepreneurial approach to solving social problems, search for innovations". (Epifanova, Romanenko, 2015). Particular attention is paid to social partnership between the public, social, and business sectors guiding the economy to address social issues.

Attempts to create a "general concept of social entrepreneurship and summarize previous experiences have led to an understanding of social entrepreneurs as organizations or individuals who take risks, use innovation, refuse to accept limitations in existing resources and try to solve pressing social problems" (Mukhin, 2011). Since 2007 there has been a period of social entrepreneurship abroad. Civil society is seeking state support for this issue, and the legal status of social entrepreneurship is being consolidated.

The Russian research community has also not ignored the current trend in the development of the phenomenon of social entrepreneurship. The most profound analysis of this phenomenon belongs to the authors' team from the Center for Social Entrepreneurship and Social Innovation of the Higher School of Economics, headed by A.A. Moskovskaya. According to the Center's findings, social entrepreneurship is much more active and diverse in the western, advanced industrialized world than in the third world. Moreover, the researchers in their work suggested that "social entrepreneurship projects in developing countries that have become globally renowned have largely become successful thanks to entrepreneurial models, values, culture, economic education created in the developed industrialized countries of the West, as well as the recently emerged practices of advisory, financial assistance from various foundations and non-profit organizations" (Moskovskaya, 2011). (Moskovskaya, 2011).

The most quoted definition of the term "social entrepreneurship" belongs to Gregory Dees, Director of the Center for Social Entrepreneurship Development at Duke University (USA). The researcher sees the reason for the emergence of social

entrepreneurship in the "inefficiency of individual social institutions. The activities of the social entrepreneur will then contribute to higher demands for social justice in this society by striking a balance between economic efficiency and social justice" (Dees, 2008). The social entrepreneur theorist identified five main factors that characterize the social entrepreneur: 1) presence of a social mission that ensures the creation and maintenance of social effect; 2) searching for and using all-new resources to implement his social mission; 3) constant involvement in the process of innovation, adaptation, and learning; 4) determination to act regardless of available resources at the moment; 5) responsibility of an entrepreneur for the results of his activities not only to clients but also to society" (Dees, Anderson, 2006). The presence of these characteristics defines the entrepreneur as a social entrepreneur. However, as noted by G. Dees, the absence of any of the characteristics does not necessarily indicate otherwise.

The classical definition of social entrepreneurship uses the following three criteria for categorizing an enterprise as social:

1) Orientation towards the social mission, i.e. the priority of solving or mitigating a social problem, meeting a social need rather than making a commercial profit;

2) Economic sustainability. Social enterprises may receive subsidies, but the main source of income is the activity of the enterprise itself;

3) The innovative approach implies a qualitatively new product (service) provision or a completely new product.

In this approach, "each of the elements points to a combination of three types of sources of motivation for the social entrepreneur: fulfilling the 'social mission', economic (business) motivation - material success, and 'innovativeness' - the desire to implement their knowledge and innovative ideas in modern technologies, approaches and business solutions" (Shavyrina, Demenenko, 2020).

These postulates served as a starting point for identifying motives for the possible realization of oneself as a social entrepreneur.

According to the data obtained, the respondents' greatest importance is the desire for independence and autonomy. This was indicated by 63.9% of respondents. Also, quite significant is the motive of self-realization and personal growth. This was indicated by 48.2% of respondents. Economic motivation (material success) was noted as a motive by 32.6% of respondents.

The next block of motives includes: solving personal problems and helping other people with similar problems (29.1%), innovativeness - the desire to implement their knowledge and innovative ideas (24.5%) and achieving success in society, the desire to improve their credibility in the eyes of others (18.9%).

Such motive as the fulfillment of "social mission", desire to be useful to the society is marked only by 8.2% of respondents.

Based on the data obtained, we can conclude that the main motives for the possible realization of himself as a social entrepreneur are the desire for independence, independence from external actors of economic activity, as well as self-realization and personal growth.

The comparative analysis of the data obtained is, to a certain extent, supported by the data conducted by the ZIRCON research team in 2018. The conducted research data confirm the initial assumption about the complex structure of motivation to start their own enterprise and engage in social entrepreneurship.

The strongest motives in the All-Russian survey were the desire "to realize a certain idea" and "striving for independence and autonomy" - both options were chosen by 70% of respondents (Research group "Zircon". Social entrepreneur-2018).

The data we obtained do not reflect innovativeness (aspiration to realize one's knowledge and innovative ideas) as the main motive. However, it should be understood that the All-Russian research involved already established social entrepreneurs and the author's research - only young people without regard to the type of their activity.

