

Book Review

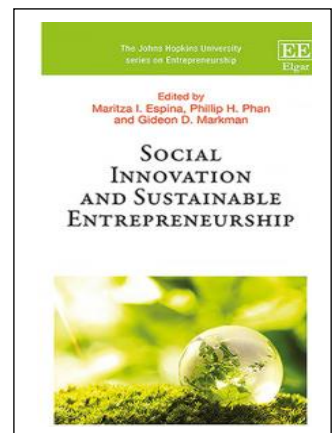
Social Innovation and Sustainable Entrepreneurship

– by Maritza Espina, Phillip H. Phan and
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Mohamed Buheji

Email: buhejim@gmail.com

Founder of the International Inspiration Economy Project - Bahrain



Abstract This review explores Espina et al. (2018) work on the development of the framework of social entrepreneurship (SE), social innovation (SI) and sustainability entrepreneurship (SuE). The review targets to orient the reader with a new way of thinking that would lead to sustainable development, namely through social entrepreneurship and social innovation. The four parts which represent the concepts of SE, SI and SuE collected by the editors illustrate the importance of such concepts to non-profit enterprises, public services, businesses and communities. This edited book gives a critical review for the readers about the opportunities and challenges in this new entrepreneurial landscape, which leads to sustainability, specifically in relevance to social and climate change management.

Keywords Social Innovation, Social Entrepreneurship, Sustainable Development, Sustainability, Socio-economy

1. Introduction to the Book

The aim of the ‘Social Entrepreneurship’, ‘Social Innovation’ and ‘Sustainable Entrepreneurship’ is to create waves of change that would influence every sector in life while shaking the current status of the way non-profit enterprises, public services and businesses are delivered. All these three concepts work on exploiting the socio-economic opportunities and challenges, Buheji (2018c). The work of Espina et al. (2018) help us to focus on the role of such concepts on the environmental and climate change; besides the ethical issues relevant to such practices.

Both social and sustainability entrepreneurship can be a good alternative means towards addressing chronic world socio-economic issues as issues of: migration, youth quality of life, unemployment and poverty. The book focuses on long-term benefits and the positive impact that such entrepreneurship and innovation could be brought to the communities. (Buheji, 2018)

Recent philanthropic models as the Bill and Malinda Gates raised the bar in creating outcome driven results that influence the socio-economics in both the short and long term. Such models and initiatives pushed for more demand for social innovation idea and made social entrepreneurs more aware of lean-startups.

Buheji (2016) and (2017) showed how such entrepreneurship and innovation practices bring in breakthroughs, which are reflected more today through the concepts of inspiration and resilience economies.

2. The Theoretical and Practical Approaches

The theoretical approaches presented in this book shows how social and sustainable entrepreneurship research and projects brings in more opportunities to businesses, consumers and institutions. Practically this book shows how the stakeholders are expecting more sustainability reporting based on the social contract theory.

The book also shows how being engaged and involved with global issues, like climate change, helps in break community traditions. The editors give the case study of the California water rights, as an example.

The papers in the book show the broad definitions of change in the meaning and approaches of social innovation and social entrepreneurs. These approaches are presented in cases where profits and progress are combined. The book concludes with ethics of social innovation, which this reviewer finds them out of scope.

3. Purpose of Studying Social and Sustainable Entrepreneurship Frameworks

The propose of exploring the frameworks for social and sustainable entrepreneurship is to build a relation between the related concepts, such as the relation between the ‘sustainable entrepreneurship’ in relevance to ‘sustainability innovation’. The framework helps to connect social and sustainable entrepreneurship to socio-economic issues and applications; regardless of the community status or the dynamic market context.

Espina et al. (2018) believe that the field is progressing very fast, and now it is time to study and measure the ‘social entrepreneurial effectiveness’. This would ensure that the proposed frameworks would be sound and ready for the adoption of the managers, the practitioners and the decision makers without much procrastination. The book also provides clear pathways for organisations that would like to sponsor programs in relevance to social and environmental responsibility.

