Edupreneurs: Achieving Sustainable Development Goal of Education Through Social Entrepreneurship

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Abstract: Increasing awareness towards social issues as well as the spirit of entrepreneurship has opened up multiple areas where social reforms can be seen. Further to this study Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by India calls for the action in one area which will have an effect in all the other areas. The light of the same promoting social entrepreneurship will result in achieving these goals by 2030. The study focuses on one of the SDGs i.e. Quality education by developing a model where the social entrepreneur can play a central role in achieving inclusiveness.
Keywords: *Social Entrepreneurship, Edupreneurs, Education.*

Introduction

Entrepreneurship has been defined as process or purposeful economic activity resulting into creation of something which is rewarding and also involves risks. Over the years importance of entrepreneurship has been highlighted from several dimensions such as economic development, regional development, social development, capital formation, improving standard of living of people. If compared with the United Nations SDGs we can map these goals with entrepreneurial activities. However to focus on most pressing problems of society with innovative solutions the concept of Social Entrepreneur has evolved over the years and has gained importance too in different areas.

Edupreneurs are educational entrepreneurs who start educational institution or start ups. The role of these edupreneurs can be viewed from the social perspective to uplift education quality and towards inclusiveness in education. Edupreneurship as a concept means initiative of any entrepreneur in educational filed.

Entrepreneurship per se has varying connotations from person to person. Different persons have interpreted Entrepreneurship in their own way, some feel that it's the outlook towards problems of life and scope, while some interpret as what are ones goals and approaches of doing business and morality principles. Since there has been shift in focus in last decade in the entire world and also in India towards education therefore entrepreneurship is noticeable in education sector also.

Review of Literature

Belz and Binder,(2002),argues that resources for social enterprises are confined not only to personal savings and banks loans but their social value creation and environmental concerns open up the door to novel, unconventional and increasingly important source of public funding such as crowd funding. Although the objective of a profit-maximizing firm is different from a social business, the managerial mindset should be the same as in a business while creating social benefit. Social businesses can certainly generate income while achieving their social missions and can be self-sustainable.

Doukas, Tsiousi, Marinakis, and Psarras, (2010),   in their study conclude that the corporations with goals limited to the mandatory legislations achieve lower performance as compared to the ones integrating fundamental environmental practices and corporate social responsibility (CSR) concepts. To incorporate these practices into the corporate policies and structures, United Nations General Assembly proposes to integrate entrepreneurship in the education curriculum and universities around the world shall be encouraged to inform students about the demands of diverse communities and the world.

Abou-Warda,(2013), opines that fostering entrepreneurial education requires support from government authorities in the form of reviewing regulations on the assistance of educators and entrepreneurs in entrepreneurship teaching activities; favoring practical activities related to technology/entrepreneurship education, and sustainable market; establishing awards for teachers and students of entrepreneurial universities; and promoting positive examples of academic spin-offs.

Stevenson and Carlos, (1990), were of the view that an increase in corporate entrepreneurship reflects an increase in social, cultural and business pressures. Social variable has been viewed as a factor that requires adequate attention in entrepreneurship. The common element found in social entrepreneurs is that they focus on making change through their actions which must lead to solutions to society problems. Bill Drayton founder and CEO of Ashoka stated that "social entrepreneurship at its best produces small changes in the short term that reverberate through existing systems to catalyze large changes in the longer term". This was typical of ABC Transport activities in the luxurious bus business.

Roger and Osberg, (2007), defined social entrepreneurs as individuals with innovative solutions to society most pressing and daunting social problems, they are ambitious and persistent tackling major social issues and offering new ideas for wide scale change. Throughout history, such individuals have introduced solutions to seemingly intractable social problems, fundamentally improving the likes of countries individuals by changing the

way critical systems operated definitely, social entrepreneurs are pioneer of innovations that benefit humanity at large.

Research Methodology

The study is exploratory in nature as it suggests the model which can be used as one of the methods to achieve SDG. The working of the model is based on the role identified of each stakeholder and integration of it. The model is suggestive and can be made practical if shortcomings of the same are well addressed. The model can be used as a pilot study to understand the intricacies and later can be used from micro level to macro level.

Development of the Model

The model includes the four stakeholders revolving around the role of social entrepreneur, termed as edupreneur. The four stakeholders are 1. Students: junior or degree college drop outs because of social and economic reasons and aspiring to complete their formal education and also develop skills making them employable. 2. Teachers and Trainers seeking to come forward for social work and ready to work as facilitator for identified students in completing their formal education and skill development. 3. Educational institutions and Universities: Where students can enroll in regular/ distance mode to complete their education and ready to provide infrastructure to carry out classroom sessions. 4. Business Houses/ Firms who are ready to provide financial resources as part of their CSR activities.

The roles of the stakeholder need to be explicitly mentioned and can be modified based on the practical implications if model is put to use. If the workability of model is tested at pilot study it can be used to bring change at national level.

Role of Students

1. Student has to enroll with the edupreneur expressing his/her interest of completing higher education.

2. Student has to attend the sessions for both completing formal education and skill development.

3. Student has to fulfil all the formalities and adhere to the norms of higher education (regular/distance).

4. Student has to adhere to the code of conduct laid down by the HEI and Edupreneur.

Role of Teachers/Trainers

1. Teachers/Trainers should be ready to provide dedicated services for the cause stated by the edupreneur

2. Teachers/ Trainers should complete syllabus/module in the stipulated time.

3. Teachers and Trainers should act as mentor and facilitator with an objective of completion of formal education and making student industry ready.

