**Three Essays on Managing Social Enterprises**

**Abstract**

Social enterprises are unique organizations that operate to pursue social or environmental goals while generating revenue through their business activities. They are sometimes considered a new phenomenon associated with the 21st century. Given the new field, there is limited empirical research on understanding issues related to managing social enterprises. This dissertation explores three aspects of managing social enterprises: knowledge management, talent management, and stakeholder engagement.

In the first essay, we examined challenges and facilitators to knowledge management, which is vital for organizations to stay competitive. Much of what we know about knowledge management barriers and facilitators are from large for-profit organizations, and social enterprises have received minimal attention. It would be wrong to assume that social enterprises do not manage knowledge, and the knowledge management challenges and facilitators in for-profit, nonprofit, small and medium enterprises, and social enterprises are the same, with the only difference being in magnitude or scale. We address this gap through our in-depth qualitative study of 25 employees (including three volunteers) working at different social enterprises, field observation of two social enterprises, and participation in online events. Our study shows that social enterprises in India face various barriers to managing knowledge, namely underestimating value, resource constraints, cultural fences, technological barricades, and inconsistent stakeholders’ expectations. Further, our findings suggest that knowledge management facilitators at social enterprises are social capital, socialization, and flat organizational structures. Through this study, we contribute to limited research on knowledge management in social enterprises.

The second essay explored what talent and talent management mean in social enterprises and what talent management practices these organizations follow. We conducted 17 interviews with experts from different social enterprises operating in India. We found that what talent and talent management mean to these organizations differs from what is considered talent and talent management in traditional businesses. For instance, talent management practices in social enterprises are social purpose driven. Further, social enterprises focus on inclusive aspects and do practice inclusive talent management practices for talent management. Our study contributes to the literature on talent management, explicitly emerging literature on inclusive talent management.

In the final essay, we study stakeholder engagement practices in social enterprises. While much research has focused on stakeholder management, in recent years, the founders of stakeholder theories have shifted from stakeholder management to stakeholder engagement, as stakeholder management is now considered a one-sided approach that does not work. On the other hand, the emphasis of stakeholder engagement is on inclusion, collaboration, and relationship-building, which also reflect a much-needed shift in society. However, we do not know much about stakeholder engagement practices, so in this essay, we ask how social enterprises engage with different stakeholders. To answer this question, we conducted 30 interviews with diverse stakeholders (including 11 employees, two volunteers, 10 beneficiaries, two community members, three funders/donors, and two government officials). Our findings show that social enterprises practice three stakeholder engagement practices, i.e., "inclusive participation and collaborative decision-making," "transparent communication and reporting," and "relationship and trust building." All these findings indicate the inclusive nature of stakeholder engagement practices, and our study contributes to the growing literature on stakeholder engagement.