4. The Influence of the New Eco-Entrepreneurial Concepts

The papers in this edited book show how the market impact measures are shifting from ‘percentage of market share’, or ‘sales growth’, or ‘capacity to compete’ towards more the role of the organisation to influence the ‘sustainable entrepreneurship’ and develop more ‘sustainability innovation’ driven projects. The editors show that all these new focused entrepreneurial concepts are playing a role in social engineering, which replaces some of the ill-designed capital economy systems. Therefore, Espina et al. (2018) explore the following concepts to be taken into consideration when studying the influence of the eco entrepreneurial concepts:

4.1. Social Enterprise School vs Social Innovation School

Social Enterprise School views social entrepreneurship as commercial activities of non-for-profit in order to gain income.

Social Innovation School views entrepreneurship as the implementation of innovation while changing solutions and usually does not entail commercial activities.

4.2. Social Value Added

The book illustrates briefly a vital concept that needs to be further researched, that is the capacity of the enterprise to create more value to the intended beneficiaries than the comparable intended resources, or the value being extended to other ventures. This is very similar to the reviewer work on inspiration currencies. Buheji (2016).

4.3. System Change

This change transforms the architecture of how things work and reach a tipping point. Again this is similar to work relevance to re-inventing the socio-economic models as models of wealth in Buheji (2018b).

4.4. Empowerment and Social Change

The benefit of such change to the benefit of the disadvantaged.

4.5. Social Innovation

Innovation that leads to achieving better social condition with minimal resources, or to solve insoluble problems.

5. The Limitations of the Book

The papers in this edited are very integrated; however, they do not address how such concepts need more multidisciplinary research approach. The book also did not address clearly how the positive social impact can be measured and how to cater to entrepreneurs’ basic needs. The other limitations for the book is that it presented sustainable entrepreneurship only from climate change perspective.

6. Uniqueness of this Book

The papers in this edited work recognise the evolution of social innovation and social entrepreneurship and their essential role in sustainable development and in creating differentiation to both individuals and community life. Moreover, the book shows the possible reasons of why we need social entrepreneurs. The rapid rise in research on social innovation and entrepreneurship means that theoretical frameworks are still being created, while traditional notions of economic efficiency and social welfare are tested.

The social innovation part has unique graphs that illustrate the influence of the models of social entrepreneurship. The graph of mapping social enterprise shows how the double line enterprises can help develop social enterprises and then develop social movement and vice versa.

The book encourages the concept of inspiration economy, as it considers that the positive causes of change comes from the field challenges. (Buheji, 2018).

7. Recommendations

This book sets a comprehensive approach to the concept of social and sustainable entrepreneurship. However, the term ecopreneurship could have been used more to keep the flow of solving environmental problems through entrepreneurial approaches. The book also could have a section its next editions about the economic value that social and sustainable entrepreneurship contribution to solving community problems and challenges. This economic value could also be related to the relation of curiosity with social and sustainable entrepreneurship. (Buheji, 2019)

Therefore, the book needs more focus sections or papers about the role of such entrepreneurial concepts in achieving societal goals while changing the community of stakeholders and achieving sustainable development. The other benefit of social and sustainable entrepreneurship that could be illustrated is the ability of these concepts to integrate socio-economic issues through micro-contributions. The practitioners and the consultants of both social entrepreneurship and social innovation would find this book hand for the delivery of their basic services.

8. Conclusions

The exploration of ‘Social Innovation and Sustainable Entrepreneurship’ by Espina et al. (2018) identifies and describes current models principles that help to foresight the possibilities of such models in the coming future.

An outline the development of the main models and line of thoughts in social entrepreneurship and social innovation is done in this review which would help the reader to identify, synthesise and classify the current research on the field of such entrepreneurship and innovation. These concepts are investigated in the context of non-profit enterprises, public services and business.

The book is recommended as an extra reference for MBA, innovation and entrepreneurship courses; besides being a library reference for researchers, scholars and educators in the area of sustainability entrepreneurship. The book carries many novel ideas which open doors for more in-depth future research.

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