4. Teachers/ Trainers should address skill needs of the students.

5. Teacher/ Trainers should follow the code of conduct laid by HEI and Edupreneur.

Role of Higher Education Institutions

1. HEI should be ready to enroll students in regular/distance mode if required.
2. HEI should be ready to provide infrastructure (Classrooms, Lab, Common Rooms etc) during their non-working hour for the students completing their higher education through distance mode.
3. HEI should co-operate during their non-operational time with edupreneur in completing the task undertaken.

Role of Business Houses

1. Providing financial resources to the eduprenuer to meet the expenses.

2. To suggest the skills required in businesses for the trainers to develop skills through skill development program.

3. To create awareness about this initiative on website.

4. To co-operate with edupreneur for completing the mission successfully.

Working of the model

Edupreneur identifies the candidates aspiring to complete their education which they could not, due to genuine socio-economic reasons or also due to lack of proper guidance. Once, the interest is identified the role of edupreneur becomes more active in terms to communicate to the interested candidate regarding the date of admissions (more preferred through the distance mode) and providing total support in registration or enrollment, at the same time edupreneur approaches different business houses/ organizations to mobilize the funds. Edupreneur can also use social media for crowd funding too. Edupreneurs, groups the students in the discipline they want to complete their unfinished studies and simultaneously also approaches educational institutes and teachers in the same locality for their support in completion of education by providing teaching support and infrastructure support respectively. Along with the formal education edupreneur also approaches trainers for the skill development. Edupreneur monitors the entire process and makes all the necessary arrangements to achieve the results in terms of completion of education and skill development. Funds mobilized will be used under following heads: i) Fees of students' ii) Honorarium to teachers/ trainers   iii) Charges for use of Infrastructure   iv) Books and other accessories   v) Promotional expenses. The edupreneur's objective should increase the number of beneficiaries year on year basis.

Making model a win-win situation

The students are benefitted directly as they are now educated with formal degrees and with the skills required making them employable. Business houses benefit as they contribute towards development of human resources which are skilled and employable thus filling the gap of skilled and educated manpower. Further, it helps them to fulfill their CSR too. Teachers can be motivated if undertaking this activity is included in their API score with good weightage. Educational Institution can project their role in carrying out extension activities for neighborhood community which is useful in their accreditation. Edupreneurs objective is achieved with more and more students enrolling year after year.
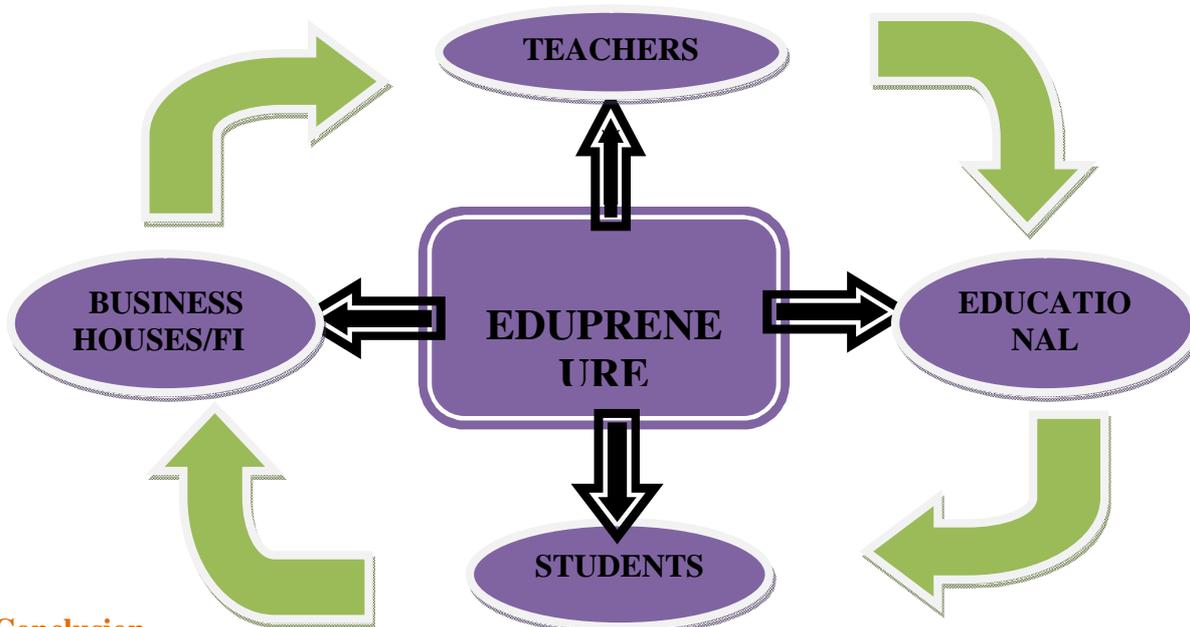
Conclusion

The study suggests that the model which is one of the ways to achieve SDG of Quality Education for drop outs at higher education is much higher and the New Education Policy 2019 also aims at increasing Gross Enrolment Ratio for higher education to 50% by 2035. Thus increasing the number of students to continue their education will also lead in achieving other SDGs viz. No Poverty, Zero Hunger, Well-being, decent work and economic growth, Reduced Inequalities and so on. To conclude in words of Swami Vivekananda "A nation is advanced in proportion to education and intelligence spread among the masses"

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