According to the All-Russian research, it is quite relevant to create one's own enterprise if one cannot receive any necessary services or goods of proper quality from existing business entities or state institutions. Thus, more than half of the respondents (54%) indicated that one of the motives was the desire to solve a particular problem, important for the family or themselves personally. According to the results of our research, this motive was noted by 29.1% of respondents. And here, it should be understood that this motive may not yet be fully actualized in young people's minds by the absence of a pressing need.

The results regarding the priority of business motivation are similar. Thus, according to the results of the All-Russian research, the desire to improve their own material well-being is noted by 52% of respondents and the desire to meet certain social needs through maximizing their profits (47%)

(Research group "Zircon". Social entrepreneur-2018).

According to the authors' results, economic motivation (material success) is noted as a motive by 32.6% of respondents, and this motive takes the third position.

The most ambivalent, ambiguous was the motive of recognition - achievement of success in society, the desire to increase one's authority in others' eyes. This aspiration was considered important by 39% of respondents, and approximately the same number - 37% - considered it unimportant for themselves in the All-Russian poll, and 18.9% in the author's poll.

Thus, it is easy to see that the priority of the choice of the main motives for creating a social enterprise, despite the difference in the survey methodology, is approximately the same for the two samples. At the same time, we note that two "hybrid" motives - "solving personal problems and helping other people..." and "satisfying social needs by maximizing one's own profit" - caused increased difficulties in answering due to this very hybridity (i.e., mixing motives of different types). Besides, it is important that the motif of "making a difference in society" gained an order of magnitude more votes in 2018, which may indicate the growing reputation of social entrepreneurship itself, which some actors can now see as a good source of symbolic capital and social credibility.

In general, the survey data analysis shows that the motives of personal growth and self-actualization (including professional) remain the unconditional leaders. The group of motives in which business motivation is a priority turns out to be weaker; they are significant for about half of respondents. And it is also worth paying attention to the desire to solve their own problems by creating a social enterprise: this motive, in our view, may indicate that the family turns out to be an important factor in the creation of the business and - possibly - one of its participants.

According to the data received on the possible sphere of social entrepreneurship, the sphere of education is the most demanded among young people. Thus, the direction of additional education was noted by 43.5% of respondents, and preschool education - 39.1%.

Then, by the degree of demand, young people mentioned tourist services (36.9%), the organization of accessible sports leisure (29.3%), as well as improving the quality and availability of medical services (26.4%).

The next block of possible areas for self-actualization as social entrepreneurs includes: the development of agriculture (21.3%), ecology

(19.2%), geriatric services to the population (organization of assistance to elderly and older adults in terms of maintaining and strengthening their health) (18.2%), and manufacturing of socially important products (17.5%).

Young people are least interested in such areas as improving the quality of life of vulnerable people (14.2%), employment (8.9%), and the preservation and revival of Russia's cultural and historical heritage (2.6%).

For research purposes, it was important for us to find out what young people thought might be a barrier to realizing themselves as social entrepreneurs.

Thus, to the greatest extent, respondents mention the lack of necessary information (59.3%). The second most important barrier is the lack of financial resources for the organization of business, the unavailability of credit resources (48.6%). And 39.2% of respondents indicated a lack of knowledge regarding the basics of entrepreneurship.

A rather significant barrier in the assessment of youth is a lack of ideas. This is indicated by 26.9% of respondents. In our opinion, this barrier is quite strongly related to the apparent lack of necessary information about social entrepreneurship as a type of entrepreneurial activity. We have noted this before. As the author's research and comparative analysis of the All-Russian monitoring data have shown, there is a huge gap of both informativeness and knowledge and awareness regarding social entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurs in modern Russian reality.

4 CONCLUSIONS

The starting point for identifying motives for the possible realization of oneself as a social entrepreneur was a combination of three types of sources of motivation of a social entrepreneur: fulfillment of "social mission", economic (business) motivation - material success, and "innovativeness" - the desire to realize their knowledge and innovative ideas in modern technologies, approaches and business solutions.

Thus, the readiness to engage in entrepreneurship in the social sphere is caused not so much by external motives associated with the lack of decent offers in the labor market, as by the desire for independence from external actors' economic activity. The group of motives in which business motivation is a priority turns out to be weaker; they are significant for about half of respondents. The data we obtained do not reflect innovativeness (aspiration to realize one's knowledge and innovative ideas) as the main motive.

The reluctance to engage in social entrepreneurship is mainly based on internal motives related to the perceived lack of necessary qualities for an entrepreneur. This suggests that both readiness to entrepreneurship and rejection of relevant practices are based not primarily on external factors but the existing attitudes, predisposition, and proactive strategies ingrained in mind.

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